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ROBERT KENNON HARGROVE, D.D.,  
ONE OF THE BISHOPS OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH.

A HISTORY  
OF  
METHODISM IN ALABAMA.

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BY THE REV. ANSON WEST, D.D.

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## PREFACE.

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HAVING come to the end of the task, self-imposed, of writing a History of Methodism in Alabama, it is but conformity to custom to write a Preface to the book. It is impossible to detail here the difficulties encountered in the prosecution of the work. No traveler ever passed over the ground before. Neither road nor trace existed, not even a footstep could be found, except in one instance, at one point, a track of the Rev. John G. Jones, D.D., and in another instance, at one other point, the track of the Rev. John B. McFerrin, D.D. The temerity which induced the undertaking, as the way has been so obscure and interminable, has been regretted many the time. If years enough were remaining to the poor wanderer who has rambled over the ground, to go again, the journey could be made to better advantage, but there is no time now for further and other excursion. The work such as it is, and as it is, must be stereotyped. It is with unfeigned sadness of heart, real pain, that the work is resigned. It has been a work which has burdened above measure, and yet the end is reached and the surcease accepted with the sorrow akin to the sorrow experienced upon bidding a last good-bye to friends and kindred dear. Much labor, no one will ever know how much, has been expended in getting at facts and arriving at truth, so as to give the real history in every case. Days have been given to tracing very small matters in order that the statements made be accurate and correct. While there may have been an occasional blunder along the dark and devious way, wherever the history is given it is given correctly. That the book has defects is only too well known. If any one can and will write a better History, let it be done. Many things in the book could have been left out, and many things out could have been put in. There is room and there is material for another History covering the same time traversed by this. Alabamians are neglectful of their own history. The plan of this book is to begin with the beginning, and write the history as it begins, develops, enlarges, and goes on, and give the history everywhere in the order of time, both in the opening and the progress. In the plan thus pursued, the history is given from 1808 to 1818. During that time there were only two appointments in the State. Then the history is given from 1818 to 1832. At the close of that time the Alabama Conference was organized. Then in the order of the design the history is given from 1832 to 1845. Then it was that the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, commenced. Finally, in the on-going of the plan the history from 1845 to 1865 is given. Then the emancipation of the slaves was consummated, and a new order of things inaugurated. There this History closes. That which is written about an itinerant preacher is, as a general thing, introduced where and when his work in the State terminated. That accounts for the fact that nothing is said about many prominent preachers. Their term of service extended beyond the time where

this History closes. What is written about a layman is, generally, introduced in connection with the place where he did most of his work, or in connection with the enterprise in which he was prominent.

The works, some in print and some in manuscript, which have been of service in the preparation of this History may be mentioned as follows:

"The General Minutes of the Methodist Episcopal Church."

"The General Minutes of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South."

"Asbury's Journal." (3 Vols.)

"Dow's Works."

"The History of Alabama." (2 Vols.) By Albert James Pickett.

"Methodism in Mississippi." (1 Vol.) John G. Jones.

"History of Methodism in Tennessee." (3 Vols.) John B. McFerrin.

Journal of the South Carolina Conference.

Journal of the Georgia Conference.

*Advocate and Journal*, 1825-1830.

*Southern Christian Advocate*, 1843-1852.

Quarterly Conference Records of Franklin, Greene, Talladega, La Fayette, Wills Valley, and Jasper Circuits, and Greensborough and Athens Stations.

Church Registers Tuskaloosa and Greensborough Stations.

Manuscript Journal of the Rev. A. C. Ramsey.

Manuscript Journal of the Rev. E. Hearn.

Manuscript Journal of the Rev. William Wier.

Manuscript Journal of the Rev. Joseph T. Curry.

Manuscript "History of Methodism in Florence." W. B. Wood.

"Life and Times of the Rev. John Brooks."

"History of Alabama." Willis Brewer.

"Public Men in Alabama." William Garrett.

"Life of Bishop Capers." W. M. Wightman.

"History of Clarke County, Alabama, and Its Surroundings." T. H. Ball.

"Biographical Sketches of Itinerant Ministers."

"History of North Alabama." Smith.

"History of Methodism in Texas." H. S. Thrall.

"History of Methodism." Stevens.

"History of Methodist Episcopal Church." Stevens.

"History of Methodism in Kentucky." Redford.

"History of the Churches of the City of Montgomery, Alabama." M. P. Blue.

Letters of the Rev. R. H. Rivers. *Alabama Christian Advocate*.

Letters of the Rev. John DuBois. *Alabama Christian Advocate*.

"History of Methodism in Georgia and Florida." Smith.

"History of Methodist Protestant Church." Paris.

"Williams' History of the Methodist Protestant Church."

"History of the Methodist Protestant Church." Brown.

Stray Copies Minutes of Alabama Annual Conference Methodist Protestant Church.

"Selma: Her Institutions and Men." Hardy.

Manuscript Sketches of Preachers of Alabama Conference.

"Baptists in Alabama." Holcombe.

*Methodist Magazine*. (6 Vols.)

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Men and women too numerous to mention have conferred special favors and rendered valuable services. The favors and services have been highly appreciated, and the persons who so generously assisted are thought of with delight. May they all attain eternal rest!

ANSON WEST.

Alabama, January 25, 1893.



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# HISTORY OF METHODISM IN ALABAMA.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE STATE OF ALABAMA: ITS GEOGRAPHY, INDIAN TRIBES, AND WHITE INHABITANTS.

ALABAMA lies between the thirtieth and thirty-fifth degrees of north latitude and between the eighty-fifth and eighty-ninth degrees of west longitude. For situation, being within these parallels of latitude and meridians of longitude, it is one of the very choicest parts of the globe. Being sufficiently distant from equator and pole to exempt it from extremes of temperature, to adapt it to the greatest variety of products, and to the largest measure of man's success and comfort, it is worthy of all preference. It is a State of grand dimensions, of extensive territory. It has an area of fifty-two thousand, two hundred and fifty square miles. At the most contracted point its width is one hundred and fifty miles, and at the most extended points its width is two hundred and five miles, and its greatest length is three hundred and thirty-two miles.

Alabama has a surface diversified by mountains, hills, and valleys. In the northern portion, including very nearly half the State, there are mountains and high ridges, while in the southern part it is more level, and the face of the country is much smoother. From the northern to the southern limit of the State its surface gradually declines toward the Gulf.

The State has a short coast line, and one of the deepest bays on the Mexican Gulf. The southern border of the State is fanned by the breezes of the Gulf of Mexico, and its northern portion is traversed by the Appalachian Mountains. Everywhere throughout the wide-extended territory of this magnificent State, springs break forth, and streams flow on. Alabama is, without exception, the best-watered country in the world.



The Tennessee River lies, like a huge serpent, across her bosom. The Tallapoosa, the Coosa, the Alabama, the Cahawba, the Warrior, the Tombigbee, and the Mobile Rivers run, like giants, among her hills and through her valleys. The Chattahoochee River washes her border, and the Choctawhatchee, the Pea, the Conecuh, the Sepulga, the Escambia, the Little, the Tensaw, the Sipsey, the North, the Elk, the Flint, and the Paint Rock rivers, with splendid creeks too numerous to mention, refresh her wide-extended soil.

The soil of this State is as varied as its surface. There are clay and sand, rock and gravel. There are mountains of rock, ridges of sand, and plains of prairie. There are the stiff soil, the loose soil, the black soil, the red soil, and the white soil. These various soils are interspersed more or less in all parts of the State. Much of the land is exceedingly rich, and everywhere it is productive, yielding abundant crops, and handsomely remunerating the toil of the husbandman.

Throughout her territory are seen magnificent forests, where the greatest number of trees abound, such as the ash, the alder, the bay, the beech, the birch, the buckeye, the cedar, the cherry, the chestnut, the chinquapin, the china, the cypress, the elm, the gum, the hickory, the holly, the juniper, the lind, the locust, the magnolia, the maple, the mulberry, the myrtle, the oak, the palmetto, the persimmon, the pine, the poplar, the sassafras, the sycamore, the walnut, and the willow. In every place where these forest trees tower in their loftiness and stateliness there grow in admirable profusion and in great variety grasses, ferns, and flowers. A section of six hundred and forty acres of Alabama woods presents in its botanical growth a scene which for variety, combination, beauty, and fragrance excels any and every garden which art, taste, and wealth have yet displayed.

Everywhere throughout this magnificent State bushes, trees, shrubs, and vines bear in great abundance their own peculiar fruits; and everywhere, for the gratification, life, and health of her population, there grow in great variety such things as pears, peaches, plums, apples, cherries, nuts, berries, grapes, and melons. A benevolent providence has greatly enriched Alabama in the extended line of products adapted to her climate, and grown in her soil for the use and benefit of man. All the cereals (Indian corn, wheat, oats, barley, rye, rice, and millet) are

grown here in great perfection. In the southern part of the State the sugar cane grows well and yields abundantly. These products, the cereals and the sugar cane, supply material for food. Cotton is grown extensively, and flax and hemp will grow and yield well when cultivated, and these supply material for making all sorts of cloth. The indigo grows successfully. The State abounds with plants noted for their medicinal properties. Tobacco and the poppy grow admirably, and their narcotic properties are well understood. The *Palma Christi* also grows well, and its medicinal nature is well attested.

The gold deposits in this State are extensive and rich. There are also deposits of silver and copper. There are beds of marble. The coal, iron, and lime are inexhaustible. These materials will last commensurate with time itself.

While there is not in all her borders a cave equal to the celebrated Mammoth Cave of Kentucky, and while there is not within her bounds a waterfall equal to that of the world-renowned Niagara, yet everywhere upon her mountains and in her valleys and by her springs and along her streams there are magnificent views, beautiful scenes, and lovely landscapes, the whole most charming, inspiring, and elevating.

Her natural conditions and resources make it possible for her to be, as a place of habitation for man, equal to the highest ideal in the mind, and the day may soon dawn when she will fall but little short of a real paradise. As a country it is equal to the country to the border of which the children of Israel were led by Moses, and in which they finally settled. "For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills, a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil-olive, and honey; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack anything in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass. When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land he hath given thee." (Deut. viii. 7-10.)

Alabama was once an unbroken wilderness, abounding with the indigenous and spontaneous. When, after the discovery of America by Columbus, it was first traversed by men from the civilized nations, it was inhabited only by beasts and birds na-



tive to the forests, and by tribes of men of savage natures, of superstitious sentiments, of rude customs, and of vulgar habits. When those acquainted with the achievements of civilization first visited and obtained a knowledge of the country now included within the limits of Alabama, they found upon her soil tribes called Coosas, Tallases, Mobilians, and Choctaws. The Cherokees were at that time occupying a part of the State, though they were called by the name of Chalaques. The Choctaws and Cherokees survived all attacks and adversities, but as time passed and events followed different tribes were found upon the soil of Alabama. Tribes went and tribes came, tribes rose and tribes fell, tribes supplanted tribes and tribes absorbed tribes, tribes were established and tribes were lost.

The Alabamas were driven hither and thither, from point to point. Now they are on the Missouri River, then on the Yazoo River, and finally they reach and settle on the river to which they give their own name: the Alabama. The Muscogeas, a migratory and aggressive tribe, emigrated from point to point, first from Mexico to Red River, then to the Ohio River; and finally, in the course of their rambling and usurpation, they supplant the Alabamas and take possession of the country on the Alabama River and on farther east. The Alabamas were allowed by the Muscogeas to return to their homes and towns on the Alabama River, but in a state of subordination. From the Ohio River came the Tookabatchas, and obtained a settlement on the Tallapoosa River. The Tuskegees reached and obtained a habitation between the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers, immediately above the junction. The Ozeailles settled on the plains through which runs the magnificent Hatchee Chubbee Creek, a few miles above the grounds of the Tuskegees. A remnant of the Natchez tribe, which escaped from the city of Natchez, on the Mississippi River, settled on the Coosa River about the Talladega Creek. The Uchees settled on the creeks which bear the same name and which empty into the Chattahoochee River. The Alabamas, the Tookabatchas, the Tuskegees, the Ozeailles, the Natchez, and the Uchees were dominated by the Muscogeas, confederated in their government, and subordinated to their laws and interests. These tribes, thus allied, were called by the general name of Creeks.

In addition to the powerful Creek nation there were three

other powerful Indian tribes which had at the same time homes and hunting grounds in Alabama. These were the Choctaws, the Chickasaws, and the Cherokees. These tribes had recognized boundaries, established by claim and acknowledged among them. Boundaries were matters of oft-recurring disputes, and the various tribes ever and anon trespassed upon the hunting grounds of each other.

It is outside the scope of this History to treat of these tribes except as citizens of the territory within Alabama. It is therefore unnecessary for the purpose of this History to give here a minute description of the entire boundaries of these several Indian tribes. It is only necessary to state approximately the boundaries which determined and exhibited the location of these several nations in what is now Alabama. The southern boundary of the Choctaw nation where it touched Alabama was the thirty-first degree of north latitude, and the eastern boundary was on the ridge dividing the waters running into the Alabama River from those running into the Tombigbee River. The present Suggsville, Choctaw Corner, McKinley, and Union Town are on this ridge and along this line. This eastern line of this Choctaw nation extended in a northern direction and terminated where it reached the boundary of the Chickasaw and Cherokee nations, somewhere near the head waters of Big Bear Creek; and here, near the head waters of Big Bear Creek, commenced the northern boundary of the Choctaws: the line between them and the Chickasaws, which boundary crossed the line of the present States of Alabama and Mississippi not more than a few miles from where the west branch of the Butta-hatchee River crosses the line between the two States. All that part of Alabama inclosed by this boundary line here above named was claimed and occupied by the Choctaws.

The northern boundary of the Choctaws was the southern boundary of the Chickasaws. The southern point of the eastern boundary of the Chickasaws was about the head waters of Big Bear Creek, and this boundary extended into what is now the State of Tennessee and crossed the Tennessee River, possibly, at Muscle Shoals. There was a region touching this line about the Tennessee River and the Muscle Shoals which was claimed by both the Chickasaws and the Cherokees, and the United States in her treaties proposed to satisfy both tribes for

claims in lands along this disputed line. All this part of Alabama in the northwest corner inclosed by this Chickasaw boundary here above named was claimed and occupied by this tribe.

The Cherokee boundary in Alabama ran northwest and southeast, and crossing the Tennessee River near the lower end of Muscle Shoals, passed along near the head waters of Big Bear Creek and along the ridge dividing the waters running into the Tennessee River from those running into the Tombigbee River, and along to the mouth of Wills Creek, and along near the present Cross Plains, on into Georgia. There were disputes about where this line between the Cherokees and Creeks ran. The Cherokees claimed that this line was farther south and west than the points above named, and the United States, settling the question of this boundary with the Cherokees, agreed to a boundary crossing the Coosa River at the lower end of Ten Islands and running in a straight line to Flat Rock, on Big Bear Creek, where the boundary intersected the Chickasaw line. Turkey Town, on the Coosa River about eight miles above the mouth of Wills Creek, was a Cherokee town; and Tallahatchee, about two miles northwest of the present town of Alexandria, in Calhoun County, was a Creek town. All that part of Alabama north and east of this line here above mentioned was the land of the Cherokees.

To the Creeks belonged all the State not owned and occupied by the Choctaws, the Chickasaws, and the Cherokees. The territory of this nation extended as far north as to the present Blount County, and as far west as Union Town and Sugsville, as far south as the State of Alabama reaches on the thirty-first degree of north latitude, and east to the limit of the State, and on far out into Georgia.

It may be well to add that the Choctaws had considerable territory in Mississippi, and the Chickasaws had large territory in what is now the States of Mississippi and Tennessee, and the territory of the Cherokees extended into Georgia, North Carolina, and Tennessee.

Upon the establishment of the United States Government, said government treated with the Indian tribes which were within territory claimed by said government and in proximity to the settlements of the citizens of the United States. In 1785, 1786, and 1790 this United States Government made treaties

with the Cherokees, the Choctaws, the Chickasaws, and the Creeks, and in said treaties the boundaries of these tribes were fixed and designated, and the boundaries thus indicated were as the boundaries which are here given. (United States Statutes at Large, Vol. VII., Indian Treaties.)

Throughout the lovely lands of this magnificent Alabama country these savage tribes had numerous towns, some of them of large populations, of great importance, and extensive influence. These were too numerous to mention, but a few of the most noted may be named. Long Island and Nickajack on the Tennessee River, Turkey Town and Wills Town between the Coosa and Tennessee Rivers were towns of the Cherokees; Abecouchee on the Talladega Creek, Coosa, Little Tallassee, and Hickory Ground on the Coosa River, Tallassee and Tookabatchee on the Tallapoosa River, Coosawda and Ecunchate on the Alabama River, and Coweta on the Chattahoochee River were towns of the Creeks; Cabusto on the Warrior River was a Choctaw town.

Little by little these savage tribes ceded their lands to the United States, and at last, by treaty, the entire claim of these aborigines to Alabama soil was extinguished. Not until time had brought it far into the present century was this beautiful and lovely Alabama entirely free from the occupancy of savages. To make the statement complete it is necessary to add that on September 20, 1830, the Choctaws, by treaty, ceded to the United States the entire country they owned and possessed east of the Mississippi River. In a treaty made March 24, 1832, the Creek tribe ceded to the United States all their land east of the Mississippi River. In a treaty made October 20, 1832, the Chickasaw nation ceded to the United States all the land which they owned on the east side of the Mississippi River. In a treaty made December 29, 1835, to which was attached a Supplementary Article by treaty March 1, 1836, the Cherokee nation ceded, relinquished, and conveyed to the United States all the land owned, claimed, or possessed by them east of the Mississippi River. (United States Statutes at Large, Vol. VII., Indian Treaties.) This extinguished the last claim of the Indian nations to the land of Alabama.

In the treaty made with the Chickasaws it was stipulated that they were to seek homes west of the Mississippi River, and



certain reservations were allowed them until they removed to their new country. The treaty made with the Creeks March 24, 1832, allowed ninety principal chiefs to select each one a section of land, and every other head of a Creek family to select one half section of land, on which they were to be permitted to remain for five years, if said land was not sooner disposed of by said occupants. In the treaty made with the Cherokees it was stipulated and agreed that they should remove to their new home west of the Mississippi River within two years from the ratification of said treaty. (United States Statutes at Large, Vol. VII., Indian Treaties.)

By the close of 1837 the last of these tribes was removed beyond the Mississippi River. Alabama is no longer menaced and downtrodden by savages. It was a joyous day and the consummation of a glorious achievement was reached when this lovely land was redeemed from the dominion of savages. It is a matter of profound regret that this goodly land was allowed to remain so long under the blight and waste of savage cruelty and superstition.

So far as research and record have furnished information Hernando De Soto, a native of Spain, and his troops, perhaps, near a thousand strong, were the first civilized persons who ever set foot on Alabama soil. A brief statement of De Soto's journey, and a bare naming of the path along which he went on this invasion and search, and nothing more, may be attempted. De Soto was an athletic man, and a bold and ambitious adventurer. He thirsted for gold and longed for conquest. His expedition, which was provided for on a grand scale, was gotten up to search for gold and to make conquests.

About the first of July, 1540, forty-eight years after Columbus discovered America, De Soto with his army of invasion entered the territory of the present Alabama about where the Coosa River reaches the border of the State. From this point he made a march across the entire territory of the State. He passed over and left behind him more gold than he is reported to have found and carried away, and he achieved no conquest, he established no colony. He reached, with a magnificent fleet, Tampa Bay, where he went ashore May 30, 1539. He had with him cows and mules; horses, hogs, and hounds; bows, cannons, chains, guns, handcuffs, and shields; assayists and crucibles;

priests, vestments, and sacramental flour and wine. In a word, he had everything which could be conceived necessary for the purposes of the expedition inaugurated. From Tampa Bay he went across the country over the Ockmulgee, Oconee, and Ogechee Rivers, and on to the head waters of the Savannah River, and from here he went a west course until he reached the Oostanaula River. He marched down the west bank of this river to its junction with the Etowah River. From here he went down the western bank of the Coosa River, entering the territory of the present Alabama as above stated. Of his haltings and tarryings, conflicts and maneuvers from the time he landed at Tampa Bay until he reached the country now called Alabama no note is made here in this work. Reaching the town of Costa, which was on the west bank of the Coosa River and between the present State line and the mouth of Wills Creek, where he found fifteen hundred armed Indian warriors, De Soto halted and sought and obtained an audience with the chief of the town. His powers of strategy were called into requisition to prevent a revengeful outbreak and a bloody engagement. It was the law of the Indians of America to avenge all injuries and resist all encroachments.

After tarrying at this town seven days he crossed the Coosa to the eastern bank. From here he marched down the river, and stopped at the end of the first day's journey at the town of Talle, which was on the bank of the Coosa River. He tarried here two days, receiving at the hands of the savage inhabitants kind treatment. Continuing down the Coosa River, passing many towns, villages, and fields, after a lapse of fourteen days from the time he left Talle he entered with a sort of ovation the town of Coosa, the capital of the Coosa province. This town was on the eastern bank of the Coosa River, and between the Talladega and the Tallassehatchee Creeks.

This writer has stood on the very spot where once this large and populous town of this powerful and prosperous Indian tribe flourished. The Talladega and the Tallassehatchee Creeks, two magnificent streams, rising a long way from each other, converge and empty into the Coosa River scarcely a mile apart, and here between these creeks is an elevated plateau, a most beautiful and admirable situation for an Indian town. Nature did her utmost in fitting this place for the capital of the Coosa province.

After a sojourn at the capital of the Coosa province for twenty-five days De Soto proceeded on his journey, keeping on the east side of the Coosa River. After the lapse of twenty-nine days from the time he resumed his march he reached the town of Tallassee, which was in a noted bend of the Tallapoosa River and on the west side of the river opposite where the Chehaw Creek empties into the river. De Soto remained at Tallassee twenty days. He then crossed the Tallapoosa River to the eastern side, and went down that river, passing many towns on the line of his march, until he reached the Alabama River. He continued down the Alabama River on the eastern side until he reached about the mouth of Pine Barren Creek, and then crossed to the western side of the river, and marched from there down on the western side until he reached a beautiful plain and a prominent bluff where a small creek with a small lake by its side empties into the river. Here at this bluff on this plain stood the town of Maubila. De Soto with his accompanying forces entered this town, whereupon the preparations of war by the Indians were discovered, and in a short interval a terrible fight had commenced between the inhabitants of the town and the Spanish invaders, a battle which continued with fury and desperation for nine hours. The town and the camp equipage, baggage, clothes, medicines, books, flour, and wine, and other commodities of the Spaniards which had been brought into the town on the entrance of it in the morning, were consumed by the flames. Hundreds of Indians were killed. Forty-five horses belonging to the Spaniards had been killed. Eighty-two Spaniards were killed, and all of them that survived were wounded, except the priests. De Soto himself was dejected, and his men were demoralized. De Soto had moved forward on this entire march from Tampa Bay with the purpose of going to Ochus, or Pensacola Bay, where his fleet with supplies for his expedition awaited him. But the condition of affairs after this terrible battle determined him to abandon the journey to Pensacola Bay, and he struck out through the country in the opposite direction. He crossed the Warrior River at the Indian town of Cabusto. A large force of armed warriors opposed his march; but he pressed his way, and in spite of obstacles continued to move forward. He went out of the present State of Alabama a few miles northwest of the mouth of Coal Fire Creek. He con-

sumed about five months in the march across Alabama. Disaster crowded on the whole of his path. He went on into Arkansas, returned to the Mississippi River, and finally sickened and died, and his comrades put his body in a strong box and in the darkness of the night dropped it into the Mississippi River. The men of his expedition who were left, about three hundred, constructed rude boats and floated down the Mississippi and out into the Gulf of Mexico, and reached the shores of Mexico.

Alabama has been discovered and traversed by men from a civilized country. Men, both Indians and Europeans, have been killed in cruel and bloody engagements. Men in priestly orders have exercised their holy offices in the administration of holy things in the territory of Alabama amidst savage surroundings. One negro, who claimed to be a Christian, and one Scotchman, together with a few hogs and a few cows, have been left at Coosa town. The hogs and cows increased, and stocked this part of the country. The Scotchman and the negro propagated by Indian women. Small achievements and meager results indeed for such expenditure of means and such sacrifice of life!

For fifty-five and four-tenths centuries there is naught of record concerning this fair land of Alabama. Through the roll of these years, and the lapse of these centuries, no event is chronicled by observant and ready writer. Upon all there is the seal of oblivion. At length Hernando De Soto and his associates in adventure spend five brief and eventful months in marching through her territory, and the scribes who are with the expedition put to record the incidents of the journey. Then, after this record, there ensues a profound silence concerning this State for more than a century and a half. During this time, so far as can be ascertained, no civilized foot touched her soil, and savages, though they may make history, never write Histories. The flight of time is ever rapid, the march of men is ever slow.

In rivalry for the Indian trade and in prosecution of rival conquests, different nations made settlements in America. The first settlement in Alabama by civilized man, so far as any record extant gives information, was made in 1702. In that year, the French, under the direction of a man named Bienville, built a warehouse on Dauphin Island, and also erected a fort, warehouse, and other public buildings at the mouth of Dog River,



and named this place Mobile. For nine years this place was the seat of government of the French province of Louisana.

In 1711 the town at the mouth of Dog River was abandoned, though the fort there was garrisoned and continued as a fort, and a town of the same name was founded at the mouth of the Mobile River, and on the site of the present city of Mobile. After the abandonment of the settlement at the mouth of Dog River, the seat of government for the province of Louisiana was permanently established at Mobile, on Mobile River. (Pickett's "History of Alabama.") It is said to be a fact that the first marriages ever celebrated by Christian ceremonies on the soil of Alabama were celebrated at the town at the mouth of Dog River, and that the first child born to civilized parents in the State was born at the same place.

In addition to their settlements on Dauphin Island and at the mouths of Dog and Mobile Rivers, the French established settlements within the present Alabama on the Coosa and Tombigbee Rivers. In 1714 they erected Fort Toulouse at the point where the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers approach each other four miles above their junction. The Tombigbee and the Warrior Rivers form a junction. About thirty-five miles by the course of the river above this junction two creeks approach and empty into the Tombigbee at the same place. Here at the mouths of these two creeks, on the west bank of the Tombigbee River, in 1735, the French erected Fort Tombigbee, and occupied the country.

The reign of the French in Alabama terminated in less than a century. Their first settlement, as has already been seen, was made in 1702, and they surrendered this country to the British in 1763. This territory now embraced in Alabama fell by conquest to the Spaniards in 1781, and was confirmed to them by treaty with Great Britain in 1783. The Spaniards occupied, in a measure, this country until 1795. In that year, in a treaty made between the Agent of the United States and the King of Spain, all of Alabama claimed by the Spaniards lying north of the thirty-first degree of north latitude was surrendered to the United States. That part of the State south of this line was occupied by the Spaniards until 1813, and was rescued from them then by military force.

In 1777 a number of French families resided at Tensaw, located on the river of that name, and in that year a party of Geor-

gians settled on the Alabama River in what is now Baldwin County.

In 1792, when the Spaniards had troops quartered in Fort Charlotte, Fort St. Stephens, and Fort Tombigbee, the largest settlement in what is now Alabama was at Mobile. The next largest at this time was on the Tensaw River, and the next in size was, perhaps, the one on the Tombigbee. At this time there was a settlement of mixed bloods on Little River. At this period a few white persons resided in the section of country traversed by the Catoma and Oakfuskee Creeks, and white men, who were traders with the Indians, or who were adventurers, or who were fugitives, were scattered more or less over the entire State.

By 1796 a comparatively large number of Georgians had emigrated and settled on the Tombigbee. Travelers had become sufficiently numerous to justify the erection of a ferry, and in 1797 a Mr. Hollinger established a ferry across the Tombigbee River, and a Mr. Mims had established one across the Alabama River. The road from one of these ferries to the other went across Nannahubba Island. This was progress.

On May 10, 1798, Mississippi Territory, which extended from the Mississippi River to the Chattahoochee River, was organized by an act of Congress. The settlements in that part of the territory now in Alabama were without laws, civil courts, or officers until 1800.

As early as 1806 white men with their families settled in the bend of the Tennessee River, in what is now Madison County, and new settlers continued, in the years immediately following, to move into this section in increased numbers.

In the years from 1702 to 1800 many white men from various countries and climes took up their abode in the region now included in Alabama, and married Indian women, and their descendants continue till this day.

There were some negroes among these settlers in the years mentioned. The French introduced them into this country, and the American settlers brought them along with them.

Here at the beginning of the nineteenth century of the Christian era Alabama presents a spectacle and a problem. From the beginning of creation on for fifty-seven centuries, so far as history gives information, her soil has been inhabited only by Indians, only by savages. Then for a century conquest has

been attempted by foreigners, and only attempted, not achieved. During this time four different nations have engaged in the strife, and have supplanted each other, but have not suppressed the powerful savages. At the expiration of this century of effort at subjugation and conquest Alabama is still a wilderness, thronged and crowded with savage warriors, with a few foreigners and mixed bloods in straggling settlements here and there. Notwithstanding one or two houses of worship were erected first and last, and a few priests now and then erected the cross and administered the Christian sacraments, there is at this period a total destitution of churches, ministers, and religious ceremonies. Notwithstanding Alabama is a part of a territory of the United States, the magistrate is not in the land, and the law is without authority and without administration.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE FIRST WORK OF METHODISM IN ALABAMA.

THOSE who first settled in the Tombigbee country settled on the hunting grounds of the Choctaw nation, and as these settlers lived on the lands of the Indians they had to submit to the laws of the Indians and conform more or less to savage customs. A vast wilderness without roads, bridges, or ferries, and filled with savages, lay between the settlements on the Tombigbee and the civilized States. Not until 1805 did the Choctaw nation cede to the United States that part of their territory occupied by the Tombigbee settlements, and even then and for many years afterward this Choctaw nation and other tribes were round about them, environing them with the perils and disadvantages of savage occupancy. The administration of civil laws is greatly embarrassed in a frontier country, and the customs of refined and civilized society are more or less ignored in such a region. Civil laws and customs cannot obtain recognition in a savage nation. But when the lands which were claimed by the Indians were ceded to the United States, and the Indian claims to the land were extinguished, and the Indians receded from the soil, the white settlements on the Tombigbee enlarged, the administration of law commenced, and civil interests advanced. When these settlements were sufficiently developed and enlarged to be heard of in the States whence the settlers thereof came, and their surroundings guaranteed access to them, access even under difficulties, the heralds of the cross found them, and the voice of the messengers of peace was heard in the wilderness.

The first Protestant preacher to preach in any part of what is now Alabama claimed to be a Methodist preacher, and affiliated with the Methodists, though at the time he did this preaching he was not in any way amenable to the Methodists, nor were they responsible for him in anything whatsoever. This preacher was the Rev. Lorenzo Dow. In May, 1803, Rev. Mr. Dow preached to the settlers in the Tombigbee and the Tensaw

settlements. This was the first preaching ever done in Alabama except by Romish priests. After describing his difficult and dangerous journey of about four hundred miles through the Creek nation from Georgia to Tombigbee, and telling about reaching the first house in a settlement on the Alabama River, Mr. Dow, in his journal, says: "The company [with whom he had traveled through the Creek nation] supposed that they could save thirty or forty miles' travel by swimming across the Alabama River and fording a swamp, which they attempted to do, and got detained by rain two days; but I left them, and went down the river ten miles, and stayed with a half-breed Indian, who charged me a dollar and a half for the night. I then left an appointment for Sunday in the Tensaw settlement, and went over the Alabama by the Cut-off, to the west side of Tombigbee, through a canebrake or swamp, seven miles, and found a thick settlement, and then a scattered one seventy miles long, through which I sent a string of appointments, and afterward fulfilled them, and the fruit I expect to see at a future day.

"The inhabitants are mostly English, but are like sheep without a shepherd. Whilst under the Spanish government, it was a place of refuge for bad men; but of late, since it fell to us, seems to be in a hopeful way, and there is still room for great amendment. A collection was offered to me, but I did not feel free to accept it; and I left the settlement, procured some corn, and had not a cent left. Three of my traveling companions fell in with me again, and accompanied me through the Choctaw nation, to the Natchez settlement, which we reached in six days and a half, being about eight hundred miles from Georgia." (Pages 163, 164.)

In his return to the North from his second tour to the Mississippi Mr. Dow again preached to the Tombigbee settlements. In this journey he was going in the direction of Georgia, and he reached the settlements on the Tombigbee December 27, 1804. He tarried some days, and preached to the people. In his journal he says: "We started betimes, and came to the first house in the Tombigbee settlement, within four miles of Fort St. Stephens, where there is but one family, but it will be a place of fame in time. We had met the man of the house where we stayed, who told us to call. His wife made a heavy charge. We paid her, and S. M. said, 'Tell your husband never any more to



invite travelers to be welcome for his wife to extort.' The river was high, and swamp not fordable, which necessitated us to go down the river about seventy miles to the Cut-off, which is a channel from the Tombigbee to the Alabama River, about seven miles from their junction, where they form the Mobile. The island contains about sixty thousand acres, which are commonly overflowed by the spring flood, as Egypt is by the Nile. I held meeting during the six days of tarrying in the settlement, and took my departure for Georgia, but was necessitated to keep on the dividing ridge, between the streams, to prevent being intercepted by creeks. There were ferries at the above rivers. In the settlement there was not a preacher of any society." (Pages 220, 221.)

No doubt Mr. Dow preached in this Tombigbee country at different times as he passed through it during the years from 1803 to 1812, though no specific mention is made by him in his *Journal* of his preaching there except on the two occasions above given. He passed through this country at least seven times of which he makes no mention. Peggy Dow, his wife, in her writings, "*Vicissitudes*," gives an account of a trip which she made with him, passing through the Tombigbee settlements in November, 1811, from Natchez, Mississippi, to Milledgeville, Georgia, in which account, speaking of camping out one night in the wilderness some forty miles from Pearl River, she says: "Yet to consider we were in a lonely desert, uninhabited by any creature but wild beasts and savages, made me feel very much alarmed, and I slept but little, while Lorenzo was quite happy and composed, as he observed he had never been so well pleased with his situation in traveling through this wild, unfrequented part of the country before; and this was the tenth time that he had passed through it, in the space of nine or ten years!" (Page 648.) Still giving account of the trip through this country and telling of crossing the Chickasawha River, by the assistance of a pilot, late in the night, pushing for a house at which to rest, Peggy says: "It was perhaps 11 o'clock at night. We came to the house. The family was gone to bed, but the woman got up, and although she was half Indian, she treated me with more attention than many would have done that had been educated among the more refined inhabitants of the earth. I felt quite comfortable, and slept sweetly through the remain-



ing part of the night. In the morning we started again, being then thirty miles from the settlements of Tombigbee. We passed through some delightful country that day. About 2 or 3 o'clock in the afternoon we reached the first house inhabited by white people. It made my heart rejoice to meet again those that spoke a language which I understood, and above all, to find some that loved the Lord. Lorenzo held several meetings in this neighborhood that were profitable, I trust, to some." (Pages 649, 650.)

Lorenzo Dow was born October 16, 1777, in Coventry, Tolland County, Connecticut. He was descended from English ancestors. He was the subject of early religious impressions. Before he was four years old he, to use his own words, "mused upon God, heaven, and hell." He had, under conviction for sin, while in search of justification and regeneration, a long struggle and a terrible agony; but at last he reached a perceptible change, in which his soul "flowed out in love to God, to his ways, to his people, and to all mankind." He united with a Society of Methodists, being received into said Society by the Rev. G. Roberts. All this occurred by the time he was fifteen years old. He claimed Hope Hull as his spiritual father, though he never spoke to Hull until after he had been preaching some time.

He struggled hard and long against the conviction that it was his duty to preach. At last, however, having reviewed the entire question, he yielded to the conviction that God had called him to the Christian ministry. He then sought the sanction of the Methodist people to preach among them, but he met with strong opposition, first from his own father, and then from the members of the Church. When he had made up his mind and sought to obtain a license to preach and to join the itinerancy, the preachers in charge of affairs discouraged him in his undertaking and persuaded him to desist; in fact, they at first sent him away rejected. But still he said: "I feel the worth of souls to be near my heart, and my duty still to be to preach the gospel, with a determination to do so, God being my helper." He continued to press his claim for ministerial prerogatives, and was finally admitted on trial in the traveling connection at Granville, September 18, 1798, and his name was printed in the Minutes, and he received a written license from Francis Asbury,

and was appointed junior preacher on Cambridge Circuit, Timothy Dewy being preacher in charge. His written license from Bishop Asbury only authorized him to preach on the Cambridge Circuit, to which he had been appointed; so that when he left that Circuit his license was null and void.

The Conference in the bounds of which he had an appointment met, at the close of his first year, in New York June 19, 1799. He had done a full year's work, but he did not attend this session of the Conference. Being in a state of health which he thought threatened a speedy exit from the stage of life without relief, he wrote to the Conference a statement of his condition, and asked permission to go to sea. Notwithstanding his ill health and precarious tenure of life, while the other preachers were in attendance upon the session of the Conference, he was traveling from twenty-five to fifty-five miles and preaching from five to six times a day. The Conference did not grant him permission, as he had requested, to go to sea for his health, but continued him on trial, and appointed him in charge of the Essex Circuit, on the borders of Canada. Some of the appointments of this Circuit were in Canada. He went to the Circuit, and was remarkably active, enthusiastic, and zealous for three or four months; but in October, against the advice and entreaty of all the preachers consulted on the subject, he left and went to Europe. He consumed about twenty months in this trip to Europe, preaching incessantly while on that continent, returning only in time for the session of the Conference, June 16, 1801. Notwithstanding one session of the Conference had intervened in his absence, and notwithstanding he had left his work without authority and against the advice of all concerned, he was there and then restored to the relation to the Conference which he had when he left for Europe, continued on trial, and appointed junior preacher on the Duchess and Columbia Circuit. He went also to this Circuit, but left it before the year was out, and made a tour to Georgia. At the Conference session June 1, 1802, his name was dropped from the Minutes. He was no longer related in any way to an Annual Conference.

At one time this man, Lorenzo Dow, wished above all things to be received and assigned work as a preacher under the regulations of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and was greatly dissatisfied because he was rejected. Then, when he was received

and put to work under the auspices of the Methodist Episcopal Church, he was greatly depressed, and because those who were over him in the offices of the Church would not consent for him to leave the work assigned him he was discontented, not to say displeased. The Circuits to which he was sent were large, but they were not sufficiently expansive to correspond with the field seen in his dreams, and depicted in his fancy. They were large, but in his conception they were too contracted to lay under contribution his indomitable energy and to guarantee work commensurate with the requisitions laid upon him. In a word, he held the conclusion that on a Circuit he was not in his "right sphere." He had it in mind to "travel extensively," to "travel the continent at large." Hence he was not careful to maintain the relation with the Conference which he had previously sought so eagerly and at last attained with such difficulty. He now utterly despised that which once he most highly prized. He claimed, now that his connection with the Conference was severed, to be a Methodist, preaching a universal atonement and a free salvation, with the continent for his field. As such he traversed the land and passed through what is now Alabama, and preached occasionally as he went in the Tombigbee settlements.

The ministry of Lorenzo Dow to the settlements on the Tombigbee was accidental, irregular, occasional, only a sermon now and then preached in passing to and fro on contingent trips through the land. All the preaching he did in these settlements in all the years in which he occasionally passed through this wilderness was not sufficient in quantity, even under favorable circumstances, to produce any perceptible results. And none were reported. He had never been ordained to the ministry, and he was without authority from any Church to administer the sacraments or to organize Societies. He was at the time he preached about the Tombigbee, and so continued all his life, without any Church alliance or allegiance, though in doctrinal principles he was a Methodist. While at one time he baptized, by request, twelve persons in what, perhaps, is now Louisiana, he seems never to have thought at any time during his wandering ministry of organizing a Society, or of making any effort for the edification of any body of believers. He seems never to have thought of the advantages of organized forces and of con-

cert of action. He was irregular and uncertain. Peggy, giving an account of her first meeting with him, says, "He was a singular character," and he himself says that he "was mostly known by the name of crazy Dow."

To come to the facts in the case and the truth in the matter, Lorenzo Dow was inefficient. He was a force, but an inefficient force. He was a force, but an uncertain and an unreliable force. His ministry through life was of doubtful utility, was very nearly, if not quite, a failure. He was not successful in anything nor in any respect. His knowledge was limited, and what he had he could not apply to useful ends. He was not a wise man. While he was not crazy in the sense that he was incapable of discerning right and wrong, and was not destitute of responsibility, yet in judgment he was defective, and he was without that necessary element of character, tenacity of purpose. He was restless and unsteady. He was a dreamer. He was restive under restraint, visionary in all his plans, impulsive in all his movements, fickle in all his undertakings, contracted in his range of thought, and seems to have had but one ambition, and that to travel at will and ramble at large. He was, contradictory as it may seem, both sanguine and despondent. He was at the same time unduly hopeful and painfully morbid. He was always looking for some wonderful achievements where there were no adequate causes or efficient means, and he was so despondent and morbid that he always thought himself sick and nearly at the point of death, whereas he had the power of physical endurance possessed by very few men. He was, because of his temperament and make-up, disqualified for success in life's great work. He was, as many of his brethren believed, and as the sequel proved, incapable of making a successful preacher. Jesse Lee so thought, and so said, and he was right. His judgment in the case has been vindicated. Jesse Lee always opposed his admission into the Conference. When, after several efforts, he was finally admitted on trial: "Then said S. Hutchinson to J. Lee 'this is the crazy man you have been trying to kill so much.'" But Jesse Lee was no murderer. He never tried to kill the man Lorenzo Dow. It was not his purpose in any wise to injure him. The Rev. Jesse Lee was a man with a Christian heart, who loved justice and mercy, full of human sympathy and true love; but he was a man

of sound judgment and correct discernment, and "that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do."

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

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



### CHAPTER III.

#### THE FIRST WORK OF METHODISM IN ALABAMA (CONTINUED).

THE South Carolina Conference began their meeting according to appointment in Charleston, South Carolina, on Monday, the 28th of December, 1807, Francis Asbury, Bishop, Lewis Myers, Secretary; and closed, near dark, by prayer, Saturday, January 2, 1808. The dates here given are the true dates of this session of this Conference, Bishop Asbury's Journal to the contrary notwithstanding. The large field belonging properly to the South Carolina Conference and the regions far beyond it were reviewed, and the work was recast, and a list of appointments, to which preachers were assigned, was made out according to the demands of the times. In this list of appointments, made at this time, there was one which hitherto had not existed. It was put down as one of the appointments of the Oconee District, though it lay far out in the wilderness, many, many leagues away from all the other appointments of the Oconee District and of the South Carolina Conference. This new and isolated appointment was the Tombigbee, then written Tombecbee. The bishop presiding called for volunteers to go to this appointment. Only one man volunteered, and he was accepted, and assigned to the place. The Journal of the Conference says: "Matthew P. Sturdevant volunteered his services to Bigbee as a missionary, was received and elected to the eldership." He was ordained elder in Bethel Church January 2, 1808. This appointment, made for the year 1808, stands, as the official record shows, Tombecbee, *Matthew P. Sturdevant*.

And what was Tombigbee at this time when Matthew P. Sturdevant was appointed to it? It was a section of country upon the Tombigbee River about seventy or eighty miles long, beginning about Tensaw Lake and the junction of the Tombigbee and Alabama Rivers, and extending as far up as Fort St. Stephens, and up to Faluktabunnee, four miles north of Wood's Bluff, sparsely settled with families of several nationalities, mostly English. The farthest house west in this settlement, oc-



cupied by English-speaking citizens, was only four miles from Fort St. Stephens. On the east the settlements could not have extended farther than Suggsville and Choctaw Corner, for at that time the Indians had not ceded to the United States their lands farther east than the Choctaw boundary. The citizens of this wilderness settlement were of varied character; the society was wild and wicked, and there was not much to restrain vice or to encourage virtue and morality. In this section, at the time Matthew P. Sturdevant was appointed to it as a preacher, there were neither churches nor preachers. Nothing was organized. There was not at that time a road leading to this wilderness settlement from any direction. Nothing more than a horse path, a trail, led to that region from any quarter. The Indians, savages that they were, owned and occupied the country on all sides. The Creek Nation was on the very border of this settlement, and owned and hunted on all the land as far east as the Oconee River, thirteen days' travel, as Lorenzo Dow found it, from this settlement. On the very borders of this settlement west was an unbroken wilderness to the Natchez country, to travel across which required six or eight days, where the Choctaw Indians roamed in savage life. Rough huts built of boards, rude cabins made of logs with puncheon or dirt floors, constituted the homes of most of the citizens. The fields in cultivation were but scanty clearings. The lands occupied were held by different sorts of tenure; French reservations, British claims, Spanish grants, Indian titles, "Deadenings," and "Settlements" constituted the basis of individual land claims. How tangled and precarious were rights and titles! and how conducive was this tangled and precarious state to drift and change on the part of these settlers! The mills were rude and few. Tools and utensils were scarce. The articles of food were few, simple, and coarse. The household goods in many cases were scanty, the entire possessions meager. Some had come to the country with no more than one ox could draw in a rolling hogshead. All had brought their goods in rolling hogsheads or on packhorses. The settlers themselves were adventurers. Many of them were Tories and criminals who had resorted to this section as a retreat from the penalties of their crimes. Many of them had come into this region to be free from law and order. There was not a Society organized, or anything else done in the way of

laying the foundations of a Church. There was here and there a person who had been a member of the Methodist Church, and here and there a person who had been a member of some other Church, where he came from, but nothing in that country induced a renewal of Church relation or a recognition of Christian worship. There had not been a Church of any name or order established there at that time. Under Spanish rule the Catholic Church, or the Church of the Pope, built and used a church and parsonage at Fort St. Stephens; but both church and parsonage had been abandoned, and Mr. Pickett states, in his "History of Alabama," that in 1805 "the parsonage of the old Spanish church was used as a skin house" in the interest of "the factory of the United States, located at St. Stephens." In 1808 Josiah Jones, a Baptist, settled on Bassett's Creek, in the Tombigbee country, and he found there William Cochran, a licensed Baptist preacher. The Rev. Hosea Holcombe, in his "History of the Baptists in Alabama," says: "Flint River, a few miles northeast of Huntsville, without doubt the oldest Church in Alabama, was constituted on Flint River, from which it takes its name, at the house of James Deaton, on the 2d of October, 1808." (Page 107.) Then, telling of the organization of Bassett's Creek Church, which is in the Tombigbee country, he gives the following: "On the 31st of March, 1810, the brethren, having consulted each other on the subject, concluded to unite themselves together; and were constituted a Church by our beloved brother James Courtney." (Page 156.) So, according to the testimony of this Baptist historian, there was not a Church of any sort organized in any part of what is now the State of Alabama until more than eight months after Matthew P. Sturdevant had commenced his ministry in the Tombigbee country, and there was not a Baptist Church organized in the Tombigbee section until two years and three months after he had commenced his ministry there, and it was not earlier than his appointment to and his arrival in that country that "several Baptists" and "a licensed preacher" were found on the Tombigbee. The Rev. T. H. Ball, A.M., a Baptist preacher, has written a History of "Clarke County, Alabama, and Its Surroundings," in which he gives a sketch of the commencement of Methodist Church work in that section of country. His account is very defective, and is absolutely incorrect. He doubtless

did not have the records from which to derive information on the subject. He labored under misapprehensions, and he made mistakes, not intentionally, but from lack of correct information. He says nothing about the ministry of the Rev. Matthew P. Sturdevant, the Rev. Michael Burdge, and the Rev. John W. Kennon. Had the Rev. Mr. Ball possessed the records which show that the Rev. Matthew P. Sturdevant was appointed to Tombigbee, and labored there for 1808 and 1809, and that the Rev. Michael Burdge was appointed there, and labored in that field for 1809 and 1810, and that the Rev. John W. Kennon was appointed to that place, and labored there for 1810 and 1811, he would have been informed more fully, and he would, no doubt, have made his statements to harmonize with the facts. The correction of his inaccuracies and his misstatements, which crept in through imperfect knowledge of the subject and the absence of the records, is very necessary. Hence the allusion here to his work.

At the time Bishop Asbury called for volunteers to preach in the Tombigbee settlements, and Matthew P. Sturdevant responded to the call, a wilderness of more than four hundred miles' extent, filled with savages, had to be traversed, a horse path, hard to find and hard to follow, had to be traveled, rivers and creeks, without ferries and without bridges, had to be crossed, to reach said settlements. Then there was only an occasional house of entertainment on the way, and that of the rudest sort. Travelers on this route often lay out at night, pinched by cold, drenched by rain, and were constantly in danger of being scalped by savages. With this state of things existing and with this prospect before him, Matthew P. Sturdevant stood up by himself and volunteered to go to Tombigbee! It required complete self-abnegation, perfect consecration to the cause, and dauntless courage, to undertake a work thus envied. Sturdevant went to that country as an ambassador for Christ. There he preached, suffered, and endured. Not many of the points at which he preached in this country are now known. At what particular places he found lodgings, how often he was received and how often he was rejected as a minister of the grace of God, and what special incidents occurred in the prosecution of his divine mission on this historic ground, no record, to which access is now had, attempts to tell. It is cer-

tain he traversed the broad wilderness and threaded the narrow trail between the Oconee and the Tombigbee Rivers. It is certain he endured cold, hunger, and fatigue, and braved imminent dangers on the way. It is certain that in the country on both sides of the Tombigbee and about Lake Tensaw he preached the gospel and bore the reproach of Christ. The manifest results of this first year's work were not equal to the sacrifices he had made and the consuming labors he had performed, but they were equal to the field, its capacity being judged by its state and surroundings. Who breaks new land must work and wait. Small is the crop gathered by the farmer the year of deadening the trees and clearing away the thicket. Sturdevant had little to cheer his heart and animate his faith. In what a field did he labor! A field, a little slip of country in the midst of savages, in which after a hard year's work and close scrutiny he can find only a few, if any, whom he can report as having any vital connection with the Church of God! Not a Society organized, not a member enrolled! A field in which rudeness and lewdness abound, and in which scoffers and strikers hold sway! Could the surroundings of Moses as he sat down by a well in the land of Midian, a stranger in a strange land, or the condition of Jacob with his head pillowed on a stone in the lonely way have tried the faith, the endurance, and the fidelity of one more than the surroundings of Matthew P. Sturdevant on Tombigbee? Not a preacher did he see from January to the next December unless he happened to meet Gorham or Cochran, Baptist preachers, who pitched their tents in that wilderness settlement perhaps some time during that very year. The Rev. Josiah Randle was the presiding elder on the Oconee District, in which the Tombigbee appointment was put down for the year 1808, but neither Randle nor any other presiding elder of the Oconee District of the South Carolina Conference ever visited this far-off appointment. None of these presiding elders of the South Carolina Conference were expected to visit it. Nothing could be more absurd than to expect a presiding elder to make a visit to a work which lay on the other side of a perilous wilderness which it took thirteen days to cross. It would be much easier now in 1888 for the presiding elder on the Oconee River in Georgia to attend a Quarterly Conference in the mountains of Colorado than it would have been for Jo-



siah Randle to have attended a Quarterly Conference on Tombigbee in 1808. Dr. Lovick Pierce was the presiding elder of the Oconee District, with Tombigbee put down in said District for 1809, and he stated in a letter to the author of these pages that he "was never there," and that "Los Angeles would be a neighborhood place now compared with Tombecebee then."

But the first licks have been struck, the little clearing has been made. The brave and zealous man has closed his first year's work in this immense wilderness, and he has closed with heart and hope.

A session of the South Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church commenced on Monday, December 26, 1808, at Liberty Chapel, Georgia, about two days' travel from Augusta. A camp-meeting was held in connection with this session of the Conference, and they had sermons, exhortations, songs, and prayers with little intermission. On this occasion there were from two to three thousand persons assembled. There were tenters on the ground a hundred and fifty miles from home. Of traveling and local preachers together there were present about three hundred. There were present from sixty to seventy preachers who belonged to the Conference. Bishop Asbury presided over the business of the Conference. Bishop McKendree was also present. At this time these two bishops were traveling together, "riding in a poor thirty-dollar chaise, in partnership." This style of traveling harmonized with the capacity of their purses, if not with the dignity of their office. Titles and dignities are often found associated with straitened circumstances. These two bishops were of those who, being "poor," were "yet making many rich."

It was to this session of this Conference, held within two days' travel of Augusta, Georgia, that the Rev. Matthew P. Sturdevant had to make the report of his first year's work in the wilderness on Tombigbee.

See this consecrated man who is to make this report from this settlement in the midst of savages! Physically he was not of robust mold, but was of rather feeble form; and he had been worn by travel and toil, bronzed by the sun, and roughened by exposure and hardship. His equipage and attire attested the fact that he had traversed the uncleared wilderness, that he had been the denizen of the forest, and that he had been the associ-

ate of frontier settlers. He had no legion of souls converted to God about which to tell and over which to rejoice, but he had, nevertheless, a thrilling narrative to recite. He told, with the calmness of a hero and with the impassioned eloquence of a consecrated genius, of the perils he had met, of the buffetings, privations, and sufferings he had endured, of the traveling he had done, of the labors he had performed. He told, in minute detail, the romantic story of how he had crossed floods, swam rivers and creeks, camped in the wilderness, slept on the ground, endured hunger and thirst, and heard, in unpleasant proximity, the howl of the wolf, the thud and growl of the bear, the scream of the panther, and the significant whoop of the savage Indian; and how he had witnessed, to the vexing of his soul, the carousals of the savage tribes about him, and the no less wicked carousals of the American settlers to whom he tendered a message of the gospel; he told also how there were brought to him narratives of brutal murders committed by lewd fellows among the American settlers, and of captures and scalpings by the savage Indians roaming hard by! Behold this man and his work! God has looked upon the same. This man had a field to report all his own, a field which he had consecrated to God by his tears and toils, by his prayers and praises. He reported a field which was to him dear and grand and full of promise for the future, by reason of what it was in itself, and by reason of what he had done and suffered in and for it as an ambassador of the cross. His sufferings and labors were a pledge, an earnest, of a future harvest of good.

This appointment thus reported was continued for another year, and Matthew P. Sturdevant was reappointed to it. This time he is put down as missionary, with Michael Burdge as preacher in charge. Bishop Asbury, speaking of what was done at the session of the Conference above referred to, says: "We appointed three missionaries: one for Tombigbee, one to Ashley and Savannah and the country between, and one to labor between Santee and Cooper Rivers."

For the year 1809 Tombigbee had two preachers instead of one as the year before. This itself was progress. This meant that in the judgment of those having the oversight there were possibilities in that country, and the most was to be made of them. This meant that more labor was to be bestowed on this field, and



that it was to be improved and enlarged as materials, facilities, and opportunities authorized. Michael Burdge, an elder, who could be had for the appointment, was thought a suitable person to put in charge to lead in conserving and developing what had been attained the year just closed. Matthew P. Sturdevant was the very man for the place assigned him. He had learned much of the field already, and understood the entire situation as no one else could. He was the man to push the conquest in the far-off and outlying regions, and he was retained here to hold and extend the field in which he had, the year just closed, labored so faithfully and endured so heroically. What had been gained was to be maintained, and the conquest extended. Should new settlements be established in the surrounding regions, these men were to move upon them and claim them for their Lord and King. Improvement and enlargement were provided for in the assignment of these two preachers. These two men were to work together. Where a beginning had been made was the center where they were to work, and from which they were to extend the field as far out as settlements and souls could be found. The missionary was to have a claim on and a support from funds other than those contributed for quarterage.

Just about the period when Sturdevant and Burdge had had time to cross the wide and perilous wilderness intervening between Liberty Chapel, Georgia, and the Tombigbee, and make an inspection of the field assigned them, a letter was sent from said field to Bishop Asbury. This letter no doubt gave an account of the hazardous journey these preachers had made, and of their final arrival at their destination, and of the prospect for the year before them. Bishop Asbury makes the following entry in his Journal: "1809, April 1. We came safe into the city of Philadelphia. I found letters from Savannah, Tombigbee, Mississippi, Ohio, and also from the eastward." These letters from Savannah, Tombigbee, and Mississippi were from mission fields. Tombigbee, with its two preachers, constituted a post, a post of dangers and of prospects, about which clustered immense interests, and one which claimed the attention of even the aged and saintly Bishop Asbury. These preachers sought the advancement of the interests involved, as well as relief from their own isolation, by communicating, by letter, with the wise and experienced General Superintendent of

the Church. On through the year these two devoted men toiled at their work, and they had good success. No record at hand speaks of their privations and perils, of their agitations, agonies, and hardships during the year, but the net result of their ministry is on record. No house of worship, stuccoed and frescoed, did they have. Not one did they build. Not even a pole cabin had been erected as a place of worship. The preaching had to be done in the cabins of the settlers, under the trees of the forest, and anywhere the frontier settlers could be assembled. The hunter, in his hunting attire, was conspicuous in the meetings on the Tombigbee. In the journey of the chase he laid down his gun and game at the root of the tree, and gave audience to the message delivered by the preacher sheltered by the boughs of the same tree. Rude and rough was everything. The Annual Conference was appointed to meet, and did meet, in Charleston, South Carolina, December 23, 1809. To this Conference there and then assembled Burdge and Sturdevant made official report of the work of the year. While they had no houses of worship, no schools of any sort, and no contributions for benevolent enterprises to report, they reported seventy-one white and fifteen colored members in Society on Tombigbee. This was an encouraging advance made in two years in the wild woods. For the place and times this was preëminent success. The white members were equal in number to the Sanhedrin, or the great Jewish Council, and the colored members numbered enough to fill up from beginning to end the Apostolic College, and have one in the place of Matthias, another in the place of Paul, and still another in the place of Apollos, provided all were men. It is history, it is a fact, not to be denied nor disguised, that from its very beginning in Alabama, Methodism in said State has been connected with the colored race, with African slaves. The very first list of the members of the Methodist Church in what is now the State of Alabama had in it the names of fifteen colored persons, of fifteen slaves. Fanatics may approve or deride as seemeth to them good, but it must be recorded as the truth of history and in eulogy of their philanthropy and fidelity to their divine mission that Sturdevant and Burdge, the first Methodist preachers appointed to preach in Alabama, did, instead of spending their strength in a fruitless rage for emancipation, give to the slaves on

the Tombigbee the gospel and ordinances of the Christian Church, which brought to said slaves the liberty of the sons of God and which fitted them for the inheritance of the saints in light. As God has ordained, the dispensations of the gospel are to men of all classes and conditions. Methodism in Alabama brought into the membership and fellowship of the Church masters and slaves together. She commenced in the State that way, and her success here has been phenomenal. God has approved. There was not a time from the taking in of the first members in 1809 to the emancipation of the slaves in 1865 that the Methodist Church in Alabama did not, under her ministry, have slaves as members of her communion. Whatever may be said of slavery *per se*, this is a matter of congratulation.

The natural limit of human endurance, as well as the legally fixed limit of the term of ministerial service, disallowed the return of Matthew P. Sturdevant to Tombigbee after the second year. Two years was then the length of ministerial service as limited by law. As he was worn and exhausted by the burdens and privations of the two years amidst savage surroundings, and as he needed relief from the fearful strain imposed by the situation, it was a moral necessity as well as a legal requirement that he go elsewhere. His ministry on the Tombigbee ended with the close of 1809.

The financial support which Matthew P. Sturdevant received during his ministry on Tombigbee was small indeed. What he received from the people of that country was not worth counting. When he was appointed to that work, there were no Societies there, and many of the inhabitants of that region were not even willing to hear the gospel, and could not be expected to provide the necessities of life for those who preached it. At that time the Discipline provided for making, on the Circuits where congregations were established and there were those able and willing to contribute, an annual and a quarterly collection for raising supplies for the propagation of the gospel and for making up the deficiencies of the salaries of the preachers. The Discipline also further provided for voluntary contributions from friends of the Church to what was called "The Chartered Fund," for the same general purposes, including as beneficiaries the "superannuated and worn-out preachers and the widows and orphans of preachers." Under the provisions herein enu-

merated Brother Sturdevant received something for defraying his expenses while he preached the gospel on the "Bigbee" Mission. On the morning of December 30, 1807, "Matthew P. Sturdevant volunteered his services to Bigbee as a missionary, was accepted, and elected to the eldership," and on Saturday, January 2, 1808, the last day of the session of the Conference, the day they "closed near dark, by prayer," the Conference "Committee of Charity," in the disposition of the funds in hand for deficient preachers, missionaries, and other claimants, "gave to the missionary to Tombigbee \$100." At the close of his first year on that work, on December 30, 1808, that Conference "Committee of Charity," in disposing of the funds raised and set apart for deficiencies in salaries, distributed to the "missionary to Tombigbee \$80.51½." At the close of his second and last year on Tombigbee, on the morning of December 27, 1809, the "Committee of Charity" which took account of receipts and deficiencies distributed to "Matthew P. Sturdevant \$74.14." These items are on record in the Journal of the South Carolina Conference, and have been taken from the official documents. At the time Sturdevant was employed in preaching on the Tombigbee the Discipline, in a statute on the subject, said: "The annual allowance of the traveling preachers shall be eighty dollars and their traveling expenses." From the amounts of his deficiencies which had to be paid out of the funds at the Conferences it is certain Brother Sturdevant received very little from the Tombigbee settlers, and that his traveling expenses were heavy for those times.

The Virginia Conference met at Edmund Taylor's, Caswell Circuit, Granville County, North Carolina, March 1, 1805. At this time and place the name of Matthew P. Sturdevant appears in official recommendation to and in official recognition by the Virginia Conference. Here at this time he was admitted on trial into the traveling connection. For this year 1805 he was appointed junior preacher on Orange Circuit, Richmond District, with Edward Henley in charge of the Circuit, and Stith Mead, presiding elder of the District. For 1806 he was junior preacher on Tar River Circuit, New Berne District, in North Carolina, with Samuel Garrard in charge of the Circuit, and Philip Bruce, presiding elder of the District. The Virginia Conference met at New Berne, North Carolina, February 2, 1807. Here



Matthew P. Sturdevant was received into full connection, ordained a deacon, and was for this year appointed junior preacher on Onoree Circuit, Seleuda District, South Carolina Conference, with W. M. Kennedy in charge of the Circuit, and Lewis Myers presiding elder of the District. At the end of this Conference year, which was the time he was first appointed to Tombigbee, at Charleston, South Carolina, Brother Sturdevant, as has already been stated, was elected and ordained an elder. He had been deacon only one ecclesiastical year, and, according to regular course, could not have been ordained an elder before the close of another year, but, as he was going a missionary to Tombigbee, the Discipline provided that he might be elected and ordained an elder for that work. At the expiration of his two years on Tombigbee he was appointed for the year 1810 to Fayetteville, North Carolina. For 1811 he was preacher in charge of the Sparta Circuit, Sparta District, in Georgia, with J. B. Glenn as junior preacher, and Joseph Tarpley as presiding elder of the District. At the end of 1811 Sturdevant located. The Journal for the day's proceedings, December 26, 1811, says: "M. P. Sturdevant desired a location, which was granted." For 1813 he was again in the Virginia Conference, and was preacher in charge of the Franklin Circuit, Yadkin District, with John C. Taylor as junior preacher, and William Jean, presiding elder of the District. At the end of this Conference year the Virginia Conference met at Norfolk February 10, 1814, and here Brother Sturdevant again located. This ended his itinerant life and labors. He was an itinerant preacher eight years in all. During his itinerant ministry he preached in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and what afterward became Alabama. His ministry extended from Orange County in Virginia to Tombigbee in the wilderness. In what a wide and great field did this man preach the everlasting gospel!

The Rev. Matthew Parham Sturdevant was born in North Carolina, and he was quite young when he commenced preaching. It is said that his parents were opposed to his joining the Methodists. He married Miss Agnes Kent, of Halifax County, Virginia, about the time he located. He and his wife had six sons and five daughters, who lived to be grown, but are now (September, 1888) all dead except one daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth T. Freeman, who is now sixty-eight years old and lives with her hus-



band, Edwin H. Freeman, at Pearsville, Bedford County, Virginia. The exact time when Brother Sturdevant died has not been ascertained. His obituary was written at the time of his death by one of his intimate friends, William S. Murrell, of Nelson County, Virginia, but said obituary has been lost. The family records were destroyed in a fire. Brother Sturdevant lived to old age, and died at his own little home in Nelson County, Virginia. His wife survived him several years, and died at the same home. He continued to work as a local preacher as long as he lived, and was very useful to the Church, especially in revival meetings. He maintained a good name to the last, and died in the faith of the gospel and in the fellowship of the Church. He had charge of the poorhouse in Amherst County, Virginia, as steward for a number of years, but taught a school through many of the years of his life after he married and retired from the work of the itinerant ministry.

From the Rev. Thomas S. Campbell, a member of the North Carolina Conference, a refined, consecrated, sweet-spirited, and saintly man, an able and evangelical preacher, one of long service in the Church, who lived a few years in Alabama, and a nephew of Alexander Sale, of precious memory, the following statements concerning Matthew P. Sturdevant are here given: "About the first missionary ever sent to Alabama by the Methodists was Matthew P. Sturdevant. It so happened that he came to live in my father's neighborhood in 1826. I knew him well in my early years, and have heard him relate with thrilling interest his travels, labors, hardships, trials, perils, sufferings, and successes on the 'Bigbee,' as he called his mission. When the bishop proposed to establish the mission, he called for volunteers, and Brother Sturdevant only of all volunteered. He was full of the divine Spirit, and labored zealously. He was a man of moderate intelligence, with some genius, considerable fancy, burning zeal, impassioned address; wanting in energy and tact in business matters, but yet of unquestioned piety. He lived several years in my father's neighborhood, and within a short distance of our church. He was a feeble man, unable to do much work. He was never robust. His health had been greatly impaired by his itinerant labors, especially the hardships of Tombigbee mission. He had a large family and was very poor. He had been living several years in the county. The commis-

sioners of the poorhouse offered him the position of steward, which he filled with fidelity for several years. He took the position in 1826, and was there when I left and joined the Conference in 1831. After leaving the place of steward he left, for what cause I know not, the neighborhood and county, removing to Nelson County, Virginia, adjoining Amherst. There he died, but when I do not recollect."

Brother Sturdevant's preaching was much in the line of warning sinners to flee from the wrath to come. He had a strong voice, was a great singer, able in prayer, and powerful in exhortation. He went through a long life without a blemish upon his moral character. Consecrated in his youth, laborious and useful through life, and triumphant in death, he went from his sufferings here and entered into the joy of his Lord.

For 1810 the appointment stood: Tombecbee, *Michael Burdge, John W. Kennon*. At the Conference held at Columbia, South Carolina, at the close of this ecclesiastical year, commencing on December 22, 1810, and adjourning *sine die* the 28th of the same month, the report from Tombigbee was *one hundred and two white members and fourteen colored members* in Society. This was an increase for the year of *thirty-one white members* and a decrease of *one colored member*. In the Journal of the South Carolina Conference is found a record of the proceedings of the day, December 28. Among other items on record is the report of the "Committee of Charity" on receipts and deficiencies, and in this report are the following items: "John W. Kennon, deficient, \$54.50. Received \$45.00." "M. Burdge, deficient, \$135.00. Received \$116.00." The record, here given, of the deficiencies of these preachers and the amounts which the Conference paid them, shows that the Rev. John W. Kennon received for the year from the denizens of Tombigbee \$25.50 and his traveling expenses, and that the Rev. Michael Burdge received for the year from the Tombigbee settlers \$25.00 and his traveling expenses. Kennon received just the same proportion of his allowance that Burdge did. The number of members in Society and the receipts and deficiencies in salaries here given are all the items reported and recorded from Tombigbee for this year. The incidents of the year are all ingulfed in oblivion. This year closed the ministry of Michael Burdge in Alabama. He had now been two years in charge of Tombigbee, and the

law limiting the term of ministerial service contravened his return.

The Rev. Michael Burdge was that type of man often met with and from whose career something may be learned. Ever and anon improprieties marked his life. There are no documents now in sight from which to ascertain when and where he was born, when and where he joined the Church, when and where he was licensed to preach. He first appears at the session of the Conference held at Charleston, South Carolina, in March, 1788. Here he was admitted on trial. At the close of this year he is reported as received into full connection. In Charleston, in February, 1790, he was ordained deacon. In Charleston, in February, 1792, he was ordained elder, and located. He had traveled four years, all his appointments being in South Carolina. He next appears at the session of the South Carolina Conference held at Charleston, commencing December 28, 1807, and closing *sine die* January 2, 1808. In the record of the proceedings of the day for December 30 is the following entry concerning him: "Michael Burdge was recommended by a Quarterly Meeting Conference held at Betterton's Meeting House, Union Circuit, but was not admitted. It was voted that the presiding elder may employ him, using caution and prudence." At the next session of the Conference, held at Liberty Chapel, Georgia, beginning December 26, 1808, and closing the 31st of the same month, he appears again. In the proceedings of the afternoon of December 28, the Journal records this item: "Michael Burdge, who was rejected last Conference, was recommended by the members of a Quarterly Conference held in Lincoln Circuit, November 12, 1808, and, after very much having been said about his former improprieties, was admitted on trial by a majority of 18 against 15." In the Journal of the proceedings for December 30, is this remarkable item: "Michael Burdge was called in to give some explanation relative to his backsliding, a lawsuit which he had with David Rumph some years ago, and to his restoration to the favor of God." This is all that is now known of him up to the time he was sent to Tombigbee. The next day he was read out to Tombigbee. This was the first work assigned him upon his reception on trial in the Conference. He did not attend the session of the Conference at the close of his first year on Tombigbee. He made a report to the Conference by letter. The session of the Conference was

held at Charleston, South Carolina, December 23-29, 1809. The Journal gives the proceedings for the morning of December 26, and says: "Brother Michael Burdge's letter was read. He is continued on trial. Conference appointed Lovick Pierce and W. M. Kennedy to write a letter to Brother Burdge to give him information according to request in his letter concerning the character of Angus McDonald and his relation to us." Angus McDonald was admitted on trial in the South Carolina Conference at its session in Sparta, Georgia, commencing December 29, 1806; was continued on trial at the next session; and at the session held at Liberty Chapel, Georgia, he was, according to the Journal of the Conference, on Thursday, December 29, 1808, granted an "honorable location." It seems that for reasons Brother Burdge on the Tombigbee wished to know the character Angus McDonald maintained in the estimation of the Methodists and the relations he really sustained to them. Probably McDonald after his location had emigrated to Tombigbee, and it was necessary to have an accurate knowledge of his character and relations in order to know whether to recognize and use him as a Methodist preacher in the local ranks, and hence the letter of inquiry by Burdge and the letter of response by the Conference through their committee.

The South Carolina Conference met at Columbia, South Carolina, on Saturday, December 22, 1810. Michael Burdge and John W. Kennon were both present all the way from Tombigbee. The Journal of the Conference, making mention of the proceedings of the afternoon session of December 24, 1810, says: "M. Burdge was admitted into full connection."

For 1811 Michael Burdge was appointed to the Bladon Circuit, Camden District, with Daniel Asbury presiding elder. For 1812 he was junior preacher on the Keewee Circuit, Edisto District, with James Elizabeth Glenn in charge of the Circuit, and William M. Kennedy, presiding elder. For 1813 he was on the Warren Circuit, Ogeechee District, with Elijah Byrd, helper, and Lewis Myers, presiding elder. For 1814 he served the Onoree Circuit, Broad River District, with West Harris, helper, and Hilliard Judge, presiding elder. For 1815 his name does not appear in the list of appointments. At the session of the South Carolina Conference, in the afternoon of December 27, 1814, as is learned from the Journal of the Conference for that



day, "M. Burdge was examined and a recommendation granted him as he wished to remove to a Conference more convenient to his family." This severed his connection with the South Carolina Conference, and with the recommendation furnished him he connected himself with the Genesee Conference. For 1816 and for 1817 he was on Tioga Circuit, Susquehanna District, with Marmaduke Pearce, presiding elder. What a combination of euphonious names is found here! For 1818 he was in charge of Broome Circuit, Chenango District, with Peter Baker, helper, and Charles Giles, presiding elder. This year closed his career as a preacher of the Methodist Episcopal Church, at least no deponent hath appeared to the contrary. It seems that during this and the preceding year he was environed by difficulties, and entangled by improprieties, and suspected of immoralities, and harassed by ecclesiastical prosecutions, and in the end was convicted and deposed from his high office. The Genesee Conference held its session at Vienna, Ontario County, New York, July 1-8, 1819. At this session of this Conference Michael Burdge, who had been a traveling preacher fourteen years, and who had had the oversight of the souls of men through all these years, was deposed from the Christian ministry. The General Minutes state that he was expelled, but do not state the cause of his expulsion. Upon inquiry made through J. M. Buckley, D.D., the following information has been kindly furnished by the Rev. C. W. Winchester, the present Secretary of the Genesee Conference:

"BATAVIA, N. Y., August 27, 1888.

"MR. ANSON WEST.

"*Dear Sir:* Your letter to the Rev. J. M. Buckley asking about the Rev. Michael Burdge has been placed in my hands. I find in the Journal of the Genesee Conference held at Vienna (now Phelps), New York, July 1-8, the following entry: 'Voted that Conference exonerate M. Burdge from the complaints brought against him at last Conference.' That bears date July 6. Under date of July 7, I find the following: 'In the examination of character it appeared that certain charges had been alleged against M. Burdge—that a committee called by the presiding elder of the Chenango District had judged him guilty of immoral and imprudent conduct, and had accordingly suspended him; whereupon the Conference proceeded upon his trial. Various papers in evidence on the case, were read. Voted that the



charges be taken up separately. After a careful and deliberate examination of evidence and circumstances, voted that the evidence is not sufficient to criminate him on the charge of immorality; 2d, voted that he is guilty of imprudence. Conference adjourned.' Under date of July 8 I find the following: 'The Conference voted that Michael Burdge be divested of his ministerial authority and that he be retained as a private member.' This is all the record of the case which has been preserved. Just what the charges and specifications were does not appear.

"Yours sincerely,

C. W. WINCHESTER,

"Secretary of Genesee Conference."

On account of "his former imprudences and backsliding," the men charged with settling the question of his admission into the itinerant ministry had grave apprehensions that he would bring reproach upon the common cause by his evil blunderings in case he was admitted, and the sequel proved that the fears entertained by the fifteen who voted against his reception into the Conference were only too well founded. He, the second man sent to the Tombigbee, that hard and difficult field in the wilderness amidst savages, was at last "divested of his ministerial authority" upon a verdict of being "guilty of imprudence." In after years he was a preacher in the Methodist Protestant Church, and was a member of the Genesee Annual Conference of that Church. He represented that Conference in the General Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church which met in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, May, 1838. What finally became of him is not now known, and there are no means of ascertaining.

For 1811 the appointment made was Tombecbee, *John W. Kennon*, *John S. Ford*. The Annual Conference at the close of this ecclesiastical year was held at Camden, South Carolina, December 21-27, 1811. To this Conference Kennon and Ford reported for Tombigbee one hundred and twenty-six white members and fourteen colored members. There was no change in the number of colored members. Whether these were the same colored members had the previous year, or whether new members had been added and some of the former members had been lost from the roll by death and otherwise there are now no means of ascertaining. There was a net increase for the year of twenty-four white members. For the limits and surroundings of the field this was a decided advance and indicated solid interests in

the work of the Church. The financial report indicated a fearful falling off for the year. Though the contributions the year before were very meager, there was for this year a falling-off of more than half. The report in the Journal is "John W. Kennon deficient \$75.00," "John S. Ford deficient \$60.50." This report of deficiencies shows that Kennon received from the people of Tombigbee for the year \$5 and his traveling expenses, and that Ford received from them for the year \$19.50 and his traveling expenses. The Conference, out of the funds provided for meeting as far as possible the deficiencies of the preachers, made up to Kennon and Ford a part of their allowance. From said funds Kennon "received \$65.00," and Ford "received \$50.50." This made their receipts for the year equal. This was Kennon's second year on Tombigbee and closed his work finally as a preacher in what is now Alabama.

The sketch of the Rev. John W. Kennon must be short. He was recommended for admission on trial into the traveling connection by a Quarterly Conference held at Hopewell Meeting House, Sparta Circuit, in Georgia, and on the afternoon of December 29, 1806, at Sparta, Georgia, he was received on trial by the South Carolina Conference. Here he was appointed junior preacher on the Great Pee Dee Circuit, Camden District. At the next session of the Conference he was continued on trial, and was appointed one of three preachers on the Onoree Circuit. The Annual Conference was held at Liberty Chapel, Georgia, December 26-31, 1808. Here, according to the Journal, on the morning of December 26, "John W. Kennon and others were examined on the subject of slavery and the Conference was satisfied with their sentiments." On the same day was "John W. Kennon admitted into full connection and elected to deacon's office." Here for 1809 he was appointed to St. Mary's Circuit, Oconee District. At the Conference at Charleston, South Carolina, December 23-29, 1809, at which Bishops Asbury and McKendree were both present, on the morning of the 28th of the month "John W. Kennon was nominated a missionary and elected to the eldership according to our Discipline in that case." Only one year had he been a deacon, and, according to the Discipline, he could not be elected and ordained an elder until he had been a deacon two years, except in case of being appointed a missionary. The next day after his election to the "eldership," having

been ordained in the meantime, he was sent forth a missionary to Tombigbee, where, as has already been stated, he remained two years. At the end of his term on Tombigbee he was appointed for the year 1812 to Claiborne Circuit, Mississippi District, Western Conference. The name of the Western Conference disappeared, and the name of the Tennessee Conference came into the list of Conferences. The Tennessee Conference met for the first time at Fountain Head, Tennessee, near the line between that State and Kentucky, November, 1812. Here John W. Kennon located. This ended his itinerant career. He settled in Mississippi not far from the southern border of his last Circuit which he served as preacher in charge. Here, amidst his own domestic surroundings and temporal engagements, he lived a few brief years and died. To the end he honored his religion.

A son of his, born a little more than a year after he left Tombigbee, Robert W. Kennon, became a preacher, and was admitted on trial in the Mississippi Conference at the session in Natchez, Mississippi, December 6, 1837. In due course of Discipline he was received into full connection in the Conference, and was inducted into the sacred orders of the Christian ministry. Serving the Church in the wide field of Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas, in various capacities as a minister, teaching and preaching for thirty-four years, and making full proof of his ministry, he died a member of the Texas Conference, January 23, 1881.

The year 1811 was the last year Tombigbee was put down in connection with the South Carolina Conference. At the close of this year it was transferred to the Western Conference, and appeared for that year in the list of appointments of that Conference. Now look at the sum total as it was when turned over to the Western Conference. There were one hundred and forty members of white and colored together. For the year the work had contributed all told twenty-four dollars and fifty cents and the traveling expenses of the preachers. This and nothing more.

All the preachers who went to Tombigbee by appointment from the South Carolina Conference previous to 1811 had to thread their way through the Indian country along an Indian trail from Fort Hawkins, where Macon, Georgia, now stands, to Mims' Ferry, on the Alabama River. This Indian trail went by Fort Mitchell, on the Chattahoochee River, nine miles below

Columbus, though Fort Mitchell was not there then, and by what is known as Warrior Stand, and eight miles south of the present city of Montgomery, and by a place called Burnt Corn in Conecuh County. Not until 1811 were steps taken to open a road through the wilderness traversed by said trail. In that year the United States, having obtained the consent of some of the chiefs of the Creek nation, cut out a road from Mims' Ferry, on the Alabama River, to Fort Mitchell, on the Chattahoochee River. As the savages were still owners and occupants of this wilderness country from side to side, the cutting out of this road did not remove the perils of the route, but only made the way easier found and followed.

By the official record the appointment for 1812 stands: Tom-beebee, *William Houston, Isaac Quinn*. This is strictly correct. These men were there, and they were faithful and efficient workers. They were at Natchez and Wilkinson, on the Mississippi River, the year before. But there is another statement to be added to make known the entire provision for the prosecution of the work on Tombigbee for this year. There was sent to this field for this year one other preacher, one sent as a missionary.

Bishop Asbury was impressed with the importance of the Natchez country and the Tombigbee settlements, and he was constantly searching for men for these fields. There was a lack of ministerial service in these countries lying among the savages. The bishop was on the alert, ever trying to supply that lack, and at the session of the South Carolina Conference, held at Camden, South Carolina, December 21-27, 1811, he transferred from that Conference to the Western Conference Lewis Hobbs and Thomas Griffin, and put Hobbs on the Wilkinson and Griffin on the Washataw Circuit, in the Natchez country. At the same time he sent forth two other members of the South Carolina Conference into the wilderness toward the setting sun, not transferring them, but sending them out as missionaries. These two men thus sent forth for the year 1812 were Richmond Nolley and Drewry Powell. The names of these two preachers do not appear in the list of appointments for this year. Their names are not attached to any appointment in the connection. They were sent forth to a work not already organized, bounded, and named; but they were sent forth with the liberty of missionaries to work in the common field of the outlying Western country,



Nolley to exercise his ministry anywhere in the Tombigbee country that he might find souls and settlements needing the ministrations of the gospel, Powell to exercise his ministry anywhere in Mississippi.

Nolley, the missionary, was to work anywhere in the Tombigbee regions that work might be needed. He was sent forth not to supply the place of Houston and Quinn, the regular appointees, on Tombigbee, not to supplant them, but to assist them, and to supply any lack of service which might exist, and to extend the work wherever extension was possible. Not a single item is recorded in the Journal of the Annual Conference concerning Nolley's appointment for 1812. There is on record an item of appropriation for missionaries to the Western country, but the names of these missionaries are not mentioned in immediate connection with this appropriation. In Nolley's obituary, published in the General Minutes, are two or three sentences which contain an item of history and throw light on some things otherwise obscure: "In 1812, in compliance with a request of the bishop, he went on a mission to Tombigbee. After passing through the savage nations, a wilderness of three hundred and fifty miles, swimming deep creeks, and lying out eleven nights, he arrived at the place of destination." "The request of the bishop" referred to in these lines was made at the session of the South Carolina Conference which opened December 21 and closed December 27, 1811. The statements all indicate as well as assert that his mission was on the Tombigbee, and there he labored for the year 1812.

Powell was sent forth by the bishop with the same commission as was Nolley. He was to supply any service needed beyond what others were rendering in any part of Mississippi Territory, which Territory by formal enactment and technical assumptions extended from the Mississippi on the west to the Chattahoochee River on the east. According to the Journal of the South Carolina Conference, "Drewry Powell was recommended by the Quarterly Conference held at Rehoboth Meeting House, Union Circuit, November 4, 1809, and was admitted on trial" by the South Carolina Conference in Charleston, South Carolina, December 26, 1809. The proceedings for the annual session held in Camden, South Carolina, December 21-27, 1811, are on record. In the proceedings for the first day the Journal



says: "Drewry Powell, a candidate for full connection and deacon's orders, was judged unworthy of office, but admitted (by a scarce majority) into full connection." In the proceedings of the last day of Conference the Journal says: "The case of Drewry Powell was reconsidered—his having been appointed a missionary for Mississippi, he was elected to deacon's orders." This record shows officially that he was appointed a missionary, and that he was appointed a missionary for Mississippi, and that he was appointed a missionary for Mississippi for the year 1812. There is no conjecture about these points. The Conference Journal is authority on the subject, but there are conflicting statements extant as to where he attempted to dispense the gospel during that year. Some have held that he preached in Louisiana, but it is beyond doubt that he stopped with Nolley on the Tombigbee, and it is reasonably certain that in that section he did what work he performed for that year.

The South Carolina Conference at this time provided by appropriation from their funds for the support and equipment of these two men for the year 1812, as they had appointed them missionaries for that year. In the proceedings for the day, December 26, the Journal says: "Appropriated to missionaries to Western country, \$175.00." This appropriation was evidently for Nolley and Powell. They were the only missionaries sent to the Western country this year by the South Carolina Conference. Hobbs and Griffin, as has already been stated, were sent to the Natchez country, but not as missionaries. They were transferred and assigned to Circuits already established and named.

There was for the Tombigbee for this year an increase of forces. Houston, Quinn, and Nolley, as the authentic records show, worked this year, 1812, on the Tombigbee, and Powell certainly worked round about there. At the session of the South Carolina Conference at the close of this year, and which met in Charleston, December 19, 1812, Drewry Powell was present, Richmond Nolley was absent. Nolley never returned to South Carolina after going to Tombigbee. On receipts of annual allowance the Conference Journal shows: "Drewry Powell deficient \$71.00," and that from the funds of the Conference for making up said deficiency he "received \$51.00." For 1813 Powell was on Wateree Circuit, Broad River District. He was

elected elder January 15, 1814, and for 1814 he was on Little River Circuit, Broad River District. At the session of the Conference on December 27, 1814, the record says, "Drewry Powell located." In 1818 he was found a local preacher living at or near Wilson's Hill, now Montevallo, in Alabama.

At the close of the year 1812, under the ministry of Houston, Quinn, Powell, and Nolley, the report from Tombigbee was one hundred and ninety-seven white and fifty-four colored members, an increase of seventy-one white and forty colored members. The increase of colored members was a fraction over two hundred and eighty-five per cent, and the increase of white members was a fraction over fifty-six per cent. This was a very gratifying increase, a glorious work for one year in a country which had to be reached by "lying out eleven nights."

This one year closed the work of the Rev. William Houston on the Tombigbee. He was admitted on trial in the Western Conference at Mount Gerizim, Kentucky, in October, 1804, and appointed junior preacher on Holston Charge in the Holston District. For 1806 he was appointed to Lexington, in Cumberland District. At Ebenezer, Nollichuckie, in Tennessee, September, 1806, he was admitted into full connection in the Conference, elected and ordained deacon, and appointed for the next year to Nollichuckie. For 1808 he was appointed to Lexington, Kentucky District. At Liberty Hill, Cumberland, Tennessee, October, 1808, he was ordained an elder, and appointed for the next year to Cincinnati. For 1810 he was appointed to Natchez, Mississippi, and for 1811 he was appointed to Wilkinston, in the same State. For 1812, as has already been mentioned, he was on Tombigbee. At the end of this year he was transferred to the Baltimore Conference, and appointed to Bottetourt, Greenbrier District. For 1814 he was appointed to Buckingham, in the same District. For 1815 he was at Staunton, and for 1816 at Buckingham again. At the end of 1816 he located. In 1820 he appeared again in the Baltimore Conference, and again located in 1828. Judging from the appointments to which he was assigned and which he served, he was a man of special attainments and of marked ability.

The Rev. Isaac Quinn preached but one year on Tombigbee. He was admitted on trial in the Baltimore Conference at Baltimore, in March, 1807, and was appointed to Mad River, in the

Ohio District, which afterward appeared in the Western Conference. At the end of 1808 he was admitted into full connection in the Western Conference, and ordained deacon. At the end of 1810 he was ordained elder. He continued in connection with the Conference until the close of 1817, when he located, having preached that year on Tazewell Circuit, in the Holston District. He is said to have been a man of decided talents.

For the year 1813 the appointment stands: Tombebee, *Richmond Nolley*, *John Shrock*. This was Nolley's second year on this work, as he was in that country as missionary for the previous year, as has already been noticed. His obituary states: "Here he spent two years in laboring indefatigably for the glory of God and the good of souls." The table in the General Minutes for the year 1813 gives the same number of members exactly that was reported the year before, and this not because the number was exactly the same, but for the reason that the report of the number of members not having been made, the report of the year before was copied and published for this year. There is a reason why the report was not made.

The General Conference held in May, 1812, gave to the bishops authority to form a Conference in Mississippi any time during the next four years, if in their judgment it should be expedient to do so. Under this given authority the bishops decided to constitute the Mississippi Conference, and accordingly appointed the time and place for organizing and holding its first session. It was to meet November 1, 1813, in the bounds of the country which it was to embrace. All the preachers who were in the then territory which was to constitute said Conference were notified to meet at the appointed time and place. For this reason the appointments in this section were not represented nor reported at the session of the Tennessee Conference as they had been the previous year. The bishops expected to go to the place of organizing this Conference from the session of the Tennessee Conference, which was to be held at Rees's Chapel, Tennessee, October 1, 1813, but when the Tennessee Conference met, at said time and place, they objected to the bishops' attempting the contemplated journey. The difficulties and dangers of going through the Mississippi Territory, which was at that time thronged with hostile Indians engaged in the massacre of the white settlers, made it expedient for the bishops to

abandon their purpose of going to the seat of the new Conference. Bishop Asbury is authority for the facts of the appointment for organizing said Conference and of the bishops' desisting from attending the session. In his Journal for November 20, 1812, he says: "If we meet the Mississippi Conference, as appointed, in November, 1813, we shall have gone entirely round the United States in forty-two years." In his Journal where he is giving account of the session of the Tennessee Conference which was held October 1-6, 1813, he says: "The Tennessee Conference were not willing to let the bishops go to the Mississippi Conference." When the bishops decided not to go to Mississippi they appointed Samuel Sellers, who was at the time presiding elder of the Mississippi District, to preside in their absence over the new Conference. The Conference was held according to previous appointment, and all the preachers who were on the appointments embraced in the new Conference for the year just closing were present except George A. Colbert, who located; Samuel S. Lewis, who returned to the Tennessee Conference; and Elisha Lott, who was absent for some unknown reason. Something like a dozen miles east of the Mississippi River and a dozen and a half miles south of Port Gibson there was a Methodist meeting house called Spring Hill. In the community around this meeting house there lived a number of Methodist families. About as far from this meeting house as Bethany was from Jerusalem was the house and home of the Rev. Newet Vick. Here at this private dwelling in proximity to Spring Hill Meeting House was the business of the first session of the Mississippi Conference transacted. From this time, and for more than a decade and a half, the Tombigbee appointment was embraced in the Mississippi Conference.

At the time of this first session of the Mississippi Conference at which the preachers from Tombigbee were present the times were out of joint, and imminent perils threatened the inhabitants of Tombigbee.

Tecumseh, a member of a remarkable family, a man of fine physical proportions, an able statesman, a true patriot, a sagacious strategist, an eloquent advocate, a hardy and courageous warrior, and an inveterate hater, was ever devoted to the interests of the red children of the Great Spirit. He was ever opposed to his people ceding their lands to the United States.



He vigorously opposed any treaty which contained an article ceding to the American Government any lands belonging to and claimed by the Indian tribes. As early as 1806 Tecumseh inaugurated measures for arresting the encroachments of the white population upon Indian domain, and he made an energetic and patriotic effort to unite the Indian tribes, from the Lakes on the north to the Gulf on the south, in league to prevent the extension of the dominion of the United States over the territory of the red men, and to eject the white settlers from the hunting grounds of the free denizens of the forest. In 1810 and 1811 he took active measures for forming an alliance of all the tribes for resisting all treaties which looked to dispossessing them of their native forests. He urged the prosecution of a war by the leagued tribes for the extermination of all white settlers who, for the purpose of establishing the customs of civilized society, had invaded their territory. In 1811 he visited in person the chiefs of the Cherokees, Chickasaws, Choctaws, Seminoles, and Creeks to lay before them his plans, and to induce them to join him in holding their native forests in their own possession and under the dominion of their own primitive customs. He visited the Creek chiefs upon the Tallapoosa, where his father and mother were born and reared, and in fiery speeches and with burning eloquence explained to them the advantages of his project and the patriotism of his mission. He offered them "the bundle of red sticks," which was to them the emblem of union for bloody war in the defense of their country and customs. Notwithstanding some of the chiefs were cold in their treatment of Tecumseh and opposed to his projects, he stirred the blood and fired the heart of the Creek Nation, and, though he returned to his home in the region of the Lakes, in due time the Creeks had on the war paint, and were in open hostility, and were engaged in a war for the extermination of all white settlers in their territory, especially the settlers on Tombigbee, who were just west of them.

On June 18, 1812, Congress passed an act declaring war with Great Britain, and the formal proclamation followed the next day. The Treaty of Peace which adjusted the disputes and terminated this war between the two governments was concluded and signed on December 24, 1814, and ratified by the United States Senate on February 18, 1815.



Though the purposes of the British in their hostilities against the United States, and the purposes of the Indians in their uprising and outbreak were wholly different, and the war on the part of these two peoples against the United States originated in entirely different causes, yet they sympathized with each other and made common cause against the United States. The British and the Spaniards assisted the Indians and supplied them with the munitions of war.

The war with the Creek Indians and the war with Great Britain put the settlers on the Tombigbee in perplexing dilemmas, under impending dangers, and fearful ordeals. South of them in Florida were the Spaniards who entertained a grudge against them and had no love for them. North and northwest of them, and in close proximity, were the Choctaw savages. The Creek Indians, a powerful tribe extending to the Oconee River, were at their very doors, and had inaugurated a savage war against them, and were engaged in the work of extermination under the lead of powerful, sagacious, and bloodthirsty warriors.

The appearance of Tecumseh among the tribes in the South land alarmed the fears of the white settlers and made them apprehensive of the worst consequences. From the time he came into the Creek Nation, inciting hostilities, this tribe menaced the settlers on Tombigbee with war. The spirit and bearing of this tribe indicated a purpose to wage unrelenting hostilities against the white population who were settled on the borders of their dominions, and the attitude of other tribes was by no means assuring to the white people. In this state of fear and apprehension the whites provided, as best they could, means of defense. Forts for refuge and protection were built at different points in the settlements. Among the first, if not the very first, and one of the most noted, built at this time by this people, was Fort Mims. It stood a few hundred yards from Lake Tensaw, a little more than a mile from Mims's Ferry, on the Alabama River, and about two and a half miles from and below the Cut-Off. The alarm produced by the stirring of the spirit of war by Tecumseh caused the building of Fort Mims, and from the best authority that can be ascertained this fort was built while Tecumseh was passing among the towns of the Creek Nation. Pickett, the Alabama historian, fixes the time of Tecumseh's visit to the Creek Nation in October, 1812, and

the time of building Fort Mims in the summer of 1813, a very short time before its capture by the savages, but evidently Mr. Pickett made a mistake in the dates of these events. Tecumseh was in the South and in the Creek Nation on his mission for league and war in 1811, and Fort Mims was built, as has already been stated, when he was going from Creek town to Creek town delivering his fiery harangues. The evidence on these points is very conclusive.

The first evidence introduced on the point is that connected with the battle of Tippecanoe. This engagement was brought on by Tecumseh's brother, the Prophet, while Tecumseh was absent in the Creek Nation, and this battle occurred November 7, 1811. The History of the United States, in giving account of this engagement at Tippecanoe with the Shawnees, states the fact that Tecumseh was absent at the time in the South. The next testimony on the subject is taken from the "History of the Indian Tribes of North America." In the biography of Menawa, the Creek Chief, who was in command of the Indian forces at the battle of the Horseshoe, on the Tallapoosa River, it is said: "When Tecumseh visited the Southern Indians, about the year 1811, for the purpose of endeavoring to unite them with the Northern tribes in a general conspiracy against the whites, the subject of this notice was the second chief of the Oakfuskee towns and had acquired the name of Manawa, which means The Great Warrior." The same fact that Tecumseh's visit to the Creeks was "in 1811" is asserted in the biography of Tustennuggee Emathla, a Creek warrior, who "was born on the Tallapoosa River," and who, though at the time "was too young to wield the tomahawk," nevertheless "witnessed the capture of Fort Mims." There is a noted fact to which allusion must be made which gives conclusive testimony on the subject, and fixes the time of Tecumseh's visit to the Creek Indians in 1811. A remarkable earthquake which occurred in 1811 took place exactly on the day to produce in the minds of the superstitious savages the impression that it was the fulfillment of a threat which Tecumseh made against Tookabatchee, a Creek town, on the Tallapoosa River. In the biography of the brother of Tecumseh, the Prophet, whose name was Tenskwantawaw, there is the following statement concerning Tecumseh: "Arriving at Tookabatchee, a Creek town on the Tallapoosa River, he

made his way to the lodge of the chief called the Big Warrior. He explained his object, delivered his war talk, presented a bundle of sticks, gave a piece of wampum and a war hatchet, all which the Big Warrior took. When Tecumseh, reading the spirit and intention of the Big Warrior, looked him in the eye, and pointing his finger toward his face, said: 'Your blood is white. You have taken my talk, and the sticks, and the wampum, and the hatchet, but you do not mean to fight. I know the reason. You do not believe the Great Spirit has sent me. You shall know. I leave Tookabatchee directly, and shall go straight to Detroit. When I arrive there I will stamp on the ground with my foot and shake down every house in Tookabatchee.' So saying, he turned and left the Big Warrior in utter amazement at both his manner and his threat, and pursued his journey. The Indians were struck no less with his conduct than was the Big Warrior, and began to dread the arrival of the day when the threatened calamity would befall them. They met often and talked over this matter, and counted the days carefully, to know the day when Tecumseh would reach Detroit. The morning they had fixed upon as the day of his arrival at last came. A mighty rumbling was heard; the Indians ran out of their houses; the earth began to shake; when, at last, sure enough, every house in Tookabatchee was shaken down! The exclamation was in every mouth: 'Tecumseh has got to Detroit.' The message he had delivered to the Big Warrior was believed, and many of the Indians took their rifles and prepared for the war. The reader will not be surprised to learn that an earthquake had produced all this; but he will be, doubtless, that it should happen on the very day on which Tecumseh arrived at Detroit, and in exact fulfillment of his threat. It was the famous earthquake of New Madrid, on the Mississippi." (*History of the Indian Tribes of North America*, p. 47.)

This remarkable event occurred in December, 1811. Eliza Bryan, who resided in New Madrid, on the Mississippi River, and in the southeastern corner of the present state of Missouri, wrote a short account of this remarkable earthquake. She says: "On the 16th of December, 1811, about 2 o'clock A.M., we were visited by a violent shock of an earthquake, accompanied by a very awful noise resembling loud but distant thunder, but more hoarse and vibrating, which was followed in a few

minutes by the complete saturation of the atmosphere with sulphurous vapor, causing total darkness. The screams of the affrighted inhabitants, running to and fro, not knowing where to go, or what to do; the cries of the fowls and beasts of every species; the cracking of trees falling; and the roaring of the Mississippi; the current of which was retrograde for a few minutes, owing, as is supposed, to an eruption in its bed—formed a scene truly horrible. From that time until about sunrise a number of lighter shocks occurred; at which time one still more violent than the first took place, with the same accompaniments as the first, and the terror which had been excited in every one, and indeed in all animal nature was now, if possible, doubled. The inhabitants fled in every direction to the country, supposing (if it can be admitted that their minds were exercised at all) that there was less danger at a distance from than near the river. In one person, a female, the alarm was so great that she fainted and could not be recovered.” (Dow’s Works, p. 344.)

This and all the other historical statements on the subject agree, and conclusively fix the time of Tecumseh’s visit to the Creek Nation in 1811, and his arrival at Detroit on his return from his tour South in December of that year.

That Fort Mims was built as early as the time Tecumseh was going from town to town in the Creek Nation stirring up the tribe to war is proven by a statement of Peggy Dow. She and Lorenzo, as has already been stated, passed through the Tombigbee settlements about the last days of November, 1811, and she speaks of Fort Mims, at that time on the bank of the Alabama River. She speaks also of the earthquake, which occurred just after she reached Milledgeville, Georgia, on this trip, in December. Speaking of leaving a cabin at which they stayed the night after they departed from Saint Stephens, she says: “In the morning we started very early, saw some scattering houses, and at night we got to the Alabama River, where we stayed that night. The river is beautiful, almost beyond description. On its pleasant bank stood Fort Mims, that has since been destroyed by the savage Creek Indians, with those that fled to it for protection.” (Dow’s Works, p. 650.) This is testimony from an eye witness, and is emphatic and conclusive.

The menacing attitude of these savages continued through many months. As the months passed the war spirit increased,



the excitement became more intense, and the aspects became more threatening. The Indians themselves had much to do before they were ready for decisive measures, for open outbreaks, and for death-dealing blows. There were many of their own race and tribe who were opposed to making war against the Americans, and these had to be disposed of in some way. They had to be allied to the cause by persuasion, or suppressed by force. The whole Indian Nation was agitated. They had among themselves, and against each other, whisperings, boastings, debates, deceits, and envyings. Pride and spite, implacableness, maliciousness, and revenge held sway among them. Many who would not align themselves with the war party were killed; others fled to the white settlements to escape death at the hands of their own people.

It was about twenty-two months from the coming of Tecumseh on his mission until the final outbreak, when the first open and regular battle was fought between the savages and the whites. These twenty-two months were occupied in intensifying the war spirit and in making preparation for the fearful contest. Through all these months the war-cloud gathered, the forces increased, and the depredations multiplied, until they were occurring almost everywhere, and at last the culmination was reached. The instances of violence committed on defenseless persons became so numerous that the white settlers gathered into their rude forts, which they had built at various points for refuge and safety, and then blood and murder in fearful measure quickly followed. There were perhaps more than a dozen of these forts, all of which were filled to their utmost capacity by refugees.

At a place, since known as Burnt Corn, about forty miles east of Fort Mims, in what is now Conecuh County, in the latter part of July, 1813, was fought, with detriment to the Indians, and with defeat to the whites, the first battle of this bloody war. Next came the attack on Fort Mims, which terminated in as horrible butchery of humankind as was ever known, perhaps, in the history of wars. It was an indiscriminate killing of men, women, and children. There were in the fort at the time of its destruction, counting all, including about seventy citizen soldiers, about four hundred persons, with an additional number of about one hundred and fifty regular soldiers.



When the sun was climbing up the eastern horizon August 30, 1813, the inmates of Fort Mims were indulging in a feeling of security, oblivious of any danger whatsoever. The eastern gate was standing open, with an obstruction of sand-drift in the way of its shutting. On previous days the inmates had been alarmed by messengers bringing the report that painted and armed savages were approaching. Through the very process of alarms the dwellers in this fort had become indifferent to alarms, and they would not now believe what any messenger said concerning lurking and approaching foes. On this day the soldiers were reposing in listless attitudes, some of the men were engaged in games of chance, the young men and maidens were occupying themselves in dancing and jollity, the children were romping and sporting through the fort, full of life and glee.

Unsuspecting as were the refugees in the fort, danger lurked very nigh them; for while they engaged in their repose, games, dances, and sports, there lay within less than a quarter of a mile of the fort, concealed by ravines, cane, and other growth, seven hundred armed and painted savages, fiery with rage, and eager for scalps! These savage warriors lay impatiently waiting for the auspicious moment and the appointed signal when they were to pounce upon their unsuspecting victims as devouring adversaries. At last the hour and the signal came! These, the hour and the signal, came not when

The western waves of ebbing day  
Rolled o'er the glen their level way,

but they came when the sun was at the meridian, pouring his rays and heat upon field and forest all around. Exactly at the hour of meridian these painted fiends, with impetuous spirit, bounded across ravine and wood, and with thundering tread and dismal yell rushed upon and into the open fort, and began the bloody work of extermination. The inmates of the fort were surprised, amazed, confused, frightened, and for the time they were paralyzed! They finally tried to rally and to fight, but, alas! how futile were their efforts! Their screams, cries, tears, and groans were horrible! The appearance of the savages as they thronged around and in the fort was absolutely paralyzing to even stout hearts. The shouts with which they rent the air, the hideous frowns and fiery glances which they cast upon their victims, demonstrated that they were maddened savages, bent

on barbarous deeds. Savages that they were, they knew nothing of capitulation, they never asked for surrender, they never showed any quarter. Coming so suddenly and unexpectedly upon their victims, they were at once in hand-to-hand engagement with them, and with clubs and tomahawks, in the use of which they were expert, they rapidly dispatched those they encountered. With guns and bows they opened a murderous fire upon the packed and huddled inmates of the fort. Soldiers, and civilians, frightened women, and helpless children fell in promiscuous heaps under the insatiable strokes of the envenomed host. When the savage throng showed any signs of desisting from the bloody work, William Wetherford, who was in command, cheered them on to the attack with animated and fiery speeches, and they never stopped until the work of destruction was complete. In the progress of the engagement they set fire to the fort, and it was finally consumed, and the inmates, huddled and packed together, expired in the flames, or if any escaped from the flames, it was to have their brains beat out with clubs. Women were beat down and ripped open, and children were slung by the heels and their brains dashed out against anything solid enough to do the work, and all were scalped that could be reached. From noon till 5 o'clock P.M. the battle raged. Then the destruction was complete. The fort and all the houses connected with it were in ruins, burning and smoldering, and the dead were lying around, heaps upon heaps, many still frying and crackling in the burning embers. The ground was bespattered with brains and saturated with blood. All who had taken refuge in the fort and all the soldiers who were there for its defense were dead except a few mixed bloods who were retained as prisoners, and a few negroes who were retained for slaves, and about fifteen persons who escaped during the progress of the engagement. The scene was too awful and too horrible for even savage eyes and savage hearts to look upon and contemplate. The destruction was complete, and there was nothing left for the savages to do but to retire from the devastated spot, smoke their pipes, dry the scalps which they had taken, and gloat over the achievements of the day. With the Indian the scalp was a trophy, and at that time had a commercial value.

At the time of this awful carnage at Fort Mims a limited

party of revengeful warriors under the lead of the energetic, sagacious, and cunning trickster, Josiah Francis, Tecumseh's trained prophet, was prowling through the region lying between the Alabama and the Tombigbee Rivers and immediately above their junction, committing fearful depredations, killing and scalping the settlers, exciting alarm and spreading terror everywhere in that quarter. The depredations and murders committed and the alarm excited by this party of warriors, in conjunction with the excitement created by the massacre of Fort Mims caused the evacuation of forts, the migration of settlers, and the moving to other points of defense of the military forces at command. A horrible panic ensued, consternation reigned. These squads of painted warriors multiplied and enlarged. Anon they were everywhere, with bow and club and rifle and tomahawk. The forests were full of them. They gloated in blood, multiplied and accumulated scalps. Battle followed battle in quick succession.

This was the fearful state of things on the Tombigbee when Nolley and Shrock ministered to that people. Evidently the conditions for prosecuting the work of their ministry were not very favorable. Manifestly the perils of these two preachers at this time were numerous, and it is marvelous that they escaped the club and the tomahawk. The presumption is that they, as far as possible, acted upon the line indicated by Solomon in his Proverbs: "The prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself." It is also very probable that they comforted themselves with the words of the Lord, the Most High: "Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day." Through the weary months of this bloody year these men of God had to seek the people in their forts to minister to them the precepts, promises, and ordinances of the gospel. This they did. A family tradition says that Uriah Simpson moved from Tennessee in 1800, and domiciled himself and family in the wilderness eight or nine miles northwest of Saint Stephens, that his house was one of the preaching places of the first Methodist preachers in that country, and that there was a fort about fifteen miles northwest of Saint Stephens into which the settlers of that section fled for protection; that one of the recollections of Uriah Simpson's wife was that she heard Nolley preach in said fort from the text, "And one of the company said unto him,

Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me" (Luke xii. 13), and that she made two shirts and gave them to Nolley.

In the midst of this confusion and war these men went from Tombigbee to the first session of the Mississippi Conference, which has been elsewhere mentioned. On November 9, 1813, just the day after the first session of the Mississippi Conference adjourned, Andrew Jackson fought the noted battle of Talladega, in which he so nearly exterminated the Creek forces who were engaged in that battle, and which was about the third engagement in which the Indians had been defeated. For a number of engagements at the beginning of the outbreak the Indians were victorious and the whites were defeated.

This state of war accounts for much which took place about this time in the ordering of Church affairs. Not much could be accomplished in the midst of such surroundings by either ministers or members of the Church. While the General Minutes for this year copied the statistics of the previous year, and consequently showed the same numbers for both years, the presumption, or rather the certainty, is that there was a marked decrease in the number of members for this year. The probability is that a number of members were killed, and that others fled from the country who never returned.

Richmond Nolley's ministry on Tombigbee and in Alabama terminated with the close of the first session of the Mississippi Conference, November 8, 1813. He lived and worked only one year after he left Tombigbee. For 1814 he was appointed to Attakapas charge, which was in Louisiana, and for this year he served this work, enduring many hardships and having some success. At the session of the Mississippi Conference which was held near Pearl River, November 14, 15, 1814, he was reappointed to Attakapas charge for the next year, but he died on his way from the session of the Conference back to his Circuit.

He was a native of Virginia, but the date of his birth is not on record. Some time in 1806, in the State of Georgia, he received in his heart the regenerating power of the Christian religion. Some while after this, though the exact date is not known, he was licensed to preach. The South Carolina Conference received him on trial in Charleston on the morning of December 30, 1807. The Conference Record for that day says:



“Richmond Nolley was recommended by a Quarterly Meeting Conference held in Sparta Circuit, December 6, 1807, and was admitted on trial.” According to the Journal of the South Carolina Conference he was received into full connection by that Conference and elected to deacon’s orders at the session in Charleston, December 23, 1809. The Record for that date says: “Richmond Nolley was admitted into full connection, and elected to deacon’s orders.” During that session of the Conference he was ordained deacon. In Camden, South Carolina, on the afternoon of December 21, 1811, he was elected to elder’s orders. It was at this time, after his election and ordination to the office of elder, that he went out, at the request of the bishop, as a missionary to Tombigbee; and this was the last session of the South Carolina Conference which he ever attended. At the end of 1812 he did not attend the session of the Conference, but remained in the Tombigbee settlements, and at the end of 1813 he, as has elsewhere been stated, was present at the session of the Mississippi Conference.

As a man he was not eloquent, as a preacher he was not profound, but he was consecrated, laborious, and faithful. He braved all sorts of dangers, and moved on through all kinds of difficulties. He never stopped for cloud or sunshine, for heat or cold. He rather courted than shunned hardships and privations. He was noted for activity and punctuality. He not only attended his appointments for preaching, but he went from house to house holding religious services with the families, instructing, as opportunity afforded, the households, and giving special attention to the children and slaves. It is said that he was sometimes refused the privilege of praying with families where he stopped for that purpose, and that in some instances he was even threatened with physical castigation, but nothing daunted his courage or dampened his ardor or arrested his going. He never quailed in the presence of a foe. He had the devotion born of moral integrity and the endurance born of the conviction of the truth and merit of the cause he espoused. He was solicitous about the welfare of his flock and the salvation of souls. His work was preëminently that of saving the souls of men. He was a man of absolute humility and of solid piety. He was solemn, reverent, and earnest. He was a man of prayer. He would devoutly kneel and fervently pray to Him who said:



"What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Even his errors were committed in what he esteemed the interest of the divine cause, and in what he supposed to be in furtherance of sincere piety. His was an austere virtue. His fasts were long and frequent. Under the effects of these severe and too frequent fasts he was lean, pale and faint. Too much must not be expected from the infliction of physical pain, or the mere exhaustion of the flesh. It is a mistake to suppose that religion requires extremes in fasting, or excess in penance, or in anything else.

He died on the journey from the Conference session to his Circuit. After crossing the Mississippi and the Ouachita Rivers, attended by the Rev. Thomas Griffin, his presiding elder, he parted from his traveling companion and went forth alone on a route which led him a more expeditious way because a more direct course to his field of labor than the route followed by the Rev. Mr. Griffin. He parted with Griffin on November 24, 1814. On the other side of a swollen and angry stream from which he parted with Griffin, and on the afternoon of November 26, 1814, the second day after he parted with Griffin, he was found, less than a mile from said stream, stretched upon the ground, with eyes closed and hands folded, dead and cold. His body was taken to a house a little more than a mile distant from where it was found, and the next day, November 27, 1814, his remains were buried, by friendly hands, near the said house to which his corpse had been carried. That there be no mistake, the dates here given will be repeated. Nolley left Griffin on November 24, 1814; was found dead in the woods November 26, 1814; and was buried November 27, 1814. These dates mark correctly his demise, notwithstanding in a sketch of his life published in "Biographical Sketches of Itinerant Ministers" some events of his life are said to have occurred in the spring of 1815, and his death is said to have occurred in November, 1815—a mistake of one year.

It is said that in the journey of the next day after he left Griffin, Nolley, in the presence of an Indian, encountered the swollen and angry stream near which he was found dead, and that in attempting to cross said stream he was submerged, that he finally gained the bank for which he was reaching, but that his horse, unable to ascend the bank where he was drifted to it,

returned to the side of the stream whence he started in; and Nolley, leaving his horse and chattels in the care of the Indian who witnessed the attempts in crossing the stream, proceeded on foot toward the house two miles distant from the creek, and from which he was afterward buried. It has been supposed that he perished from exhaustion caused by the fasting which he imposed upon himself and the drenching which he received in swimming the swollen creek. This is, of course, all suppositious. Nothing is known of how or why he died. All is conjecture. This much is, however, true and certain: that in the region between the Ouachita and Red Rivers, in the wild woods, in the dismal swamp, the saintly Nolley fell and expired, and there in that then wild region near where he was found dead he was buried, and thence he shall rise and come to the judgment.

The Rev. John Shrock, than whom a more sanguine, erratic, impulsive, excitable, and boisterous man never lived, was born in South Carolina. He was of German descent, and in physical mold and stature was after the fashion of the nation of his ancestors. He was a man of some gifts and of considerable power as a preacher, and was a good man, but his life was marked and marred by improprieties. He did ludicrous things, and was guilty of improprieties involving serious consequences. The first time he appeared for public consideration before an Annual Conference he appeared under the disabilities of notable improprieties. The following is the first entry concerning him made in the Journal of the South Carolina Conference: "John Shrock was recommended by a Quarterly Meeting Conference held in Santee Circuit, 15th of ———, 1810, and after much was said in favor of his gifts and usefulness, there appeared some impropriety in his conduct relative to matrimonial engagements, which induced the Conference not to admit him." This entry was made in the Journal for the first day of the Conference session, December 22, 1810. Two days later, Monday, December 24, the Journal records the following item: "Brother Daniel Asbury motioned that John Shrock's case be reconsidered, and it was carried—and after much opposition was admitted on trial by a small majority." The South Carolina Conference met in Charleston, December 19, 1812. The Record for that day says: "John Shrock admitted into full connection, and elected deacon." He was also ordained deacon at this time.

This closed his connection with the South Carolina Conference, for having been appointed to Tombigbee, in January, 1813, immediately after the adjournment of the Conference, he, in company with John I. E. Byrd, who was going to Wilkinson Circuit in the Natchez country, left his native State and set out for his distant appointment in the outlying wilderness. These two young men, Shrock and Byrd, at this eminently dangerous period when the Creek chiefs and prophets were posting from town to town throughout their nation, inspiring the purpose to destroy, to kill, and cause to perish all the settlers of Tombigbee, both old and young, women and children, and when roaming clans, armed with gleaming tomahawks and scalping knives, everywhere lurked and thirsted for blood, passed through the entire Creek Nation! It took strong limbs and high courage to tread alone and unarmed that long and dangerous way across that savage land. The only music which regaled the dauntless ambassadors of the Son of God on this journey was the music made by the sighing winds, and that music which accompanied the war dances of the revengeful savages. On the way they were often chilled by the frosty breezes of the season, and time and again they had hard work to keep themselves "above the foaming tide" of the swollen streams which swept across their path. But they were equal to the task, and in spite of perils, hardships, and sufferings reached their environed fields of labor in good order. Shrock served the Tombigbee work but one year, and his last appointment was Rapides Circuit, Louisiana District. Sometime in this year 1814, the year he served the Rapides Circuit, he married a woman who lived in the bounds of said Circuit, and at the close of the Conference year, after being elected to elder's orders, located. Here ended forever his itinerant ministry. There was no bishop present at the Conference at which he was elected elder, and he was not ordained to that office until about two years after. For many years he was an active and zealous local preacher. Sometime between the beginning of 1840 and 1845 he removed to Texas, then a Republic, and died.

The appointment for 1814 was Tombecbee: *John I. E. Byrd, Peter James.* Neither of these preachers was eligible at this time to elder's orders. Byrd was not quite twenty-three years old at the time he was appointed to Tombigbee, and he had

only been a deacon one year. Peter James was about twenty-four years old, and had just been admitted on trial by the informally constituted Mississippi Conference, and was not eligible even to deacon's orders. The dread and danger still continued in the Tombigbee settlements. The war raged in all its fury. The painted warriors, armed with club and tomahawk, bow and gun, still pursued their bloody work, bent on extermination. Not until August 9 of this year was the war party conquered. On that day the war chiefs surrendered to the officer commanding the United States forces, and signed a treaty of peace. This, of course, brought relief but not quiet. Byrd and James, amidst imminent dangers and under great embarrassments, prosecuted the work of their ministry, and had, for the circumstances, good success. The decrease of the previous year had been more than overcome. The statistics gave the number of members at the close of the year at two hundred and sixty-nine white and seventy-nine colored. This was seventy-two white and twenty-five colored members more than had ever been reported before.

The Rev. John I. E. Byrd, who was named for Ira Ellis, a noted Methodist preacher, was a native of South Carolina, and was born May 15, 1791. When a boy, and after his father's death, he was put to the trade of a shoe maker. When between nineteen and twenty years of age he received the regenerating grace which made him a child of God and an heir of glory. In a few months after this he was inducted into the ministry. The following item is found in the Journal of the South Carolina Conference for December 22, 1810: "John I. E. Byrd was recommended by a Quarterly Conference held in Great Pee Dee Circuit, December 8, 1810, and was admitted on trial." Then in the same Journal for December 19, 1812, is found this item: "J. I. E. Byrd admitted into full connection and elected deacon." Here closed his connection with the South Carolina Conference after his ordination to the office of deacon. He was appointed for 1813 to the Wilkinson Circuit, in the Natchez country. Henceforth he exercised his ministry in that section, only he served Tombigbee one year. He was a preacher for about sixty years, but more than half of these years he was not effective. He was sometimes local, sometimes without an appointment, sometimes supernumerary, and sometimes superan-



nuated. He died at the village of Black Hawk, Mississippi, April 6, 1871.

The Rev. Peter James was born in Pennsylvania in 1789, and in 1800 his father moved with him to Natchez. He grew to manhood in Mississippi. When about twenty-four years of age he was received into the Mississippi Conference, and appointed to Tombigbee for 1814. He was local occasionally, but belonged to the Mississippi Conference most of the time from the beginning of his ministry till the close of his life. While he had only limited advantages, meager attainments, and ordinary ability, he was a man of integrity and of exemplary piety, and his life was marked with a degree of usefulness. He died in Holmes County, Mississippi, March 18, 1869.

Tombecbee, *John S. Ford, Thomas Owens*. So stood this appointment for 1815. In the obituary of Ford, published in the General Minutes, it is said: "He was appointed in 1814 to the Tombigbee Circuit." The Conference at which he was appointed this time to Tombigbee met November 14, 1814, and this put him on that work for 1815. At this time Ford was an elder elect, having been elected to that office a year previous, but was not ordained, having failed of ordination to this office because no bishop had been present at the Conference. At the end of this year 1815, in the month of October, he was ordained an elder. Thomas Owens had been on trial only one year, and, consequently, was not eligible even to deacon's orders. As Ford was on Tombigbee in 1811, this was the second time he served that work.

A new era had now dawned. Remarkable events had just passed. The wars had just ceased. The Creek Indians and Great Britain had signed treaties of peace. The settlers on Tombigbee had a measure of quiet, and they were prosecuting their peaceable pursuits, and were endeavoring to repair their losses and rebuild their fortunes. These settlers, however, were not by any means in a paradisiacal state, though new settlers, eager for a possession in that land of promise, were flowing like a stream into the country. The gore with which the land had been drenched was hardly gone from view, the wounded were hardly healed, the ashes of the burned cabins had scarcely disappeared, the rude looms and primitive spinning wheels had not been rebuilt and operated long enough to replenish the scanty



wardrobes, the scattered and depleted herds had not been re-gathered and restored, and the fields had not yet yielded their accustomed supplies. The lamentations which had been so long and so loud had only partially subsided, and hope had only partially revived.

But these two preachers wrought at their ministry, and at the end of the year reported the results of their labor. The report of the numbers in Society gave two hundred and eighty-seven white and seventy-six colored members, an increase of eighteen white members and a decrease of three colored members.

The Rev. John S. Ford was born in South Carolina, February 6, 1790. He was baptized when an infant, and when about thirteen years of age he received from God, through Christ, by faith, incomparable peace and inexpressible joy. Immediately upon the attainment of this blessed estate, and in the year 1805, he united with the Methodist Episcopal Church. He believed and approved, without any mental or moral reservation, the doctrines and rules of this Church. Yielding to a conviction which impressed and impelled him, he accepted a license to preach, and entered upon the itinerant ministry peculiar to his Church. The same Quarterly Conference which licensed him to preach recommended him to the Annual Conference for admission on trial in the traveling connection. His license bore date November 3, 1809. The Quarterly Conference devoted two days to its business. An entry in the Journal of the South Carolina Conference for the afternoon of December 26, 1809, says: "John S. Ford was recommended by the Quarterly Meeting Conference, held at Moore's Meeting House, Union Circuit, November 4, 1809, and was admitted on trial." At the end of his first year in the Conference, and more than a month before he was twenty-one, on December 28, 1810, he was appointed missionary to Tombigbee, and elected and ordained deacon. The Journal of the South Carolina Conference for that date says: "John S. Ford, Missionary, elected to Deacon's office." He was not eligible to reception into full connection, and he remained on trial, but, as the law provided in such case, as a missionary he was elected and ordained deacon. This explains all the records on the subject, even those which are conflicting. For 1816 he was at Nollichuckee, in the Holston District, Tennessee Conference. At the session of the Tennessee Conference at Franklin com-

mencing October 20, 1816, Ford was not present, but he made there at that time a most singular request and a blundering application. He sent to the Conference a letter in which he applied for a letter of dismissal from the Conference. His request was granted. On the assembling of the South Carolina Conference at Columbia, December 25, 1816, just two months and five days after he had obtained a dismissal from the Tennessee Conference, he presented his letter of dismissal from the Tennessee Conference for admission to and recognition in the South Carolina Conference. Here he found out the blunder he had made. He had really been dismissed upon his own application from the traveling connection. Instead of obtaining a letter of recommendation for recognition by the South Carolina Conference, he had been dismissed from the traveling connection. The Journal of the Conference says: "John S. Ford, who went a Missionary from this Conference to the West some years ago, having injudiciously applied by letter to the last Tennessee Conference for a dismission, which was granted, supposing that it would be a sufficient recommendation for his entrance into this Conference, offered himself for readmission here, but was objected to. This Conference, however, having confidence in Brother Ford, and believing him to have erred mostly through ignorance and not intentionally, received him in character with the approbation of the superintendents." At the end of 1818 he located, but was finally re-admitted to the traveling connection. For many long years under physical infirmities, he held a superannuated relation in the Conference. When he died he was a member of the South Georgia Conference. He died in the city of Macon, Georgia, November 9, 1871.

Though he was not profound nor eloquent, yet he was an impressive preacher. He held in high regard and preached earnestly the distinguishing doctrines of the Methodists. The universality of the atonement was his favorite theme. He gloried in the truth that Jesus Christ died for all men.

Tombeebec, *Ashley Hewett, Alexander Fleming.* This was the record for this appointment for the year 1816. Through some cause, possibly the division of the Circuit and the formation of the Chickasaw Circuit, afterward called Chickasahay, the membership on Tombigbee decreased this year one hundred and thirty-seven white members and thirty-six colored members.

The Mississippi Conference met at William Foster's, October 10, 1816. Here Hewett and Fleming reported the year's work from Tombigbee. Ashley Hewett had received on the work for his support \$60, and Alexander Fleming had received on the work for his support \$80. Ashley Hewett reported raised as "Conference Collection on Tombigbee \$29.81 $\frac{1}{4}$ ." The Conference "Committee of Appropriation" paid Hewett "\$40," and Fleming "\$20," and "Fleming's two children \$48." The entire collection from Tombigbee for the year was "\$169.81 $\frac{1}{4}$ ."

The Rev. "Ashley Hewitt was recommended by the members of a Quarterly Conference held in Onoree Circuit, November 18, 1810," and was admitted on trial by the South Carolina Conference, in Charleston, South Carolina, December 22, 1810. In Charleston, South Carolina, December 19, 1812, he was "admitted into full connection, and elected deacon." He was also ordained a deacon at the session of this Conference. At Milledgeville, Georgia, December 24, 1814, he was "elected to elder's orders," and he was ordained to said office on a subsequent day of the session of said Conference. At the session of the Conference held in Charleston, December 23-28, 1815, in response to a call for volunteers to go to the destitute regions toward the setting sun, Hewett volunteered, and was transferred from his native State and Conference, and was appointed, as above stated, to Tombigbee. The journey from his native State to Tombigbee through the Indian country was made in perilous times. On this journey his courage was often put to the test, and his life was in jeopardy.

It is said that in stature he was tall and lean; that he had blue eyes, and hair of light color, a fair complexion, a mouth large enough to indicate a fluent speaker, and that he had a pleasant countenance. He was a quiet, sedate, matter-of-fact man, possessing a sound judgment, medium attainments, and moderate abilities. He had neither genius nor fancy. As a preacher he had but little or no variety, and was almost entirely destitute of emotion and of action. For the year 1830 he served the Warren Circuit, in the Bayou Pierre District, and at the session of the Mississippi Conference which met at Tuskaloosa, Alabama, November 24, 1830, he located.

Alexander Fleming was admitted on trial by the Tennessee Conference at its session at Bethlehem Meeting House, in Wil-

son County, Tennessee, October 20, 1815, and was appointed for the year following to Tombigbee. He was or had been married. He had two children. For 1817 he was appointed to Rapides Circuit, in the Louisiana District, and at the end of the year discontinued. He did not live long after this.

For 1817 the appointment stood: Tombecbee, *Elisha Lott*. At the end of this year the report of the members in Society gives Tombigbee two hundred and thirty-three white and ninety-five colored members, an increase for the year of eighty-three white and of fifty-five colored members, a very fine increase indeed.

The Rev. Elisha Lott was received into the Tennessee Conference on trial at Fountain Head, November 1, 1812, and was appointed to Amite Circuit, Mississippi, and for 1814 he was on Wilkinson Circuit, in the same State. At the end of 1814 he was received into full connection in the Mississippi Conference, and elected to deacon's orders. For 1815 he was on Rapides Circuit, in Louisiana. At the session of the Tennessee Conference at Bethlehem Meeting House, Wilson County, Tennessee, in November, 1815, he was ordained deacon. It appears that he was carried through the form of being received into full connection in the Tennessee Conference, though the same thing had been done at the Mississippi Conference, held near Pearl River, beginning November 14, 1814. At the Mississippi Conference at Midway, in November, 1817, he was elected and ordained elder, and he located. For 1826 he appears again in the Mississippi Conference, and at the end of 1827 he again located. This terminated his itinerant ministry in the Methodist Episcopal Church. He lived a local preacher in the State of Mississippi from the close of 1827 until the latter part of 1836, when, for some reason, he, in a rude and peevish way, surrendered his credentials to the Quarterly Conference of which he was a member, and soon after united with the Methodist Protestant Church, in which Church he held the position of a preacher, and in which he lived and labored until the end of his natural life. He lived to be an old man, and died in Madison County, Mississippi.



## CHAPTER IV.

### THE FIRST WORK OF METHODISM IN ALABAMA (CONTINUED).

AT this juncture in this historic narrative the geographical limits, the men and women who composed the congregations and membership of the Tombigbee charge during the first decade thereof, and some miscellaneous items claim specific attention. A most difficult task, and one which in the nature of the case will be very imperfectly performed, is hereby presented and attempted. Nothing can be gathered in this field beyond a mere gleanings. But few transactions of that time were ever put to record, tradition has perpetuated but little, and consequently most of the official acts and of the personal reminiscences have been forgotten and are forever lost.

That tract of land which the Choctaw Indians had previous to this date ceded to the United States, while east and west it extended from the line of the Creek Nation a few miles east of the Tombigbee River to the Mississippi River, was in width, north and south, at the Tombigbee River, on an air line, just sixty-eight miles. By any route which could be traveled it was probably eighty or more miles from one side to the other. The southern boundary of this ceded territory was the thirty-first parallel of latitude, and was ten miles south of the junction of the Tombigbee and Alabama Rivers, and the northern boundary was at the mouth of Faluktabunnee Creek, four miles north of a noted bluff known as Wood's Bluff. Within these lines north and south, and within a few miles east and west of the Tombigbee River were found all the purely white settlers of that time. Many were the inducements to settlers to pitch their habitations about the river, and up to 1808, the settlers having yielded to these inducements, very few families resided more than a dozen miles away from some part of the river. The entire area occupied at that date by these settlers was less than a thousand square miles, and the whole number of inhabitants living at that time in the Tombigbee settlements was estimated at from eight hundred to a thousand. There was not more than an average of



one family for every four square miles. There were at this date a few families settled on the Chickasahay River, which river is, at different points, on an air line, from twenty-five to thirty-five miles west of the Tombigbee River. There were but few places of note in all these settlements in this year of grace 1808. Lake Tensaw was a point of some significance seven or eight miles east of the Tombigbee and Alabama junction, and Fort Stoddart was a military post four or five miles southwest of said junction. McIntosh Bluff was the center of a community and the name of a point on the Tombigbee. Wakefield was at that time a little village and the seat of justice, and was in the region of McIntosh Bluff. Wakefield was in Section Thirty-five, Township Five, north, Range One, east. Saint Stephens, on the bank of the Tombigbee, was at that time a place, but was then noted only for being the emporium of the Indian trade, the whole business of which was under the supervision of one man. Wood's Bluff, sometimes called Easley's Station, was thirty-one miles from Saint Stephens, and almost due north of it.

For the first year of this first regularly appointed Methodist ministry to this country, the year 1808, the preaching was evidently confined to the territory in the immediate vicinity of the Tombigbee River. Brother Sturdevant may possibly have made a single visit in the year 1808 to the families residing on Chickasahay River, but it is evident that he confined his ministry during that year within the lines and the area above described on the Tombigbee River. At any private house, or embowered spot, or place of public resort, within the lines and the area above named, that he could get permission to exercise his ministry and persons to listen to his message, did Mr. Sturdevant, with impassioned eloquence, proclaim the word of life. At Wood's Bluff, at different places round about Saint Stephens, at Wakefield, at Fort Stoddart, at Lake Tensaw, were probably found the points for preaching the gospel this first year of religious work in that region. Evidently Mr. Sturdevant came in contact with all the citizens within the limits of his field of operations, and associated with them more or less, as was to them agreeable. It was impossible for him to traverse that land as he did again and again, from end to end and from side to side, and not meet at some time, in some way, nearly the entire population. It would have been comparatively a small matter for

him to have visited every family in the bounds of his work, and it is altogether probable that he did visit every family that would receive him. That whole population knew Mr. Sturdevant as a Methodist preacher, as an ambassador representing the court of heaven, and praying them in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God. It was impossible for a Methodist preacher to be in that country a year, and any of the inhabitants thereof not to hear of and see him, and to be also for some reason interested in the fact that he was there. The advent of a preacher in that land to preach to that people was an occasion, and at that time was such an occasion as had not hitherto been. It was an event of no ordinary meaning. It was an event which could not be ignored, an event which commanded attention and demanded consideration. Did a preacher's presence and influence mean good to the country, or did they mean evil? These were questions which had to be settled. If for no other reason the novelty of a preacher in that country, going up and down in it, would excite curiosity, intensify interest, and cause no little inquiry and gossip. The presence of Mr. Sturdevant as a preacher furnished, no doubt, the theme of conversation in all the cabins and at all the gatherings in that isolated section. Wherever the inhabitants met for work and business, or for sport and frolic, they talked of the new thing under the sun, the Methodist preacher who had come into their midst. At their house raisings, log rollings, quiltings, shooting matches, and dances, they talked, derisively it may be in some instances, but they talked, promiscuously and intently, about the preacher then among them. They discussed his personal appearance, his speech, his conduct, his motives, and his mission to their country, and the possible success he would attain, and the probable effects of his ministry upon their country in general and their habits and pleasures in particular. Various and conflicting opinions were expressed. All this tended to give publicity to his ministry, and to make some sort of impression on the minds of the population.

Among the men living in that country in that first year of Mr. Sturdevant's ministry may be mentioned: Samuel Mims, John Linder, Thomas Byrne, Benjamin Steadham, Moses Steadham, William H. Hargrove, Joseph Bates, John Hinson, Nicholas Perkins, Thomas Malone, Peter Malone, Edmund P. Gaines, George S. Gaines, Harry Toulmin, Thomas Kimbell, Ransom

Kimbell, Hiram Mounger, Samson Mounger, Nathan Blackwell, John Brewer, George Brewer, Robert Caller, John Caller, James Caller, Henry Atchison, James Powell, John Powell, Daniel Johnson, Joseph Wheat, Solomon Wheat, Thomas Bassett, John McGrew, William McGrew, Tandy Walker, Richard Hawkins, Edwin Lewis, John Baker, James Morgan, Randall P. West, James McGoffin, William Coate, William Murrell, Abner Turner, William Easley, Warham Easley. Many others might be named.

These men here named lived in different parts of that tract of country on the Tombigbee. Many of them were never Methodists. A large number of them were grossly worldly and extremely wicked, and could no more be impressed with the obligations and benefits of the Christian religion than could the beasts of the forest in which they lived, but possibly they all saw Mr. Sturdevant, and perhaps heard him preach, and some few of them were favorably impressed and properly influenced by his ministry.

Samuel Mims whom Mr. Sturdevant found on Lake Tensaw when first he came to that region, was what is known in history as an "Indian countryman." He was once a pack-horseman and a trader in the Indian nations. He had been a resident on Lake Tensaw many years. He was a wealthy man. He was the founder and proprietor of Mims's Ferry, on the Alabama River. Fort Mims was named for him and enclosed his residence. It is in evidence that he cared very little for Mr. Sturdevant and his ministry. Like many others found at that time in that land, he had resided by choice too long in the Indian country, he had associated too intimately with savage life, he had conformed too closely to the manners and customs of barbarous tribes, to have any special appreciation of the Christian religion. Not to speak of worse things, his house was "a resort of mirth," a noted place where fiddlers and dancers oft assembled, and spent their time moving in measured step to the sound of musical instruments. This "the most spacious" house in the country at that time Mr. Sturdevant did not fail to find, but he did not succeed in making it a house of prayer. He was unable to exorcise the dancing spirit. The young folks were dancing in that very same house the day that Wetherford and his savage warriors burned it to the ground and massacred its inmates.

When in penetrating his field of labor in the remote and isolated settlements on the Tombigbee Mr. Sturdevant reached the little town of Wakefield, then the seat of justice for that District, he found residing there Nicholas Perkins, a young lawyer from Tennessee, who at the first court held at that new seat of justice "was admitted to the practice of Attorney General of the Court;" Thomas Malone, then the Clerk of the Court: Theodore Brightwell, then Sheriff of Washington County; and Harry Toulmin, Judge of the Superior Court. There were a few others residing there. Seven miles from there lived John Hinson.

The tastes, habits, and character of a man are often learned by the history of incidents. The circumstances which lead to a man's connection with certain events indicate what he was and how he stood related to certain questions and principles. As to whether a man was allied to certain parties, interests, and principles may be correctly ascertained by a knowledge of his allegiance to other parties, interests, and principles. Accepting these criteria, the social type and moral character of Perkins, Malone, Brightwell, and Hinson may be ascertained by their connection with a remarkable incident which occurred about one year before Mr. Sturdevant reached the country.

In January, 1807, Aaron Burr, ex-Vice-president of the United States, having been suspected of treasonable purposes, or of "Crimes of High Misdemeanors," was arrested and carried a prisoner to the town of Washington, then the capital of Mississippi Territory. Before the Superior Court, convened in that town, February 3, 1807, Burr appeared upon his own recognizance to answer according to the finding of the Grand Jury impaneled in the case. For three days the court was occupied with counter-motions and counter-rulings and indefinite action, Burr attending each day on his recognizance. On the opening of the court on the fourth day of its session it was found that Burr had absconded. For some days, and until he could make preparations to depart from that immediate section, his friends concealed him. Then donning a dress which would serve to disguise him, pantaloons of coarse texture and copperas color, a coat of coarse material and in style what we would call a "round-about," a slouch and weather-beaten hat, and mounting himself upon a fleet and superb horse, and securing one Major Ashley as a traveling companion and guide, he plunged into the



wilderness toward the Tombigbee. About ten o'clock at night, on the 28th of February, the same month in which the Court at Washington in the Natchez District had dallied with him, he rode into the little town of Wakefield. At that hour a light was burning in a cabin which stood in the limits of that village, a light which was fed by pinewood, commonly called "lightwood." By that light in that cabin sat two young men, Perkins and Malone, the attorney and clerk above named, engaged in a game of backgammon. That light in that cabin at that hour attracted, illured, and betrayed Burr. He and his traveling companion rode to the door of the cabin where flamed the light and where plied the young men the game of chance, and inquired for the tavern, and then for the road to Col. John Hinson's. When the inquiries had been answered, and the tavern and road asked for indicated, the two travelers proceeded on their way, not to the tavern, but to the house of Hinson, which they reached, though uncertain paths and dangerous streams were encountered, in as short time as fleet horses could pass over seven miles. Here these two travelers tarried for the remainder of the night, although Mr. Hinson was absent from home. They stabled and fed their horses, a negro assisting Mr. Ashley in the task, secured supper for themselves, Mrs. Hinson preparing it, and occupied the kitchen. Perkins detected in the man so plainly dressed and so superbly mounted Aaron Burr, who was advertised and described in a proclamation made by the civil authorities for his arrest. The game of chance which had been so fascinating as to engage these two young men until such a late hour at night was instantly abandoned. Perkins at once decided to follow the strange travelers and have the suspected man arrested, and having engaged Brightwell, the sheriff, in the proposed arrest, in the quickest conceivable time he and Brightwell were mounted and on the road to Hinson's. Perkins and Brightwell reached Hinson's in a very short time after the two travelers had arrived. Perkins, however, did not go to the house, but remained in the woods at a short distance for concealment. Brightwell, the sheriff, went to the house and interrogated and investigated the two travelers as best he could, but did not return to inform Perkins of the result of his investigations, as he had engaged to do. Perkins, finally despairing of the return of Brightwell, put out with all possible speed for Fort Stoddart to



report to the Commandant there his confident opinion that he had detected Aaron Burr, the man for whose arrest a handsome reward was offered. He reached the fort by daylight, having paddled part of the way down the river in a canoe, and by sun-up he was returning upon the way toward Hinson's with Captain Edmund P. Gaines and a posse of soldiers in search for the traveler supposed to be Burr. After getting breakfast and inquiring the way to Pensacola, and the delivery of many polite expressions of appreciation of the kindness and entertainment he had received, Burr bade Mrs. Hinson farewell, and he and his traveling companion set off, going toward the Carson Ferry on the Tombigbee. About two miles from the home of Colonel Hinson, and about two or three hours' ride from Fort Stoddart in Range One, west, Township Four, north, Section Thirty-six, and about four miles west of Tombigbee River, the posse of soldiers under Captain Gaines met the strangers. Mr. Perkins's suspicions were confirmed. The man in the coarse attire, with flashing eyes and engaging address, was Aaron Burr. Captain Gaines took him in custody and carried him prisoner to Fort Stoddart. In course of time, arrangements having been completed for the journey, Perkins took charge of the prisoner, conveyed him to Richmond, and delivered him to the United States authorities. In due course Burr was tried for treason, and acquitted.

At that time there was a wolf-pen standing near the spot where Burr was arrested by Gaines. Since that a Methodist Church has stood near that spot. A combination met in that place. A wolf-pen, the capture of Aaron Burr, and a Methodist church! That is historic ground, if not classic.

While Mr. Malone, the man so fond of the game of backgammon, might not by any religious inclinations which he had be attracted to Mr. Sturdevant, there was one element of attraction, one ground of friendship between them. They were natives of the same State. They were both from that State whose natural products and commercial staples were tar, hoop-poles and huckleberries. Such would inevitably attract them to each other, and stick and bind them close together. Many of the citizens of that Tombigbee country would have a special interest in Mr. Sturdevant, for many of them were from North Carolina.

It is certain that in passing about Wakefield in the discharge of the duties of his ministry, Mr. Sturdevant met Hon. Harry

Toulmin, who has been mentioned above as residing there at that time, but it is pretty certain that Judge Toulmin never gave more than a casual notice to Mr. Sturdevant's preaching, and that he never allied himself in any way with Methodism. Judge Toulmin was born in England, and when a very young man entered the ministry, and was for a time in charge of a Unitarian congregation. He very soon, however, came to America, seeking greater freedom in the expression of his opinions than he was allowed in his native land. He was at one time President of Transylvania University, Lexington, Kentucky, and at another time he was Secretary of State of Kentucky. He was a man of considerable learning and ability. Judge Toulmin, while in Kentucky, was active in disseminating his Socinian doctrines, and was successful in proselyting to his theories some men of high position and of respectable influence in the orthodox Churches. He used his talents and position on this behalf. It seems that he was by turns preacher, teacher, politician, lawyer, and office holder. He came to Tombigbee, by appointment of the President of the United States, as Judge of the Superior Court established there by the General Government. As he had been a Unitarian preacher in the past, and was then occupied with civil affairs and allied with those who were clothed with military titles and charged with military duties, it is evident he was not preoccupied by Methodism, nor prepossessed in its favor. In his amiable disposition he may have made himself agreeable to Mr. Sturdevant, and may have delighted and entertained him with his social conversation, but he never acceded to any propositions for alliance with him in Church interests.

Edmund P. Gaines was the son-in-law of Judge Toulmin, and was at the time of Mr. Sturdevant's ministry captain in command of the United States forces at Fort Stoddart, and was the officer who arrested Aaron Burr, as has already been stated. Mr. Sturdevant no doubt tendered to this captain of a band of United States troops an offer of rank and heritage at the court of heaven, but was not successful in enlisting him in the cause of his Church.

At this same time Mr. George S. Gaines, a brother of Edmund P. Gaines, was at Saint Stephens in charge of the United States trading house which had been established there for the exchange of commodities with the Indians. He had with him

a man who assisted as clerk, and one who handled and took care of the skins which were purchased in the transactions of the business, and also one who acted as interpreter. Mr. Gaines went to Saint Stephens in 1805, and remained there a number of years. Whether Mr. Sturdevant and Mr. Gaines found anything to attract each to the other, or to cause them to associate with any special interest is very questionable. No doubt Mr. Sturdevant approached Mr. Gaines in a way and interrogated him sufficiently to ascertain the estimate in which he, the man who was using the parsonage of the old Spanish Church as a warehouse in which to store the skins purchased from the savages of the forest, held the dispensation of the gospel which he tendered to the citizens of that country. From all the light possessed on the subject the conclusion is reached that Mr. Gaines had no Methodistic proclivities, neither had his clerk, nor his man of the skins, nor his interpreter. Mr. Sturdevant could not help being interested in them all.

These three men, Harry Toulmin, Edmund P. Gaines, and George S. Gaines, Mr. Sturdevant had in his field but not in his fold, in his Circuit but not in his class, and nearly all their descendants who belong to the Church, so far as known, are Episcopalians.

Those men who sought residence where savage modes of life prevailed, and who had been long associated with barbarous tribes and wild adventurers, would not be easy victims of religious truth nor ready adherents of the gospel ministry. Such men were Nathan Blackwell, Hiram Mounger, and John McGrew. Blackwell moved to the Tombigbee and settled among the Indians in 1790, and Mounger in 1791, and McGrew somewhere about the same time. McGrew obtained possession of a tract of land on the east side of the Tombigbee, where he resided for many years, and where he was when Mr. Sturdevant brought the message of salvation to that region. In a treaty made between the United States and the Choctaw Indians November 16, 1805, there is an article which gives a part of the history of this man: "Art. IV. The Mingoes, chiefs and warriors of the Choctaws, certify that a tract of land not exceeding fifteen hundred acres, situated between the Tombigbee River and Jackson's Creek, the front or river line extending down the river from a blazed white oak standing on the left bank of the Tom-

bigbee near the head of the shoal, next above Hobukentoopa, and claimed by John McGrew, was in fact granted to the said McGrew by Opiomingo Hesnitta and others many years ago, and they respectfully request the Government of the United States to establish the claim of the said McGrew to the said fifteen hundred acres." (United States Statutes at Large, Indian Treaties, Vol. VII, p. 99.)

One part of Mr. Sturdevant's work in that country was to study the character and traits of the adventurers whom he found there and the necessary adjustments of the gospel to their cases.

Among all the men whom Mr. Sturdevant found in that country there was none of more conspicuous character than Tandy Walker, none in whom Mr. Sturdevant was more intensely interested. Mr. Walker's grandmother's maiden name was Nancy Tandy. That was the origin of his given name, Tandy. He was by birth a Virginian, by nature and experience a backwoodsman, by trade a blacksmith, and by acquired knowledge of the Indian language a medium of communication between the English-speaking and the Indian-speaking people. For all these reasons Mr. Sturdevant would be interested in him. He emigrated to Tombigbee by or before the summer of 1803. Some have said that he went to the Tombigbee in 1801. He was noted for courage, generosity, and honesty. The United States Government was exceedingly anxious to civilize the Indians and improve their condition, and to this end endeavored to introduce among them implements of husbandry. In some of the treaties made with the Indian tribes the Federal Government stipulated to furnish them blacksmiths. In connection with the trading house established at Saint Stephens for the benefit of the Choctaw Indians the government established a blacksmith shop, and for a time employed Tandy Walker to do the work of the shop. In the first half of this century nothing of a temporal and physical nature was of more importance to an itinerant preacher than a horse. While a horse is, under certain environments, a vain thing for safety, yet the horse has rendered invaluable service in ministerial work in these United States. To the comfort of the traveler and his horse nothing is more essential than horseshoes and horseshoe nails. Therefore, to Mr. Sturdevant, Tandy Walker, the blacksmith, was an important and invaluable citizen in the country where he found



him. Tandy Walker was, no doubt, the man who, from time to time, shod the horse of the first Methodist preacher who went to and fro in that envired settlement. It has been stated above that this blacksmith was a conspicuous character. He was summoned to serve on the juries of his country, and was employed and sent on most delicate and complicated missions. He was sent on expeditions in which caution, daring, endurance, insight, and wisdom were all in requisition. In 1812, upon the suggestion of Mrs. Gaines, the wife of George S. Gaines, the Government Agent, and upon the promptings of his own noble and generous impulses, Tandy Walker went to the Falls of the Black Warrior River, about where Tuskaloosa now stands, to rescue or ransom a Mrs. Crawley who had been captured in Tennessee and brought to that place by a party of Creek warriors who had been on a visit to Tecumseh on the Lakes. This business Mr. Walker transacted with success. In 1813 he went on some perilous expeditions for inspecting the situation and ascertaining the movements of the Creek forces which beleaguered the white settlements.

Though Tandy Walker could never be induced to join the Church himself, members of his household were in the communion of the Methodist Episcopal Church. His wife, whose maiden name was Mary Mays, was one of the Methodists of the Tombigbee Circuit, and his daughter, Sarah Newstep, who was born at the old town of Saint Stephens, on Tombigbee River, November 8, 1803, and who in 1820 married Caswell Reynolds, and who lived many years near New Berne, Alabama, and who has died this year 1890, was baptized and received into the Methodist Episcopal Church in the year 1815, at one of the appointments on the Tombigbee Circuit, near Coffeetown, Clark County, Alabama, by the Rev. Samuel Sellers, then presiding elder. This woman was a member of the Methodist Church in Alabama for three-quarters of a century. She was full of faith and good works.

Southeast of the present town of New Berne and in Township eighteen and Range six is a noted prairie marked on the maps as Walker's Prairie, and said to have been so called for Tandy Walker, and not far from that prairie, on the west side of it, Tandy Walker died in about 1842. His grave is there till this day.



Randall P. West, a native of England, a relative of a noted family of England, a man at one time of extensive commercial engagements, and a member of the Church of England, settled in Washington County, near Saint Stephens, about the year 1800, and was there until some time after Mr. Sturdevant's ministry in that section terminated. His granddaughter, Miss Marsilla Sexton, married Dr. Thomas O. Summers. His daughter, Miss Jane West, who married Mr. Sexton, and who was the mother of Dr. Summers' wife, was a Methodist, and a member at Tuscaloosa, Alabama, as early as 1831.

The population found by Mr. Sturdevant in the Tombigbee country when first he went to it were more inclined to sylvan sports and border ruffianism than to religious worship and to Christian decorum, and at the end of the first year he had not a member to report, and it seems, from the figures found on record, that not even his traveling expenses had been paid by the people whom he served.

The next year, the year 1809, Sturdevant and his colleague in the ministry enlarged the Tombeebee Mission. They extended it to the Chickasahay River, which was from five to ten miles beyond the present line of Alabama, and where they found a few families which became noted in the work of Methodism. This year and the years immediately following there moved into the bounds of what was then the Tombeebee charge men and women who were more favorably inclined toward the Christian religion than were those who settled there from one to three decades earlier. In this year, 1809, Sturdevant and Burdge had a preaching place and organized a Society on the Chickasahay in the neighborhood of the present town of Winchester, eight or ten miles west of the present line of Alabama. A Mr. Webber, a Mrs. Patton, William Ramsey, and his wife Elizabeth were original members of this Society. There is, at this date, no information as to who besides these, if any, belonged to that Society at its organization. Ramsey's cabin was a lodging place for the preachers when they were in that part of the Mission. Ramsey and his wife were leading spirits in the Methodist Church in the Chickasahay country during their lives, and Ramsey was a class leader for many years.

A short sketch of William Ramsey at this point is eminently proper, as he was among the very first members of the Tombig-

bee Mission, and was in style a type of the men of that day in that country, and as his history will give a correct idea of the hardships encountered in that region at the time of the introduction of Methodism there.

The incidents of a country are in accord with the state of society in which they transpire. The original state and the succeeding events of a country are inseparably connected. The original environment gives form and complexion to all forthcoming events. The environment is the very source and cause of the events which follow each other in the lapse of time. The character of grievances which occur gives rise to the modes of redress adopted. All events and all performances are characterized by the state and style of things which give them birth. No one will be guilty of the improprieties of excessive devotion to refined habits when refined habits are unknown. As was inevitable, the style of Church work and the effects of the gospel in the Tombigbee region, at the time of the introduction of Methodism there, were in exact keeping with the state of the people and the style of the times. These things premised, the life of William Ramsey has its significance, and a sketch of him will not fail to be of interest.

This William Ramsey was born in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, July 27, 1770. He lived awhile in Jackson County, Georgia, where two of his children were born. In 1808 he moved to the Chickasahay River. The little caravan of which he was the head, as it passed from Jackson County, Georgia, to the Chickasahay River, consisted of himself on foot, his wife mounted on a horse, with her child Andrew, not more than two and a half years old, seated behind her, and her baby, Abiezer Clarke, then less than four months old, in her lap, Dinah, a negro girl, on foot, and two pack horses loaded with what household goods and camp equipage they could carry. Whether there was a dog in the company tradition has not recorded. This little band found nearly the whole way infested with Indians, and themselves exposed to dangers and depredations, and their progress often retarded by streams that were not fordable, and that were without bridges and without ferries.

The trip made by this caravan was commenced in January, and the Chickasahay was reached and the trip ended February 21, 1808. None can refuse to pause and view the unique scene

of this woman, mounted on a horse, with her helpless offspring packed about her, making this trip across more than half the State of Georgia and across the entire State of Alabama, with menacing savages hanging on nearly every step, and swollen streams, bridgeless and ferryless, encountered every day! Though she was not adorned with the attire of a queen, nor attended by the retinue of an empress, yet Æschylus in his sublimest conceptions and wildest creations never apprehended and presented a picture which would surpass in engaging interest this real picture of this woman making this perilous and fatiguing journey.

The wife and children dismounted, and Mr. Ramsey unloaded his pack horses on the Chickasahay River near what was then the Choctaw boundary line, and near what is now the town of Waynesborough. Here he built his first cabin, made his first clearing, and raised his first crop, all done in the year 1808. When he reached the Chickasahay River his entire estate consisted of three horses, the baggage which two pack horses had conveyed there, the negro girl, Dinah, and twenty-one dollars in cash. He had neither provisions, house, nor field. One of the horses fell off the river bluff and was drowned; another was stolen by the Indians, and was never recovered. When Mr. Ramsey had halted on the spot where he intended to build his cabin and make his clearing, and had looked around him, he found that he had but few neighbors, and that they, like himself, were newly arrived. He also found that there was but little in that land on which to subsist, except the spontaneous products of the country. To get even seed corn he had to return to Saint Stephens, on the Tombigbee River, and pay four dollars a bushel for it. Other provisions were alike scarce and at exorbitant prices. But time and allotted space would fail to tell of building the cabin, clearing the field, planting the corn, making benches, stools, and chairs, securing the spinning wheel, constructing the rude loom, the slow process of picking the seed out of the cotton, spinning, spooling, reeling, dyeing, sizing, warping, and sleiding thread, weaving cloth, and obtaining other household necessities. Confronted as he was by such scarcity of provisions at such exorbitant prices, by the heavy losses he had sustained, and by such meager resources, the question is: How did he and his household manage to subsist? Stinted and

oppressed, sad and discouraged, he and his wife often wished they were back in Georgia, whence they came.

At the end of 1808 Mr. Ramsey sold his improvements (he did not own the land) and moved down the Chickasahay, and built a cabin, and opened a new clearing on the identical spot now occupied by the town of Winchester. He felled the first tree ever felled at the town of Winchester. Here he lived when Sturdevant and Burdge found him.

For about three years he lived in this vicinity. He then moved still lower down the Chickasahay to where the present town of Leakesville is situated, and in the immediate vicinity of what was then Bethel Church. At Bethel he and his wife held their membership for a series of years. Mr. Ramsey lived at many different places in this same community. He finally moved from the neighborhood of Bethel Church to a place west of Pascagoula River, in what is now Jackson County, near what was called Fairley's Ferry, and in a community of honest, industrious, hospitable, and mostly pious families. His plan was to locate on a spot, build a cabin, clear a field, then sell the improvements; hence his many moves. About 1820 he moved again, and settled a new place in the pine woods on the banks of Red Creek, and about twenty miles from the place whence he moved. Through all the years in which he resided on the banks of Red Creek he was an invalid, unable to even feed himself. He died at his home, July 19, 1833. He was a man of great industry, of uncommon energy, and of economical habits. His continual roving from place to place, though done in an effort to improve his financial condition, subjected him to many vicissitudes, and prevented any great acquisition of wealth. Through his great industry and close economy he was always able to live on his own resources, dispense a befitting hospitality, and maintain a measure of usefulness. He was a man of unquestioned integrity, and was much esteemed by his neighbors. As a Christian he was full of faith and good deeds, and had a profound experience of divine things. His patience under suffering was beautiful. His death was peaceful and triumphant. He was buried at his home on the banks of Red Creek. His wife died June 8, 1836, and was buried by his side. From thence they shall rise to the judgment.

The baby, Abiezer Clarke, who was brought on horseback by



his mother, Mrs. Elizabeth Ramsey, to Chickasahay, when less than four months old, will appear farther on in these pages as a Methodist preacher, and as one who rendered long and efficient service in Alabama.

The Bethel Meeting House, already mentioned, was two miles west of the Chickasahay River, and about two miles below the present town of Leakesville, was built of logs, and was the first house of worship, so far as any records show, which was ever built on the Tombigbee Mission. A Society was formed at that place in the house of John McRae, probably in 1809, and the house was built some time before 1812. John McRae and his wife, his two daughters and his two sisters, William Martin, and Daniel McIntosh, and possibly others, were original members of the Society at Bethel. John McRae was a leading citizen, the duke of the county in which he lived, and was for a long time a class leader. He was honored with a seat in the Legislative bodies of the State. The Society at Bethel was a flourishing one for many long years. The session of the Mississippi Conference was held there commencing December 5, 1822.

By 1810 there had gathered on Bassett's Creek east of the Tombigbee River, about fifteen miles from the junction of said creek and river, a considerable settlement, called Bassett's Creek Settlement. As early as the date here given the Methodists had in that community a preaching place and an organized Society. By 1810 John Dean had pitched his tent and had erected his home and altar in this community, and here in Section fourteen, Township seven, and Range three, west, he, at his first opportunity, made an entry of land. His entry is marked and named on the old maps of the State. This Mr. John Dean was a Methodist, and the members of his family were Methodists. He was kind, generous, hospitable, and religious. It was at his house on or near Bassett's Creek that the Methodist preachers in charge of the Tombigbee Mission in that early day received a cheerful welcome, found an agreeable home, and had furnished to them whatever was necessary to their comfort. It was at his house that the Rev. John S. Ford, at the close of a journey of eleven days through the Creek Nation, spent his first night on the Tombigbee Mission, and rested his weary limbs. It was in that neighborhood in which Mr. Dean lived that Mr.



Ford, the first Friday after his arrival there, attended a fast day service, and preached his first sermon on that Mission.

Ireland, though first discovered by pirates, first inhabited by exiles and outlaws, and first ruled by fire worshipers, and though her people have ever been turbulent and seditious, and though she has ever been cursed by cupidity, despotism, ignorance, popery, and poverty, has produced not a few Methodist preachers of note and worth. In the northeast of Ireland there is a county called Antrim. In this county, just north of Lough Neagh, on the river Main, is a place called Randalstown. In this town, in the year 1766, was born one John French, who became conspicuous in Methodism in the Tombigbee country. Somewhere about the first of this nineteenth century this John French left the land of bogs and mountains, of lakes and shores, of verdure and famine, of contrasts and conflicts, and came to America, a land bounteous, large, and free. It seems that he took up his abode with the conservative and steady people of North Carolina. Here in America he met with the Methodists, and through their influence he soon fell under deep distress on account of sin, was led to inquire wherewith he should draw near to God, and what he should bring to gain his grace. Under the process of evangelical conviction he tested the greatness of redeeming power, obtained the justifying grace, and felt his willing heart all taken up by love divine. From that time around the altars of the Church he poured forth his strains of triumph, and proclaimed his glorious hope of a righteous crown. He maintained that God's children, favored with his peculiar smile, and with all his blessings blessed, had a right to shout, and often, transported on the wings of love to realms of ineffable delight, did his impulsive soul break forth with ascriptions of praise and with loud hallelujahs.

He was convicted of a divine commission to preach the gospel, and his brethren were persuaded that he had gifts, grace, and promise of usefulness for the work, and consequently he was, by the process in such case provided, inducted into the Christian ministry. At the session of the Virginia Conference at Edmund Taylor's, Caswell Circuit, North Carolina, March 1, 1805, John French was admitted on trial into the traveling connection. He was admitted in the class with Matthew P. Sturdevant. At the session of the Virginia Conference at New

Berne, North Carolina, February 2, 1807, he was admitted into full connection, and ordained deacon. At the session of this Conference held at Tarborough, North Carolina, February 1, 1809, he was ordained elder. At the session of the Conference at Raleigh, North Carolina, February 7, 1811, he was granted a location at his own request. This ended his itinerant work. He had an honorable standing in his Conference while he was connected with it. He filled important Circuits, and had success in all the charges he served.

He married a woman of good traits and of Christian character about the time he located. His marriage induced his location.

In 1811, the year of his location, he moved to the Tombigbee settlements. He was at that time clothed with all the functions of the Christian ministry, was naturally endowed with liberal gifts, and had qualifications attained by large experience and extensive observation. He was, therefore, prepared to preach the gospel, administer the sacraments, and give counsel in planning and executing the work of the Church; hence his advent into the Tombigbee country was a blessing to Methodism in that region.

He reached that country just on the eve of perilous times. A few short months after Mr. French reached the Tombigbee settlements, and in the same year, Tecumseh was in the Creek Nation, and the Creek War was projecting its dark lineaments over the land. The plot was thickening, the elements were brewing, the portents were increasing. He scarcely had time to build himself a rude shelter before he had to help erect forts for the protection of the settlers; he scarcely had time to adjust his ministerial armor after his journey through the wilderness before he had to don the military garb. During this terrible Creek War he acted in the capacity of soldier and preacher. He bore the weapons carnal and spiritual at the same time. He made a valiant soldier as well as a zealous and laborious preacher. He discharged all the duties devolving upon him in the campaign as a soldier, and preached to the people assembled in the different forts in the settlements as opportunity offered. He died in 1840. His wife, Sarah, a Virginian by birth, died in the sixty-ninth year of her age, September 5, 1848.

On the east bank of the Tombigbee River at Wood's Bluff,

and in an admirable natural position for defense, was a fort called Fort Easley, and so named from a family by the name of Easley living in the immediate vicinity. William Easley, who, at the opening of Mr. Sturdevant's ministry in that country, had several grown sons and citizens of the same vicinity, moved to the Tombigbee at least a decade before the beginning of this century. A number of these Easleys became Methodists. Some persons have supposed that when the Easleys first moved to the Tombigbee they carried with them to that country certificates of membership in the Methodist Church, but this is clearly a mistake. At the time William Easley settled in that country among the savages and Spaniards there was no use for certificates of membership in the Methodist Church there, and Mr. Easley carried with him to that land neither certificate nor membership. But some of the members of this large family attached themselves to the Methodist Episcopal Church during the very first years of the Methodist ministry in that section. In this fort bearing their name the Easleys took refuge, and their neighbors and others also gathered there. In 1813 a camp-meeting was held in this fort. Here all the services of a camp-meeting were had, even the class-meeting or love-feast on Sunday morning. Those who occupied other forts in adjacent sections attended this camp-meeting. While the divine services were carried on, armed men were stationed around on picket lines to watch and guard against surprises and attacks from the prowling and murderous savages. This camp-meeting, held amidst the strifes and tumults of a savage war, was conducted by Nolley and Shrock, who were the preachers assigned to the charge for that year, and by French, the local preacher and the enlisted militia soldier. These preachers and people worked for God and worshiped him like the builders of the walls of Jerusalem in the time of Nehemiah, armed "with their swords, their spears, and their bows."

The war terminated disastrously to the Creek savages. As a condition of the Treaty of Peace they ceded all their land from the western boundary as far east as the Coosa River. This treaty was made August 9, 1814. The war was over, and Mr. French laid aside the soldier's armor, and gave himself to the peaceable pursuits so agreeable to him, and so befitting his ministerial calling. In 1815 he settled in Barlow's Bend of the Ala-

bama River, five or six miles from the present Gainestown. Here he lived until his days on earth were ended. In 1819 he built in his community a house for worship, which was ever known as French's Chapel. He did much for the cause of Methodism in all the surrounding country. Many amusing anecdotes have been told of him. Numerous were his puns and blunders. He was, nevertheless, a great revivalist, and a wise and judicious manipulator of protracted meetings. He understood the processes for the attainment of the best results. Mr. French wholly followed the Lord, and maintained an untarnished Christian character to the end of his earthly career.

The Rev. Thomas Owens was the junior preacher on the Tombigbee Charge in 1815, and then again in 1818. He was born in South Carolina, January 8, 1787. When but a child he went with his parents to the Natchez country, where he grew to manhood. When a young man, and before his attainment of the Christian religion, he was boisterous, wild, and wicked. His first year in the itinerant ministry was 1814, and was in connection with the Mississippi Conference. His effective ministry covered not more than a dozen years. For many, many years he was on the superannuated list. He was a small man, with a lean, bony face, a prominent forehead, and keen eyes. He was eccentric, humorous, and facetious. He was, even in old age, wanting in gravity. Through his life he enacted many ridiculous scenes, and was the subject of many amusing anecdotes. He was full of levity, and enjoyed the ludicrous when it was at the expense of others; but when it was at his expense he did not relish it. One incident which occurred in the second year of his ministry, and his first year on the Tombigbee Charge, will serve as an illustration of the latter part of this statement. When this incident occurred he was about twenty-eight years old, and was an unmarried man. He had an appointment on one occasion for preaching at night at the residence of Mr. William Ramsey, which was just on the opposite side of the Chickasaw River from Bethel Church. The time came, the congregation assembled, the services were held, the sermon was preached, the congregation was dismissed, and they dispersed and went to their homes. Brother Owens remained at Brother Ramsey's for the night. So did two young ladies, Miss Margaret McRae and her sister, Miss Jane McRae. Brother Ramsey's



house had but two rooms. One of these rooms was occupied for the night by the Misses McRae, and the other by the family and the preacher. Brother Owens declined to occupy the bed which was set apart for his use, and would not be satisfied with anything but a pallet on the floor before the fire, and so he was accommodated. During the night a heavy gust of wind swept down the chimney, carrying the accumulated soot into the room, and depositing a thick covering of it on the preacher and his pallet. Oblivious of the coming and going of the wind, and unconscious of the coat with which he and his pallet before the fire were covered, and it not being one of his times to rise up a great while before day, and depart into a solitary place and pray, he continued to recline and roll upon his bed until after the morning sun had dispelled the darkness of the night. The soot was well rubbed in and pretty firmly set by this time, and Brother Owens was quite as black as the sable sons of Africa's clime. Finally his host aroused him from his slumbers, invited him to arise from his chosen pallet, and requested him to behold his face in the glass. He arose, and looked into the glass, and, it is likely, he never did forget what manner of looking man he was that morning. He went to a washstand in the yard, where with water and soap he commenced a process of cleansing. Just as he was beginning the work of scrubbing the Misses McRae walked out, surveyed the scene, and took in the situation. A preacher's dignity and this preacher's plight were incongruous. The scene was ludicrous, and was too much for any rules of etiquette, and was too much for any common seriousness. Let rhetoricians say what they may about the purposes of raising a laugh, and let them say what they may about the offices of ridicule in the improvement of morals and the refinement of manners; let moralists say what they may about laughing at one's misfortunes being a species of ridicule, and let them say what they may about ridicule being a violation of the law of love, it was impossible to suppress laughter while looking at that preacher covered with soot and scrubbing with water and soap. The provocation was enough, and the young ladies and the members of the family laughed, they laughed involuntarily and heartily. This was to Brother Owens a terrible ordeal. The scrubbing, cleansing process irritated the surface no little, and irritated that within fully as much. The laughing caused



by his predicament and done at his expense intensified the irritation under which he was smarting. This ordeal tested his grace and manifested his temper. For once in his life his levity was overcome, his facetiousness forsook him, and he became severely grave, he became grave almost to rage. Under that process he was austere enough to have satisfied the demand of an ascetic. The scrubbing was finally finished, the laughing ended, and Brother Owens recovered his equanimity. No doubt he set this occurrence down as one of the felicities of the itinerancy in a new country.

Brother Owens was of a nervous temperament, but he was as fearless as a lion. His effort in preaching was to stir the emotions rather than to enlighten the intellect. His reproofs and admonitions were made with great directness. He never courted the applause of the irreligious. His custom was to invite penitents to the altar after preaching. From the time of his admission into the itinerant ministry until his death he was a member of the Mississippi Conference. He maintained a good name until the end, and died in the State of Mississippi, July 1, 1868, exclaiming with his expiring breath: "My way to heaven is as straight as a line."

In 1816 the Rev. John Gilmore, then about forty years old, and the Rev. Elijah Gilmore, a younger brother, with their families, moved from Tennessee to the Tombigbee country. The Rev. John Gilmore stopped in the neighborhood of Wood's Bluff, and the Rev. Elijah Gilmore stopped in the neighborhood of what was afterward called Grove Hill.

The Rev. John Gilmore joined the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1800, and was licensed to preach in 1813. So soon as he settled on the Tombigbee he began to preach as a local preacher to the people in his immediate vicinity. The largest part of his ministry was given as a local preacher to the Tombigbee Circuit, he remaining in that region in that capacity about twenty years. He was ordained a deacon by Bishop Enoch George, at Sugsville, Alabama, in November, 1819. In January, 1837, in the city of Mobile, he joined the Alabama Conference, and thenceforward continued in the itinerant ministry until his death, in November, 1844. He trained all who were under his control in the doctrines and usages of Methodism. In his death he was peaceful, assured, and triumphant.

It is not known when nor where the Rev. Elijah Gilmore was licensed to preach. It was, however, some time before he moved to the Tombigbee region. So soon as he could congregate the few white settlers he found in the new community in which he had located, he commenced preaching to them. In due course of events there was a School-house built about two miles east of the present town of Grove Hill. Here the Rev. Elijah Gilmore established a regular appointment for preaching, and here was established what became one of the regular appointments of the Tombigbee Circuit, and one which continued until 1860. This place was named for John Spinks, who was among the early settlers in that community, and who lived in the neighborhood until his death. The Rev. Joseph T. Curry, who was one of the preachers on the Tombigbee Circuit in 1843, made an entry in his Journal concerning John Spinks which may be given here in connection with this account of the origin of this appointment bearing so long his name. "December, Sunday, 3, 1843. I attended the funeral of a beloved brother, John Spinks, over whom the Church and friends greatly lament; his house has ever been the Methodist preacher's home; both saints and sinners mourn his exit." Brother Elijah Gilmore lived and labored as a Methodist preacher in the neighborhood of Spinks' Chapel for a number of years, and finally moved and settled near Shubuta, Mississippi, where he afterward died, a very old man.

There came to the Tombigbee with these two preachers, John and Elijah Gilmore, their mother, Mrs. Gilmore, and four brothers, the widow and sons of the Rev. Humphrey Gilmore, whom Bishop Asbury set apart for the office of a deacon, at Augusta, Georgia, December 30, 1801. The members of this family were all Methodists, instructed in the doctrines and trained in the usages thereof. Stephen, the youngest of the sons, and who was seventeen years old, when he came to the neighborhood of what was afterward called Spinks' Chapel, became a preacher. Here is a verbatim copy of his license: "Stephen Gilmore is hereby authorized to Preach as A Local Preacher in the Methodist E. Church so long as his conduct accord with the word of God. Signed in behalf of the Conference held for Marengo Circuit 20th September, 1828. EBENEZER HEARN, P. E." He was set apart to the office of a deacon by Bishop Beverly Waugh, in Mobile, Alabama, December 19, 1841.

Some further history of the organization of the Mississippi Conference is necessary in order to a full and intelligent understanding of the subject. The name of the Mississippi Conference does not appear in the Discipline until 1816, nor in the General Minutes until the appointments are given for 1817, and yet previous to this there were held three sessions of the Mississippi Conference, three sessions which never had proper official recognition. The first session of this Conference was held, as has been stated elsewhere, in November, 1813; the second session was held in November, 1814; and the third session was held in November, 1815. The General Conference, at the session in May, 1812, authorized the bishops—there were only two of them, Asbury and McKendree—to organize a Conference in Mississippi any time, during the next four years, if in their judgment it should be expedient. Under this authority and the emergencies of the case, the bishops, in the latter end of 1812, decided to constitute the Mississippi Conference, and appointed the time and place, November 1, 1813, and Spring Hill, Jefferson County, Mississippi Territory, for its first session and for its formal organization. When the appointed time came the bishops could not, on account of the hostilities of the Creek Indians, attend. The preachers, however, who were to constitute the Conference and had been notified of the time for its organization met and organized and transacted the business properly coming before them on the occasion. They held the three sessions already mentioned without any bishop; and so, though these sessions were held by appointment, by authority, and by legal enactment, and though the regular business of an Annual Conference was all scrupulously transacted, preachers being received on trial and into full connection, and elected to deacon's and elder's orders, and superannuated, and located as in other Annual Conferences, these sessions of this Conference were all treated as irregular, and the proceedings thereof were reported and printed in the General Minutes as business transacted by the Tennessee Conference. The boundaries of the Mississippi Conference were for the first time determined and named by the General Conference at the session in May, 1816. Then for the first time the name and boundaries of this Annual Conference appeared in the Discipline, and the first session under this official provision was held at William Foster's, a few miles north

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of the city of Natchez, beginning October 10, 1816, with Bishop Robert R. Roberts presiding, at least the latter part of the session. Henceforth the name and proceedings of the Mississippi Conference appeared in the General Minutes. Now all was established and regular.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE FIRST WORK OF METHODISM IN ALABAMA (CONTINUED).

THAT section of Alabama joining the State of Tennessee and lying along the Tennessee River next claims attention in the order of the beginning of the work of Methodism in the State.

It is a fact which appears in the history that the various Indian tribes claimed all the land they could about the borders of their several boundaries, and that these tribes ceded to the United States any and every part of their lands grudgingly. They never ceded any portion of their lands until emergencies arising absolutely compelled them to do so. No white settlements, properly so called, were ever made in any section of the country until the lands were ceded to the United States, and the Indian titles were extinguished. White men settled among the Indians nearly everywhere before cessions of land were made, but in all such cases they submitted to the customs and modes of Indian life. Therefore the date of the beginning of white settlements in every place is the same as the date of the cession of the land by the Indians to the United States. This is exactly true concerning the beginning of the white settlements in that part of Alabama along the Tennessee River. The cession of the land and the extinction of the Indian titles in that immediate section was complicated and retarded by conflicting claims. The boundary line between the Cherokee and the Chickasaw Indians was a subject of dispute with these tribes, and they claimed the same territory about the head waters of Duck and Elk Rivers, and along the Tennessee River from the Chickasaw Island in that river which is just above what is now called Whitesburg, and what was as early as 1805 and as late as 1818 called Ditto's Landing, down to the lower end of Muscule Shoals. From the treaties made by these tribes with the United States it is shown that the Chickasaws and the Cherokees each ceded and received compensation for the same tract of country.



In a treaty concluded in the Chickasaw country, July 23, 1805, between the United States and the Chickasaw Indians, the Chickasaws ceded to the United States the tract of country included in the following boundary: "Beginning on the left bank of Ohio, where the present Indian boundary adjoins the same, thence down the left bank of Ohio to the Tennessee River, thence up the main channel of Tennessee to the mouth of Duck River; thence up the left bank of Duck River to the Columbian highway or road leading from Nashville to Natchez, thence along the said road to the ridge dividing the waters running into Duck River from those running into Buffalo River, thence eastwardly along the said ridge to the great ridge dividing the waters running into the main Tennessee River from those running into Buffalo River near the main source of Buffalo River, thence in a direct line to the Great Tennessee River near the Chickasaw old fields or eastern point of the Chickasaw claim on that river; thence northwardly to the great ridge dividing the waters running into the Tennessee from those running into Cumberland River, so as to include all the waters running into Elk River, thence along the top of the said great ridge to the place of beginning."

In a treaty concluded at the city of Washington between the United States and the Cherokee Nation of Indians on January 7, 1806, the Cherokees relinquished "to the United States all right, title, interest, and claim, which they have or ever had to all that tract of country which lies to the northward of the river Tennessee and westward of a line to be run from the upper part of the Chickasaw old fields, at the upper point of an island, called Chickasaw Island, on said river, to the most easterly head waters of that branch of said Tennessee River called Duck River, excepting the two following described tracts--viz.: one tract bounded southerly on the said Tennessee River, at a place called the Muscle Shoals, westerly by a creek called Te Kee-ta-noeh or Cyprus Creek, and easterly by Chu-wa-lee, or Elk River or Creek, and northerly by a line to be drawn from a point on said Elk River ten miles on a direct line from its mouth or junction with Tennessee River, to a point on the said Cyprus Creek, ten miles on a direct line from its junction with the Tennessee River. The other tract is to be two miles in width on the north side of Tennessee River, and to extend north-

erly from that river three miles, and bounded as follows, viz.: Beginning at the mouth of Spring Creek, and running up said creek three miles on a straight line, thence westerly two miles at right angles with the general course of said creek, thence southerly on a line parallel with the general course of said creek to the Tennessee River, thence up said river by its waters to the beginning; which first reserved tract is to be considered the common property of the Cherokees who now live on the same; including John D. Chesholm, Au-tow-we and Cheh Chuh, and the other reserved tract, on which Moses Melton now lives, is to be considered the property of said Melton and of Charles Hicks, in equal shares."

The land ceded and bounded in the treaty made with the Chickasaws, July 23, 1805, covered a part of the same tract embraced in the land ceded and bounded in the treaty made with the Cherokees, January 7, 1806. That part of the tract of land ceded and bounded in the said treaty with the Chickasaws which lay in Alabama was in the form of a triangle, and where it terminated at the Chickasaw Island, in the Tennessee River just above what was then called Ditto's Landing, it was about four miles wide, and at the Tennessee State line was about thirty miles wide. The tract of land ceded and bounded by the Cherokees, January 7, 1806, went to the same line east and to the same point at Chickasaw Island of the tract ceded by the Chickasaws, but extended further down the Tennessee River than did the tract ceded by the Chickasaws. It extended to the lower end of Muscle Shoals, except two small reservations named. It took from July 23, 1805, till May 22, 1807, to make and ratify the treaties necessary to entirely extinguish the Indian titles to that triangular tract of land out of which, December 13, 1808, the County of Madison was by legal enactment and authority constituted. Upon the establishment of these treaties that section of the country was open to white settlers, and about the time these treaties bear date white men began to venture into that region. It was just about the time these treaties were made, somewhere from 1805 to 1807, that John Hunt took up his abode and built a log cabin at the magnificent spring ten miles from Ditto's Landing. Henceforth that spring was called Hunt's Spring. Ditto's Landing was so called from a white man by the name of Ditto who lived at that point

among the Indians, a regular Indian Countryman, and who went among them previous to any cession of that territory to the United States.

About the time the treaty with the Cherokee Indians was ratified in 1807, a small number of immigrants from South Carolina, with John Ford as the recognized leader of the little band, took up their abode in that triangular-shaped territory which had its terminal point, as has already been stated, at Chickasaw Island. When this little company of immigrants had pitched their tents in this territory so recently ceded to the United States they found they were literally in the dismal wilds of America, where no laws existed, and where no government had jurisdiction. Civilization, even in its smallest beginnings and rudest forms, had not so much as laid a preëmption on that soil. The little tract of land, though released from Indian claims, was closely environed by savages. While it was the center of a beautiful region, with gushing springs, refreshing streams, and fertile soil, it was, nevertheless, at that time, an inhospitable land. It was a dismal solitude. There was nothing to gratify a reasonable ambition, nothing to encourage religious devotion, or to contribute to religious enjoyment. There was nothing upon which to expend religious energies. Depredations were common, and called for unremitting vigilance and vigorous defense. John Ford's ancestors were Methodists, and he and his wife had joined the Methodist Episcopal Church in South Carolina, and were pious and zealous Christians. They, and others of this little company of adventurers, longed for religious immunities and Christian associations. Oppressed by isolation, harassed by depredations, and thirsting for better religious facilities, they resolved not to remain in that land; and so, at the end of one year, they took their journey from thence, and went into the Natchez country. In that then far western land Mr. Ford searched him out a location on Pearl River, where he made his abode till his earthly pilgrimage was ended. He and his family became noted in Methodism. At some time in his life, when is not known, he was licensed to preach, and he was for a great number of years a local preacher. It was at John Ford's, on Pearl River, that the second informal session of the Mississippi Conference was held, beginning November 14, 1814. It was at Ford's Meeting House, Pearl River, Missis-

issippi State, the Mississippi Conference held its session beginning October 29, 1818.

This band of immigrants left the land on the Tennessee, but soon others came. In the year 1808, Joshua Boucher, with his young family, and John Stringfield, with his wife and children, moved to that territory, which was that very year organized into a county, and named Madison. Mr. Boucher had joined the Methodist Episcopal Church in Kentucky in 1806, and was a zealous Christian. Mr. Stringfield and his wife, Sarah, and his son, Thomas, who was twelve years old when they came to this section, had all joined the Methodist Episcopal Church previous to their coming to their new abode, and they were all pious. John Stringfield and his wife both died in this county, Mr. Stringfield in 1822, and his wife in 1828. Though the inhabitants were few, and the organized Methodist Classes were small, yet, here in this wild region, Joshua Boucher filled the position of class leader and of exhorter, and here in 1811 he was licensed to preach. In 1809, Daniel Thompson, a local preacher of great popularity, and a professional teacher of rare attainments and of profound scholarship, came to Madison County. He died in the county at an advanced age, and was buried at Beech Grove Church, near the State line. But space would fail to tell of Bibb and Brandon and Cabaniss and Eldridge and Harris and Lanier and Manning and McDonald and Moore and Pope and Powers and Reedy and Roper and Strong and Steger and Weaver and Winston, and others who had become residents of the county by the close of 1810. By the latter part of 1809 it was assumed that there were citizens enough in the county to justify the holding of courts in the county. Accordingly, the Legislative Council and House of Representatives of the Mississippi Territory, in general assembly convened, did, on December 23, 1809, pass an act directing courts to be held, and a convenient place to be selected for establishing public buildings in the County of Madison. The next year, 1810, the place was selected, and the town was laid out and named Twickenham, as the legislative act required. The place selected was at the spring where John Hunt had previously erected his cabin. The Legislative Council and House of Representatives of Mississippi Territory, in general assembly convened, passed, November 25, 1811, an act changing the name of Twickenham to that of



Huntsville, and on December 9, 1811, they passed an act to incorporate said town.

Methodism was present at the dawning of things in Madison County. The very first white persons who touched the soil embraced in Madison County were Methodists. Before any courts were established in the county Methodist Societies were organized, Methodist class leaders were appointed, Methodist exhorters were licensed, Methodist services were being held, and Methodist work was going on. As early as 1811, if not earlier, Methodist Quarterly Conferences were held, and Methodist preachers were licensed in the county.

The Baptists were there equally early. They were there at the beginning of things, and they were strong and numerous for the number of inhabitants in the county at the time. On Flint River, north-east of Hunt's Spring, at the house of James Deaton, October 2, 1808, they constituted a Church with eleven or twelve members, which Church they named Flint River. This was the first Baptist Church in the county. Others soon followed. Though in the beginning, in all the Tennessee Valley, the Baptists were strong, they have not, up to this date, prospered much in that part of Alabama. There has been a special cause for this. At the risk of anticipating the events of history, it may be said in this connection that the Baptists in Alabama, at one time, had among themselves dissensions and divisions of a serious nature, and that in their final issue these dissensions and divisions resulted in great damage to their interests in all that part of the State known as the Tennessee Valley. The doctrine of Calvinism held by the Baptists as a denomination led to confusion in their administration and to strife in their councils. The logical sequence of Calvinism is Antinomianism. A large number of the ministers and members of the Baptist Church were out and out Antinomians, and as such were opposed to all benevolent enterprises, and to all efforts for the dissemination of the gospel. An Antinomian is an antimissionary. There were others among the Baptists who in the face of the Calvinistic doctrine of foreordination and fatality which they held, and in defiance of all the logic involved in their doctrine, insisted on making an effort to disseminate the gospel, and these, in 1823, formed the State Convention, the objects of which were to aid in domestic and foreign missions, and the edu-



cation of young men who were called to the ministry. At once an issue arose, and a contest ensued. The Antinomian party were irreconcilably opposed to the work for which the Convention had been organized. Many of the ministers and churches delivered their opinions on these points, acrimonious speeches were made, and angry debates took place in their associational meetings. Human language is too poor to describe some of the scenes which were enacted in not a few of their Associations. In some instances preachers were arraigned by Churches for persisting in having a Sunday-school, and for joining missionary societies, and in some instances churches set up in Associations to themselves in order to separate themselves from those allied to the cause of Missions and other benevolent institutions. The Rev. William Crutcher, of Madison County, was at the head of the antieffort men of the time, and his associates and followers in that section constituted the large majority of the Baptist fraternity. These statements concerning the Baptists are not prompted by any unfriendly feeling. They are in accord with the facts of history, and are authorized by the Baptist historian. The strong opposition to benevolent enterprises and Christian effort originating with and maintained by these Baptists, these Antinomians, in that section, affected that whole country. It was potent for evil. As a poison it infected the whole population. Consequently, throughout the Tennessee Valley there has not been that liberality in supporting the enterprises of the Church which duty and interest required. The Methodists of the Tennessee Valley have never been distracted by any dissensions of their own. They have been singularly free from strifes and division among themselves, and they have ever had a numerous following and a large membership. While they have been Arminians, and have avowed opposition to Antinomianism, yet they have been so environed by this hostility to benevolent institutions in Church work that, compared with the luxuriant products and the wealth possessed in that country, the financial contributions made there by the Methodists to the support of the ministry and the various enterprises of the Church have up to this date (1889) been exceedingly meager. That grace of liberality which the Word of God so authoritatively enjoins and so repeatedly commends has been suppressed, dwarfed, by the insidious influence of that Antinomianism which distracted

and divided the Baptist Church, and impeded her progress in that region.

The session of the Western Conference, held at Liberty Hill, where Green Hill lived, in Williamson County, Tennessee, October 1-7, 1808, touched closely a historic paragraph in the introduction of Methodism in the "great bend" of the Tennessee River. A camp-meeting was held in connection with this session of the Conference, and the preachers were entertained and lodged in the tents. Bishop Asbury presided over the business of the Conference, and preached three times during the session. Attention is called to the fact that this session of the Conference commenced on Saturday, the first day of October, the day before the Flint River Baptist Church, north-east of Hunt's Spring, was constituted, and that said session ended on Friday, the seventh day of October, more than two months before the County of Madison was by official act, constituted and named, and more than fourteen months before the legislative act was passed directing courts to be held in said county. These statements are made to show forth still further that the Methodists were in that section at the very first, at the origin and organization of affairs. It was at this session of the Western Conference that the first Methodist preacher, in the regular ministerial work, was sent to the settlers in the "great bend" of the Tennessee River. This appointment was made at the date above given, but it must be borne in mind that it was made for the Conference year, 1809. At the end of the list of the appointments for the Cumberland District are found these words: "James Gwinn, Missionary." This was the man who was to preach that year to the new settlers in the "great bend" of the noble Tennessee, and this was the capacity in which he was to minister to that people. He was a missionary to bear to that people glad tidings. He filled his appointment, operated in the field designed by his appointment, had good success, and at the end of the Conference year, September 30, 1809, reported for the statistical table one hundred and seventy-five white and four colored members, and a pastoral charge which heretofore had not existed, an appointment named Flint. This pastoral charge was on Flint River, and lay partly in Madison County, Alabama, and partly in Franklin County, Tennessee. It extended from Chickasaw Island, in the Tennessee River, to about where McMinnville, in

the State of Tennessee, is now situated. So the first regular itinerant work in this river bend was done by the Rev. James Gwinn, beginning in October, 1808.

The Rev. James Gwinn was born in 1769. He went to Tennessee in 1788, and there, that year, when in the Cumberland Circuit, in the bounds of which he lived, there were only fifty-nine white and four colored members, he joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. He, though very young, had married before he joined the Church. When or where he was licensed to preach is to this present generation unknown. The first record now extant of his ministry is found in connection with the Western Conference. The Western Conference held its session at Station Camp, in the Wilderness, on or near the Cumberland River, in Tennessee, October 2-5, 1802. It appears that Station Camp was not very far from where the present town of Gallatin is situated. Bishop Asbury reached the seat of this Conference on the day of the beginning of the session after the Conference had proceeded to business, going there on horseback from Virginia, by way of Knoxville, Tennessee, along narrow trails, and over rugged mountains, camping out at night. He was suffering intensely with rheumatism, and though he had preached many times on the way thither, he was too unwell to preach during the session of the Conference. He, however, presided in the Conference, ordained those present for ordination, and made the appointments of the preachers for the next year. At this session of the Conference the Rev. James Gwinn was received as a preacher on trial, and given an appointment. From this time until his death, in 1841, he served with more or less regularity in the itinerant ministry. For a few years of the time he was local, and a few years of the time, when connected with the Conference, he was without an appointment. He organized Missions and Circuits, thereby laying the foundations in some places, and seven years of his ministry he was in the office of presiding elder. He lived in Nashville many years, serving the Church in various capacities in and about that then small town. He was at the time of his death, which occurred near Vicksburg, Mississippi, August 3, 1841, a member of the Mississippi Conference. He labored in Alabama only one year, beginning his work October 7, 1808, and closing it September 30, 1809.

Physically Mr. Gwinn was neither a dwarf nor a weakling. He was tall, large, and strong. Mentally he was well endowed, having an active and a discerning mind. He was a man of generous impulses, of an indomitable spirit, and of easy and pleasant manners. He was in his measure a patriot and a philanthropist. As a preacher what he lacked in systematic and logical arrangement he more than made up by warmth, ardor, and impetuosity. In song and prayer and exhortation he was sweet, fervent, and mighty. He had a native and wild eloquence which gave him power over the masses. He received many into the Church during his ministry, and he secured the affection and retained the respect of those to whom he preached. His faith was abiding, and his death was peaceful.

The Flint Circuit continued to increase in membership. At the close of 1817 there were on that work six hundred white and forty-five colored members. There are no means of ascertaining what proportion of these members were in Alabama and what proportion were in Tennessee. Information as to the places where and the dates when Societies were organized in the "big bend" of the Tennessee River is quite meager. Shiloh, which was about two miles from what is now Brownsboro, a station on the Memphis and Charleston Railroad, was one of the oldest preaching places in that region. A Society was formed there at a private house in the very beginning. At Hunt's Spring a Society was organized at the first. At the very beginning a Society was organized five or six miles west of Hunt's Spring, in the neighborhood where Jordan's Camp Ground was afterward established. At Ford's Chapel, a dozen or more miles north-west from Huntsville, a preaching place was established and a Society was organized as early as 1815. Blue Spring, about four miles from Huntsville, was organized in the very early days. McGhee's Camp Ground, two miles south of the Tennessee State line, on the road now leading from Huntsville to Fayetteville, was established and a Society organized as early as 1816. At a very early date there was a Society organized two and a half miles from Ditto's Landing, and afterward a house of worship was erected there and called Lebanon. Organizations are still kept up at Shiloh, Hunt's Spring, Ford's Chapel, and Lebanon. Hunt's Spring changed in name to Huntsville, and Lebanon changed its location a short distance. It is impossible to mention all who in



that early day were members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and prominent in the cause. Some names have already been mentioned. At Shiloh were David Thompson, John W. Hewlett, Thomas King, Joel Tatum, Augustus Hewlett, and John W. Hamner; at Hunt's Spring were the Brandons, Mrs. Dunn, and Mrs. Ewing; in the neighborhood where Jordan's Camp Ground was afterward established were William Lanier, Robert Lanford, James Bibb, William Bibb, Loyd Aday, James Polard, Batt Jordan, James Sharp, William Blake; at Blue Spring was Richard Harris. Judging from the oldest deeds on record, these Societies all worshiped in private houses until 1820 and 1821, as no houses of worship were built previous to said dates. The preachers who served the Flint Circuit after its organization by the Rev. James Gwinn up to the close of 1817, were Jedediah McMinn, John Phipps, Thomas Stilwell, David Goodner, Zachariah Witten, John McClure, Valentine D. Barry, John Cragg, Moses Ashworth, Hugh McPhaill, James Farris. Learner Blackman and Thomas L. Douglass were the presiding elders.

Until about 1818 Flint Circuit was the only pastoral charge which reached into that part of what is now Alabama and known as the Tennessee Valley. Elk Circuit never reached what is now Alabama. It was confined to the State of Tennessee. There were no white settlers about the mouth of the Elk River and about the Muscle Shoals on the Tennessee River to preach to before 1817. It was not until the making of a treaty September 20, 1816, that the Chickasaws relinquished "all right or title to the lands on the north side of the Tennessee River, and all claim to territory on the south side of said river, and east of a line commencing at the mouth of Caney Creek, running up said creek to its source, thence a due south course to the ridge path, or commonly called Gaines's road, along said road south-westwardly to a point on the Tombigbee River, well known by the name of the Cotton Gin Port, and down the west bank of the Tombigbee to the Choctaw boundary." In 1818 the Richland Circuit was extended across the Tennessee State line into the Alabama Territory, and preaching places were established at private houses about the Muscle Shoals. This was the second charge which was extended into that part of the Territory of Alabama, and this was the year in which it was done. There were none in that part of the Tennessee Valley to preach to until about the year



1818. As authority for these statements here made may be given one who was on the ground at the time, the Rev. John Brooks. From "The Life and Times of the Rev. John Brooks" is given the following: "In 1818 I joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. From this time I felt a constant impression to call sinners to repentance. In the month of May I went to a quarterly meeting on Bradshaw Creek, Giles County, on purpose to see Thomas L. Douglass, and have a private interview with him. . . . I laid before him my feelings. . . . He then advised me to travel the balance of the year with the Rev. John Seaton and Hartwell H. Brown, who were then traveling Richland Circuit. . . . Some time in June I joined Messrs. Seaton and Brown. They received me kindly. I traveled first with one and then the other. Richland Circuit that year embraced the territory lying west of Giles County, extending to the Muscle Shoals on Tennessee River. It took us six weeks to get round; we had but little rest and much hard traveling and labor. As the territorial part of our circuit [that part of it which was in Alabama] was a wilderness and just filling up, the oldest settlers perhaps had not been there more than a year, we had much trouble in this new part with the fierce, ranting Calvinists, who were doing all they could to distract and destroy the Societies in this section. Indeed this was their steady work everywhere, and always had been. We sometimes were assailed by them in a very unbecoming manner. . . . I recollect near the mouth of Blue Water, near the Muscle Shoals, after Brother Brown had preached one day at a brother's house, and the congregation had been dismissed, an aged man who was on a visit to see the landlord rose up and attacked us in a rough manner, and went on at some length, neither of us making any reply, till the man of the house broke into his conversation by asking us all if we would not like after dinner to go a fishing, to which we all agreed. I took Brother Brown out and told him I wanted him to paddle the canoe, and told him my reasons, to which he agreed. It was not long till we were on the water. Brother B. paddled the little craft; our landlord stood in the bow with his gig; our assailant and myself sat near the middle on two boards. I soon introduced the subject of his assault on us. At this he very willingly went to the matter. Instantly we were in close, deathlike action. It was not long till he was

so fired that he talked very loud, and soon seemed to get very angry. I minded neither of these, but kept close to him, sending home darts every moment. He finally turned to the bowman and asked him to make for shore; he wanted to get away from me. I looked around at Brother B., and gave him the wink. I then told my friend we were not going to land; this was my time; he had publicly, at the house, assailed us uncalled for, and as he was fond of water fighting, I hoped he would not flinch now, but let us have a final naval action. He answered that he would talk to no such man. I asked him what had caused so sudden a change in his mind; he was very fond of talking to me at the house. He said he did not know me then. I told him what he had learned of me was from talking, and to prevent him from getting into similar disgrace I would talk. At last he offered to pay me if I would let him alone. I told him I had no pay for such work; I wanted him to know that hereafter he should treat Methodist preachers differently. He said he wanted to go to land. I told him we would go; I looked at Brother B., he tacked the canoe to land. We went. Our friend was very silent all night, and next morning till we left him." (Pages 28-32.)

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE FIRST WORK OF METHODISM IN ALABAMA (CONTINUED).

IN a treaty of capitulation, made and concluded at Fort Jackson, just above the junction of the Coosa and the Tallapoosa Rivers, August 9, 1814, between Maj. Gen. Andrew Jackson, of the United States of America, and the chiefs, deputies, and warriors of the Creek Nation, there was ceded to the United States all the territory belonging to the Creek Nation lying west and south and south-eastwardly of a line beginning at a point on the eastern bank of the Coosa River, where the south boundary line of the Cherokee Nation crossed the same, running from thence down the said Coosa with its eastern bank to a point one mile above the mouth of Cedar Creek, at Fort Williams, thence east two miles, thence south two miles, thence west to the eastern bank of the said Coosa River, thence down the eastern bank thereof, to a point opposite the upper end of the Falls of Wetumpka, thence east from a true meridian line to a point due north of the mouth of Ofuschee, thence south by a like meridian line to the mouth of Ofuschee on the south side of the Tallapoosa River, thence up the same to a point where a direct course will cross the same at the distance of ten miles from the mouth thereof, thence a direct line to the mouth of Summochico Creek, which empties into the Chattahoochee River on the east side thereof below the town of Eufaula, thence east from a true meridian line to a point intersecting the line dividing the lands claimed by the Creek Nation from those claimed by the State of Georgia.

The boundaries of the Creek Nation have been given in these pages so often that the reader can fully understand without any repetition of the boundary lines what portion of the present State of Alabama was ceded by this treaty of August 9, 1814. This extinction of Indian titles opened up all the land described by the lines of boundary named in the treaty to occupancy by white men, and very soon white settlers were located here and there on the newly acquired soil.

In April, 1818, the Rev. Thomas Logan Douglass, the presiding elder of the Nashville District, of the Tennessee Conference, removed the Rev. Ebenezer Hearn from the Flint Circuit, to which he had been assigned for that year, and sent him forth to preach and organize Societies in that part of Alabama so recently taken from the Creek Indians by the treaty of capitulation made by them with the United States. Ditto's Landing was the lowest point of the Flint Circuit, and from this point Brother Hearn set out for his new field. Crossing the Tennessee River at Ditto's Landing, and going due south, he passed through a portion of country about fifteen miles wide which still belonged to the Cherokee Indians. On the mountain about fifteen miles south of Ditto's Landing, late in the afternoon of the day he left Flint Circuit, he reached a cabin occupied by a white man. Here he found a welcome, and here, with this Indian countryman and his family, he spent the night, and here he offered his first evening sacrifice of prayer and praise in the wilderness. At daylight the next morning he proceeded on his way, going due south. Fifteen miles brought him to the home of Joseph H. Mead. Mr. Mead and his family were from Virginia. Here Brother Hearn took breakfast. Five miles more brought him to Bear-meat Cabin, which place now bears the name of Blountsville, which has been the permanent seat of justice for Blount County since 1820. Here he found a number of white settlers, some of whom had been members of the Church in the countries whence they came. Some were Methodists, some were Baptists, and others were Stonites. Here he preached his first sermon in this new and unorganized field, and here he left an appointment for the next month, and here was established one of the regular appointments of the Mission. From Bear-meat Cabin he went to where the present city of Birmingham is situated, finding small settlements in the valleys along the route. At the place where Birmingham is located and in the vicinity thereof he found a comparatively large settlement of whites. Among the settlers of this locality were a number of Methodists. In 1817 the Rev. David Owen came from Tennessee, and built a house and established a home about one-fourth of a mile north-east of the Court-house now in Birmingham. This private residence of the Rev. David Owen Brother Hearn used as a preaching place and house of worship. Here he established a



regular appointment for preaching, here he deposited his few goods, and here he had a preacher's home. In 1816 Thomas Owen, the son of the Rev. David Owen, settled near the spot where the South and North and the Alabama and Chattanooga Railroads now cross each other in Birmingham. His wife was a Methodist. Nancy Saddler and Margaret Prude, the wife of John Prude, were among the Methodists whom Brother Hearn found in Jones's Valley, they having moved there in 1817. Nancy Saddler died in 1828, and Margaret Prude died in 1853. In 1823 the Rev. David Owen moved from Jones's Valley to Russellville, Franklin County, Alabama, where he remained until his death. His grave is on the old military road, near Russellville. The Owens, the Prudes, the Saddlers, and the McAdorys, all related by marriage or otherwise, have been quite numerous and have been leading Methodists in Jones's Valley from the beginning. Perhaps Methodism in this valley is indebted to none more than to Sister Margaret Prude. She was a woman of energy, character, and piety.

From Jones's Valley Brother Hearn went to Roupe's Valley, where he found a small settlement, and from thence to Hill's Settlement, the place now called Scottsville, and from thence to the Falls of Cahawba River, the place where Centerville, the county site of Bibb, now stands. From thence he went northeast, and on Sunday he attended a love-feast and a sacramental service at the residence of Obed Lovelady near Wilson's Hill, the place now known as Montevallo. The meeting at which the services were held had been appointed by local elders who resided in that community, and the sacrament was administered by these local elders. Brother Hearn at that time had not even been ordained a deacon. He says: "Here I organized the first Society I formed on my Mission, and here I had my first quarterly meeting." The place where this Society was organized, and this Quarterly Meeting was held, was about one mile south of the present town of Montevallo. In this community, near Wilson's Hill, Brother Hearn found four local Methodist preachers. They were the Rev. Joseph D. Lee, the Rev. Drury Powell, the Rev. Joseph Walker, and the Rev. Joshua West, M.D. Lee, Powell, and Walker were from Georgia, and West was from Tennessee. In a former chapter of this History the Rev. Drury Powell has been noticed. When Brother Hearn married

he married Miss Mary Walker, the daughter of the Rev. Joseph Walker.

The Rev. Joshua West, M.D., is entitled to a more extended notice. He was born in Rockingham County, in the Colony of Virginia, North America, in the year 1771. While yet very young his parents, moving, carried him with them to Green River County, Virginia. Events occurred here which gave direction to his whole after life, auspicious events which became his inspiration and his delight through all after years. A Methodist preacher, in the fulfillment of his divine commission to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, passed along and asked permission to preach in his father's house. The permission asked was given, and the preacher in pursuance of his Heaven-appointed work preached. Young Joshua was convicted under the sermon, and at the second appointment, just one month from the first, he did what, up to that time, he had never seen any one do: joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. His mother and his sister joined at the same time. He joined as a seeker of religion, and subsequently he was justified and regenerated. Of the Society organized in his father's house he was appointed class leader, and he was also authorized to hold meetings for prayer and exhortation. Not long after he commenced to exercise in public he fell under a strange and formidable temptation. He was harassed with the apprehension, the fearful foreboding, that he would apostatize. A terrible struggle ensued. In his distress he sought relief at the throne of grace, he cried unto the Lord for the deliverance of his soul. In the terrible struggle with this temptation, and the agonizing effort for relief from the sharp arrows of the mighty adversary, he became prostrate and unconscious, and so remained for hours; but eventually he recovered his consciousness, and issued into the light of deliverance from the dark temptation. It was a life-long deliverance. Never more did that temptation return upon him. Rich attainments made in Christian grace and great victories achieved in Christian conflicts make one stable in the divine cause and active in the divine service.

The following is a verbatim copy of Brother West's license to preach: "This may Certify to whom it may Concern that Joshua West is permitted as a local Preacher In the Methodist Episcopal Church. Given under my hand this 17th day Oct.

1792. BENNET MAXEY, *E. M. E. C.*" Bennet Maxey, whose name is signed to this license, was for the year this license bears date the preacher in charge of Bottetourt Circuit, in Virginia.

In 1793 Brother West was married to Hannah Prentice, who lived with him in the holy estate of matrimony for nearly sixty years; and in 1794 he moved to Sevier County, Tennessee, where he remained until the latter part of 1816, when he removed to the Territory of Alabama.

Brother West's license to preach, his credentials to the orders of deacon and elder, and his certificate to Bishop Asbury with his own signature certifying to his belief of and his love for the Methodist doctrine and discipline, and his willingness to rule and be governed by the same, are in hand at this moment, and they are all in a good state of preservation, clean and legible.

His parchment shows that he was set apart for the office of a deacon by the imposition of Francis Asbury's hands, and that this was done at Bethel, Kentucky, the Seventh day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred. The parchment bears the name and signature of Francis Asbury, and the seal set to the parchment has in it the bishop's initials, F. A., and the words containing his motto: "Study to show thyself approved to God." The credential given him as an elder shows that he was set apart for that office by the imposition of Francis Asbury's hands, and that this was done the Twentieth day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirteen, and said credential bears the signature and seal of Bishop Asbury. This parchment fails to tell where this ordination took place, but Bishop Asbury, for the day this parchment bears date, says in his Journal, Volume III., page 357: "I preached at Ohaver's on Wednesday, and ordained Joshua West an elder." Ohaver's was in Sevier County, Tennessee, which county adjoined South Carolina. Bishop Asbury was en route from the session of the Tennessee Conference, which had been held at Reese's, to South Carolina. It was at the very time he had expected to be on his way to Mississippi.

In 1811 Joshua West was authorized as the civil law directed to practice medicine, and he made a skillful and useful physician, and being a man of great energy and integrity he constantly maintained a remunerative practice.

Coming to Alabama in the latter part of 1816, he spent the remainder of his life near Montevallo, except a few brief years spent at Centerville, Bibb County, Alabama.

He followed the lessons of thrift, and the dictates of justice and equity. He persistently eschewed debt, and scrupulously avoided litigation. He was not ambitious of things of a worldly nature. He never aspired to civil rank and political distinction. He persistently refused the honors and emoluments of office which his fellow-citizens repeatedly endeavored to thrust upon him.

On all proper occasions Dr. West asserted with much emphasis his earnest acceptance of the doctrines of Methodism. He desired engraved on his tombstone a statement that he firmly believed the distinctive doctrines of Methodism, believed them to be of divine origin and authority, was ardently devoted to these doctrines, and that he died in the assurance that they were in accord with the divine mind. Being free from all pernicious tendencies and all heretical opinions, he was a Christian of steady purpose and of exemplary conduct. He entered into the gates of righteousness, and praised the Lord. He was a man of prayer and of piety.

In Christian labors he was abundant. His zeal and energy were exerted in the cause of religion under the auspices of Methodism. Soon after he came to Alabama, he, assisted by Lovelady, Lee, Powell, Walker, and others, established a Camp Ground in the community, about one mile from what is now Montevallo. Camp-meetings were held at this place for some years. At these meetings he rendered his assistance and bestowed his hospitality. After this Camp Ground was abandoned, another, named Ebenezer for the Rev. Ebenezer Hearn, was established through Dr. West's influence and with his assistance, about five miles north of the present town of Montevallo. But it is impossible to review here all the work he did, or recount all the organizations established through his influence. He preached much. His desire and effort was to be useful as a preacher. He was happy when preaching and administering the sacraments of the Church. He often officiated in the administration of the Lord's Supper, and he had the pleasure of baptizing very many persons. It is said that though he baptized a large number of persons he never immersed one.



He officiated at a great many funerals. Perhaps no one man has done more for Methodism in Shelby County than Dr. Joshua West. He was a preacher sixty-seven years, two months, and twenty-one days. From the day he joined the Church in Virginia until his death in Alabama there was never a charge against his moral character.

He brought up a family of eleven children, five sons and six daughters. Two or three of his grandsons have made preachers. The Rev. Elbert A. West, once a member of the Conference in Alabama, and who died some years ago, was his grandson. The Rev. Samuel P. West, now a member of the North Alabama Conference, is another of his grandsons.

Dr. West died at his home near Montevallo, Shelby County, Alabama, January 8, 1860. He was buried, according to his own expressed desire, by the side of his wife, who had preceded him to the grave a few years, in a grave-yard in the country not far from Montevallo.

The narrative which was arrested by the introduction of the name and biography of the Rev. Joshua West is here resumed. From Wilson's Hill Brother Hearn went up the valley to Catawla Town, on Canoe Creek. This Catawla Town was the place at which was fixed, by a vote of the qualified electors of Saint Clair County, polled on the first Monday and the day following in August, 1821, the permanent seat of justice for Saint Clair County, and has since been called Ashville. In the valley between Wilson's Hill and Catawla Town, Brother Hearn established several preaching places, but at what particular points is not now known. He established a preaching place at Catawla Town, and from this place he went to a cove which from that time has been called Bristow's Cove, so named for a local preacher by the name of Bristow who settled there. At the house of this local preacher in this cove Brother Hearn established a preaching place. From this cove he returned to Bear-meat Cabin. He had now made a round, set his stakes, and in some measure formed a Circuit; a Circuit, however, which was to be enlarged as further explorations were made.

On his second round he found on Cedar Mountain Brother Frank Self, one of the numerous Selfs who have been Methodists in that section of country. On his third round he went to the town of Tuskaloosa. Speaking of Tuskaloosa as it then was,

he says: "The buildings, with two exceptions, were board shanties; the two exceptions were log cabins." In one of these log cabins, which was the tavern, he preached. On his fourth round he penetrated the country as far as where Greensborough and Marion are situated. He preached in that section, and found some benevolent as well as some eccentric persons. This round closed his work for the year. He had spent five months in making a survey of the country and in organizing Church work. He had broken ground, and had laid the foundations.

At the session of the Tennessee Annual Conference held at Nashville, Tennessee, beginning October 1, 1818, there were reported six appointments with a membership aggregating eight hundred and fifty-seven which hitherto had not existed, and which had been formed in the Alabama Territory during that Conference year just then closing. The six appointments were Tuskaloosa, Cahawba, Cotaco, Limestone, Shoal, and Butch-hatche. Tuskaloosa and Cahawba embraced the territory explored and the membership gathered by the Rev. Ebenezer Hearn. Limestone embraced Limestone County, and Cotaco was in the County of that name, and in the Counties of Lawrence and Franklin. Shoal was on Shoal Creek and the Muscle Shoals and the region thereabout. Limestone and Cotaco were both formed during 1818, the former by the Rev. Sterling C. Brown, a young man employed by the presiding elder, the latter by some one not now known. The Societies which constituted the Shoal charge had been organized that year, 1818, by the Rev. Hartwell H. Brown and the Rev. John Brooks, two young men who were employed by the presiding elder, and the Rev. John Seaton, who was on the Richland Circuit.

These six new pastoral charges had been organized that year under the planning and direction of the presiding elder of the Nashville District, the Rev. Thomas L. Douglass, who was a man of pleasing manners, dignified bearing, and solemn demeanor; a man of accurate knowledge, exact habits, administrative ability, and evangelical faith; an able minister of the New Testament. He understood the mission of the Church, and the nature of the work to be done under her auspices, and he adapted his methods and agencies to the exigencies of the case in hand. The Rev. John Brooks, who knew Brother Douglass well, said of him: "Take him altogether, he was the best presiding

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elder I ever saw. He was a deep and strong divine. He was hard to excel in the pulpit. In his administration of the Discipline, I have never seen his equal. Middle Tennessee, at the time he came, needed just such a man. No man ever contributed so much to the sound popularity of the Methodist Church in this portion of the State as did Thomas L. Douglass."

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE ENLARGEMENT AND ADVANCEMENT OF THE WORK OF METHODISM IN ALABAMA.

FOR the year 1819 three Conferences—the Tennessee, the Mississippi, and the South Carolina—furnished preachers for Alabama.

The following appointments for that year are found in connection with the Tennessee Conference:

Tennessee District, Thomas D. Porter, P. E.  
Flint River, Robert Paine.  
Cotaco, Abraham Still.  
Limestone, Joshua Boucher, Sr.  
Cahawba, Thomas Stringfield.  
Tuskaloosa, John Kesterson.  
Shoal, Robert Hooper.  
Butchehatche, Ebenezer Hearn.

These appointments were altogether in Alabama, except that a part of the Flint Circuit was in the State of Tennessee, and the Butchehatche charge, which was to be organized, was to extend beyond the line of Alabama into the State of Mississippi, about the Cotton Gin Port and below.

For the year 1819 there was one appointment in Alabama in connection with the Mississippi Conference, as follows:

Tombechee, Thomas Griffin, John Murrow.

Thomas Griffin was also for that year the presiding elder of the District which included the Tombechee Circuit.

At the end of the list of the appointments of the South Carolina Conference, for the year 1819, is the following:

Alexander Talley, Missionary to Alabama Territory.

At the beginning of the year 1819 there were in Alabama eleven itinerant preachers, and that many or more local preachers, and about sixteen hundred members. That was the year Alabama was admitted into the Union as a State.

The net increase in the membership in all parts of the State



for the Conference year 1819 was, in round numbers, about eight hundred.

The Tennessee River District, on which the Rev. Thomas D. Porter was that year presiding elder, was a new District, in the first year of its existence, and extended from the Tennessee State line on the north to a line running from the junction of the Coosa River and Hatchett Creek to the source of the Mulberry Creek and to the junction of the Cahawba and the Alabama Rivers, and to the junction of the Tombigbee and the Warrior Rivers on the south, and from Flint River, Wills Creek, and Coosa River on the east to the upper Tombigbee River on the west. This District occupied the same territory for 1820, and was served that year by the same presiding elder. The year 1821 the District was changed in its boundary, and did not extend south of the Tennessee River, and Mr. Porter served it that year. This closed his work in Alabama. For 1822 he was supernumerary, and at the close of that Conference year he located.

The Rev. Thomas D. Porter was a native of Virginia. He was admitted on trial in the Western Conference, at its session in Cincinnati, Ohio, beginning October 1, 1811. After locating, he secured a home some twenty miles south of Nashville, where he lived amidst plenty and popularity until 1837. In that year he made a visit to the Republic of Texas, and while on that visit and among strangers he died of yellow fever. He was a man of good talents, and he was a successful preacher.

The Conference year for 1819 was the first year of the itinerant ministry of the Rev. Robert Paine, and the Flint Circuit was his first appointment in that ministry. In order to a correct understanding of dates, however, it is necessary to state that the Conference at which he was received on trial met at Nashville, Tennessee, October 1, 1818.

For 1820 the Flint Circuit was served by William McMahon and Hartwell H. Brown. For 1821 it was served by Thomas Stringfield, William McMahon, supernumerary. For 1822 the preacher on this Circuit was Wiley B. Peck, William McMahon, presiding elder. At the end of 1822 the Flint Circuit was changed in name to that of Madison, and the District in which it was embraced was changed from the name of Tennessee to that of Huntsville. For 1823 the preachers on the Madison Circuit were Lewis S. Marshall, James W. Allen.

This closed Lewis S. Marshall's work in Alabama. He was received on trial in the Tennessee Conference at Nashville, October, 1818, and was received into full connection, and elected and ordained a deacon at the session of the Tennessee Conference at Hopkinsville, Kentucky, October, 1820; he was ordained an elder at the close of his year on the Madison Circuit, at the session of the Tennessee Conference at Huntsville, Alabama, beginning November 26, 1823. For the year 1824 he was on New River Circuit, and at the end of that year he located. He reëntered the Holston Conference at the close of 1833, and again located at the close of 1838. He reëntered the itinerancy, and appeared for the year 1845 in the Kentucky Conference; and in September, 1845, he transferred from the Kentucky to the Texas Conference; then he fell into the East Texas Conference; and in March, 1847, he transferred from that to the Arkansas Conference; and when the Wachita Conference was organized, in 1854, he fell into that Conference, in which he remained until his death, in 1862. He was in charge of the Wachita Circuit at the time of his death. He seems to have been a man of more than ordinary attainments and ability.

For 1824 the preachers on Madison Circuit were Andrew Jackson Crawford and Thomas A. Strain; for 1825, Ellison Taylor and Samuel R. Davidson. This closed the ministry of Ellison Taylor on Madison Circuit and his earthly career, the statement in the General Minutes which shows that he was appointed to the Madison Circuit for the Conference year 1826 to the contrary notwithstanding. All can be explained. At the close of his year's work on Madison Circuit he went to the session of the Conference which met at Shelbyville, Tennessee, November 10, 1825. During the session of the Conference he was attacked with fever, from which he died. At the adjournment of the Conference he was still alive, with the possibility of recovery, and so he was assigned to the Madison Circuit again, for the Conference year 1826, with Isaac W. Sullivan and Samuel R. Davidson, assistants, but a short time after the adjournment of the Conference his attack of fever terminated fatally, and the Circuit for that year, 1826, was served by Sullivan and Davidson. As Taylor died a short time after the adjournment of the Conference at Shelbyville, in November, 1825, his obituary was presented at the Conference at the close of 1826, though he

really died in November, 1825. He was a native of South Carolina. He entered the itinerant ministry on trial in the Tennessee Conference, in October, 1819, and in due course was advanced to membership in the Conference and to orders in the ministry. He was a man of pleasant bearing, superior talents, and personal influence. He had the sweet enjoyments and the consoling assurances of the Christian religion in his last illness and in the final issue.

At the end of the year 1826 Isaac W. Sullivan located. He had traveled four years, and had received deacon's orders.

For 1827 the preachers for Madison Circuit were Ambrose F. Driskill and Alexander L. P. Green; for 1828, T. M. King and Lorenzo D. Overall; for 1829, Alexander L. P. Green and Greenville T. Henderson; for 1830, Greenville T. Henderson and George W. Morris; for 1831, Elisha Dodson and Greene Malone; for 1832, Samuel Gilliland and John W. Hanner.

The membership on this Circuit from 1819 to 1832 was, in point of numbers, somewhat fluctuating. Some years there was an increase in numbers, and other years there was a decrease. The lowest number of white members on this work for any one year, in the period above named, was five hundred and ten, and the highest number was one thousand and twenty-six. The lowest number of colored members, any one year of that period, was thirty-three, and the highest number was one hundred and eighty.

The County of Cotaco was established and bounded by an act of the Legislative Council and House of Representatives of the Alabama Territory, in general assembly convened, February 4, 1818.

The Legislature of Alabama, in general assembly convened, on June 14, 1821, passed an act, that from and after that date the County of Cotaco should be known and called by the name of Morgan.

The Cotaco Circuit was formed the same year that Cotaco County was established, and existed by that name two years. It appeared in the General Minutes for the Conference years 1819 and 1820, and the name of Cotaco then gave place to the name of Franklin. This Cotaco Circuit embraced what was then Cotaco and Lawrence Counties, and it was extended into Franklin County on the change of the name from Cotaco to Franklin Circuit.

The Rev. Abraham Still was the first preacher on the Cotaco Circuit, and that Circuit was the first and last pastoral charge served by him in Alabama. He was succeeded in 1820 by the Rev. Thomas Madden, and this Cotaco Circuit was the first, though by no means the last, charge served in the State of Alabama by the Rev. Thomas Madden.

The Rev. Abraham Still was in due course admitted to membership in the Tennessee Conference, and ordained deacon and elder. He was elected and ordained elder at Huntsville, Alabama, November, 1823. He was at the organization of the Holston Conference, just one year after this, as one of the members of that body, and at the end of one more year he located. Reëntering the Holston Conference at the close of the year 1832, he then filled appointments in that Conference for four years, and transferred to the Missouri Conference, where he filled missions for eight years, and was then placed on the superannuated list by the Missouri Conference. Here he disappeared from the General Minutes, and no statement was made as to how he went out.

On February 6, 1818, the Legislative Council and House of Representatives of the Alabama Territory fixed the boundaries and established the County of Limestone, and in the latter part of the summer of the same year Sterling C. Brown, as already stated, under the employment and instructions of the presiding elder, the Rev. Thomas L. Douglass, formed the Limestone Circuit. The name of the preacher on this Circuit for 1819 has already been given. For 1820 it was served by Thomas Stringfield; for 1821, by Lewis S. Marshall; for 1822, by Coleman Harwell and Robert Boyd. This was the first and last ministerial service rendered in Alabama by Harwell and Boyd. Harwell was admitted on trial in the South Carolina Conference at the close of 1807, and into full connection and ordained deacon at the close of 1809, and he was ordained elder and located at the close of 1811. He was re-admitted into the itinerancy by the Tennessee Conference at the close of 1821, and appointed to Limestone Circuit, and he located again at the close of 1823.

The Rev. Robert Boyd was received on trial by the Tennessee Conference at the time he was appointed to the Limestone Circuit, and he was discontinued at the close of his second year.

The preachers on the Limestone Circuit for 1823 were Elli-



son Taylor and Joseph W. Camp. This was Camp's first and last year. He had just been received as a preacher on trial, and was discontinued at the close of the year.

For 1824 the preachers on that Circuit were Joshua Boucher and Ellison Taylor; for 1825, Gilbert D. Taylor and Arthur McClure.

This year's work on the Limestone Circuit terminated the earthly career of the Rev. Arthur McClure. He was a native of East Tennessee, having been born there February 16, 1801. September 29, 1821, he was licensed to preach, and, in a class of thirty-nine, was received on trial into the Tennessee Conference, October, 1822, and appointed to the New River Circuit; at the close of that Conference year he was appointed to Jackson Circuit, which was in Jackson County, Alabama; at the end of that year he was admitted into full connection in the Conference, and ordained deacon and appointed to Limestone Circuit, where he died September 26, 1825. His life was short. Brief but brilliant was his ministry. He acquired knowledge rapidly, made what he acquired available, and worked with will and wisdom. He was a man of great endurance, acceptability, and usefulness; but neither his endurance, acceptability, usefulness, nor the skill of physicians could withstand that violent fever which took hold of him that fatal day in September, 1825, and he passed to

"The undiscovered country, from whose bourne  
No traveler returns."

It is said that "he reviewed, on his dying bed, with heartfelt satisfaction, the truth of the doctrines which he had taught, and on which he now rested the eternal interests of his soul," and that he "departed in glorious triumph."

The preachers on the Limestone Circuit for 1826 were James McFerrin and James W. Allen; for 1827, James McFerrin and Samuel R. Davidson; for 1828, Joshua Boucher and A. L. P. Green; for 1829, Thomas M. King, Green M. Rodgers, and James W. Allen, supernumerary; for 1830, Wilson L. McAllister and John B. McFerrin; for 1831, Wilson L. McAllister and William M. McFerrin; for 1832, Samuel R. Davidson and William P. Rowles.

This closed the work of the Rev. Samuel R. Davidson in Alabama. He was received on trial in the Tennessee Conference

at the close of 1824, and remained twelve years in the itinerant ministry, four of which years were given to the work in Alabama. He maintained a good character and did acceptable work.

The Rev. William P. Rowles was admitted on trial in the Tennessee Conference at the close of 1831, so that the Limestone Circuit was the first appointment he received, and he located at the close of 1835. He was, during two years of his ministry, connected with the Missions and Schools for the Cherokees. He joined the Church, and was licensed to preach in Alabama. He was a man of superior native ability and of eminent professional attainments, but he seems to have been unstable in the pursuits of life. He was a physician, and before he commenced preaching he was engaged in the work of his profession, and after he located he turned his attention to the profession of law.

The fluctuations in the numbers in Society on the Limestone Circuit, for the fourteen or fifteen years included from the formation of said Circuit in 1818 to the close of 1832, show the particular impress of the different administrations under which the work was carried on, and, moreover, indicate the instability of the populace of the country. In the number of colored members on the Circuit, increase and decrease were alternately recurring. At the close of 1818 there were twenty-four colored members on the Circuit, at the close of 1819 there were nineteen, at the close of 1821 there were forty-four, at the close of 1822 there were thirty-four. Thus the fluctuation continued from year to year. At the close of 1832 there were one hundred and fifty-eight colored members.

Of the white members on the Circuit there was a steady increase every year from 1818, when there were two hundred and thirty-two, until the close of 1822, when there were four hundred and three. The next year there was a net decrease of seven, and the next year, under the ministry of the Rev. Joshua Boucher and the Rev. Ellison Taylor, there was a net increase of two hundred and four. In 1825, under the ministry of the Rev. Gilbert D. Taylor and the Rev. Arthur McClure, there was a net increase of four hundred and seventeen. There was reported for that year in Society on the Limestone Circuit one thousand and seventeen white members. That was one of the years of an extraordinary religious excitement in that pastoral charge, in which the Circuit was in a blaze of revival glory from

end to end and from side to side. The next year there was a net decrease of two hundred and forty-two white members in that Circuit, and at the close of 1832 there were only six hundred and fifty-two white members, where seven years before there were one thousand and seventeen.

Evidently there were unstable souls in that section, and there was vacillation thereabout in the administration of the affairs of Zion. But unstable souls resided in every part of the State, and a vacillating administration prevailed everywhere. Large numbers of persons were constantly before the Church, now to be applauded, then to be denounced; now to be applauded for their supposed purpose of reformation, then to be denounced for their supposed apostasy. Many received in the summer and autumn were discontinued before the following spring had passed. Many persons joined the Church annually, some oftener. One administration received, the next expelled. In some instances the same administration inducted into the Church and deposed from it the same persons repeatedly. This instability of the would-be adherents of the divine cause, and this infelicitous and inharmonious administration in the admission of persons to membership in the Church of God has been highly prejudicial to the cause of religion. False sentiments prevail concerning the confidence which the Church should repose in the unstable and unprincipled persons who make a show of adopting the holy precepts of the gospel. It is thought by not a few that the Church should receive and confide in all who offer to join her ranks, though they make and break their vows seventy times seven. This sentiment is unscriptural, and any administration which accords with it is fearfully damaging. It is true that "not every sin willingly committed after justification is the sin against the Holy Ghost, and unpardonable." It is equally true that "the grant of repentance is not to be denied to such as fall into sin after justification." It is, moreover, true that "they are to be condemned who say they can no more sin as long as they live here, or deny the place of forgiveness to such as truly repent." But these mysterious and sublime truths do not constitute a basis for the conclusion that the Church should take into her fold those who never repent, those who have no fixed "desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins," those who have no moral integrity. The induction

of the unstable into the Church should be as strenuously guarded against as the introduction of heretics. It is useless to pronounce maledictions upon others, however much they merit it, while encomiums are heaped upon those who are without stability in everything except their fickleness, and who are without persistence in everything except their stratagems in getting into the Church, and who have no uniformity of life except in their inconsistencies. This class of persons are odious. Their very pretensions are impious. An ecclesiastical body should adopt wise and salutary measures for the administration of her affairs and persistently enforce them. She should not dally with those who are unprincipled. She should not allow her communion distracted and her name sullied by affiliation with the unstable elements of society.

The original preaching places in Limestone County, to name them alphabetically, were Athens, Bethlehem, Cambridge, Cokesbury, Lebanon, and Pettusville. The town of Mooresville is as old as Limestone County, having been incorporated by an Act of the Legislative Council and House of Representatives of the Alabama Territory November 16, 1818, but the Methodists have never had a house of worship at that place. They have preached there for years, but have not accomplished anything. Athens is as old as Limestone County, and has been the permanent seat of justice of that county since December 3, 1819. Bethlehem was about ten miles south-west of Athens, and Lebanon was about ten miles north-west. Cambridge, about six miles east of Athens, is as old a preaching place as there is in the county. A Society was organized and a Camp-ground was established there in the very beginning. Cambridge was the center of Methodist gatherings for Limestone County. There Quarterly Meetings and Camp-meetings were held, and there men were licensed to preach. It was there on that consecrated spot in the month of October, 1825, that John Berry McFerrin was licensed to preach. Cokesbury was located on what has long been known as Nubbin Ridge, something less than three miles from the eastern boundary of Limestone County. It was named for Bishops Coke and Asbury, and the name was doubtless given by Methodists there from the Atlantic States who loved and admired those two bishops.

James Bibb, Edward Patterson, John Pollard, and John P.



Horton were local preachers in the bounds of the Limestone Circuit in 1830. At the close of that year James Bibb was elected to elder's orders, and the others here named were at the same time elected to deacon's orders.

The official records show that the Shoal Circuit and the itinerant ministry of the Rev. Thomas Hooper were co-etaneous. Shoal Circuit was the field assigned the Rev. Thomas Hooper for 1819. That Circuit was the last charge he served in Alabama. For some reason, not now known, he failed to obtain orders in the ministry, and he located at the close of 1822.

The Rev. Thomas Hooper was succeeded on the Shoal Circuit by the Rev. Thomas Stillwell, who was admitted on trial in the Western Conference at the end of 1807, and who advanced to membership in the Conference and to elder's orders, and at the end of 1812 located; and who was re-admitted at the end of 1819, and located again at the end of 1823; and whose work in Alabama opened and closed with 1820 and with the Shoal Circuit.

After the Rev. Thomas Stillwell came the Rev. John Cragg and the Rev. Alson J. Waters for 1821. The Rev. Alson J. Waters had just been received on trial in the Tennessee Conference, and was discontinued at the close of the year. The Rev. John Cragg was received on trial by the Western Conference at the close of the Conference year 1807. In due course he was admitted into full connection and ordained deacon and elder. For the year 1815 he was on Flint Circuit, and for 1821 on Shoal Circuit, so that two years of his ministry were given to Alabama. From 1825 till 1840 he was a member of the Holston Conference. He was thirty-three years an itinerant preacher, and twenty-eight of these years he was effective. This was a long service, and he filled many important appointments. He died in 1840.

The Rev. Joshua Boucher was the senior preacher on the Shoal Circuit for 1822, and the Rev. James Edmiston, who had just been admitted on trial by the Tennessee Conference, and who was discontinued at the end of the year, was his colleague.

The Rev. Elias Tidwell and the Rev. Coleman Harwell were the preachers on the Shoal Circuit for 1823. That was the last year's service in Alabama by that man, the Rev. Coleman Harwell. Another man of the same name and of the same family has been noticed on a previous page. This Brother Harwell

now engaging attention was a man of zeal and fidelity, a consecrated and laborious Christian. He died of consumption—consumption which was, doubtless, superinduced by the exposures and hardships endured in the work of his ministry. He was born in North Carolina, May 10, 1800, joined the Church in 1817; was licensed to preach in 1820; and was admitted on trial in the Tennessee Conference, and appointed, as has already been stated, to Shoal Circuit for 1823. He died July 5, 1830. His life was short, but his work was well done, and his exit was peaceful and happy.

For Shoal Circuit the preachers were, for 1824, Ashley B. Rozzel; for 1825, Jeremiah Jackson, Isaac V. Enochs; for 1826, Josiah Browder, William H. Hollyman.

The Rev. Josiah Browder was admitted on trial by the Tennessee Conference, beginning October 1, 1819, and he located at the session of the Conference held in the latter part of 1827.

The Rev. Thomas Payne and the Rev. John F. Ford were the preachers appointed to Shoal Circuit for 1827. The Rev. John F. Ford had just been admitted into the Tennessee Conference on trial. This was his last year in Alabama. He located at the session of the Tennessee Conference held the latter part of 1829.

The preachers appointed to Shoal Circuit were, for 1828, Elias Tidwell, Joseph Miller; for 1829, Thomas Payne, William E. Potter. This was the last work of the Rev. Thomas Payne in Alabama. His first appointment in the Conference was for 1827, and he located at the session of the Conference held in November, 1831. This appointment for 1829 was the first and the last work of the Rev. William E. Potter in Alabama. He had just been admitted on trial in the Conference, and he located in November, 1834.

The Rev. Charles Sibley and the Rev. Thomas Loyd were appointed to Shoal Circuit for 1830. That was the beginning of Sibley's ministry, and after a trial of three years in the itinerancy he was discontinued.

For 1831 the appointment reads: Shoal, Gilbert D. Taylor, Henry C. Lightfoot. The Rev. Henry C. Lightfoot was on trial for that year, and was discontinued at the end thereof.

The appointment for 1832 was: Shoal, Peter Burnum, Stith M. Harwell. The Rev. Peter Burnum closed his two years on

trial with the year 1832, and was discontinued at the end thereof; and the Rev. Stith M. Harwell closed his first year on trial that year, and was discontinued at its expiration.

The Shoal Circuit was treated as an inferior appointment. Seldom did it have other than inexperienced men to administer its affairs and dispense the gospel to its people.

At the close of 1819 there were reported on Shoal Circuit two hundred and twenty-nine white and three colored members. At the close of 1832 there were reported four hundred and thirty white and forty-six colored members in said Circuit. There had been the same fluctuations in the membership of this Circuit during the period from 1819 to 1832 as found in other Circuits. For instance, in 1830 there were two hundred and eight more white members than there were in 1832.

At the time of its organization the Cahawba Circuit was one of first importance. Preachers of native ability, and some who attained to eminence, served it from time to time. As has already been related, the Rev. Ebenezer Hearn did, in the year 1818, organize the Societies which at the first constituted the membership of that Circuit. The first year of its existence as a Circuit was 1819, and the Rev. Thomas Stringfield was appointed to it for that year, though he went to another field before the year closed. Brother Hearn, who had been appointed to organize a work on the Butchehatche, hearing rumors of depredations committed by passing Indians in the field assigned him, declined to enter said field in the beginning of the year, and joined Stringfield in his Circuit. By an arrangement reluctantly sanctioned by the presiding elder, the Rev. Thomas D. Porter, Brother Stringfield went, after the year had considerably advanced, and the depredations alluded to had subsided, to the Butchehatche, and Hearn remained and served the Cahawba Circuit without Stringfield the remainder of the year. It is a fact well attested that Stringfield and Hearn served the Cahawba Circuit together a part of the year 1819, and that Stringfield instead of Hearn toiled at the organization of Societies on Butchehatche that year.

For 1820 the Rev. Meredith Renneau was appointed to Cahawba Circuit.

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

head waters of Mulberry Creek on the south to the Tennessee River on the north, and was constituted of the Cahawba, Franklin, Marion, and Tuskaloosa Circuits. Cahawba Circuit lay along the Cahawba Valley, and the Franklin Circuit was just south of the Tennessee River in the counties of Franklin, Lawrence, and Morgan. For this year, 1821, the Rev. Thomas Nixon was the presiding elder of this new District, and he was also the preacher in charge of the Cahawba Circuit. This was the last and the second year of Nixon's ministry in Alabama. The year before he was preacher in charge of the Alabama Circuit. While on the Cahawba District and Circuit in 1821, Nixon fell under some evil occurrence in which he was finally, after due process, expelled from the connection. So the case is reported in the General Minutes, Volume I., page 398. He furnished late in life, as given by Dr. McFerrin in his "History of Methodism in Tennessee," Volume II., pages 202-205, a statement concerning himself, in which he gave a catalogue of the appointments which he served in his ministry, beginning with his admission into the Tennessee Conference on trial in the latter part of 1812, and closing with 1836; but in this statement, as it is published, he studiously avoided any allusion to his being presiding elder of the Cahawba District and preacher in charge of the Cahawba Circuit. His own statement concerning his ministry, in view of the facts of the case, is destitute of the elements of truth. It is not to be supposed that the Cahawba Circuit advanced or improved any that year. There was no report made of that circuit for that year, 1821. The statistics were copied *verbatim* from the Minutes of the previous year.

Mr. Nixon was finally restored to the ministry, and at the close of 1832 he was, through some process, re-admitted to the Mississippi Conference. He located at the close of 1836, and was again re-admitted into the same Conference at the close of 1866, and died a member of the Mississippi Conference in 1872.

At the session of the Mississippi Conference held at Washington, Mississippi, beginning December 7, 1821, in assigning the preachers to the pastoral charges for 1822, the Rev. John C. Burruss was assigned to the Cahawba District as presiding elder, and the Rev. Benjamin M. Drake and the Rev. John R. Lambuth were assigned to the Cahawba Circuit as preachers, assist-



ant and junior. This was the first and the last appointment filled by the Rev. John C. Burruss as a traveling preacher in Alabama. He had resided for a time, and exercised his ministry in a local capacity, in Lawrence and Franklin Counties, Alabama. He started as a preacher in the Virginia Conference, having been received on trial in that Conference in February, 1814, and received into full connection in the same Conference in January, 1816. He located at the same time he was received into full connection. He was a member of the Mississippi Conference from the beginning of 1822 to the close of 1835, except the years 1830 and 1831, when he was in the local ranks. The last pastoral charge he served was New Orleans in 1835. He was the brother of the wife of the Rev. Alexander Sale.

The Cahawba Circuit was the first and the last charge served in Alabama by the Rev. Benjamin M. Drake. When he was appointed to that work he had just reached his majority, was not yet in full connection in the Conference, and he had just come through from Kentucky in company with his colleague, the Rev. John Russell Lambuth. These two men, Drake and Lambuth, left the Kentucky Conference for the Mississippi Conference at the instance and solicitation of Bishop George. In their journey from Kentucky to the seat of the Mississippi Conference Bishop George joined them at Nashville, Tennessee, and traveled with them on horseback to Washington. Drake was born in Robeson County, North Carolina, September 11, 1800, and was carried when a child by his parents to Muhlenburg County, Kentucky, where, when about eighteen years old, he received the spirit of adoption, was justified from all his sins, and called to separate himself to the work of the ministry. His heart was filled with joy and his mouth with praise. He was soon licensed to preach, and was put to work. He was received on trial into the Annual Conference in October, 1820, and appointed for the following Conference year to the Fountain Head Circuit, which was then in the newly organized Kentucky Conference. At the Mississippi Conference at the close of the Conference year 1822 he was admitted into full connection in the Conference, and in the course of time was admitted to full orders in the ministry. In 1852 the degree of D.D. was conferred on him by Centenary College. He was elected to and served in every General Conference held from 1828 to 1858.

He died in Mississippi, May 8, 1860. He had an enviable reputation, one "upon which a shadow never fell."

In the year 1822, while Drake and Lambuth served that Cahawba Circuit, there was added to it a Society of which it is proper to speak particularly. Parallel with the Coosa River, and from eight to ten miles west thereof, there is a small stream about fifteen miles long called Wolf Creek. This creek is in Saint Clair County, and it forms a junction with Kelly's Creek just at the south-western line of the county. Just seven years after General Jackson had released from Indian title and occupancy this fair section bordered by the beautiful Coosa, an ardent and impulsive man from East Tennessee by the name of Abel Gilliland unloaded his goods and pitched his tent on the banks of this Wolf Creek. This man Gilliland was a Methodist, devout, impetuous, and zealous. By his prayers and his songs he consecrated to God the spot where he pitched his tent. He soon erected him a cabin and consecrated that to the service of God as well as to his own use as a habitation. He was in the wilderness where roamed the wolf, the bear and the panther, the fox and the deer, and where the priest of God was not heard and the sacrifice of religion was not offered. The nearest preaching place to his new habitation was twenty-five miles or more away. He commenced a local ministry, gathered the scattered inhabitants in the region, and informed them of his purpose to introduce the Christian religion among them and secure for the community the means of grace for edification in divine things. When he had completed the rude preparations esteemed necessary to the work anticipated, and he had enlisted the attention of his pioneer neighbors in his purposes, Brother Gilliland went to one of the appointments of the Rev. Mr. Drake in the Cahawba Valley, and engaged Mr. Drake, who had charge of the Cahawba Circuit, to go to his house and there establish a preaching place and organize a Society. Mr. Drake went and preached and organized a Society in the frontier cabin of Abel Gilliland. Soon a humble house of worship was erected near Mr. Gilliland's residence, and from that day till 1886 Gilliland's Chapel was occupied by a Methodist Society, and there the word of God was preached and the sacraments duly administered. In 1886 that sacred place was sold and the Society moved to Eden. Eden is a little village on Wolf Creek,

about three miles from the spot where so long stood Gilliland's Chapel. Mr. Gilliland lived only about five years after he settled on Wolf Creek, but his works lived after him, and from that place he will go up to the judgment with the hosts who have lived, labored, and died in that community.

The preachers for Cahawba Circuit for 1823 were Thomas Owens, John Patton; for 1824, Edmund Pearson, James Nicholson; for 1825, Hugh A. McPhail, John G. Lee; for 1826, John Booth, Benjamin A. Houghton.

The Mississippi Conference met at Midway, Mississippi Territory, November 7, 1817. There and then two men, and only two—John Booth and Wiley Ledbetter—were admitted on trial into the Conference. At the session of the Conference at Washington, Mississippi, November 17, 1819, the same two men were admitted into full connection in the Conference and ordained deacons. At the session of the Conference at the same place December 7, 1821, these two men with two others, John, Seaton and Ebenezer Hearn, who in the transfer of appointments had been transferred from the Tennessee to the Mississippi Conference, were ordained elders. At the Conference session held at John McRae's, on Chickasawhay River, Mississippi, December 5, 1822, the Rev. John Booth located, and at the Conference at Washington, Mississippi, December 8, 1825, he was re-admitted to the Conference, and at the session of the Conference held at Tuskaloosa, Alabama, December 14, 1826, he again located. This terminated his itinerant career. Just two years of his itinerant ministry were given to Alabama: 1822 to Conecuh Circuit and 1826 to Cahawba Circuit. The other years were given to appointments in the bounds of Mississippi.

For 1827 there was only one preacher appointed to the Cahawba Circuit: Eugene V. LeVert. For 1828 the preachers for that Circuit were Joseph McDowell, Daniel H. Norwood; for 1829, David Harkey; for 1830, David Harkey, Daniel Sears.

The Rev. Daniel Sears had just been admitted on trial in the Conference, and this his first appointment was his last in Alabama. The year 1831 he had an appointment in Mississippi, and in arranging the appointments for 1832, preparatory to the organization of the Alabama Conference, he went into the Mississippi Conference.

For 1831 the preachers for Cahawba Circuit were Leroy Mas-sengale, Jacob Segrest; for 1832, John Foust, Stephen Herrin.

The formation of the Circuits in the series of years now under consideration was governed by the order and relations of the settlements made in the country, and the settlements followed naturally the course of the streams and the valleys, and were limited by the ridges and mountains which separated the valleys. The Cahawba Circuit in its general course in the direction of its length was from north-east to south-west, and for the term of ten years, or from the close of 1818 until the formation of the Oakmulgee Circuit at the close of 1828, its boundaries were as follows: The Coosa River, from the mouth of Wills Creek to the mouth of Hatchett Creek; a parallel line from the mouth of Hatchett Creek to the head waters of Mulberry Creek, the Mulberry Creek to its mouth; the Alabama River from the mouth of Mulberry Creek to the mouth of the Cahawba River, the head waters of the creeks running into the Cahawba River on the west and north side of that river along its entire course, and then the head waters of the creeks running into the Coosa River on the west and north side of that river up to Wills Creek. The Cahawba Circuit at that time extended to the Alabama Circuit on the south-east, and to the Tuskaloosa and Jones's Valley Circuits on the west and north, and was from thirty to fifty miles wide, and was about one hundred and fifty miles long. At that time the Coosa River was the western boundary of the lands of the Creek Indians, and that tribe of Indians occupied the country just across the river from the Cahawba Circuit, and the Cherokee Indians were then occupying the lands just across Wills Creek from this Circuit. Marengo Circuit was formed at the close of 1825, and joined the Cahawba Circuit on the south-west.

During the term of years from 1818 to 1832 the work in hand on the Cahawba Circuit, many impediments and some adverse occurrences hereafter to be noticed to the contrary, advanced satisfactorily. As inhabitants moved into that portion of the country which that Circuit traversed Societies were multiplied and the membership increased in numbers. Though it is impossible to give at this date a perfect list of the appointments on that Circuit during the series of years now under review, yet some of the more prominent appointments can be named.



On Canoe Creek, at Catawla Town, afterward called Ashville, an appointment was established and a Society organized in 1818. This is still a preaching place, and there is still a Society.

At Liberty Chapel, a union house so called, five miles from Ashville on the Cahawba road, a preaching place for the Methodists was established in the beginning of their work, and there they had a Society in the outset of their administration. Of late years their Society there has waned. A union house for worship is the product of weakness, the precursor of division, the guarantee of strife, the forerunner of decline and decay.

Highland, a place still farther down the Cahawba Valley, was from the first a preaching place, and still continues.

Ebenezer, about five miles north of what is now Montevallo, was among the very first places where a Society was organized and a Camp-ground established. There prosperity existed for long years.

Near the present Montevallo was a central and leading appointment, where in 1818 a Quarterly Conference and a Camp-meeting were held. Round about Montevallo Methodism has been strong and influential through all the years that have elapsed.

The first itinerant preacher who ever invaded the country, the Rev. Ebenezer Hearn, preached on his first coming at the Falls of Cahawba, since called Centerville. Up to this time, however, religion has not prospered at Centerville. The very first item known to be on record concerning the introduction of Methodist preaching at Centerville is coupled with the statement that at that time there was living there an apostate Methodist preacher who never reformed and who was never reclaimed. The probabilities are that the presence and influence of that apostate preacher planted the seeds of infidelity and retarded the progress of the divine cause at that place. There has never been a place where a Methodist preacher apostatized or fell into any grievous sin but that the cause of Methodism languished there so long as the sin or apostasy was remembered. No Church has ever prospered under the oversight or within the influence of a man who committed sin during his ministry. The sin of a preacher pollutes the land and disgraces the cause of righteousness.

Seven or eight miles east of the Cahawba River and six miles north of the Alabama River, in or near Section thirty-five, Township eighteen, Range ten, east, is a spot which may be called sacred, a spot on which, about the middle of the third decade of the present century, a house for divine worship was erected by a Methodist Society. From the first to the last the place was known as Childer's Chapel. There for a fifth of a century or more divine worship, with its hallowed influences and immortal results was maintained, and there many dead interred remain and await the resurrection day. At this date it is impossible to recall and record every name which was on the roll of that Society at its organization. A few names are still unforgotten, and they go to record on this page: George Childers, Elizabeth Childers, Noel Pitts, Caroline Pinson, and Mrs. Jordan. These were all members of firmness of purpose and strength of character. Childers and Pitts were members of that Society at that place through all the years of its existence. George Childers was the man for whom the place was named. He was a man of excellent traits of character, of deep piety, of preëminence, and of commanding influence. He was a worthy leader. His power and influence were recognized. Elizabeth Childers was the wife of George Childers, and in her maturer years was familiarly called "Aunt Betsy." She was a woman of great firmness, usefulness, and religious devotion. She uniformly went from the service of the holy communion filled with the divine grace and sensible of the heavenly benediction, and with audible shouts she gave vent to her emotions and praise to her Redeemer. All this was fitting. Angels shout, and why should not the redeemed of earth praise God with heart and voice when they have before them the emblems of their Saviour's dying love, and are inspired by so many demonstrations of his resurrection power?

In 1829 and 1830, while the Rev. David Harkey was on the Cahawba Circuit, a house of worship was built in Saint Clair County, on Broken Arrow Creek, five or six miles from the junction of said creek with the Coosa River, and called Harkey's Chapel, for the preacher in charge of the Circuit. Till this day the Methodists worship there, and the place is still known as Harkey's Chapel, though the log house built when Harkey was there has given place to a house made of better

material, and there is now a railroad town there called Broken Arrow.

The last year of Harkey's ministry on the Cahawba Circuit, when Sears was his colleague on the work, a Society which had been organized at Bethlehem secured a deed to a tract of land containing six and a half acres in Section twenty-eight, Township nineteen, Range sixteen, east, and erected on it a house of worship. The deed was made by John W. Kidd and Ann P. Kidd, his wife. The Trustees to whom this deed was made were William W. Harper, Isaac Brinker, Benjamin Hudgins, George B. Nash, and Samuel New. The deed bears date June 16, 1830, and is in the handwriting of Judge Leonard Tarrant. The persons whose names are given in this deed were all members of the Society at Bethlehem, and were persons of stability and worth. John W. Kidd was in his day a pillar in this Society. This Bethlehem Church stands on a lovely spot in a magnificent grove in which there is a very superior spring of never failing water. Bethlehem Church is at the village now called Harpersville, in Shelby County. When Camp-meetings were the order of the day, Bethlehem was one of the noted Camp-grounds. Though Camp-meetings have been long abandoned at that place, yet there is still there a flourishing Society and a large and intelligent congregation.

The above appointments, ten in number, were of central importance on the Cahawba Circuit. Doubtless there were in the extensive territory included in that Circuit other places where preaching was had and Societies existed, for in those days numerous appointments were considered a means of grace and a matter of commendation, and preachers commonly had twenty and thirty Societies and preaching places under their oversight, but the particulars concerning such other places and Societies are not now in hand.

The Tuskaloosa Circuit and the itinerant ministry of the Rev. John Kesterson were coeval. Both appeared first for the year 1819, and they appeared together for that year. While the Rev. Ebenezer Hearn explored the country and organized the Societies which at the first constituted the Tuskaloosa Circuit in 1818, yet it first appears in the General Minutes for 1819, and the Rev. John Kesterson was the preacher appointed to it for that year. He had just been received on trial by the Tennessee

Conference at its session in Nashville, beginning October 1, 1818. He was received into full connection at the close of 1820, and elected to deacon's orders, though not ordained at that time. At the close of 1823 he was ordained elder, and at the close of 1824 he located. After living as a local preacher in the territory embraced in the Memphis Conference at its organization for eighteen years, he was re-admitted to the itinerant work by the Memphis Conference at the close of 1842, and again located at the close of 1847. When he died is not known. He gave about eleven years of his life to the itinerant ministry. He was a man of moderate ability. His importance in the history of Methodism in Alabama is found alone in the fact that he was the first preacher on the Tuskaloosa Circuit after its formation. He served in Alabama only one year. He was the predecessor on the Tuskaloosa Circuit of the Rev. Robert Paine.

The Rev. Robert Paine was on the Tuskaloosa Circuit for 1820, having been appointed to that Circuit at the session of the Tennessee Conference held at Nashville, beginning October 1, 1819. These dates and statements are correct in every item.

For 1821 the Tuskaloosa Circuit appears in the General Minutes without a preacher. The Marion Circuit, which lay in and around Marion County north-west of Tuskaloosa, also appears in the General Minutes without a preacher for that year. At the end of the list of the appointments of the South Carolina Conference for 1821 are found these words: "Missionaries to the Mississippi Conference, Zach. Williams, Barnabas Pipkin." These two missionaries from the South Carolina Conference to the Mississippi Conference served the two Circuits which were left without preachers. The Rev. Zachariah Williams was the preacher on the Tuskaloosa Circuit for that year 1821, and the Rev. Barnabas Pipkin was the preacher on the Marion Circuit for that year.

The preachers on the Tuskaloosa Circuit for 1822 were Samuel Patton, Eugene V. LeVert; for 1823 Samuel Patton, William M. Curtiss; for 1824 Francis R. Cheatham, Thomas C. Brown.

The Rev. Thomas C. Brown had just been admitted on trial in the Mississippi Conference, and that was his last year in Al-



abama. At the close of 1826 he located; at the close of 1829 he was re-admitted, and again located at the close of one year.

For 1825 the preachers on the Tuskaloosa Circuit were Robert L. Walker, John O. T. Hawkins; for 1826 Hugh A. McPhail, Thomas Burpo; for 1827 Thomas Clinton, Moses Perry.

This was the last year of the ministry of the Rev. Thomas Clinton in Alabama. Perhaps no man ever had a harder life than had Thomas Clinton, and yet, perhaps, no man was ever more religious, devoted, and happy than he through his whole Christian career. Ere he had passed five summers the dark shadow of orphanage fell upon him, his father and mother dying of yellow fever and being buried in the same grave, and he was brought up from his infancy without a known living kinsman in the world. He was of Irish descent, and was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, January, 1793. Before his father and mother were taken off by the yellow fever they had joined the Methodists, and had dedicated the infant son to God in holy baptism. On January 2, 1808, the last day of the session of the South Carolina Conference, six men were ordained deacons and five men were ordained elders in the old Bethel Church in the city of Charleston, South Carolina. The Rev. Matthew P. Sturdevant, the first Methodist preacher ever sent to Alabama, was one of the men there and then ordained an elder. On that historic day Thomas Clinton, through youthful curiosity, wandered into the old Bethel Church, heard the ordination sermon, and witnessed the ordination ceremonies, and was awakened to an interest in the great gospel theme which offers salvation to every man, and formed resolutions which finally eventuated in his justification, regeneration, sanctification, and in his assumption of the prerogatives and duties of the Christian ministry. At the session of the South Carolina Conference held in Charleston January, 1820, when he was just twenty-seven years old, he was admitted on trial in the Conference, and volunteered to go as a missionary in the bounds of the Mississippi Conference. At the end of the list of the appointments of the South Carolina Conference for that year 1820 are these words: "Missionaries to Mississippi, Nicholas McIntyre, Thomas Clinton." At the end of the list of appointments of the Mississippi Conference for that same year are found the words: "Tombecbee, N. McIntyre, J. Clinton." The "J" is an

error. It was evidently intended for a T. These two men were the same men sent as missionaries from South Carolina to the Mississippi Conference. There is one other item of history in connection with the case. While McIntyre and Clinton had been assigned by the bishop to Tombeebee Circuit and the appointments were published officially and correctly, yet when they arrived in the field the emergencies of the case induced Thomas Griffin, the presiding elder of the Alabama District, to change Thomas Clinton from the Tombeebee to the Alabama Circuit. So that Clinton that year served the Alabama Circuit with Thomas Nixon instead of Tombeebee Circuit with Nicholas McIntyre. Five years of his ministry, the years 1820, 1821, 1822, 1826, and 1827, were given to the work in Alabama, and the pastoral charges which he served in the State in addition to those already given were the Conecuh and the Marion Circuits. He was twice on the Alabama Circuit. In January, 1828, just after he had closed his year's work on the Tuskaloosa Circuit, he was married. His wife, an educated and a pious woman, was a Miss A. L. Hanna, and was the sister of Miss Elizabeth Hanna, whom the Rev. Barnabas Pipkin first wedded. The children of the Rev. Thomas Clinton were ten in number, and these children were an honor to him and their mother, though sad bereavements came to the fond parents through the early demise of a number of these loved ones. One of the sons was a Methodist preacher, and one of the daughters was the wife of a Methodist preacher. The Rev. Thomas Clinton, like Zaccheus of New Testament fame, was little of stature, weighing usually one hundred and ten pounds. He had the complexion and the features characteristic of the Irish nation, and yet his features were sufficiently unique to be peculiarly his own. He had a fair complexion, cheek bones sufficiently prominent to give to his face in the general outline an oval form, and a nose of sufficient dimensions to prevent its being lost sight of, if not of sufficient length to create wonder and merriment. He was of an earnest nature and of an indomitable courage, and, notwithstanding he was physically small, he was capable of untold endurance, and was a man of commanding personal influence. He was industrious and studious, and he made himself a theologian of more than ordinary attainments. During his active ministry he served Circuits, Districts, and Missions—Missions to the colored

people. He was of cheerful spirit, of strict integrity, and of eminent piety. He died in the faith in his eighty-third year October 28, 1875, at the residence of the Rev. Barnabas Pipkin, and was buried in his own family cemetery in St. Helena Parish, Louisiana.

The preachers on the Tuskaloosa Circuit were, for 1828 Blanton P. Box; for 1829 Eugene V. LeVert, Leroy Massengale; for 1830 Mark Westmoreland; for 1831 Nathan Hopkins, William Wier; for 1832 Eugene V. LeVert, Jacob Matthews.

The Tuskaloosa or Black Warrior River, rising in the mountains ten or fifteen miles south of the Tennessee River, and forming a junction with the Tombigbee River, and having its general course from north-east to south-west, is, following its meanderings, about two hundred and seventy-five miles in length. The Tuskaloosa Circuit at its organization and for four years thereafter had open to it the whole country of from forty to sixty miles in width along the entire course of this river. Murphree's Valley, Jones's Valley, Rouse's Valley, and all that section lower down between Sipsey River and the head waters of the creeks flowing east into the Cahawba River were embraced in the Tuskaloosa Circuit for the years 1819-1822 inclusive. Societies were formed at various points in that territory, some sooner, some later.

Here and now, as it indicates the state of the country and the character of the people at that day, may be related an incident which occurred at a point first embraced in the Tuskaloosa Circuit, and with which one man, who afterward had a long residence in the State of Alabama, was incidentally connected.

On November 10, 1819, a man, who lacked twenty-four days of being twenty-four years old, and who had made with one Miss Elizabeth King a marriage engagement which was to be consummated at some unnamed time in the future, left Sandymush, in Buncombe County, North Carolina, and at the close of twelve days from the time of starting, having passed, on horseback, through the Cherokee Nation, stopped on Village Creek, in Alabama. Here, in a population numerous for so new a settlement, that young man found two persons whom he had known in Buncombe, whence he and they had come. These two persons were Mr. Thomas Holmes and Mrs. Margaret Prude. Upon the solicitation and recommendation of these two acquaintances

this young man secured a list of pupils, supplanting a teacher in the community by the name of Andrew Moore, and on the first Monday in December, 1819, opened a school in a house near Brown's Spring. Brown's Spring, which is now in the city of Birmingham, was so called for Judge John Brown, who first settled at that spring and was living there when that young man taught that school. That school was opened a few days before the County of Jefferson was constituted by legislative enactment, and there was then neither city nor town anywhere in that section. The place at which the seat of justice was afterward established and named Elyton and incorporated as a town, was then known as Frog Level Race Ground. The race track was the principal thing there at that date, and horse racing was the chief business carried on there at that time. That young man had a large school, and many of his pupils were grown young men, some of them being as old as he. Among the young men enrolled as pupils and in actual attendance upon the school were Jacob Brooks, Washington Burford, Thomas Cawley, Gersham Kelley, Moses Kelley, Allen Killough, David Killough, James Killough, Peter Lawley, James McAdory, David Prude, Jonathan Prude. One of the many races had at the Frog Level Race Ground came off about the close of the first month of the school. The occasion was anticipated with deepest interest. Intense excitement was created by the coming event. The jockey clubs and sporting fraternities were all busy and active. All who at any time ever participated in horse racing were intensely interested in that occasion. Few there were who were not going to witness and participate in the sport of that day. None were more completely absorbed by the anticipated events than the young men and boys in the school near Brown's Spring. They were going to the races, of course. That was a foregone conclusion. They expected to take part in the contests of the day. But an issue which was not anticipated, was made. The evening before the races, the teacher delivered to his school a lecture on horse-racing. In that lecture he denounced the sport of the race-course as an unmitigated evil. He maintained that attendance upon and participation in such sports were fraught with all manner of bad consequences. He closed his lecture with the announcement that the pupils would not be permitted to



attend the races the next day on penalty of expulsion from the school, and added the suggestion that if any were determined to attend they would as well take their books and apparatus home that evening. That announcement had not been anticipated by the pupils, and they were amazed. After the lecture closed and the school was dismissed for the day, the young men, twelve or thirteen in number, held a consultation to decide what action they would take and what course to pursue in the premises. As a result of their consultation they waited on the teacher, and demanded that he reverse his decision and retract his announcement. David Killough, the senior among them, acted as their spokesman. They offered as reasons in the premises their desires, their rights, and their interests. They personally desired to go to the races, they had an inherent right, which no man could take from them, to go, and there were interests with their friends who were to be engaged in the bets and sports of the day which demanded that they should be in attendance. They plead, they entreated, they demanded. The teacher was inflexible. He listened, but yielded not. His decision was adhered to, his announcement reiterated. The young men were irritated and indignant. They were on the verge of resentment. But, notwithstanding their desires, their rights, their interests, and their indignation, they returned next day to school. They took special pains, however, to show to the teacher their anger. The people gathered in throngs at the race ground, bets were made, the stakes in which all interest centered were deposited, the preparations were completed, and the races came off just after noon. Scarcely had the contesting steeds cleared the posts when one of them flew the track and threw the rider, knocking him breathless, though not killing him, as it happened. The other steed was carried through to the end of the course, and the purse claimed and demanded. Those in charge of the steed which flew the track declined to surrender the stakes. A row ensued. Fighting was the order of the hour. There were thirty or forty men in actual collision. Fingers, fists, knives, sticks, and teeth were the weapons used in the fray, and they were freely used. Abdomens were cut, cheeks were bruised, ears were bitten, eyes were gouged, features were mutilated, fingers and jawbones were broken, muscles were lacerated, noses were smashed, scalps were

gashed. There was much blood, and many wounds, but no one, wonderful as it is, was killed. That scene of carousal depicts the state of the country as the preachers who served the Tuskalooosa Circuit then found it. Frog Level Race Ground and the school-house near Brown's Spring were in sufficient proximity for those at the school-house to hear the clatter of the racers' hoofs and the tumult of the throng who participated in the revel and the riot of the day. The young men at the school-house heard the noise and the uproar at the race ground, and could well conjecture what was going on, though they knew not the specific causes nor the actual results. They were greatly agitated, but not one of them left for the scene of the carousal. The teacher asserted his authority and restrained those under his tuition. The man who held this reign and rule against the race-course and a sporting population was not then a professing Christian, but he was subsequently regenerated by the power of the Holy Ghost in that very school-house in which he opened and maintained that sharp contest against horse-racing. That man who inaugurated that testimony for the right and followed his convictions of duty was none other than Reuben Philips. That stand for order and morality made for him a fast and strong friend in the person of the Rev. David Owen, a local preacher who lived near the school-house. Mr. Philips at that time remained in Jones's Valley only a few months, and did not return there to live any more until 1844.

In that community on Village Creek round about Brown's Spring and Frog Level Race Ground was one of the preaching places belonging to the Tuskaloosa Circuit from the very beginning.

The combined movements of State and Church and individuals produce events and make history. On February 7, 1818, the Territory of Alabama, in Legislative Council assembled, did by enactment constitute the County of Tuskaloosa. In the months of that same year, Dudley Hargrove, a licensed local preacher of the Methodist Episcopal Church, at the head of his family, including all his grown sons except Benjamin, the second son, emigrated from Hancock County, Georgia, and pitched his tent in the then wilderness by a big spring, one of the sources of Big Sandy Creek, in what is Section thirty-five, Township twenty-two south, Range eight west, a few miles south-east of



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the present town of Tuskaloosa, Alabama. Soon after Hargrove had pitched his tent hard by the head waters of Big Sandy Creek a Society was organized in that community. That Society has continued till now, 1889, though the meeting houses in which that Society has assembled from time to time to worship have been at different places in the community at different times. At one time the meeting house stood right near the place first settled by Dudley Hargrove. The house now in use is, perhaps, three miles from the spot originally occupied, and is named Pleasant Hill, sometimes called Hargrove's.

The Rev. Dudley Hargrove was really the patriarch of that Society, organized at or near the place of his first settlement in Alabama, and his eldest son, Daniel J. Hargrove, was the first class-leader there. That Society has always been an appointment of the Tuskaloosa Circuit, or whatever Circuit took its place.

One of the first preaching places established in that section of the country was established by Dudley Hargrove at the house of John A. Goodson, not far from Hill's Creek, and in the edge of what is now Bibb County.

By an incident in his life the Rev. Dudley Hargrove became an historic character. In 1819, while he lived on Big Sandy Creek, and was a member of the Society near him, he was recommended by the Quarterly Conference of the Tuskaloosa Circuit to the Tennessee Annual Conference, to be held at Nashville, Tennessee, October 1, 1819, as a suitable person to be elected and ordained a local deacon. In the order of the regular business of that session of the Tennessee Conference that recommendation from the Tuskaloosa Circuit was presented, and the question, "Shall Dudley Hargrove be elected and ordained a deacon?" was before the Church in official form and for official decision. At the same time and place at which Hargrove's case was pending there was presented a recommendation from Shoal Circuit of the Rev. Gilbert D. Taylor for admission on trial into the traveling connection, and the question, "Shall Gilbert D. Taylor be admitted on trial into the Conference?" was officially before that body for official decision. Each of these men was possessed of an unblemished character so far as his general conduct was concerned, and each had endowments and attainments sufficient to qualify him for the position he

sought, but it was a fact, and the fact was made known, that each of these men was a slave-holder. The discussion of the questions, "Shall Hargrove be elected and ordained a deacon?" and "Shall Taylor be admitted on trial into the Conference?" turned upon their being slave-holders and upon their obligation to emancipate the persons held in slavery by them. From its organization in the latter part of 1812 until the session in which the acts now under consideration were passed, and even down to a later date, the Tennessee Conference was pronounced in its position on the subject of slavery as it existed in the United States, and a number of its leading members were bitterly opposed to slave-traders and slave-owners holding office in the Church, or exercising the prerogatives of the ministry. The presentation of these men for position and office in the Methodist ministry made an issue and inaugurated a conflict. The contest was sharply defined, and went on in earnest. The discussion was warm, excited, and vehement. Every phase of the subject was touched by those engaged in the debate. The Conference decided by a majority of at least three not to elect Hargrove to deacon's orders, and not to admit Taylor on trial into the traveling connection because they were slave-holders. A protest against the action of the Conference in the premises was presented and put to record, signed by sixteen of the members. The following is the protest:

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

pline of our Church. We therefore do most solemnly, and in the fear of God, as members of this Conference, enter our protest against the proceedings of the Conference—as it relates to the above-mentioned *course* and *principle*.

THOMAS L. DOUGLASS, EBENEZER HEARN,  
THOMAS D. PORTER, TIMOTHY CARPENTER,  
WILLIAM McMAHON, THOMAS STRINGFIELD,  
BENJAMIN MALONE, BENJAMIN EDGE,  
LEWIS GARRETT, JOSHUA BOUCHER,  
BARNABAS McHENRY, WILLIAM HARTT,  
WILLIAM ALLGOOD, JOHN JOHNSON,  
WILLIAM STRIBLING, HENRY B. BASCOM."

From the history of Dudley Hargrove's application for deacon's orders, and the absolute refusal to confer on him said orders because he was a slave-holder, it is clearly learned and fully demonstrated that from the very time of planting Methodism in Alabama the adherents of said cause in said State were touched by the existence of slavery and involved in the agitation about emancipation, and that amid the angry contentions and bitter disputes which arose on the subject some were deprived of their rights and suffered injuries. From the same case it is also learned that the Lord, the righteous Judge, will avenge his chosen ones, and will redress the wrongs they suffer. He, sooner or later, compensates for the wrongs inflicted. He will, under the on-going of his wonderful providence, see that justice is done to his servant who has been cheated of his rights and deprived of his prerogatives. In a most signal manner God rebuked the acts which had been committed against Hargrove and Taylor. In the case of Taylor, the Tennessee Conference, five years after its action against him, corrected the wrong by admitting him to the ministry which he so humbly sought, and which he so admirably adorned and so successfully filled. Dudley Hargrove, who died about 1823, did not live long enough to receive at the hands of the Tennessee Conference a correction of the untoward act, did not live long enough to receive in his own person the justice and redress due him in the case, but there was at last a most signal manifestation of divine providence rectifying the wrong and compensating the injury which he suffered. A little more than sixty-two years after Dudley Hargrove was refused deacon's orders because he was a slave-

holder, and in the very city of Nashville, Tennessee, where the act of refusing the orders was done, his son's son, the Rev. Robert Kennon Hargrove, was ordained a bishop, in the light of the sun and in the presence of the representatives of nearly a million of Methodists. God, who ever keeps covenant with his chosen ones, never forgot that case, and he dealt with the case on the principle on which he dealt with Solomon in his apostasy, when, still remembering his covenant with his servant David, he said: "I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding, in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen." (1 Kings xi. 11-13.)

On December 19, 1820, the State of Alabama, by legislative enactment, constituted and bounded the County known and distinguished by the name of Pickens. Near the same time Dudley Hargrove, with his son, Daniel Hargrove, left the neighborhood of Lye Branch Church and settled in Pickens County, near Bear Creek, which empties into Lubbub Creek, Section five, Township twenty, Range thirteen, west, twenty or twenty-five miles north-west of the town of Tuskaloosa. These two men, father and son, settled homes here within one mile and a half of each other. Immediately upon settlement in that locality these men had a Methodist Society organized, which has been perpetuated to this year (1889), and has ever been known as Hargrove's Church. Dudley Hargrove died at his home in Pickens County in 1823. A large piece of timber which was being used in the erection of a gin-house on his farm, accidentally fell on him and killed him. Daniel Hargrove remained on the place he first settled in Pickens County until his death in 1869. For a half century he served the Methodist Church in Alabama, filling the offices of class leader, steward, and trustee. He was a devout and useful Christian. Dudley Hargrove was a cousin of Bishop McKendree, and the grandfather of Bishop Robert Kennon Hargrove, as has been stated in another place. Daniel Hargrove, here mentioned, was the father of Bishop Hargrove.

At a place afterward known as Hardwick's Shelter the Rev.





MRS. D. J. HARGROVE  
(*Née* LAODICEA BRANTLEY),  
SIXTY-SEVEN YEARS A METHODIST.

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Ebenezer Hearn preached in 1818, and from that time on the Methodists had a Society there, and it was one of the appointments of the Tuskaloosa Circuit for many years. The place known as Hardwick's Shelter is about two miles west of south of Tuskaloosa and about fourteen or fifteen miles from that town and not more than four furlongs from the village of Carthage. A man by the name of Harper was appointed class-leader. Other prominent members were Mrs. Hardwick, a very excellent lady, and a Mrs. Toosan, a widow, of whom it was said that "it never rained or snowed hard enough to prevent her going to church." Alfred Massengale, father of the Rev. Leroy Massengale, was a member at Hardwick's Shelter.

A Society called Center was organized by 1820, if not sooner, and still exists, 1889, and is about ten miles south of the town of Tuskaloosa, and has always been one of the appointments on the Tuskaloosa Circuit. Mrs. Tutt and Mrs. Clements, two widows and elect ladies, a son of Mrs. Clements, and Leonard Rush, who was a class-leader, were members at the organization of that Society. During the twenties Robert Martin, a man who came from South Carolina to Tuskaloosa County, Alabama, in 1818, and who was a prominent citizen, a useful and pious man, and who passed to his reward through a peaceful death May 5, 1840, was a class-leader at Center. Here at Center in the fall of 1827, while attending a class-meeting, William B. Neal, who was for long years a member of the Alabama Conference, was converted, and here he and his father, David C. Neal, and other members of the family at this time joined the Church. About the same time Benjamin Rosser, Jr., was converted at a Camp-meeting held on Rum Creek, about three miles south of Tuskaloosa, and joined the Church at Center. He has been a leading member there through all the years since. At this time (1889), he still lives.

There was a Methodist Meeting-house in Jasper County, Georgia, called Purity. By 1820 a number of the members of the Society at that place had emigrated and joined themselves in a community about twelve miles from Tuskaloosa, Alabama, and east of south from that place. A Society was organized in that community, and the place of worship fixed on Bunche's Creek. The associations of the old Church whence these new settlers came were still fresh in their memories, and the affections

of these persons still entwined about the sacred place where formerly they had sung the songs of Zion and offered the sacrifices of praise, and which place they had so recently left, and so they did what was most natural for them to do—they named the place of the meeting of their new Society on Bunche's Creek Purity. Purity Church was, from its organization to its discontinuance, one of the appointments of the Tuskaloosa Circuit. Among the members of that Society at the date of its naming may be mentioned as prominent, Benjamin Rosser, Sirmon Lane, Philip Pless, Joshua B. Shackleford, and a Mrs. Morrow. Lane was the first class-leader of the Society, and Rosser was appointed class-leader in 1821. Nimrod Hendrick was a member of that Society, and he was through life a man of usefulness, and he met death with a triumphant faith.

This Society at Purity was blessed with a most remarkable revival in 1826, and a new house of worship was built that year. That second house was erected about one mile from the site on which stood the first one. That revival, so remarkable, commenced in the conversion of a Mrs. Phillips and her husband one night in a public service appointed and conducted by Benjamin Rosser, one of the class-leaders, at the residence of Mr. Phillips. The next day was the regular time for preaching at Purity, and the Rev. Joshua Boucher, a nephew of the Rev. Joshua Boucher who was so long a member of the Tennessee Conference, and that year the preacher stationed at the town of Tuskaloosa, preached and invited mourners to the altar, and a large number accepted the invitation. Ere the meeting closed there were nearly one hundred conversions. Purity Church as an organization is extinct, and the place as a place of worship has been abandoned, but there at that sacred spot in the old church-yard repose the remains of many men and women who acted well their part in the drama of life, and who await the resurrection morning and the revelation of the last day.

Benjamin Rosser was born in Johnson County, North Carolina, in 1785. About 1800 he removed to Jasper County, Georgia, where in 1811, under the ministry of Lovick Pierce and Charles W. Kennon, he obtained religion, joined the Church, and was appointed class-leader, which position he filled for long years. In 1820 he removed to Alabama, as has already been intimated. On September 24, 1847, he was given



a license to exhort, which was renewed until July 28, 1866. He was a useful man, and died July 20, 1873, in Tuskaloosa County, Alabama.

In 1820 a Society was organized within the bounds of the then Tuakaloosa Circuit in the house of Aaron Murphree. In process of time that Society built an humble house of worship, and called the place Ebenezer. The place thus named and consecrated is on the old thoroughfare in Murphree's Valley, fourteen or fifteen miles south-east from Blountsville. A chapter might be devoted to that Society, did space permit. Murphree, Ellis, Bynum, Hallmark, Foust are names which have been, through all the years, familiar and of honor in that community and surrounding country. There lived in the neighborhood of Ebenezer, in the very first years of its existence, two local preachers, Peter Foust and William McDonald, who witnessed the outpouring of the Spirit and numerous conversions in that Society. Of the members of that Society who in its early history entered the Methodist ministry may be named Jesse Ellis, John Foust, William Foust, David Foust, Daniel Easley, and Cummings Hallmark. Jesse Ellis and John Foust gave themselves to the itinerant work; the others remained in the local ministry, where they labored long and efficiently. It is not intended to convey the idea that all these here named were members of that Society at its organization, for some of them were not at that time in the Church.

In the latter part of 1820 a Society was organized a little lower down Murphree's Valley and called Shiloh. That Society has ever flourished, and still exists, 1889. Shiloh is at the place known in the United States mail service as Chepultepec. Blakeley, Box, Cornelius, Hallmark, Murphree, Renno have been familiar names in the membership of that long-lived Society.

Not earlier than 1819 nor later than 1822, a Society was organized at the house of John Blackburn, probably by the Rev. Daniel Monaghan. Then a house was built in the neighborhood which was used for a school-house and a preaching place, and there for some time that Society had its place of meeting. Afterward a church was built, and it was named Mount Zion. That Society exists until this day, 1889. That Mount Zion is eight miles north-west of the town of Marion. To what Circuit it belonged at its organization is not certainly known, but

it is very probable that it belonged to the Tuskaloosa Circuit until the Brush Creek Circuit was formed. Prominent among its first members were John Blackburn, who is said to have been its first steward, and his wife; James Boyles, who is said to have been its first class-leader, and his wife; Mrs. Elizabeth Richardson, and Mrs. Ellen Lyles. This Society will come in view again at a later day.

About eighteen miles east of the town of Tuskaloosa and on the road leading to Jones's Valley and about two miles from what is now known as Clements Station on the Alabama and Chattanooga railroad was one of the Societies of the Tuskaloosa Circuit. That Society was organized in 1821 or 1822, and was called Hopewell. The leading men there were Frederick Ray, the father of the Rev. Anderson Ray, once an active preacher in the South Carolina and Georgia Conferences; John Eads, John Collins, John Cameron, the father of the Rev. J. D. Cameron, D.D., and the Rev. William E. Cameron, and the Rev. Thomas Cameron, itinerant preachers; Michael Ashford, and a man by the name of Chappell. It is said that Chappell moved from there to Texas, and settled the place called Chappell Hill. It is said that Leonard Rush, mentioned in another Society, was at one time a member at Hopewell, and that he was the father of the Rev. John G. Rush who was once a preacher in Alabama. That Society at Hopewell, sometimes called Hurricane, in the first decade of its existence was large in membership, and quite prosperous in all that pertains to spirituality. In that day there was a Camp-ground there at which large congregations assembled and great spiritual harvests were reaped. The first decline that Society ever knew was caused by the emigration of its members, and the decline was so great that the Society almost reached the point of desertion and extinction. It was afterward visited by a revival. This Society will be mentioned again on a future page.

Sometime between 1820 and 1825 a Church called Asbury was organized about twenty-two miles south of the town of Tuskaloosa. It is said that William Kennon, a brother to the Rev. Robert L. and the Rev. Charles W. Kennon, was the leading spirit at that Society. That was one of the Societies of the Tuskaloosa Circuit.

The town of Tuskaloosa was one of the appointments on the

Tuskaloosa Circuit from 1818 to 1825, when it was made a Station. From 1819 to 1831 other Societies, of which there is no particular account, were organized about the Black Warrior and the Sipsey Rivers and attached to the Tuskaloosa Circuit.

In the territory first traversed by the Tuskaloosa Circuit the growth of the Church was constant and rapid. In the membership in that section there was not that fluctuation and instability which was in some other regions of the State. Within the territory open to the preachers of the Tuskaloosa Circuit at the beginning of 1819 there were only eighty-six white members, and at the close of 1832, when the first session of the Alabama Conference was held, there were in that same territory seven-teen hundred and seventy-nine white members and six hundred and ninety colored members. What in 1819 was one Circuit was in 1832 four Circuits and one Station.

Buttahatchee was named in the appointments for 1819 with the Rev. Ebenezer Hearn as preacher. That appointment was made for a section of country through the center of which flowed the Buttahatchee River. The work was without form and void. The country was to be penetrated and inspected, and, if possible, Societies were to be organized, and a Circuit formed. On a previous page has been narrated how and why the Rev. Ebenezer Hearn did not enter that field for that year, notwithstanding he was appointed to do so; and how the Rev. Thomas Stringfield did penetrate that section after the year had considerably advanced. It seems that Stringfield had good success in his efforts, and that he organized the work, for at the end of the year there were reported from that appointment to the Conference, not by the name of Buttahatchee, but by the name of Marion, seventy-two white members.

For 1820, the Rev. Ebenezer Hearn was again appointed to that work, then called Marion. What was then Marion County, Alabama, gave name to the appointment, and the Circuit took in anywhere round about that county and extended to the Tombigbee River in the State of Mississippi, and from Cotton Gin Port, on the Tombigbee River, down to the Sipsey River. Brother Hearn, describing the condition of the Circuit as it then was, says: "For a distance of more than one hundred miles from Cotton Gin Port down the Tombigbee there was not a preaching house; so I had to preach in private houses or in

the woods, either of which was unpleasant. So I determined to make an effort to secure churches, if they were small ones; so I gathered as many men as I could, and with axes, wedges, and frows, we went to a high hill near the mouth of Coal Fire Creek, cleared out a place, cut logs, made boards, and built a house, twenty by twenty-four feet, made a rough pulpit, and made one door, but as we could not get any planks we were content to have a dirt floor; they called the church Ebenezer, that being my Christian name; and here we did raise our Ebenezer. We went on securing houses of worship as we could." What measure of success was achieved in building houses of worship in addition to the one on Coal Fire is not recorded. The labors of the year were closed with a Camp-meeting, and the statement is left on record that they "had a glorious work" on the whole Circuit. One hundred and forty-two white members and five colored members were reported to the Annual Conference on the Circuit.

In the General Minutes for 1821 the Marion Circuit is left as an appointment without a preacher. This was in accord with an act of the South Carolina Conference for the same year. For that year the South Carolina Conference sent two "Missionaries to the Mississippi Conference, Zachariah Williams, Barnabas Pipkin." Williams, as has been stated elsewhere, took charge of Tuscaloosa Circuit, and Pipkin took charge of and served the Marion Circuit.

For 1822 the preachers appointed to Marion Circuit were Thomas Clinton, Benjamin F. Lidden; and for 1823 Wiley Ledbetter, John G. Lee.

That Marion Circuit was the first and the last work served in Alabama by Wiley Ledbetter. He was admitted on trial in the Mississippi Conference in November, 1817, and into full connection in that Conference in November, 1819, and he located in December, 1825. After he located he made his home in Perry County, Mississippi. The Rev. A. C. Ramsey, once a member of the Alabama Conference, and who knew Ledbetter well, says of him, in a manuscript of his own Life and Times: "Wiley Ledbetter was in 1821 a distinguished preacher of the Mississippi Conference, a man of great force and power, but who, for some cause, I know not what, finally fell. The last time I saw him was at his home in Perry County, and at a wed-



ding in his neighborhood, where I was called on to marry a Mr. Reed to a Miss Myers, in 1836. He had entirely given up religion, and was trying to embrace infidelity. I remonstrated with him; referred him to what he once was; the good that he had tried to accomplish, and in which no doubt he had succeeded, referred to his preaching to me when I was a little boy, but all to no effect. A few years afterward I heard he died." (Page 61.)

How sad it is to think of those "who leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness!"

The preachers on Marion Circuit for 1824 were Thomas Owens, Thomas S. Abernathy; for 1825, Peyton S. Graves; for 1826, Thomas E. Ledbetter, Isaac V. Enochs; for 1827, Leroy Massengale. There is clear testimony that the Rev. Jesse Mize was for that year in charge of the Marion Circuit, and the Rev. Leroy Massengale was his colleague, though the General Minutes show only Massengale appointed to the Circuit for that year. The Rev. Jesse Mize was, as it appears, a local preacher put in charge of the Circuit by the presiding elder.

The appointment for 1828 was: Marion, Moses Perry.

The Marion Circuit was the second charge served by the Rev. Moses Perry as an itinerant preacher, and the first and last served by him in Alabama. He wound up his year's labor on that appointment and attended the session of the Mississippi Conference which commenced at Tuskaloosa, Alabama, December 25, 1828, when he was received into full connection in the Conference and ordained deacon. He then left the State of Alabama, and he never returned to it. From that time till November, 1841, he had appointments in connection with the Mission to the Choctaw Indians. He then located. He was something of a scholar, and was a teacher as well as a preacher. He married an Indian.

For 1829 the preachers for the Marion Circuit were, Felix Wood, Blanton P. Box. Wood and Box had just been admitted on trial in the Conference, and Wood discontinued at the end of the year.

The appointment for 1830 was, Marion, Lewis S. Turner. That closed Turner's work in Alabama. He located in December, 1833.

Preston Cooper was the preacher on Marion Circuit for 1831, and that was his first and last year in Alabama. He joined the

Methodist Episcopal Church, and was licensed to preach in Marengo County, Alabama, in 1823. He was received on trial in the Mississippi Conference at the session which commenced in Tuskaloosa, Alabama, December 25, 1828, and received into full connection at the session at Tuskaloosa, commencing November 24, 1830, and was elected deacon at that time, though not ordained then because no Bishop was present; and he located in December, 1837. He was a presiding elder two years in the Mississippi Conference, after the Alabama Conference was organized.

For 1832 the Marion Circuit and Columbus, Mississippi, were put together and called Columbus and Marion, and Nathan Hopkins and Anthony S. Dickinson were the preachers appointed thereto.

During the years from 1819 to 1832 the membership in the territory embraced in what was first called Buttahatchee, and then Marion increased steadily and satisfactorily. In that time the numbers increased from seventy-two white members to eight hundred and thirty-six white and ninety-six colored members. The largest increase was in that part of the Circuit which lay in the State of Mississippi, and nearly all the colored members were in that part of the Circuit.

For the years from 1818 to 1832 the Tombigbee Circuit comes into view again.

Tombecbee, *John McLendon*, Thomas Owens. That was the order of the appointments made for that Circuit for the year 1818. The appointment of Thomas Owens was made at the session of the Mississippi Conference held at Midway, Mississippi, commencing November 7, 1817, and John McLendon received the appointment at the session of the South Carolina Conference held at Augusta, Georgia, commencing January 27, 1818. The same Bishop appointed both of these preachers to Tombigbee, though he appointed Owens junior preacher at Midway, in November, 1817, and McLendon preacher in charge at Augusta, in January, 1818. McLendon was an elder and Owens was only a deacon, and the elder was put in charge of the Circuit and the deacon was put on as junior preacher. At the end of the year there were reported three hundred and seventy white and ninety-three colored members, which was an increase of thirty-seven white members and a decrease of three colored members.

That one year's service on the Tombigbee Circuit was the only service rendered by the Rev. John McLendon in Alabama. At the session of the South Carolina Conference, which was held at Fayetteville, North Carolina, January 12-19, 1814, he was admitted on trial in the traveling connection; and at the session of the Conference at Charleston, South Carolina, commencing December 23, 1815, he was admitted into full connection and ordained deacon. As the Journal of the Conference shows, the session of the South Carolina Conference "was appointed to be held at Louisville, Georgia, January 27, 1818, but was held in Augusta, Georgia, having been removed from Louisville with the consent of the Conference." At that session of the Conference the Rev. John McLendon was ordained an elder, transferred to the Mississippi Conference, and appointed, as above stated, to the Tombigbee Circuit. The last appointments which he served as an itinerant preacher were in the State of Mississippi. He located at the session of the Mississippi Conference held at Midway, Mississippi, commencing November 17, 1820.

As already stated in another place in this chapter, the preachers for Tombeebee Circuit for 1819 were Thomas Griffin and John Murrow. That was Murrow's only year in Alabama. He was admitted on trial in the South Carolina Conference at the same time the Rev. John McLendon was admitted, and followed McLendon on the Tombeebee Circuit in 1819, and at the end of the year returned to the South Carolina Conference, and located at the close of 1824.

In the General Minutes for 1820 the appointments stand: Tombeebee, Nicholas McIntyre, J. Clinton. It should have been Thomas Clinton, instead of J. Clinton, and while Thomas Clinton was appointed by the Bishop to the Tombigbee Circuit, yet when the field had been surveyed the presiding elder changed him to the Alabama Circuit, and McIntyre served the Tombigbee Circuit that year alone.

The preachers for Tombeebee Circuit were for 1821 Meridith Renneau; for 1822, Zachariah Williams, John Patton; for 1823, Henry P. Cook; for 1824, John R. Lambuth; for 1825, Zachariah Williams.

With the year 1825 the name of Zachariah Williams disappears from the roll of preachers of the Methodist Episcopal

Church. How he was disposed of is not stated in the General Minutes. He started as a preacher in the South Carolina Conference. The South Carolina Conference held a session at Charleston, South Carolina, commencing December 23, 1815. In the Journal for that session of the Conference is an entry for December 28, as follows: "Zachariah Williams was duly recommended by a Quarterly Conference of Keewee Circuit, and admitted on trial." He was admitted into full connection at Augusta, Georgia, in January, 1818, and ordained deacon. He was ordained an elder at Charleston, South Carolina, January, 1820. The Journal of the South Carolina Conference, for the session held at Columbia, South Carolina, commencing January 11, 1821, shows that charges were made against Zachariah Williams by Hartwell Spain, January 15, 1821, and that a committee was appointed consisting of Nicholas Talley, Henry Bass, and Allen Turner, to which said charges were referred, and that on the next day, January 16, the committee reported his case: "The result of which was that they judge that he should 1. Be reprov'd by the President before the Conference; 2. That he should be deprived of his parchment as elder until our next Annual Conference. The first punishment was adopted, and the second did not pass. He was called in and reprov'd accordingly." From that session of the Conference he was sent a missionary to the Mississippi Conference, and as such missionary he took charge of Tuskaloosa Circuit. It appears therefore that he came to the Tuskaloosa Circuit, Alabama, just fresh from a trial and reprimand on charges, the nature of which is not now known. He united with the Methodist Protestant Church, and was for many long years a preacher in the Alabama Conference of that Church, and finally, in 1856, he joined the Baptists in Alabama; and became a preacher among them, and for many years lived in comparative obscurity in an out-of-the-way part of the State, on the borders of Conecuh and Covington Counties.

The appointment for 1826 stands: Tombecbee, John G. Lee. The Rev. John G. Lee was admitted on trial in the Mississippi Conference at the close of 1822, and he located at the close of 1827.

For 1827: Tombecbee, Henry J. Brown.

For 1828: Tombecbee, Anderson G. McDaniel, Lewis S. Tur-



ner. When these two men, McDaniel and Turner, received that appointment they had been on trial just one year, and at the end of that year's work on Tombecbee McDaniel was discontinued.

The preachers on Tombecbee were for 1829, Lewis S. Turner; for 1830 Daniel Monaghan; for 1831 Joshua Peavy; for 1832 Job Foster.

The Tombecbee Circuit for the year 1832 was the last appointment served by the Rev. Job Foster which was all included in the State of Alabama. For 1833 and 1834 he served the Chickasawhay Circuit, which, though it was then included in the Alabama Conference, was all in the State of Mississippi, except one appointment. One Society, then on that Circuit, called Providence, and in which William Godfrey, a prominent man and a pious Christian, was the leading member, and at which large congregations assembled, was in Washington County, Alabama. At the end of 1834 Foster located, but was again a member of the Alabama Conference for the years 1837 and 1838, and for those years served again the Chickasawhay Circuit. At the close of 1838 he again located, and that terminated his itinerant career. He was first received on trial in the Mississippi Conference in December, 1829, and he had just been received into full connection by the Mississippi Conference and ordained deacon, November, 1831, when he was appointed to the Tombecbee Circuit.

Some of those who were intimately associated with the Rev. Job Foster regarded him a good man, and they have reported him as punctual and faithful in the work of the ministry. He is said to have been "impulsive and eccentric." His excitable and erratic nature led him into grotesque attitudes and betrayed him into ludicrous utterances. Two or three incidents in his life may suffice for an insight to his erratic nature and a knowledge of his odd ways. It was a custom with him to sit flat on the ground and talk with himself when in his religious moods. It was also a remarkable fact that others were never swept into the torrent of his ecstasies. When he was excited others were calm. When he was in his sublimest raptures others were in their deepest depression and thickest gloom. When he was in charge of the Tombigbee Circuit he had a Camp-meeting at or near Suggsville, which was one of the appoint-

ments on that Circuit. At one of the services of the occasion he seated himself on the straw in front of the altar and talked to himself. While in that attitude he was borne away with rapturous delight, and he made the air ring and the hills echo with his shouts. He shouted, he laughed, he talked. As usual, he was the only one at that hour apparently happy. While he was pouring forth the expressions of his overmastering joy he said, "I will bet I die shouting," and as quick as thought he added, "if it were lawful to bet." Some persons in the congregation of irreligious proclivities circulated an exaggerated statement of what he said. They reported that Foster said: "I'll bet my horse I'll die shouting." There was no need of exaggerating the account, for the performance was ridiculous enough in its verity. For he did say, "I will bet I die shouting," and added as an afterthought, "if it were lawful to bet."

At the close of Foster's year on the Tombigbee Circuit, on November 27, 1832, the Alabama Conference met in its first session at the town of Tuskaloosa, Alabama, Bishop James Osgood Andrew presiding. The last convocation of that session of the Conference was reached. It was at night. The purpose of the convocation at that hour was to administer the Lord's Supper, and announce the assignment of the preachers to the several charges for the next year. Bishop Andrew officiated in the administration of the sacrament. Profound quiet prevailed for a time, and the entire audience was reverent and solemn. Suddenly Foster was seized with a spasm of excitement, so "happy," as he called it, that he could neither contain nor restrain himself. With a spasmodic lunge he threw his arms around the Rev. A. C. Ramsey, a small and feeble young man, and one of the preachers who had just been admitted on trial into the Conference, who was sitting near him, and hugged him with such a furious and death-like grip that it seemed that he would literally squeeze the life out of him before he could extricate himself. When Ramsey had finally broken his grasp and crawled out of his embrace, Foster, as quick as lightning, rose to his feet and dashed up the aisle with an agility which was amazing, and with antics which were alarming, and with a medley of utterances which, but for the improprieties of the whole performance, might have been amusing. As he flew back and forth, up and down the aisle, from the altar to the door, some of the

young men who were seated in the back part of the audience said: "We will have to put side lines on that fellow to hold him in his place, and to keep him from killing himself and others."

When the appointments were announced for the ensuing year, the year 1833, Foster was read out to the Chickasawhay Circuit. During the year he held a Camp-meeting on his Circuit on or near Red Creek. The Rev. Paul F. Sterns, then serving what was called Mobile Mission, and who was a very quiet man and who even in his greatest ecstasies was calm and composed, attended that Camp-meeting. One night while the meeting was going on Foster was seated in his favorite position flat on the ground in Sister Ramsey's tent, and all at once he sprang up from the ground, and went dashing over the tent, knocking over chairs, and pushing the individuals with whom he came in contact hither and thither. Finally in his furious course he approached the Rev. Paul F. Sterns, and grasped him rather violently, and then letting go his grasp on him he laid his hands on his head, and with vociferous voice and in a tone of exclamation he said: "Brother Saul, receive thy sight." All this he did while every one in the tent and on the campus was perfectly quiet and without any excess of emotion.

This erratic man, the Rev. Job Foster, finally moved to Texas, and at last, it is said, upon credible testimony, he hanged himself. His erratic nature held sway over him, and at last his life terminated by suicide!

In the list of appointments appeared a new pastoral charge. It did not appear in the list for 1819, but it was surveyed and its outline established that year, and was on record for 1820. It was called *Alabama*, and the territory which it occupied was on the Alabama River, having its first and leading appointments about the mouths of Pine Woods Creek, Autauga Creek, Catoma Creek, and Swift Creek, and in its general outlines, extending as far up the river as its termination at the junction of the Coosa and the Tallapoosa Rivers, and up the Coosa River to the Coosa Falls or Wetumpka, and as far down the river as to the place known as Benton, and extending out from the river on both sides.

That Alabama Circuit was surveyed and outlined by the Rev. Alexander Talley, a Missionary to the Alabama Territory from the South Carolina Conference for the year 1819. That the

Rev. Alexander Talley was sent to the Alabama Territory by the South Carolina Conference as Missionary for the year 1819, and that he worked that year in the field thenceforward occupied by the Alabama Circuit, is certified by numerous indubitable witnesses, and these facts are established beyond all question, and that notwithstanding it is stated in his memoir, published in the General Minutes, that he was sent to Mobile for 1819. The statements in his memoir are altogether unreliable, as will appear fully when the real facts in the case transpire.

It is impossible at this stage of matters to give with absolute certainty the name of the Methodist who first settled in the bounds of what was for many years the Alabama Circuit, but it is a fact that Mrs. Martha Lee Bledsoe, if not the first Methodist reaching that fair and beautiful region, was, nevertheless, in the advance of Methodist emigrants to that section. She took up her abode on the sunset side of the Coosa River, a mile or so from Fort Jackson, in August, 1815. That was just one year after a treaty had been made and concluded between Maj. Gen. Andrew Jackson, on behalf of the United States of America, and the chiefs, deputies, and warriors of the Creek Nation, extinguishing the Indian title thereto and ceding the region of country about the Alabama River and further out to the United States Government, and it was while the United States troops were stationed on the line which bounded the ceded territory, superintending the removal of the Indians across the said line. That boundary line has been given on a preceding page in Chapter VI.

A slight detail in biography and incident will narrate how Mrs. Martha Lee Bledsoe was led to emigrate to the section of country which was once traversed by the Alabama Circuit. Her maiden name was Wilder. She was born in the Colony of Virginia in 1770. Her father, William Wilder, who served through the seven years of the Revolutionary War between the United Colonies and Great Britain, moved, after the close of that war, to that section of Georgia now included in Wilkes County. When a young lady she married B. H. House, who in a few years after marriage died, leaving her with four children, two sons and two daughters. A few years after the death of her first husband she married J. Bledsoe, of Kentucky, who died about one year after marriage, leaving her by this mar-



riage one daughter. When the war between the United States and Great Britain, and the war between the United States and the Creek Indians commenced, the two sons of Mrs. Bledsoe, Jacob P. House and William H. House, enlisted in the military service, and they were employed in the campaign against the Creek Indians and the British. Being a widow and her two sons being in the army, Mrs. Bledsoe moved from Georgia to Winchester, Tennessee, where then lived her married daughter. When the time of service for which they had enlisted expired, her two sons were honorably discharged from the army. They were mustered out of service at Fort Jackson. Instead of returning to their former home, they took up their abode on the soil they had helped to redeem from savage occupancy, and went into business across the river from where they were discharged from the military service. They built for themselves a storehouse on the opposite side of the Coosa River from Fort Jackson and about one mile from the fort, and supplying themselves with a stock of goods, which they had transported from Fort Claiborne on the Alabama River on pole boats, they opened a traffic with the Indians and also with the United States soldiers who were stationed at the fort a mile away. When her sons were settled at that point Mrs. Bledsoe set her face to go into that land to sojourn with them, and in the month of August, 1815, having passed over the intervening country between Winchester, Tennessee, and that spot, she took up her abode at the place of her sons' business, on the very line which divided the ceded territory from that still owned and still to be occupied by the Indians. Afterward she moved from that place and settled a home in the pine woods, about twelve miles from where the town of Washington was established, and in the bounds once included in what was established as Autauga County she lived until her death in 1832. She died suddenly near Big Island, on the Coosa River. Mrs. Bledsoe was renewed in her heart in her childhood under the Wesleyan ministry, and she was an earnest and faithful member of the Methodist Episcopal Church until her death. For a half century or more she walked in the ways of the Lord. She attended upon the class-meetings and love-feasts. She was at the first Camp-meeting held at the noted Camp-ground at Graves's Ferry, on the Alabama River, five miles below the

town of Washington. When she lived at the place a mile or so from Fort Jackson she resorted to the fort to hear the Chaplain to the soldiers preach. Two of her daughters and one of her sons were Methodists, while one of her sons was an Episcopalian, and her youngest daughter, Mrs. C. M. Brown, who in this year (1889) is still living, has been for long years a Presbyterian.

Evidently Mrs. Bledsoe and her children were among the very first settlers in that fascinating region from Fort Jackson to the Holy Ground, after the extinction of the Indian titles to the land thereabouts. It is a tradition that Jacob P. House, the son of Mrs. Bledsoe by her first husband, raised the first crop of corn ever raised by a white man in what was at one time Autauga County, after the cession of that territory by the Indians to the United States Government.

The County of Autauga was constituted and named by enactment of the Legislative Council and House of Representatives of the Alabama Territory in General Assembly convened, on November 21, 1818, with the following boundaries: "Beginning on the Alabama River at the mouth of the Lower Mulberry Creek, thence running up the main stream thereof to its source, thence in a direct line to the north bank of the Coosa River opposite the upper end of Proctor's Island, thence down the Coosa to its junction with the Tallapoosa River, thence down the Alabama to the beginning." Upon the formation of Autauga County, Montgomery County was confined to the opposite side of the Alabama River, and at that time it included what was afterward constituted Lowndes County.

The first emigrants to Autauga County aggregated at one place in sufficient numbers to make a village or town, and being patriotic admirers of the Father of his country, they named the town Washington, and the said town was incorporated by an Act of the Legislature of Alabama passed December 14, 1820. The act of incorporation defined the limits and designated the location of the town as follows: "And be it further enacted, That all that part of fraction thirty-three, in Township seventeen, and Range sixteen, lying west of the Autauga Creek, and north-west of the Alabama River, be, and the same shall constitute the corporation limits of the town of Washington."

At a point below the town of Washington and in the County of Autauga, is a noted bend of the Alabama River, which at the

beginning of the incoming of emigrants to that part of Alabama was settled by a number of Dutch and Dutch descendants, and has since and on that account been called Dutch Bend.

In 1819 Seaborn Minns took up his abode just around the point on the Alabama River where begins the noted Dutch Bend, and just far enough around the point to be on the west bank of the river, and there he laid out a town and named it Vernon. That town attained sufficient importance to be incorporated, and on December 8, 1821, it was enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Alabama in General Assembly convened, "That all that part of fractions thirty-five and thirty-six, west of Alabama River, in Township seventeen, and Range fourteen, be, and the same constitute the corporate limits of the town of Vernon."

Econachaca, an Indian town, familiarly known as Holy Ground, and which was on the Alabama River just opposite the Dutch Bend, in what was in 1819 Montgomery County, and what is now in 1889 Lowndes County, and where on December 23, 1813, as history records, a decisive battle was fought between the United States troops under the lead of General Claiborne and the Creek warriors under the lead of Weatherford, was the center of a community which was commenced at as early a day as the settlements at Washington and in Dutch Bend.

These settlements herein named were noted places in the then Counties of Autauga and Montgomery at which in reconnoitering the territory to be embraced in the Alabama Circuit Methodist preaching places were established.

At the first the people were assembled in private houses and under forest trees to listen to the preaching of the gospel and to join in the divine worship; and though the Rev. Alexander Talley worked as a missionary in that region during the year 1819, it appears that little was accomplished in organizing Societies and in erecting houses of worship before 1820.

Near the site of the Holy Ground, where was fought the famous battle in which General Claiborne achieved a complete victory, and Weatherford, the Indian warrior, displayed unsurpassed chivalry, a Methodist church was erected as early as 1820; and by that same date a Society was organized and a log cabin was erected for a church in Dutch Bend, about three miles from Vernon. That church was named Asbury.

Washington was one of the preaching places at the first. Through 1819 and 1820, and on into 1821, the Methodists preached in Washington in private houses, usually in the house of Major James Howard. A house was built and finished in 1821 for an Academy and a church conjointly. In a year or more the place was abandoned as a place for a school and the house was henceforward used exclusively as a Methodist church.

The first Camp-ground established in Autauga County was at or near Graves's Ferry, a few miles from the town of Washington, down the Alabama River, and was known as Graves's Camp-ground, so called for William Graves, who had a ferry on the river. Camp-meetings were held there for many years, and great numbers of men and women were turned from sin to holiness at that sacred spot who made noble workers and noted saints. The first Camp-meeting was held there in the latter half of the year 1820, and the Rev. Thomas Nixon, the Rev. Thomas Clinton, the Rev. Eli Terry, the Rev. Peyton Bibb, and others, did the preaching on that occasion. Among those who at that time and place received the regenerating power of the Holy Ghost were two men who became itinerant preachers, Peyton S. Graves and William Alexander. Peyton S. Graves, though he did not maintain a reputable character through life, became notorious in the ranks of Methodism in that section of Alabama.

One of the most thrilling scenes ever disclosed in the new settlements on the Alabama River was witnessed at a brook on the way between Graves's Camp-ground and the beautiful little town of Vernon. It was in the month of August in the year 1822. A Camp-meeting, which had been attended with divine power and unction, had, on the morning on which said scene occurred, closed with the usual songs, prayers, good-bye greetings, and benediction; and the crowds who had attended the delightful services of the occasion were, with mingled feelings of sadness and of joy, wending their way homeward. They were sad on account of leaving the sacred place and the holy services, and of separating from friends of kindred minds, and they were joyous on account of the anointing they had received from the Holy One. Two men who lived at Vernon, John Du Bois and William McPherson, journeyed together, Du Bois on foot, McPherson on horseback. Peyton S. Graves, one of the three



traveling preachers on the Alabama Circuit for that year, had, by his preaching on the occasion, arrested the attention of these two men and had riveted upon their consciences divine conviction. Du Bois had been a penitent at the altar, and in his feelings had oscillated between despair and hope. He had passed through all the stages of a true repentance, and on the morning of the adjournment of the meeting, he got a deep insight into evangelical truth, and had his soul regaled with divine grace. As he and his immediate companion journeyed he descanted on his new-found joys. The meanwhile McPherson was pensive and sad, he was overwhelmed with the magnitude of his guilt and the enormity of his sins. In the moods here detailed these two companions reached the brook which meandered across the road on which they journeyed, and there they halted to give drink to the steed which McPherson rode. While the animal was quenching his thirst with the water of the brook there fell instantly upon Du Bois a divine influence which was overpowering and inexpressible, and instantaneously with this baptism upon Du Bois McPherson felt the regenerating work of the Holy Ghost in his heart. Instantly McPherson leaped from his horse, and uttered his joy in a loud tone, literally yelled and ran like a wild Indian. This bestowment of heavenly joy upon these two men arrested the march of the journeying crowds. They halted upon the spot and joined Du Bois and McPherson in shouting their triumphs and in praising God, and many more were there and then regenerated. The memory of that hour still abides, for there is, at least, one who yet abides on these mortal shores and who still maintains the Christian faith who was a participant in the transactions of that hour. William McPherson, at this date, January 2, 1890, still lives, and through all the long period of more than sixty-seven years which have now intervened since his conversion at the brook he has maintained a spotless character and has been a pillar in the Church of God. Since 1835 he has resided at what is now known as Fayetteville, in Talladega County, Alabama, and he has done much for Methodism in the country where he has lived. John Du Bois was long a local preacher in Alabama.

The town of Vernon, though there was never any house of worship there, early became a center of religious influence and of Methodist usages. The Rev. Alexander Talley located at the

end of the year 1819, entered upon the study and practice of medicine, and made his home at Vernon, and as a local preacher exerted a powerful influence there and throughout the Alabama Circuit which he surveyed and organized. Much of the time from the close of 1819 to the close of 1825, while he was in the capacity of a local preacher, Dr. Talley made the house of Mr. Seaborn Mims his home. The home of Mr. Mims, a sort of inn for the entertainment of boarders and travelers, was, in 1821, blessed with a special visit from the divine presence from which a grand revival ensued. In that year, 1821, Mrs. Mims, the wife of Seaborn Mims, a woman of strength and honor, and whose worth was "far above rubies," became deeply concerned upon the subject of religion, and in due process she emerged from the burden of guilt and the sorrows of sin. Suddenly her sighing was made to cease and her joy to abound. Her ecstasy was so intense that she could not restrain herself, and she made the entire premises to resound with her shouts. Her conversion and her exclamations of joy were a surprise to all the inmates, a promiscuous company, of the house. Her conversion made a deep impression upon all who knew her, and her religious influence permeated the whole town and the surrounding country. A revival inundated the whole community, and nearly the entire population was ere long converted. Preachers and class-leaders were overwhelmed with work, and saving power was everywhere felt and seen. A number of the Mimses were converted. Mr. Seaborn Mims was one of the grandest workers in the Methodist ranks who ever lived in the State of Alabama.

It was at the house of Mr. Seaborn Mims, in the town of Vernon, that an incident occurred with Bishop Roberts which has had many, many versions. Said incident shall be related here by John Du Bois, who was present and witnessed the whole affair: "Late one evening in December, 1822, after the busy inmates of our pleasant home had come in from their labors, a venerable stranger rode up and asked to be entertained for the night. He was kindly received by Mr. Mims, our generous host, and was soon seated before a glowing fire, which threw its cheerful light and radiant heat over all around. The tall and commanding figure of the stranger, his elegant manners and pleasant and dignified conversation, inspired every one with a

desire to know who he was. Tea was soon announced, and after a good supper, Mr. Mims proffered to show him to his room that he might retire early, and take a good night's rest. It was our class-meeting night, and Mr. Mims so announced to him by way of courtesy. He said he was not much fatigued, that he was refreshed by his supper, and that it would be his pleasure to go with us.

"Arnold Campbell, a local preacher, was our class-leader. He was a young man, but zealous in all good works. Our place of meeting was in the Academy. After the leader had discharged his duty to each member of the class, he then addressed himself to the visitor, whose response was so full, simple, and eloquent, that we were all deeply impressed, and still more anxious to know the stranger; but the conventional code and primitive modesty of our society would not allow us to be very inquisitive under any circumstances, and especially to strangers.

"When we reached the inn, on our return from the services, Mr. Mims again offered to conduct him to his room, but he replied: 'Before retiring let us have prayers.' The Book was handed, an appropriate lesson read, and then followed such a prayer as we have seldom heard. By this time curiosity was at its height. Brother Campbell and some others went with him to his room. Without further ceremony Brother Campbell asked him if he would preach for him the next day, promising to secure for him a congregation. He said: 'How do you know that I am a preacher? I guess you would like to know who I am. I am Robert R. Roberts.' So, by entertaining a stranger, we had the honor of entertaining a live Bishop unawares.

"He consented to preach, and did so the next day, very much to the edification and spiritual profit of the people, and took his leave to the regions far beyond, expressing himself as much pleased with his sojourn among us, as we were delighted and profited by his visit."

About two miles from what was then the town of Montgomery, and west of south from that town, a Society, which was thenceforward in the Alabama Circuit, was organized in the year 1821, and a log house was erected and dedicated to divine worship, and the place was known as "Mills and Westcott Meeting House." The sobriquet will be explained when it is stated that Flora Mills and Eliza Westcott were members of the Society

there. Mrs. Flora Mills was from North Carolina, and settled at Alabama Town, which was a little way west of what was Montgomery, after its name was changed from Philadelphia to Montgomery, and she settled there previous to April, 1819. Thomas Hatchett was at the head of that little band of Christians who worshiped at the "Mills and Westcott Meeting House," and Rachel Hatchett and Susannah Nichols had their names enrolled among that faithful few. In that log house they kept the charge of the Lord, and offered their sacrifices and sweet incense continually. There the pure word of God was preached, and the sacraments duly administered. How many and who were baptized in that unpretentious house is not now known, but it is known that W. R. Westcott, now, in 1890, living in the city of Montgomery, was baptized there. Like all things earthly, that log house decayed, and by the beginning of 1828 it was so dilapidated that it was no longer a suitable place for divine service. In that year, 1828, Thomas Hatchett, in his liberality and enterprise, built a new house, designed to serve the Society in place of the old one, but by the time he had the new house ready for occupancy and sought the execution of the deed to the lot on which the house was erected, a number of the Society had turned Reformers and had joined the Protestant Methodists, and the man who owned the lot deeded lot and house to the new organization, and left Mr. Hatchett and those who adhered to the doctrines and polity of the Methodist Episcopal Church to seek a place of worship at another locality.

Francis M. Gilmer, with his family, moved from Oglethorpe County, Georgia, to Alabama Territory, in January, 1819, and settled in Montgomery County, a little way west of Ofushee, or, as it is put down on the maps, Oakfuskee Creek, then the line of the Creek Nation, and about twenty miles south-east of what was then the town of Philadelphia, what was afterward incorporated as the town of Montgomery. He and his wife were Methodists, having joined the Church in 1808. From the time he settled at that new home he had preaching in his house whenever a preacher passed that way. The passing of preachers through that community was, for many years, uncertain and irregular. No Methodist church was built in that neighborhood until after 1830. In 1828, the Rev. James H. Mellard, then the preacher on the Alabama Circuit, preached a sermon



at the house of Brother Gilmer, and baptized two of his sons, George N. and John. Some time between 1830 and 1835 a church was built a few miles from the residence of Brother Gilmer at which he and his family from that time held membership.

Benajah S. Bibb, Thomas Jarrett, Abner McGhee, and William Taylor moved to Montgomery County, Alabama, and located homes and domiciled themselves between Catoma and Pintlala Creeks about the year 1822. William Taylor's place was eight miles from the town of Montgomery, and exactly south of that town, and in Township fifteen and Range eighteen. Benajah S. Bibb's place was five or six miles south-west of the town of Montgomery, and in Township fifteen and Range seventeen. Abner McGhee possessed himself of a large body of land, and his place, perhaps, became central to the community, and on his land and near the Federal Road and about ten miles south-west of the town of Montgomery, a church was built, so soon as it could be conveniently done after these men had fixed their habitations, and the place was called Hope Hull, after the great Methodist man of that name in Georgia. This Hope Hull Church was one of the appointments on the Alabama Circuit, but only for a few years, as the membership of that Society revolted the Methodist Episcopal Church, and joined the Reformers.

By 1823, perhaps before that, a Camp-ground was established near Montgomery at which great and efficient sermons were preached, at which the presence and power of God were manifested, and at which grand results were achieved. As early as the establishment of the Camp-ground here mentioned a preaching place was established by the Methodists at the town of Coosauda, which was at that time, perhaps, a larger place than Montgomery. At Wetumpka also there were Methodists living at that early date, and grand times were had there. The times were pleasant thereabout, and conversions were constantly occurring.

Rocky Mount, in Section eight, Township seventeen, Range seventeen, became a center of social and literary interest at an early day. There an academy was erected and maintained for the instruction of the children of the country. An act of the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Alabama,

establishing the Rocky Mount Academy in Autauga County and constituting the Trustees thereof a body corporate, was passed and approved January 12, 1827. John G. Graham, Malcolm Smith, Jacob Whetstone, William Hall, Littleton Reese, Zachariah T. Watkins, and Peyton Bibb were the Trustees named in the act of incorporation. John G. Graham and Malcolm Smith were firm Presbyterians. Jacob Whetstone was a local preacher in the Methodist Episcopal Church, firm, tried, true. Peyton Bibb was a Methodist, and a local preacher.

All these places above named were in the Alabama Circuit.

Whatever may have been lacking in the Alabama Circuit in the first decade of its existence in the way of houses of worship and of organized charities, there was not lacking gospel truth preached in fervency; and the Methodists there in that day had vital religion, inward holiness, in the heart power and joy divine. As indicative of what they held as a doctrine and experienced as a personal attainment there may be given here the obituary of one who died in that Circuit in 1826:

“Died in Washington, Autauga County, Alabama, on the 21st December last, Mrs. Elizabeth Rush, wife of Captain Charles G. Rush, in the thirty-ninth year of her age.

“By the death of Mrs. Rush, a blank is left in the neighborhood, which will not easily be filled; and though the friend who pens this is, in general, opposed to obituary plaudits, yet there was something so peculiarly affecting in the closing scene of this excellent woman’s life, that justice to her fellow mortals demands it should be made public. In early life she became a member of the Lutheran Church in South Carolina, her native State, but without experiencing the power of religion otherwise than as a moral restraint upon her actions. The pious precepts, however, which she had received from her father, and the correct example of an excellent mother, had implanted in her mind the seeds of virtue, and fixed in her heart those pure and amiable qualities which constituted her a dutiful and loving wife, a kind and affectionate mother, an obliging and charitable neighbor, and to all outward appearance a good and faithful Christian. But, possessed as she was, of so many engaging qualities, she was still a stranger to the efficacy of the blood of Christ as exhibited in the knowledge of sins forgiven.

“After her removal to Alabama, she remained for some years

like a sheep strayed from the fold, having no members of the same Church with whom to associate. But finding her faith declining, and her practice less restrained than formerly, she became satisfied of the necessity of being united with the visible Church on earth, to enable her to claim a seat among the Church of the First Born in heaven. Under such impressions she connected herself with the Methodist Episcopal Church in Washington, and again partook at the table of the Lord. But still she was a stranger to the knowledge of pardoning grace. But thank the Lord, he was not unmindful of his promise, after near two weeks from the birth of her child, of most excruciating pain, from which only by the skill and constant attention of her physician, Dr. Withers, she obtained occasional intervals, her prayers and those of her pious friends were at length answered; her soul was comforted, her fears dissipated, and her pains assuaged; she shouted victory aloud, and gave glory to God. Then opened a scene of holy transport, mingled with heavenly consolation to her believing husband and friends, which it is impossible for pen to describe or imagination to conceive. Relieved, as it were, from pain, while in the very agonies of death, her soul was strong in the Lord. All the powers of her mind revived, and better preaching was seldom if ever heard.

“Having been for some days persuaded that her dissolution was at hand, she had devoted all the time her severe sufferings would allow to wrestling with God, being determined not to give up till she was blessed with the evidence of her acceptance. When that was obtained a calm serenity possessed her soul, and she seemed anxiously to desire that every member of her family and all her neighbors should be able to feel that happiness and calm resignation which she felt; and with a view of impressing her dying charge more deeply upon them, after requesting to hear prayer, she called her husband and children, brothers, sisters, servants, and neighbors separately to her bedside, and warned them by the torment she had suffered to flee from the wrath to come; to begin early to prepare to meet their God; that religion would afford them a happy life and a triumphantly glorious and happy death. Her address to the physician was peculiarly interesting. She thanked him for his unremitted attention; expressed her belief that some of the

most important days of her life were, under God, owing to his skill and assiduity, and besought him to get religion, to seek for that jewel of great price, that all-important acquisition, which will not only give happiness in this life, but eternal enjoyment in heaven. And while in the act of thus exhorting her friends to seek their soul's salvation, her spirit took its peaceful flight, and is now, we trust, in the realms of immortal bliss. Such is the death of the righteous, may mine be like hers!"

Of those who were prominent and valiant as Methodists in the Alabama Circuit, and who came to the country at an early day, may be mentioned, in addition to those whose names have already been given: The Rev. Moses Andrew, the Rev. Peyton Bibb, the Rev. Britton Capel, the Rev. Arnold Campbell, the Rev. James H. Mellard, the Rev. Eli Terry, the Rev. William Terry, Mrs. Ashley, Jesse Box, Emanuel Golson, William Graves, Bruner Harris, William Hester, Mark Howard, James Howard, Joseph W. Houck, Lewis Houser, William Keener, Thomas C. Ledbetter, Thomas E. Ledbetter, Marshal Mims, Shadrack Mims, David Mims, Rudolph Murph, Elijah Myers, James Mitchell, James E. Nicholson, Stephen Pierce, Charles G. Rush, Thomas Smith, George Stoudenmire, Benjamin Taylor, Henry Webster, Henry Whetstone, Stephen White.

Others there were, whose names are not given, who came among the very first, and who were persons of prominence and piety. The names here given are put down alphabetically, and not in the order of the time of said persons coming to the country, nor in the order of the time of their attaching themselves to the Church.

Andrew, Capel, and Mellard had been members of the South Carolina Conference and influential men in the itinerant ranks, but they had located, and then had emigrated to Alabama. Perhaps Mellard was the last of the three to take up his abode in the beautiful land of Alabama, and he is said to have come to the State by 1821. He preached in Montgomery, August 26, 1821.

The Rev. Moses Andrew was born in Georgia, and was for four years, or from December, 1808, till December, 1812, an itinerant preacher in the pastoral work, during which time he was ordained deacon and elder. He came to Alabama in 1820. In 1823 he was a citizen of the town of Montgomery. In 1826



and 1827 he lived at or near the town of Coosauda. He lived, first and last, in various places in that section of Alabama. He was a physician as well as a local preacher, following his profession while he lived in Alabama. He was a popular physician and an eminent preacher. He was a successful champion of the divine cause. He was a zealous and an able defender of the doctrines and polity of the Methodist Episcopal Church to the day of his death. He resisted with all his power and influence the disruption of the Church, inaugurated, fostered, and consummated by the Reformers or the Protestant Methodists. He was a kinsman of Bishop James O. Andrew. He was something above medium height and of consumptive mold. He died and was buried near where the town of Haynesville now is, in 1834. He died of consumption in his forty-fourth year.

The Rev. Britton Capel came to Alabama in company with William Graves, the father of the Rev. Peyton Smith Graves, in perhaps the latter part of 1817. Capel settled seven or eight miles south of the Alabama River and two or three miles west of Pintlala Creek, and in the bounds of what was then Montgomery County, and in the bounds of Lowndes County when that county was organized. For eleven years he was an itinerant preacher. He was received on trial in the South Carolina Conference in January, 1799, and was received into full connection in that Conference and ordained deacon in January, 1801, and was ordained elder in January, 1803. In 1805 and 1806 he was presiding elder of the Selueda District, with Charleston as one of the pastoral charges in the District, and in 1807, 1808, and 1809 he was presiding elder of the Ogeechee District, with Augusta as one of the pastoral charges of the District. At the Conference in December, 1809, he located. He was a local preacher in the Alabama Circuit eight or ten years. The Rev. John Du Bois, who knew him in Alabama, and heard him preach in the Alabama Circuit, says:

“Rev. Britton Capel was a preacher of the primitive type, but a man of moving powers. He was not exactly ubiquitous, but was a sort of ecclesiastical wanderer, that went about sowing the seeds of kindness and gospel truth, with the eloquence of a pious soul.

“His advent into a neighborhood was hailed with delight by

all good persons, and was to them the harbinger of a spiritual feast. His visits were never long, but their impressions were deep and lasting. At the family altar, in the social circle, and along the dusty highway, he labored to do good and honor the Master. His manners were pleasant and simple, his life consistent and pure. As a faithful servant he found peace in the vineyard of the Lord, and delighted in the sanctuary of the Most High. The pulpit seemed to be his native element; and though simplicity marked his efforts, the genius of eloquence possessed him."

More will be said of him hereafter in another connection. Graves who came with Capel to Alabama settled on the Alabama River a few miles below the town of Washington and established a ferry on that river which was called by his name. As stated in another connection the first Camp-ground established in Autauga County was established near his place in the latter part of 1820 and named Graves's Camp-ground.

The Rev. Peyton Bibb, and his brother who was the Governor of the Alabama Territory, and the first Governor of the State of Alabama, moved to Alabama when it was a Territory, and they settled in the vicinity of Coosauda town.

Mark Howard moved to the section now embraced in Autauga County before the county was made, and while Alabama was a Territory Leonidas Howard, the son of Mark Howard, who lives now near Mulberry, Autauga County, Alabama, and in the same neighborhood in which he has lived more than seventy years, and who was born in Georgia September 13, 1816, recollects being baptized in Autauga County, Alabama, in 1820, by the Rev. Alexander Talley, and recollects seeing his father baptized the same day by the same preacher. The son was baptized by sprinkling, the father was baptized by immersion.

James Howard moved to the town of Washington in January, 1818, and joined the Church there in 1821. James E. Nicholson, William Hester, and Stephen Pierce moved to the town of Washington about the same time James Howard did, and they and their wives were members of the Church there. Thomas Smith moved to that section of country in January, 1818.

The Mims brothers, all except Seaborn, moved to the vicinity of Vernon in 1820. John Du Bois, Thomas C. Ledbetter, Thomas E. Ledbetter, and Joseph W. Houck took up abode at

Vernon and vicinity in January, 1821. William McPherson came in 1822.

The Methodist and Baptist Churches were co-etaneous in that section of the country, and the Baptists there were the most persistent antagonists with which the Methodists had to contend. In the month of January, 1819, the Rev. Alexander Talley reached the Alabama River, when and where he commenced his ministry to the settlers thereabout. History asserts that "Elim," a Baptist church, was "nearly six miles" from the town of Montgomery, and north-east from the town, and that it was the "first Christian Church" established in "Montgomery County," and, moreover, that it was constituted "June 19, 1819, by a Presbytery consisting of the Rev. James McLemore, and Electus Thompson." The Baptist historian also states that the "Alabama Baptist Association was constituted December 13, 1819, of four churches, Antioch, Bethel, Elim, and Rehoboth, all of Montgomery County," and that "in 1820 Union and Swift Creek churches, in Autauga" County "were received" into the Association. The *data* here furnished show that the Rev. Alexander Talley, the Methodist preacher, was at work in that region a few months before any Baptist Church was organized therein, and that in the outline of their work the two Churches, the Methodists and the Baptists, commenced their operations and planted their organizations there about the same time.

The Rev. L. C. Davis was the first Moderator of the "Alabama Baptist Association," and he presided over its deliberations two of its annual sessions in succession. The style of the men who at that time composed that Association may be known by the style of the man chosen as their Moderator, and the style of Moderator may be gathered from the appellation given him; he was commonly called "Club Axe Davis."

The Baptists in that day and in that section, as well as in other sections, boasted of their ignorance, and set forth said ignorance as the evidence of their Christian merit, and as an evidence that they were in the apostolic succession, and that as preachers they had a divine call, and belonged to a scriptural ministry. They proscribed learning and set a premium upon illiteracy. They interpreted Paul's words, "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called," as meaning:

Let every man who is called of God to preach who was not educated before his call remain uneducated. They insisted with no little pertinacity that whom God called to preach he would qualify for the work of the ministry, and that without education, without reading, and without study. They maintained with a tenacity worthy of a better cause than one founded in ignorance that the preacher called of God would have nothing to do but to open his mouth and God would fill it with suitable words. It was a common occurrence in that time and country for Baptist preachers in their public harangues in the pulpit to boast that they were not "college bred." They have been known to assert in the delivery of their sermons that they had "never swallowed a dictionary," or as they pronounced it a "dixonary." They have been known commonly to announce to their audience that they "did not know where or what their text for the hour was, nor what they were going to say about it, that they would speak as the Lord directed them." The truth of the declaration that they did not know what they were going to say in the interpretation of the text was usually demonstrated, but it was not always manifest that the Lord guided them in what they said.

The Baptists were Calvinists, Fatalists, Antinomians. They stated in their creeds and asserted in their pulpits, not in very scholarly terms, nor in very elegant diction, nor in very elevated style, but in very positive words, that God did, from all eternity, by his determinate counsel and foreknowledge, and that without any reference to contingencies and conditions, fore-ordain whatsoever comes to pass; and that God did, by a decree by him made before the foundations of the world were laid, and made according to his eternal and immutable purpose, predestinate a certain and definite number of persons to everlasting life, and fore-ordain and reprobate a certain and definite number to everlasting death; and that the elect have been redeemed by Christ, and will be irresistibly and effectually called, and, that having been given in covenant to the Son by the Father from eternity, they cannot totally and finally fall away; and that the reprobate, left out of the eternal covenant of grace, are not redeemed by Christ, and nothing can be done for their salvation. With the doctrines of divine sovereignty, human bondage, limited atonement, absolute decrees, irresistible grace, personal and



predetermined election and reprobation the Baptists fought most valiantly against the establishment of Methodism. They fought with a zeal which indicated that they earnestly desired to contribute to the consummation of the decrees so absolute in their nature and so ancient in their origin. These Baptists have been known to occupy the hours allotted to the public services of the Sabbath in trying to prove that from eternity it had been predetermined just how, where, and when every one should be born and should die. They would harangue interminably to show that the very time and manner of one's death were fixed from before all worlds, and that no course of conduct and no fortuitous circumstances would or could have anything to do in the termination of life. They would caricature the doctrines of Arminianism, and ridicule the experiences and denounce the professions of Methodists. They opposed and denounced the class-meetings, the love-feasts, and the prayer meetings held by the Methodists, and also their custom of holding divine services at night. They charged that the class-meetings and love-feasts were held for inquisitorial and dissolute purposes, and that night services were occasions for carrying forward works of darkness and committing deeds of evil. One of the worst offenses, as they esteemed it, which they charged against the Methodists was that they had made a Bible of their own, and one to suit themselves and with which to vindicate their many heresies. The basis for this charge was that Mr. Wesley had made and published a translation of the New Testament. For this act these Baptists fulminated their anathemas against the Methodists, and sustained their denunciations with the words of Revelation: "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

Those Baptists claimed to be, in some sense, the successors of John the Baptist, and they were persistent in anathematizing the followers of Mr. Wesley because they presumed to baptize persons by a mode other than immersion, and because they would confer baptism on children. They declared that immer-

sion only is baptism, and that they considered "infant baptism the most damnable" of all heresies, and that it has done more to "corrupt the Church of God, and make it a den of robbers, than all other inventions of the wicked one!" They asserted that there were none like the Methodists who had sold themselves to work wickedness and commit abominations in the sight of the Lord; and they attributed to the Methodists the characteristics of the woman seen in the Apocalyptic vision upon whose "forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." Many of these Antinomians would not attend any of the services of the Methodists lest they might thereby partake of the grievous crime of bidding them God speed.

The preachers on the Alabama Circuit were: 1820, Thomas Nixon, Thomas Clinton; 1821, Nicholas McIntyre; 1822, Meredith Renneau, Nicholas T. Snead, Peyton S. Graves. This year and this appointment closed the work of the Rev. Meredith Renneau in Alabama; and also closed the itinerant ministry of the Rev. Nicholas T. Snead. Mr. Renneau had served one year on the Cahawba Circuit, and one year on the Tombechee Circuit. For two years he filled appointments in the State of Mississippi, and then located at the close of 1824. Mr. Snead was two years on trial and both years was in Alabama. He was discontinued at the end of his year on the Alabama Circuit. He was never in full connection in the Conference.

But to proceed with the preachers on the Alabama Circuit; they were: 1823, Joshua Boucher, Eugene V. LeVert; 1824, Samuel Patton, Richard Pipkin.

This closed the last and the third year of the Rev. Samuel Patton in Alabama. For 1822 and 1823 he was in charge of the Tuskaloosa Circuit. While he served the Tuskaloosa Circuit he was a single man. At the close of his term there instead of going to the session of the Mississippi Conference which met at Natchez, Mississippi, December 25, 1823, he went in the month of November to Sullivan County, Tennessee, where on the 27th of that month he consummated an engagement which he had with Miss Nancy Morrison, and entered into the holy bonds of matrimony. He reached his field of labor so soon as he could after the announcement of the appointment and commenced his ministry on the Alabama Circuit. He and

his wife boarded for the year with Sister Ledbetter at the town of Washington, Autauga County, and he moved around the Circuit with his accustomed zeal and success.

At the close of the year's work Brother Patton repaired to the town of Tuskaloosa, Tuskaloosa County, Alabama, where the Mississippi Conference assembled December 22, 1824, Bishop Joshua Soule presiding. At that session of the Conference he was ordained an elder by Bishop Soule, and he located for the purpose, though it was a little irregular, of going to the Holston Conference. He reentered the itinerant ministry at the Holston Conference at the close of 1825. His official relations to Alabama Methodism commenced and terminated in the bounds of the Tuskaloosa Circuit. His ministry in Alabama was laborious and efficient. In the Holston Conference his ministry was long and useful. He was a leader in Israel, a good and great man.

In the house of Sister Ledbetter, at the town of Washington, Autauga County, Alabama, on September 19, 1824, was born to the Rev. Samuel Patton and Nancy Patton their first child, a son, and to the boy they gave the name of James Otterbein. He was named Otterbein for William Otterbein, the native German, the profound scholar, the able divine, the eloquent preacher, and the founder of the Church known as the "United Brethren in Christ." This James Otterbein Patton, born at the junction of the Alabama River and the Autauga Creek, and brought up in the Holston country, has long been a consistent Methodist and a useful man. He still lives, and is at present and has been for years a citizen of his native State.

Preachers for Alabama Circuit were: 1825, Marcus C. Henderson, James Nicholson. Henderson located at the close of 1825. He was admitted on trial in the Mississippi Conference at the close of 1822. He was on Jones's Valley Circuit for 1824.

For Alabama Circuit: 1826, Thomas Clinton, John O. T. Hawkins. This was the second and the last year of Hawkins in Alabama. The year before this he was on the Tuskaloosa Circuit, and after 1826 he passed out of Alabama into the State of Mississippi.

Preachers on the Alabama Circuit were: 1827, Hugh McPhail, James A. Hughes; 1828, James H. Mellard, Peyton S. Graves.

The year 1828 and the work on the Alabama Circuit for that year closed the ministerial labors of the Rev. Peyton S. Graves, in connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church. It was at Graves's Camp-ground in the bounds of the Alabama Circuit, and under the ministrations of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1820, as has been stated on a previous page, that Peyton Smith Graves professed the attainment of religion and was received into the Church; and it was on the Alabama Circuit in 1828 that he closed the work of the ministry in the Church under whose auspices he was inducted into the Christian religion. How sad one feels as the history of that gifted man passes in review! December 25, 1828, the Mississippi Conference met at Tuscaloosa, Alabama. The General Minutes for that session of the Conference contains the following record: "Who have been expelled from the connection this year? Peyton S. Graves." Falsehood and fraud were the charges formulated against him. To these charges he did not respond, but while they were pending he joined the party known as the "Reformers." Nevertheless the Mississippi Annual Conference, to which he belonged, and to which he was properly amenable at the time the charges were instituted against him, proceeded, as of legal right and of ecclesiastical duty, with the investigation of said charges, and expelled him from the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Reformers gave him shield and shelter, and he became an earnest and active advocate of the claims of that party, and a zealous persecutor of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Preachers on the Alabama Circuit were: 1829, Joseph McDowell, Nathan Hopkins; 1830, James A. Hughes, David Barlow.

On July 2, 1830, the Rev. James A. Hughes, writing from Autauga County, Alabama, then in the bounds of his Circuit, stated: "We have received above one hundred members since our last Conference." Truly their labors were blessed of God and crowned with success.

The Rev. James A. Hughes was a native of Tennessee, joined the Church in Alabama, and was received on trial in the Mississippi Conference, and was appointed to the Alabama Circuit for 1827, when in the nineteenth year of his age. He was then two years on the Conecuh Circuit, then back again on the



Alabama Circuit in the twenty-third year of his age. His last appointment was Washington, Mississippi, for 1831. That year he died. He was ordained an elder at the close of his last year on the Alabama Circuit. He was modest in his bearing, diligent in his work, patient in his sufferings, and triumphant in his death.

The preachers on the Alabama Circuit were: 1831, Benjamin F. Coxe, Francis H. Jones.

That was the first and last year of the Rev. Benjamin F. Coxe in Alabama. He was admitted on trial in the Mississippi Conference at the close of 1828, and he located at the close of 1832, having been ordained an elder at the same time.

The preachers for the Alabama Circuit were: 1832, Daniel D. Brewer, Paul F. Stearnes.

That was the last year the Rev. Daniel D. Brewer was in Alabama. He was on the Marengo Circuit in 1830. He was born in North Carolina, what year is not known, and was brought into the kingdom of light in Louisiana in the year 1827. At the close of 1828 he was admitted on trial in the Mississippi Conference. He died in the bounds of the Rapides Circuit, Louisiana District, in 1833. His talents were not of brilliant order, his ministry was limited to five brief years, but he was preëminently successful, and had many seals to his ministry. Though the illness which terminated his life was protracted and severe, his death was peaceful and triumphant.

Previous to 1832 there was no provision for giving in the General Minutes any financial statistics. Previous to that period there was no published item which showed the permanent results achieved, or indicated the real progress made by the Church, except what was given in answer to the thirteenth question: "What numbers are in Society?" At the session of the Mississippi Conference held at Midway, commencing November 17, 1820, the first report of the members in Society in the Alabama Circuit was made, and the report showed that there were two hundred and fifty-five white and twenty-one colored members in that Circuit at that date. The report made at the session of the Conference held at John McRea's, Chickasawhay River, December 5, 1822, shows that at that time there were in the bounds of the Alabama Circuit, thirteen hundred and ninety-four white and eighty-four colored members. That was the

largest number of white members ever reported on that Circuit, though not the largest number of colored members. For the next year, the year 1823, there were reported on that Circuit only six hundred and thirty-nine white and one hundred and thirty-eight colored members. The increase for 1822 was unprecedented, and the decrease following the next year was, perhaps, unparalleled. The special influences which contributed to the unusual increase the one year and the extraordinary decrease the other year, are at this date unknown. Perhaps they were not apparent causes. Without tracing all the fluctuations of the membership in all the intervening years, suffice it to state that at the close of 1832 there were five hundred and ten white and one hundred and eighty-six colored members in the Alabama Circuit.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE ENLARGEMENT AND ADVANCEMENT OF THE WORK OF METHODISM IN ALABAMA.

FOR 1820 no new pastoral charges were organized in Alabama, and only two were organized for 1821. These two new Circuits for that year were Jackson and Conecuh. The Jackson Circuit, so named because it occupied the County of Jackson, Alabama, was in the extreme northern part of the State, and the Conecuh Circuit was in the extreme southern part of the State, just above the line of Florida. Jackson Circuit was in the Tennessee District in the Tennessee Conference, and the Conecuh Circuit was in the Alabama District in the Mississippi Conference.

While the Jackson Circuit was in the list of appointments for 1821, no preacher of the Conference was appointed to it for that year, and the data are not at hand to ascertain who served it. No doubt it was supplied and served in some way, either by a local preacher or by an itinerant preacher in proximity to it, under the direction of the presiding elder. At the end of that year, as the statistics show, there were one hundred and fifty white members in its bounds.

For 1822 Elias Tidwell and Richard Neely were appointed to Jackson, and at the end of the year they reported to the Annual Conference two hundred and thirty-one white members under their jurisdiction.

Thomas A. Young and Greenberry Garrett were assigned to Jackson Circuit for 1823. At the end of that year there were three hundred and fourteen white and twenty colored members in Society on that Circuit. That year closed the ministerial work of the Rev. Thomas A. Young in Alabama. He was a preacher of some ability, but, having married, he located at the close of 1826, and went into seclusion.

For 1824 the appointments read: Jackson, James McFerrin, Arthur McClure. That was the first year of the itinerant ministry of the Rev. James McFerrin. He had been living, as a

local preacher, one or two years at or near Belle Fontte, and in the bounds of the Jackson Circuit; and he and those of his family who then had membership in the Church held their membership in the Jackson Circuit. This James McFerrin was the father of the Rev. John Berry McFerrin, who afterward filled so many prominent places in the Church.

For 1825 the appointments read: Jackson, James McFerrin, Alexander L. P. Green. That was the first appointment received by the Rev. A. L. P. Green as an itinerant preacher. That year there were in the Jackson Circuit those destined to be historic men: James McFerrin, A. L. P. Green, John B. McFerrin. John B. McFerrin was then a young man, under his majority, living with his father at or near Belle Fontte, and having his Church membership in one of the Societies of the Jackson Circuit, under the pastoral oversight of his father. That year he was licensed to preach.

The next year, 1826, the appointments were: Jackson, George W. Morris, Alexander L. P. Green. In 1825 the membership increased from four hundred and five white and thirty colored to seven hundred and thirty-two white and thirty colored members. For 1826 there were only eight white and thirty-two colored members more than there were the year before.

For 1827 the following were the appointments: Jackson, Thomas M. King, James E. Brown, Richard Neely, Sup. That was King's first and last appointment as an itinerant preacher.

The preachers for Jackson Circuit for 1828 were: George W. Morris, Samuel R. Davidson, Sup.; 1829, Jacob Ellinger; 1830, Nathan S. Johnson, Isaac H. Harris.

The Jackson Circuit was the first and the last work in Alabama committed to the Rev. Nathan S. Johnson and the Rev. Isaac H. Harris. Johnson was admitted on trial into the Kentucky Conference at the close of 1826, and Harris had just been received on trial in the Tennessee Conference when he was appointed to the Jackson Circuit. After 1830 these two men had appointments in the bounds of the State of Tennessee, and they both located at the close of 1834.

The preachers for Jackson Circuit were: 1831, Hiram M. Glass, Asbury Davidson; 1832, Elisha J. Dodson, Robert Gregory.

The Jackson Circuit was the last appointment served in Ala-



bama by the Rev. Elisha J. Dodson. He was a native of North Carolina. He was carried by his father in the days of his childhood to Kentucky. He was trained, under his parents, in the Calvinistic doctrines, but he was led away from the doctrines in which he was early trained by Camp-meeting influences with which he came in contact under the auspices of Methodism. About the time he reached his majority, while attending a Camp-meeting, he experienced in his own heart the saving power of the gospel, and soon after joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. When about thirty years of age he was licensed to preach, and for ten years he was a local preacher, a part of which time he lived in Madison County, Alabama. In December, 1828, when he only lacked till March 31, 1829, of being forty-one years old, he was admitted on trial in the Tennessee Conference. He served as an itinerant preacher in Alabama four years; two years he was on the Lawrence Circuit, one year on the Madison Circuit, and, as above stated, one year on the Jackson Circuit. The other appointments which he filled were in the State of Tennessee. He died while serving the Bedford Circuit, July 29, 1842. As a minister of the gospel he was able, zealous, and successful. As a man he was amiable and cheerful. When the final issue came upon him he expressed resignation to the will of God, and readiness to live or die. He joined the throng who live and reign with Christ on shores immortal.

The Rev. Robert Gregory closed his work in Alabama at the end of a term of two years, 1832, 1833, on the Jackson Circuit. He was on the Lawrence Circuit the year before he went to the Jackson Circuit. He was admitted on trial in the Tennessee Conference at the close of 1829, and continued in the itinerant ministry until the close of 1844, and was a part of the time in the Arkansas and the Memphis Conferences. He was presiding elder for a few years in Arkansas.

At the close of 1832 there were in the bounds of the Jackson Circuit five hundred and twenty-five white and thirty-eight colored members.

Belle Fontte, Bolivar, Doran's Cove, Maynard's Cove, Stevenson, and Blue Spring, east of Santa Creek, were central in the Jackson Circuit.

While the Conecuh Circuit appeared in the list of appoint-

ments for the first time for 1821, having been put down as an appointment at the session of the Mississippi Conference commencing November 17, 1820, it had been previously surveyed preparatory to its organization, and it was reported then to have two hundred and sixty-eight white and fifty colored members within its bounds.

At its first organization the Conecuh Circuit embraced nearly all Conecuh County, and a very large part of Monroe County, and extended, if not at first, afterward into Baldwin County, and into Butler County. The central points at which Societies were organized in the beginning of the work on that Circuit were Sardis, at or near Bellville, Claiborne, Mount Zion, and a Society in Burnt Corn neighborhood, afterward called Puryearville. In after years Monroeville, Rhode's Church, on Randon's Creek, Henderson's Church, near Mount Pleasant, all three in Monroe County, Davis's Church, near Montgomery Hill in Baldwin County, Thick Woods, about one mile west of the present town of Evergreen in Conecuh County, and Concord, in the Forks of Sepulga, were appointments on the Conecuh Circuit.

The Society in the neighborhood of Burnt Corn was near the line of Monroe and Conecuh Counties, and Isaac Betts, George Watson, and Mrs. Puryear were leading members there. The Rev. James King was a member there from the beginning of 1821 to perhaps 1834.

On the road leading from Pine Orchard to Claiborne, and passing between Limestone and Flat Creeks was Mount Zion. There is only a scrap of the history of Mount Zion preserved, and that shows that the first house of worship built there became a rendezvous for hogs, and became infested with fleas, and that the last religious service held in that house was held in 1835, and consisted of a single prayer offered, under great difficulties, by the preacher in charge of the Circuit, for the edification of three devout members of his flock, and that an effort to cleanse the house of the Lord by fire resulted in its reduction to ashes. The scrap of history is given here from the manuscript of the Rev. A. C. Ramsey with slight emendation: "There stood an old church on the road leading from Pine Orchard to Claiborne called 'Mount Zion,' which was dilapidated, almost forsaken; hogs had been sleeping under it for months, probably for years. On one of my rounds I was accompanied by old Brother Nathan

Sirmon. On the day which I was to preach at Mount Zion he and I rode up to the place and hitched our horses near the church. By the time we had dismounted and removed our saddles the horses began to stamp and move about, but to this we gave no particular concern. Two women, who with Brother Sirmon and me, constituted the entire congregation of the day, were sitting in the door of the church, and as we approached the door in which they were sitting they said to us, 'If you do not mind you will get fleas on you; there are lots of them here.' This warning induced a survey of the situation, and the fact was revealed that we were already literally covered with the agile insects. My buffalo-rug and my saddle-bags, each end of which was covered with bear-skin, which I had on my arm, furnished ample concealment for innumerable of these pestiferous creatures. So soon as the true situation had transpired I said to Brother Sirmon, 'Let us leave here.' He replied, 'O no, not until we have prayers. We must not let the devil run us off with fleas.' I yielded to his sentiment, and we had a prayer, which was offered while fighting and scratching. The prayer over, we left the infested place, as soon as we could. Brother Sirmon and I took to the woods, and under cover of the forest growth we knocked off and killed many of the annoying creatures which had secreted themselves in our clothes and had crowded our saddle-bags, saddle-blankets, and buffalo-rug, though it took at least a week to get entirely rid of the troublesome creatures. We spent the night in the community with Brother Stacy. I did not leave another appointment at that Meeting-house, but moved the preaching place to Brother Stacy's residence. The citizens undertook finally to destroy the fleas at the Meeting-house, and they succeeded effectually. The house was a little distance from the ground. They scattered a considerable quantity of pine straw under the house and set it afire. The flames burned up the old house, fleas, and all." The Rev. A. C. Ramsey, from whom the above narrative has been secured, was the preacher in charge of the Conecuh Circuit at the time the incidents here recorded took place, which was in the year 1835.

Claiborne was the most aspiring place in the Conecuh Circuit. Twice in the first decade of its existence as a Society did Claiborne attempt to be a Station and have a preacher all its

own, once in 1827, and again in 1830, but it did not succeed in this attempt but a year at a time, before 1840.

About the time the preachers for the Conecuh Circuit for 1822 reached the work, the Methodists had a royal day in Claiborne. Bishop Enoch George, on his way from Washington, Mississippi, where he had held the session of the Mississippi Conference, to Augusta, Georgia, where he was to hold the South Carolina Conference, made his advent in the town of Claiborne, and there tarried and preached and administered the affairs of the Church committed to his hands; in testimony whereof is the following credential: "KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS, That I, Enoch George, one of the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, under the protection of ALMIGHTY GOD, and with a single eye to his Glory, by the imposition of my hands and prayer (being assisted by the Elders present) have this day set apart Lewis Pipkin for the office of an Elder in the said Methodist Episcopal Church, a man whom I judge to be well qualified for that work: And I do hereby recommend him to all whom it may concern, as a proper person to administer the Sacraments and Ordinances, and to feed the flock of Christ. IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal, this 1st day of January, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-two. ENOCH GEORGE.

"Claiborne, Alabama."

Bishop George passed through Claiborne a number of times on his way to and from the Conferences over which he presided.

The Church at or near Bellville was called Sardis, and was one of the strongest Societies belonging to the Conecuh Circuit. In that Church in 1822 Bishop Enoch George set apart the Rev. James King, a local preacher, for the office of an elder in the Church of God. It is evident, therefore, that on one occasion Bishop George favored the Church at Bellville with his presence and ministry, and may have done so on more than one occasion.

For nearly a quarter of a century or more Lewis Pipkin, a local preacher, and a farmer by secular occupation, was a leading and an influential member at Sardis. Perhaps, he was a member at its organization. It is probable that he gathered the first Methodist Class ever formed at that place.



The Rev. Lewis Pipkin was born in Wayne County, North Carolina, 1777. He removed from his native State to South Carolina, but at what date is not accurately given. From South Carolina he moved to Alabama, and settled, as has already been intimated, at what was afterward called Bellville, but in what year is not reliably stated, probably in 1816, certainly before 1822. The year 1846 found him a citizen, with the privileges of a citizen, of what was then Ouachita and what is now Nevada County, Arkansas. In that county and State, and in the last months of 1864 or the first months of 1865 he died. His body sleeps in the grave-yard at Mount Vernon Church in the county and State above given.

It cannot be stated authoritatively at what time Brother Pipkin joined the Church, or at what time he was licensed to preach. He was set apart for the office of a deacon by Bishop Francis Asbury at Columbia, South Carolina, December 25, 1810. His parchment for a deacon, given him by Bishop Asbury, and now in hand, is authority for this statement. As already stated he was ordained an elder by Bishop George at Claiborne, Alabama, January 1, 1822.

In his mature years the Rev. Lewis Pipkin was in height five feet ten inches, with erect form, and weighing about one hundred and seventy pounds. He had blue eyes, fair complexion, light brown hair, and a prominent forehead. He was of sanguine temperament. He was not given to despondency, but was always hopeful and cheerful. He was affable without levity, and dignified and serious without moroseness. He was as meek as Moses, as pathetic as Jeremiah, as devout as Cornelius, and as rapturous as Paul.

Throughout his long life, even in his old age, when he was blind and had to be led to the grove by another, he had his regular hours for secret prayer. It was no uncommon thing for him to be overcome in the public worship with emotion, and for his hearty shouts to attest the joy which filled his soul. Often he would break forth in singing the sacred songs which expressed his love for Jesus, and which gave vent to his blissful anticipations. It was no uncommon thing for him to stand and exhort and entreat sinners in persuasive tones and with eyes suffused with tears.

His style as a preacher was plain and succinct. His manner

was deeply earnest, and his preaching was truly edifying. He was familiar with the Scriptures, and understood the literature, doctrines, and polity of the Church.

He was abundant in labors as a local preacher in the bounds of the Conecuh Circuit throughout the years he lived at Bellville, and his personal and ministerial influence was extensive and salutary. His character was admired, and his example was commended.

The Rev. Barnabas Pipkin and the Rev. Stephen Pipkin, once members of the Mississippi Conference, were his brothers.

In his twenty-second year Lewis Pipkin married Miss Fari-bey Beasley, a woman worthy of him, an honor and a help to him. She was industrious and discreet. Her personal character was lovely, and her Christian life a benediction. In the dying moment her faith and peace abounded, and words of praise to God were on her lips. She died in 1856, and her mortal body rests in the grave-yard of Mount Vernon Church in Arkansas. Brother and Sister Pipkin brought up ten children of their own, four sons and six daughters; and every one of them joined the Methodist Church, and honored their parents and their Church, and lived lives devoted to God. There is a considerable tribe of the descendants of this household in Arkansas and Texas; they are Methodists, and of the tribe a number of preachers have been raised up—men of piety and of influence.

In the neighborhood which has long been known as Forks of Sepulga, at an early day, a Methodist Society was organized, and by or before 1830 a house of worship was built in that neighborhood in the north-eastern corner of Conecuh County, and in Section twenty-six, Township eight, Range eleven, and one mile from Sepulga Post-office, and within one-half mile of the residence of Nathan Sirmon, and named Concord. That Church still exists, 1890, and still bears the name of Concord. Nathan Sirmon, Joshua Calloway, and John Sirmon were prominent men and members of that Society at its organization. Nathan Sirmon was class-leader. Joshua Calloway and John Sirmon were local preachers.

The Rev. Joshua Calloway was a holy man, and a zealous and useful preacher. He often attended his appointments under inconveniences and with much fatigue, even going on foot ten and

fifteen miles. His descendants are still in the country, and members of the Church at Concord.

Nathan Sirmon was a man of humble deportment, and amiable disposition, who sympathized with the poor and administered to the relief of the distressed. For forty-four years he was a member of the Church, thirty years a class-leader, and for twenty years claimed and enjoyed the special blessing of sanctification, and lived a sanctified life. He was noted for integrity and piety. Throughout the days of his last sickness on earth he was in ecstasies of joy, and on April 16, 1850, in the sixty-fourth year of his age, at his home near Concord Church, he fell asleep in Jesus.

The Rev. John Sirmon was the son of Nathan Sirmon, and was one of the most noted men in the Forks of Sepulga. He was a preacher of remarkable spiritual power. He had a good report of them that were without. The descendants of Nathan and John Sirmon are still in the land, and members of the Methodist Church.

John Wright, Sheldrick Kendrick, James Wright, Allen Page, and William Russell were leading members at Concord. John Wright and his wife, the father and mother of the Rev. David J. Wright now, 1890, a member of the Alabama Conference, joined the Church at Concord in 1830. At the house of John Wright the preachers of the Conecuh Circuit used to rest and have their wants supplied and their washing done. The blessings of God have been upon Concord, and upon the descendants of those who first constituted its membership.

The first preacher ever appointed to Conecuh Circuit was Thomas Clinton; and at the close of his year there he reported two hundred and sixty white and one hundred and fifteen colored members; sixty-five colored members more than were reported to be there the year before, and eight white members less.

The preachers for that Circuit for 1822 were John Booth, Francis R. Cheatham. The members reported at the end of that year were four hundred and twenty-one white and nineteen colored, a very remarkable decrease in colored members.

The appointments for 1823 were: Conecuh, Barnabas Pipkin, Sup., Elijah B. McKay. At the session of the Conference at the close of that year the number of members reported for Conecuh

Circuit were three hundred and twenty-eight whites and eighty-two colored. The Rev. Elijah B. McKay had just been admitted on trial in the Conference when he was appointed to the Conecuh Circuit, and that was the last work he served in the bounds of the State of Alabama. He filled appointments in the States of Mississippi and Louisiana.

For 1824: Conecuh, Zachariah Williams, Robert L. Walker; 1825: John Cotton, Samuel Davis.

The Rev. Samuel Davis had just been admitted on trial in the Conference when he was appointed to the Conecuh Circuit, and he was discontinued at the end of the year.

The preachers for Conecuh Circuit for 1826 were: William Spruill, Richard H. Herbert.

The Conecuh Circuit and the year 1826 closed the work of the Rev. Richard H. Herbert in Alabama. At the close of 1829, having attained deacon's and elder's orders, he located.

For 1827: Conecuh, Robert L. Walker, Lewis Turner; 1828: Conecuh, Henry J. Brown, James A. Hughes; 1829: Conecuh, James A. Hughes, John A. Cotton.

The following letters, put in print by the *Christian Advocate*, and *Journal* and *Zion's Herald*, transmit to this generation an account of the state of religion in the Conecuh Circuit at the dates which they bear:

"CLAIBORNE, ALABAMA, June 22, 1829.

"Notwithstanding I prefer hearing to speaking, I think duty calls me in the present instance to say a little in behalf of the cause of God. As I am much cheered and strengthened by the good news you send us of the work of God in other places, so I trust others may be refreshed by learning what he is doing for us on Conecuh Circuit. Almost every appointment in the Circuit has been favored with an outpouring of the Spirit within the last three months. One hundred and fifty have joined on probation, many of whom profess to have found the pearl of great price, and the others seem struggling after liberty, while several backsliders have been reclaimed. Glory be to God for his goodness unto the children of men.

"JAMES A. HUGHES."

"CONECUH CIRCUIT, S. ALABAMA, July 22, 1829.

"Messrs. Editors:—The dawn of what we trust will prove a bright day has arisen on us. Two hundred and thirty have



been added to the Churches since the beginning of this year, which is a wonderful accession compared with any former period. The congregations are uncommonly numerous and attentive. A general interest is manifested on the subject of religion. It is the theme of conversation in almost every circle. It is rare to see two persons together, whether of a religious or irreligious character, but what this is the topic of discourse. The professors, too, are much stirred up; and within my knowledge several backsliders have been reclaimed.

"Yours Fraternally,

W. A. STEWART."

For 1830 the appointments were: Conecuh, John A. Cotton, Blanton P. Box. The following letter, put in print and preserved to the present, is the sole item which has come to hand concerning the work in that Circuit for that year:

"BELLVILLE, ALABAMA, July 14, 1830.

"The Lord is doing wonders for us here. Last Sabbath I preached at Bellville to a large and attentive congregation, and the Lord made bare his arm in the awakening and conversion of souls. Two professed to find peace in believing. Twelve joined class as seekers. May they soon find.

"J. A. COTTON."

The last appointment received in Alabama by the Rev. John A. Cotton and by the Rev. Blanton Powell Box was the Conecuh Circuit for 1830. Both these preachers were then on trial in the Conference for the third year. At the close of that year Cotton was received into full connection and ordained deacon, and Box was discontinued. Box was brought up in humble circumstances, and knew from his youth what it was to contend with adversity. He lived for many years in the bounds of the Conecuh Circuit as a local preacher, and was, for a time at least, the Recording Steward of the Circuit. He was an efficient local preacher and an influential citizen of Conecuh County, though he became embarrassed financially, and that, as a matter of course, involved his influence. He finally moved to the State of Arkansas, and died in Camden, Arkansas, March 21, 1851, in the forty-ninth year of his age. When told that he must die, his reply was: "All is right! I am not taken by surprise. I am ready to live or die." He was a native of South Carolina, and he obtained a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ

in the State of Indiana, entered the ministry in Alabama, and his body rests in the soil of Arkansas.

The Rev. John A. Cotton was for the three years succeeding the last year he was on the Conecuh Circuit, appointed to serve Circuits in the bounds of the State of Mississippi. At the session of the Conference which met at Natchez, Mississippi, November 13, 1833, he was, for breach of the seventh Commandment committed by him, deprived of his ministerial office. In the course of two years he was, through some process, restored to the ministry and again admitted into the Mississippi Conference on trial, and given an appointment in the State of Mississippi, but at the end of one year he was discontinued. His light went out in uncleanness.

The Rev. John Cotton who was one of the preachers on the Conecuh Circuit for 1825 must not be confounded with the Rev. John A. Cotton whose fall from his ministry is here related; they were different men.

The preachers on the Conecuh Circuit for 1831 were: Thomas Burpo and William Howie; and for 1832, Joshua Peavy and Charles McCleod.

The number of members on the Conecuh Circuit at the close of 1832 was five hundred and seventy-nine white and two hundred and seven colored.

The Rev. Joshua Peavy was born in Brunswick County, North Carolina, July 3, 1784. In January, 1818, he pitched his tent in the County of Monroe, in the Alabama Territory. He pitched his tent in that part of Monroe County which was, by an act of the Legislative Council and House of Representatives of the Alabama Territory, passed February 13, 1818, made Conecuh County. He brought with him to Alabama Territory a wife and five daughters, and his eldest son was born in the very same month that Conecuh County was constituted. The Rev. Joshua Peavy and his family were in Conecuh County nearly three years before any regular preacher was appointed to the Conecuh Circuit. It is not known when or where he was licensed to preach. It is said that he commenced preaching in South Carolina. He was ordained deacon by Bishop Enoch George at some point in Alabama, — 11, 1821. He was received on trial in the Mississippi Conference at the session beginning December 25, 1828, and he was appointed for 1829 to

the Cedar Creek Circuit. At the end of 1829 he was discontinued, and again received on trial in the Conference in November, 1830, and for 1831 was appointed to the Tombecbee Circuit, and he was again discontinued at the session of the Alabama Conference beginning November 27, 1832. That was the first session of the Alabama Conference, and the last itinerant work of the Rev. Joshua Peavy. He was an elder elect when he was received on trial in the Conference in November, 1830, and he was ordained an elder by Bishop John Emory, in the city of Montgomery, Alabama, December 13, 1833. After severing his connection with the Conference, which he did on account of impaired health, he continued to reside in Conecuh County until some time after 1835. He finally moved to Wilcox County, and settled on Gravel Creek near Mount Carmel, or Gravel Creek Church. There he had his home until his death. He died January 5, 1852. The Rev. A. C. Ramsey preached his funeral from the text: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." (2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.)

The Rev. Joshua Peavy was of very dark complexion, and in his youth was destitute of educational facilities. It was said that when he commenced preaching he commenced to educate himself, and that as he was scarcely able to read he then commenced the study of the spelling book. His knowledge of the science of language was ever defective. There were many inaccuracies in his speech. But he was endowed with extraordinary mental powers. He had the power of application and of investigation. He had a retentive mind and a thirst for knowledge. While he knew nothing of the elegance of diction, and while his knowledge of his mother-tongue was imperfect, yet by diligence in the acquisition of knowledge, he became one of the most thorough divines in the section of country in which he lived. It was generally conceded that he had a thorough knowledge of the Bible, and he was considered a lucid and an edifying preacher. He made extensive acquisitions in Methodist literature. He read and in some measure mastered Wesley's Sermons, Fletcher's Checks, Clarke's Com-

mentaries, and Watson's Institutes. By those who associated with him he was esteemed a first rate commentator. His method of unfolding and enforcing the Scriptures was instructive and convincing. He made his statements in concise form, and his reasoning was convincing. He elucidated his themes and established his propositions. He was a doctrinal preacher, and had a fondness for contests and combats on controverted points of doctrine. He was in the arena, and whenever the doctrines which he had espoused were assailed he engaged in their defense, and he was a champion whose shield was never broken, and whose cause never suffered. When he drew a lance he transfixed his enemy. He was a master in polemics.

The following occurrence may serve to indicate the alacrity with which he met heretics, and the zeal with which he engaged in driving away erroneous doctrines: In 1835, while Peavy still resided in Conecuh County, a preacher who was disseminating the doctrines of Universalism, and who had previously resided in the North, made his advent in the community of Bellville, and at once obtained permission to preach in the Baptist Church in that vicinity. He advertised as extensively as the facilities at his command would enable him to do, that at the coming appointment he would preach on the subject of Dives and Lazarus, and that the time would be devoted mainly to an exposition of the language: "And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments." The day for the sermon arrived, the people assembled, and the preacher performed his task in his own way. He did, no doubt, the best he could in the defense of Universalism. The Rev. Joshua Peavy made one of the congregation, and heard the sermon, the purpose of which was to prove that the rich man was only in the grave and not in hell, a place of eternal punishment, and that Hades means only the grave and Gehenna means no more than the valley on the borders of Jerusalem. When the Universalist ended his sermon the Rev. Joshua Peavy announced to the congregation that he would preach on the same theme two weeks from that day, and that he would refute the doctrines which had been announced by the Universalist preacher. He invited all the congregation to be present to hear what he would have to say on the subject, and especially requested the Universalist preacher to attend and hear the sermon which would demolish his foun-



dations. The news of what was to be, spread rapidly, and when the day for the delivery of the sermon arrived, there was a vast concourse of persons assembled—such a multitude that the Methodist Church which stood near the town of Bellville, where the sermon was to be preached, though it was a large frame building, could not contain the congregation. Such an assembly had not been seen in that section for years, if ever. Seats were improvised and arranged in the grove under the shade of the trees for the multitude, and Brother Peavy proceeded with the service, and delivered his sermon in the exposition of the Scriptures descriptive of the character and fate of Dives and Lazarus, and the Scriptures which pertain to the existence of a state of future retribution. He had selected every passage and incident in the Bible which pertained to the subject of a future state of retribution. He had prepared himself thoroughly for the work of the day. He read and commented upon every passage and incident bearing on the subject in hand, and then presented a powerful argument on the subject drawn from the nature of God, from the nature of the divine law, from the nature of sin, and from the character of the wicked. For two hours he held his vast audience in silent and profound attention. The Universalist preacher who had delivered the sermon which Peavy was refuting was present, took notes of the discourse, and afterward published in a newspaper of Universalist faith a reply to Peavy's sermon, but no further notice was taken of the matter. The Universalist preacher soon quit preaching and took up another calling. While Universalism had a few adherents in that section of the State, especially about Burnt Corn, the cause never prospered there from the day the Rev. Joshua Peavy gave it such a refutation.

That man, the Rev. Joshua Peavy, was one of the pioneers of Alabama, and as a Methodist preacher he worked in Alabama a third of a century. Two of his sons, the Rev. William N. Peavy and the Rev. John W. Peavy, were once members of the Alabama Conference and worked in the regular pastorate for a number of years. Two of his grandsons, the Rev. Joshua S. Peavy and the Rev. John R. Peavy, are now members of the Alabama Conference. His sons and his grandsons attained good rank as preachers.

In 1821 a work was done which, though the result was a little

delayed, eventuated in the organization of the Cedar Creek Circuit. At that time there was a section of country between the Alabama, the Cahawba, the Conecuh, the Tombebee, and the Tuscaloosa Circuits, which was outside of all these pastoral charges and unoccupied by any. Into that unoccupied section of country, in 1821, the presiding elder of the Alabama District, the Rev. Thomas Griffin, upon whose borders it lay, extended his labors, and, with such of his assistant preachers as could be commanded for the work, he held a number of meetings. A few paragraphs from a report of that work made by the Rev. Thomas Griffin, and which paragraphs are still extant, may be given here. They will furnish the best information which can be given concerning the state of the country, and the character and difficulties of the work of that day:

“On the 2nd of August we commenced a Camp Meeting on the banks of the Alabama River, thirty miles below the town of Cahawba, the seat of government for this State. From the paucity of the inhabitants, and the affliction many were suffering from a prevailing fever, there were not many that attended this meeting. Some disorder was witnessed; but he that commanded the boisterous winds to be still, appeared in our behalf, and, before the exercises closed, some were brought, as we have reason to believe, to the knowledge of the truth.

“August 10th, another meeting began thirty miles above Cahawba, on the bank of the above-mentioned river. A numerous concourse of people attended, and much good was done. On Tuesday morning, I requested all who had obtained an evidence of their conversion to God, to come forward to the altar, when thirty-seven presented themselves. The two last Meetings were held in a forest, and the Indians were fishing in the river, while we were preaching and praying; the bears were ravaging the corn-fields, and the wolves and tigers were howling and screaming in the very woods in the neighborhood of our meeting.

“These accounts may seem unimportant to those who are accustomed to more numerous congregations, and who have the privilege of assembling in convenient houses; but to us, who are struggling with many difficulties in this newly settled country, it is highly gratifying, and fills us with a pleasing hope of yet seeing the *desert blossom as the rose*.”

The work of penetrating that section by the divine embassa-

dors and of gathering a membership therein went on, and at the session of the Annual Conference held at John McRae's, Chickasawhay River, December 5, 1822, the Cedar Creek Circuit was incorporated in the list of appointments for the ensuing year.

There is a large stream which has its source in the region of Fort Deposit, and has a length, including its meanderings, of from fifty to seventy-five miles, and forms a junction with the Alabama River about six miles south of the mouth of the Cahawba River, and the once town of Cahawba and capital of the State of Alabama. It is called Cedar Creek, and for that stream the Cedar Creek Circuit was named. At its first organization, and it may be said as long as it had a name and an existence, the Cedar Creek Circuit covered a vast scope of country. It extended from Big Swamp Creek to Flat Creek, and from the Alabama River to the head waters of Pigeon Creek. There were appointments belonging to that Circuit in the Counties of Butler, Dallas, Lowndes, Monroe, and Wilcox.

Shady Grove was the name of one of the oldest Churches in the Cedar Creek Circuit. That Church was at its first location about three miles west of what is now Camden, the seat of justice for Wilcox County. It was afterward moved about one mile east from where it was first established.

In 1816 William Hobbs and Benjamin Dunn emigrated to Alabama and settled in or near the confines of what has long been known as Possum Bend. Others also settled there at that early date. Hobbs and Dunn, together with several members of their families, were active and devoted Methodists. Hobbs and Dunn were Class Leaders and exhorters. These two men held Class Meetings and other meetings for religious services with such as could be assembled for the purpose. For some time after these men established themselves in that section there were no regular preachers in the country, and these men had to hold their services for several years in private residences. Occasionally a preacher would pass through the country and preach for them.

In 1822 Hobbs and Dunn, with the help of a few others, built a house of worship. It was a very common house, built of poles. That was Shady Grove. About that time Glover, Williamson, and Holly, with large families, and others also, became citizens of that community, and became members of the Church at Shady Grove. About 1826 a neat house, built of hewed logs,

was erected in lieu of the one made of poles. The hewed-log house was located about one mile east of the first one, but took the place of the house built of poles, and was called Shady Grove.

About the time the new church was built or a very short while after a numerous family by the name of Stearns located in the community of Shady Grove. They were all Methodists. The Rev. Paul F. Stearns was a local preacher who worked there for a number of years. He was living in that neighborhood when he was recommended to the Annual Conference for admission into the traveling connection.

Just about the time the new house was built John Hollis, who was a member of that Society, and who married a Miss Glover, who was also a member, was licensed to preach, and he preached in that section as a local preacher for ten or twelve years, then moved west. He was a useful man, and died in the faith.

In the very early history of Shady Grove the Blues, the Capells, the Dannellys, and the Hawkinses came in and were members there. There were, perhaps, two Camp-meetings held at Shady Grove, but the Camp-ground for that neighborhood, and at which the Camp-meetings were held from the first, was three miles north of the present town of Camden, and on the Alabama River, and was known as the Glover Camp-ground. Meetings were held there with vast crowds at times, and with grand results.

Shady Grove flourished all through its history, and until about 1850, when it was abandoned, the membership then removing to the town of Camden.

Ebenezer, in Section sixteen, Township eleven, Range ten, and at the place afterward known as Oak Ridge, or Oak Hill, in the County of Wilcox, was one of the earliest Societies established in the Cedar Creek Circuit. The second house built by the Society there was ready for displacement by the year 1832.

Mount Carmel, on or near Gravelly Creek, usually called Gravel Creek Church, and about eight miles south of the present town of Camden, was organized in the very first years of the Cedar Creek Circuit. For many long years there was at that place a log house. Dr. John Harrington, Israel Davis, and Edward Warren and their families were prominent members in that Society. That Society still exists, 1890, and is more than three score years old. It has sent out a number of preachers.



Union Church, on the Tallachee Creek, in Section five, Township ten, Range seven, and nearly or quite in sight of the line between the Counties of Monroe and Wilcox and on the road leading from Mrs. McCant's Entry to the Bell's Landing Post-office, was one of the Churches early established in the Cedar Creek Circuit. Like nearly all the other churches in that section its first house of worship was built of logs.

Providence, a small Society, with a little log house, about two miles west of what was once called Warrenton, in Dallas County, was one of the preaching places, in the early times, in the Cedar Creek Circuit.

Pleasant Hill, also in Dallas County, was one of the appointments of that Circuit.

On the opposite side of the Alabama River from the town of Cahawba and a league or so away in a south-east direction, was organized and provided with a house of worship one of the Societies which for many years belonged to the Cedar Creek Circuit. That Society was organized, possibly, as early as the first part of 1822, and was certainly domiciled in its own house of worship before the last part of 1824. It was in the neighborhood of that Society that the Rev. Joseph Walker, a local preacher, and who previously lived near Montevallo, and was the father of the Rev. Robert L. Walker, and the father of the wife of the Rev. Ebenezer Hearn, settled by at least 1822. It was in the neighborhood of that Society that the Rev. Ebenezer Hearn and Miss Mary Walker married November 7, 1822, and it was in the neighborhood of that Church that the Rev. Ebenezer Hearn had his home for twelve years beginning in 1825.

By an act of the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Alabama passed December 18, 1821, the town of Buttsville was made the permanent seat of justice in and for the County of Butler; and by an act of the Senate and House of Representatives of the State passed December 28, 1822, the name of Buttsville was changed to that of Greenville. Not more than twenty days prior to the Legislative act changing the name of Buttsville to that of Greenville, the Mississippi Conference had for the first time announced the name of the Cedar Creek Circuit and had appointed two preachers to it, and Greenville early became one of the appointments of that Circuit, and continued for a number of years connected therewith.

Another of the churches of the Cedar Creek Circuit, and one that was organized in the first years of the existence of said Circuit, and which was commonly called McFarland's, was on the Federal Road several miles from Fort Deposit. In the latter part of 1819 James McFarland, for whom the church here under consideration was named, accompanied by his wife and other members of his family moved from Richmond County, North Carolina to Alabama, and settled on the Federal Road where said church was afterward organized. It is not possible at this date to tell who were members of the Society at McFarland's, but it is a fact that Mrs. Flora McFarland, the wife of James McFarland, and who came with her husband from North Carolina at the date above given, joined the Methodist Episcopal Church in her adopted State in 1825, and was a member at the Church bearing her husband's name for about twenty-six years, and that she was a woman of uniform piety and of strict integrity, and that in her last hours she was calm and her last words were words of assurance.

The Cedar Creek Circuit for its first year had two preachers: Armstrong I. Blackburn and Edmund Pearson. The Rev. Armstrong I. Blackburn was admitted on trial in the Conference in December, 1821, and was discontinued at the end of the year on the Cedar Creek Circuit.

The appointments were for 1824: Cedar Creek, Joshua Boucher; for 1825: Cedar Creek, Joshua Boucher, Thomas E. Ledbetter; for 1826: Cedar Creek, Benjamin Dulany, Le Roy Massengale; for 1827: Cedar Creek, Benjamin Dulany, William H. Turnley.

The year 1827 closed the connection of the Rev. Benjamin Dulany with the Methodist Episcopal Church. The record reports him as locating at the end of his work on the Cedar Creek Circuit at the close of 1827. He left the Methodist Episcopal Church and joined the Reformers.

The Rev. William H. Turnley had just been received on trial in the Conference when he was appointed to the Cedar Creek Circuit, and that Circuit was the only appointment he ever had in Alabama. He continued in the itinerant work about eleven years and then located. He filled important works in Mississippi, Louisiana, and Arkansas. He was presiding elder two years. He was a member of the Arkansas Conference at the time he obtained a location.

The appointment was for 1828: Cedar Creek, Jephthah Hughes. He had just been admitted into the Conference in full connection. The year 1827 he was on the Saint Clair Circuit, the only year that work had existed. The year 1828 closed his work in Alabama. He obtained a location of the Arkansas Conference at the close of 1838.

The appointments were for 1829: Cedar Creek, Joshua Peavy; for 1830: Cedar Creek, Le Roy Massengale; for 1831: Cedar Creek, Daniel Monaghan, J. Matthews; for 1832: Cedar Creek, Daniel B. Barlow, John Jackson.

At the end of the first year there were reported on the Cedar Creek Circuit three hundred and nineteen white and one hundred and twelve colored members. At the close of 1829 there were on that Circuit five hundred and seventy-three white and one hundred and eighty colored members. At the close of 1832 there were on the Circuit four hundred and thirty-one white and two hundred and fifty-seven colored members. It is very doubtful if the membership increased as rapidly as did the population. In another place will be stated the probable cause operating against the increase of Methodist strength in that Circuit.

For the first time the Franklin Circuit appeared in the list of the appointments for 1821, and for that and the two years next succeeding embraced the Counties of Franklin, Lawrence, and Morgan. At the expiration of 1823 the Lawrence Circuit was formed, and it occupied Morgan County and a part of Lawrence.

At the time the Franklin Circuit was first formed the country was new and sparsely settled, but there were in its bounds five incorporated towns, then bearing the following names: Courtland, Moulton, Ococopaso, Russellville, and Somerville.

The first preacher appointed to the Franklin Circuit was the Rev. Nicholas T. Snead, a man who had just been admitted on trial in the Mississippi Conference. For 1822 the Rev. Barnabas Pipkin, and for 1823 the Rev. Peyton S. Graves, and the Rev. John R. Lambuth were the preachers who served that Circuit. For 1824, the year following the reduction of the territory embraced in that Circuit in the manner already indicated, the preacher was the Rev. Benjamin F. Liddon.

The following is an exact record of the proceedings of the first Quarterly Conference for that Circuit for that year:

"The First Quarterly Meeting for Franklin Circuit was held at Tuscumbia, on Saturday, the 13 March, 1824. Present: Alexander Sale, P. E. Benjamin F. Liddon, A. P. David Owen, L. E. James Smith, L. P. William Smith, C. L. John Hale, C. L. Richard Thompson, C. L. W. S. Jones, Std. Question, Are there any complaints or appeals? Ans. None. Are there any Licenses to be renewed or granted? Ans. None. Ordered by the Quarterly Meeting Conference that John Harvey be appointed Steward for Franklin Circuit.

William S. Jones, Secty.

Paid Alexander Sale \$4.31 $\frac{1}{4}$

Paid Be. F. Liddon \$5.81 $\frac{1}{4}$ ."

Alexander Sale, P. E.

Quarterage \$10.12 $\frac{1}{2}$

The place here mentioned at which that Quarterly Conference was held was, by an act of the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Alabama, passed December 20, 1820, incorporated as the town of Ococopaso, and by an act of the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Alabama, passed June 14, 1821, the name was "altered to that of Big Spring," and by an act of the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Alabama, passed December 31, 1822, the name was "changed to that of Tuscumbia," which name it has since held.

As early as 1823 the Methodists held worship at Tuscumbia in a small school-house, built of logs, and that school-house was used by all denominations for some time. The Methodists used it until the close of 1827, when they went into a brick church which they had erected. Tuscumbia continued as one of the appointments of the Franklin Circuit until 1828, when it was set off to itself, and given a preacher. It continued as a Station until the close of 1840, when it fell back again into the Franklin Circuit.

David Owen, local elder, mentioned in the Minutes of the Quarterly Conference for Franklin Circuit at Tuscumbia, March 13, 1824, was the same David Owen mentioned in a previous chapter as living, in 1818, on Village Creek, at or near where Birmingham now stands. His name appeared on the Minutes of the Quarterly Conference held at Russellville, May 16, 1829, for the last time. That was the last Quarterly Conference he ever attended. Russellville was his home at that time, and his body was buried near that village when he died.



James Smith, mentioned as a local preacher, and as present at the Quarterly Conference for Franklin Circuit, at Tuscumbia, March 13, 1824, did, in due course, advance to elder's orders, and did continue through long years a local preacher. The last Quarterly Conference he ever attended was held at Mount Pleasant, December 25, 1852. In a short time thereafter he was taken sick, and, lingering about ten days, died. His funeral services were conducted by the Rev. A. G. Copeland. The Rev. James Smith was an earnest, pious Christian, and a zealous and laborious preacher. His Church loved him, and all who knew him respected him. He had his name on the Church Register at Mount Pleasant, a Society established at first through his influence. In the latter years of his life it was a Society with a large membership and a commodious house of worship. That Society still exists. "The Third Quarterly Meeting for Franklin Circuit was held at the Camp Meeting near James Smith's, on Saturday, the 11 September, 1824." Since then many a Quarterly Conference has been held there. Mount Pleasant is about ten miles east of Russellville on the road leading to Moulton, and in the vicinity of a little village called Newburgh, and at this time is near the line of Colbert, Franklin, and Lawrence Counties. It is now, perhaps, in Colbert County. In Smith's time it was in Franklin County. Newburgh is now in Franklin County.

Through all the history of the Franklin and Russell's Valley Circuits included in all the years from 1820 to 1870 run the life and labors of William S. Jones, the man who was Secretary of the Quarterly Conference held for the Franklin Circuit, at Tuscumbia, March 13, 1824, and Secretary of most of the Quarterly Conferences for that Circuit from that time on. About 1820, as tradition has it, and ere he had yet reached a quarter of a century in years, William S. Jones settled in Russell's Valley, in which Valley he lived until his demise January 30, 1870. Some time previous to 1827, the exact year is not now known, a house of worship was built in Russell's Valley which was known in the official records as "Jones's Meeting House." The Minutes of the Quarterly Conference held for the Franklin Circuit, February 9, 1828, contains the following item of business transacted: "David Owen, William S. Jones, W. R. Saddler, John W. Harris, S. Sale, S. B. White, Manson Jones, Aaron Day, and

Augustus Saddler appointed Trustees for Jones's Meeting House, (Russell's Valley); and also for a Meeting House contemplated to be built in Russellville." Some time previous to 1830 there was a Camp Ground established, on the place of William S. Jones, near Russellville, at which many great Meetings were held and at which many souls were convicted and justified. In after years that Camp Ground was removed three miles from its original site.

There is a tradition to the effect that William S. Jones was brought into the kingdom of grace under the ministry of the Rev. Thomas Madden, in the year 1820, when the Cotaco Circuit held preëmption right to all Cotaco, Lawrence, and Franklin Counties. In the earliest Church Record for that section now extant is found the name of William S. Jones; and that Record shows that he was then a steward of the Church, and that same Record extending on into the years following shows that he remained in the office of steward for more than forty-six years.

To William S. Jones belonged idiosyncrasies, and individuality. He was inflexible, and pious. In both personal and official duty he was prompt, punctual, and faithful. He prayed in private and in public, and had his own family altar. He was familiar with the doctrines and with the songs of his Church. He was obedient to the discipline of the Church, attended upon her ordinances, and supported her institutions. For the preacher who served his Circuit and for the preacher's family, when one he had, William S. Jones furnished, in his own house, bed, board, and books; and the preacher's horse he had curried, fed, and watered at his own expense.

The Rev. R. H. Rivers, D.D., the son-in-law of Mr. Jones, makes the following statements concerning him: "He was a man of generous hospitality. He loved most of all the society of the preachers. Bishops, Presiding Elders, and his own Circuit preachers were always received with a most cordial welcome, and ministered unto as lovingly as if they had been angels of mercy. He often recurred with pleasure to the dignified Soule, the sweet spirited Roberts, the eccentric Faris, the zealous James McFerrin, the poetic Madden, and the imperial McMahon."

"During his last illness, and but a short time before he died,

he asked his old friend, Brother Harris, to write to my wife and say to her: 'I am dying. I shall never leave this bed until I am borne from it by kind friends. I am very happy. I shall see you no more on earth, but I hope to meet you in heaven.' While he was dictating this message tears of joy gushed from his eyes, and words of praise fell from his lips."

His wife preceded him to the grave six years. She was a woman of great worth; intelligent, and pious, and in every way worthy of her husband.

At Kitty Casky School-house, which was on the west side of Town Creek, and about four miles from its junction with the Tennessee River, a Quarterly Conference was held May 29, 1824, at which were present, beside the preachers in charge of the Circuit, Samuel B. White, local elder, David Hodges, local deacon, Henry Davis, local preacher, John Harvey, local preacher and steward, John F. Johnson, William R. Saddler, and Christopher Hammons, class leaders.

John Harvey, who afterward attained to elder's orders, and who continued a member of the Quarterly Conference of the Franklin Circuit until 1831, and who was a native Virginian, and a Revolutionary soldier, and who was naturally endowed with the gifts of oratory, and was talented, and pious, had his membership at Kitty Casky at the time of the Quarterly Conference above mentioned, and he died at that place afterward.

Samuel B. White, who was at the Quarterly Conference at Kitty Casky, May 29, 1824, lived in Russell's Valley, and held his membership in the Societies in the vicinity in which he resided. For more than a quarter of a century, except for a short interval, his name appeared in the Quarterly Conference Records as a local elder in the Circuit in the bounds of which he lived. His life was marked by some untoward events whereby his usefulness was arrested and circumscribed, and his peace greatly disturbed. In 1830 he had some trouble with Manson Jones in a case of debt, which case went into arbitration. In 1838 his character as a local elder was passed by the Quarterly Conference with a qualification which indicated dereliction of duty on his part. At Russellville, December 21, 1840, he was convicted of grave charges, by a Committee of investigation, and suspended from the ministry until the Quarterly Conference next ensuing. The charges were made against him by

Brothers Jones and Hudson. The Committee of investigation consisted of Alexander Sale, James Smith, and F. C. Spraggins, presided over by Joshua Boucher. The Quarterly Conference met at La Grange, January 9, 1841, and by it S. B. White was tried on the charges for which he had been suspended, and by that Quarterly Conference, upon said charges, he was expelled the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Quarterly Conference which tried and expelled him was presided over by the then presiding elder of the District, Robert L. Andrews; and the members present and participating in the business of the body were: Joshua Boucher, preacher in charge of the Circuit, William H. Wilkes, junior preacher, Alexander Sale, F. C. Spraggins, James Smith, and R. H. Rivers, local elders, Robert Paine, President La Grange College, William R. Nicholson, local preacher, William S. Jones, and John W. Harris, stewards, and William Hudson, class leader. That was, beyond all doubt, a body of able men. They were men capable of weighing testimony, and of rendering a just verdict. At a Quarterly Conference held March 23, 1844, at Mount Pleasant, a Church already mentioned, presided over by the then presiding elder of the District, A. F. Driskill, and composed of the following members: John A. Jones, preacher in charge of the Circuit, William R. Hodges, junior preacher, James Smith, F. C. Spraggins, and Isaac N. Mullens, local elders, John F. Richardson, William Hudson, and William S. Jones, stewards, and C. Tomkins, class leader, Samuel B. White presented from the Society of which he was a member a recommendation which set forth that he was a suitable person to be licensed to preach; and after due examination of his gifts, grace, and usefulness he was given a license. At the next session of the Tennessee Conference, upon the recommendation of the Quarterly Conference, his ordination papers were restored to him. He met a tragic end. A horse ran away with him, and a fatal event ensued. He was killed.

William R. Saddler, who, as a class leader, was present a member of the Quarterly Conference held at Kitty Casky School-house, May 29, 1824, and who attended the Quarterly Conference of the Franklin Circuit from time to time as a member thereof, being a class leader, until as late as the close of 1836, had his membership at Jones's Meeting House, in Russell's Valley, and was a Trustee of that Meeting House. He was



one of the talented, pious, and influential members of the Church in the community in which he lived. The members of his household were noted for their intelligence, and their influence.

At the Third Quarterly Conference for the Franklin Circuit for the year, held at the Camp Meeting near James Smith's, on Saturday, September 11, 1824, Ned, a colored man, applied to have his license as an exhorter renewed, and the application was granted, and his license was renewed.

James P. Warrington, an exhorter, who had been convicted of a charge of Sabbath breaking presented an appeal to the Quarterly Conference held for the Circuit at Tuscumbia, November 13, 1824, and after hearing the case the Quarterly Conference reversed the decision of the court below, and acquitted him of the charge, and then passed his character and renewed his license.

Kitty Casky School-house was superseded by Harvey's Meeting House, the latter place being about two miles from the former. At a Quarterly Conference convened at Harvey's Meeting House, April 2, 1825, a new name was entered on the roll of official members of the Franklin Circuit, and the new name was recorded in the Minutes of that Quarterly Conference, and the fact was stated that the person bearing the name was present in his official capacity. The name and person: "Turner Saunders, Local Deacon." On the official roll and in the approved and recorded Minutes of the Franklin Circuit the ministerial grade of Turner Saunders was designated as that of "Local Deacon" until May, 1828, when his name was put on the Record as a "Local Elder." He was *elected* an elder possibly two years before he was *ordained* to that office. He was born in Brunswick County, Virginia, January 3, 1782, and was married to Miss Frances Dunn, his first wife, in his native State and County, before he was eighteen years old. He was renewed in heart, and joined the Church in his native State. In 1808 he moved to Tennessee and settled at or near the place now called Franklin. From there he moved to Lawrence County, Alabama, as indicated by the Records above alluded to, about the first of 1825. He was licensed to preach about 1813, or 1814. At Ebenezer, a church six miles north-west of the town of Courtland, and which existed from 1828, or earlier, till 1840,

the Rev. Turner Saunders held his membership. At one time Alexander Sale, local elder, Mrs. Sarah C. Sale, Miss Mary F. Sale, Miss Susannah Sale, Turner Saunders, local elder, James E. Saunders, Claiborne W. Saunders, Mrs. Henrietta M. Saunders, Mrs. Mary F. Saunders, Mrs. Eliza Saunders, William Jones, Alexander Jones, Mrs. Cynthia Jones, Miss Martha Jones, Miss Judith Jones, Mrs. Jane Jones, William E. Doty, Mrs. Lucy Doty, William Garrett, John Garrett, Mrs. Nancy Garrett, Mrs. Martha Garrett, William McGregor, Mrs. Elizabeth McGregor, William W. Harper, George W. Foster, Mrs. Sarah J. Foster, John Scruggs, Mrs. Elizabeth Scruggs, Mrs. Maria McFerrin, Mrs. Mary D. Butler, Miss Mary E. Millwater, and others were members at Ebenezer.

The Rev. Turner Saunders did great work for Methodism in the section of Alabama in which he lived. He was a leader in the educational interests of the State. Physically he was of medium size, of noble form, erect, and well proportioned. He had a manly countenance, and was of commanding presence. In mood he was solemn, in habit taciturn, and in bearing dignified. He never indulged in wit and jokes. He was cultured and refined. He was firm, energetic, and systematic. He never faltered at opposition, and increased difficulties gave new impulses to his energies. He was honest. While he was not impulsive, he was generous, and benevolent. He contributed of his means to benevolent purposes with method and motive. As a preacher his manner was calm, his style simple. He was a strong preacher, an able defender of the doctrines of his Church. An incident of his life, when he was in the vigor of his manhood, may illustrate and exhibit his capacity as a preacher. While he lived at Franklin, Tennessee, a preacher by the name of Streeter, a man of considerable education, and an impressive, and eloquent speaker, and who advocated the doctrinal system known as Universalism, opened his ministry in the town of Franklin. With methods so plausible and doctrines so congenial to human nature he made a favorable impression upon the community. A religious revolution was imminent. He finally challenged any whom it might concern to a public debate on the doctrines which he emphasized in his Creed. Upon consultation the Methodists selected as their champion to defend their doctrines against the attacks of the Universalist,

the Rev. Turner Saunders. The debate was agreed to, and the day was appointed when the people might assemble to witness the polemics. A vast throng assembled on the day. There were present some from Nashville and Columbia. The debate continued three days. Saunders vindicated divine truth, demolished the heresies of his antagonist, and arrested the revolt from evangelical doctrines. At the conclusion of the debate a document on which a subscription had been obtained for the purpose of securing the ministerial services of the Universalist, and on which some of the new converts had previously put down as much as two hundred dollars apiece, was torn up in the presence of the public assembly, and the Rev. Mr. Streeter departed for other fields, and from thence-forth was never seen in the town of Franklin. That triumphant vindication of Evangelical Christianity stands in proof of the superior ability of the Rev. Turner Saunders, and is sufficient eulogy upon his worth as a preacher of the gospel.

He accumulated an ample fortune, and provided himself and household with an elegant home, where all things which could contribute to taste and comfort were furnished and enjoyed, and at which guests were entertained with generous liberality.

He preached for about forty years, and was accustomed through all his Christian life to attend the Class-meetings of his Society. He died at the age of seventy-two, in the town of Aberdeen, Mississippi. His descendants have been Methodists. They have moved in elegant society, and some of them have filled places of honor and trust.

The Minutes of the Quarterly Conference for the Franklin Circuit at which the name of "Turner Saunders, Local Preacher," first appeared contain this item: "Present, Freeman Fitzgerald, Class Leader." This is the first time that his name appears on the Record. He became an active and useful man in that Circuit. At the Quarterly Conference held at Spring Creek Camp Ground, (Mount Carmel) which was on Spring Creek about six miles south-east from Tusculumbia, August 25, 1826, "Freeman Fitzgerald was recommended to the District Conference for License to preach." That process was according to the then provision of the law of the Church. The District Conference to which he was recommended granted him the license asked for, and at the Quarterly Conference held for the

Circuit January 20, 1827, "Freeman Fitzgerald, Local Preacher," is set down as present. The next year he was appointed by the Quarterly Conference one of the Trustees for Courtland Meeting House. He lived two or three miles a little north of west from the town of Courtland. At the Quarterly Conference held at the Camp Ground near Russellville, October 2, 1830, "he was recommended to the Annual Conference for Deacon's orders." The last entry concerning him is found in the Minutes of the first Quarterly Conference for Franklin Circuit for the year held at Mount Zion, February 19, 1831: "William Jones was appointed Circuit Steward in place of Brother Fitzgerald, who has removed." He moved to West Florida. He died in Virginia. He was a man of wealth; a good man, and true, and highly respected, but not particularly gifted.

Most remarkable is the Record of the Franklin Circuit on the subject of a Parsonage for that Circuit. The enterprise of securing a Parsonage for the Circuit was inaugurated at an early day. In the project of improvising a Parsonage the official members, in Quarterly Conference assembled, exercised themselves plentifully in adopting motions, passing resolutions, and in appointing, replacing, and abolishing Committees. They certainly did strive for the mastery in discussing the matter, but they never did reach the goal. Judging from their numerous enactments there must have been some powerful incentive which impelled them, and at the same time there must have been some potent influence which impeded all progress, and which thwarted all designs, and which prevented every measure of success in the premises. They made vigorous efforts in the way of resolutions and appointments, they were versatile in the invention of agencies, they were shifty in marshaling forces, but they made feeble contributions, they were not prolific of gifts. Were the wealth of the members of the Circuit judged by the contributions made to the worthy enterprise, the conclusion would be inevitable that their surplus was not great. If in the interest of the enterprise, they in privation and self-denial, imposed on themselves a regimen which stunted them to the extreme of endurance, then the margin for self-denial with them was not large.

At the Quarterly Conference for the Circuit held at the Camp Ground near James Smith's, August 20, 1825: "The business of



building a Parsonage on Franklin Circuit was taken up, and Alexander Sale, Freeman Fitzgerald, Samuel B. White, William S. Jones, and David Hodges were appointed a Committee to carry the same into effect."

Nothing further is heard on the subject until the Quarterly Conference held at Spring Creek Camp Ground, October 25, 1828, when it was "Ordered by this Conference, that the Circuit Stewards, be a Committee to carry into effect the building of a Parsonage on the Franklin Circuit according to our Discipline, and that William S. Jones be Chairman of said Committee."

At the Quarterly Conference held at Mountain Spring Camp Ground, which Camp Ground was on the point of the mountain five miles from Courtland, July 25, 1829, the following action was had: "Resolved that the Committee appointed at the last Quarterly Conference for 1828 to prepare a Parsonage, be dismissed, and F. Fitzgerald, E. D. Sims, Robert Fenner, Alexander Sledge, and B. C. Burnett, be appointed in their stead." Not a line is on record to indicate that any work was done by that new Committee.

No further interest is evinced on the subject until the Quarterly Conference held at La Grange, January 21, 1832. "The Conference then appointed A. Sale, R. A. Baker, W. Garrett, W. S. Jones, and W. R. Saddler as a Committee to take into consideration the expediency and practicability of building a Parsonage on Franklin Circuit, and the Committee reported, That in their opinion it was both expedient and practicable; which report was received by the Conference. On motion it was ordered that the same Committee, open subscription, for the purpose of raising funds to build the House, and that they receive proposals for sites, &c, and report the same to the next Quarterly Meeting Conference to be held at Courtland on 30 March next."

At the Quarterly Conference held at Russellville, September 1-3, 1832, the following action was had: "On motion ordered that the Committee appointed to raise funds to build a Parsonage, be allowed until next Conference to make their report, and that Drury Mays take the place of W. Garrett, resigned."

The next action had on the subject was at the Quarterly Conference held at Courtland, April 14, 1833: "On motion ordered that the Committee appointed to raise funds to build a Parson-

age be discharged from further duty on that subject, and any moneys raised for that purpose be returned to the Donors." That was an abandonment of the enterprise.

But at a Quarterly Conference held at La Grange, February 18, 1837, the enterprise was revived: "On motion of Brother Sale, it was Resolved that a Committee of five be appointed to take into consideration the propriety of establishing a Parsonage on Franklin Circuit; when the following persons were appointed, as said Committee: James E. Saunders, A. Sale, W. S. Jones, John T. Richardson, and R. R. Corban."

"The report of the Committee on the business of Parsonage being called for, it was found that a part of the Committee were absent, therefore the report was not forthcoming, but the Committee was continued, and requested to report to the next Quarterly Meeting." This is the recorded action of the Quarterly Conference held at Courtland, May 20, 1837.

The Quarterly Conference was held at Mountain Spring Camp Ground, July 29-31, 1837. On the first day, "The Committee on Parsonage reported, which was ordered to lie on the table." On Monday, the last day of the session, the Record says: "The report on the Parsonage, which was laid on the table at the last sitting, was taken up and accepted, which is as follows: 'The Committee on Parsonage instruct me to report, that it is expedient to establish a Parsonage on Franklin Circuit, but beg leave to be discharged from considering the Location of the same.' Signed, James E. Saunders, Chairman. The Quarterly Meeting Conference then resolved itself into a Committee of the whole on the subject of Parsonage, and do make the following location; To wit: That La Grange be and the same is hereby selected as the most eligible site for the Location of the Parsonage House on Franklin Circuit. Resolved that the following persons be a Committee to carry into practical effect the resolutions of this Conference in reference to the Parsonage: Robert Paine, James E. Saunders, J. T. Richardson, R. A. Baker, R. R. Corban, William Garrett, and Robert Fenner."

At a Quarterly Conference held at Ebenezer, December 23, 1837, the following was adopted: "On motion the Committee on Parsonage was ordered to furnish the Parsonage House with such furniture as in their estimation is contemplated by the

word of our Discipline. On motion the Committee on Parsonage is also appointed Trustees for the Parsonage House."

"The Committee appointed at the fourth Quarterly Meeting for 1837 made a report, through their Chairman, R. Fenner, and marked, 'R. R. Corban Deed, for Parsonage,' and begged to be taken as said report, which by vote of the Conference was received. On motion, Resolved that Brothers D. S. Goodloe, J. T. Richardson, and S. B. White take said report (or Deed) and arrange the same for legal authentication. On motion, Resolved that a Committee of seven persons be appointed to raise the necessary amount to pay the expense of purchasing the Parsonage on Franklin Circuit, including the amount expended for 'Heavy Furniture' for said House; whereupon A. Sale, James Smith, R. Clark, D. S. Goodloe, S. B. White, J. C. Hicks, and A. G. Lewis were appointed as said Committee." This is the action on the subject by the Quarterly Conference held at the classic town of La Grange, March 10, 1838.

The most tangible report of any which had yet appeared was made at the Quarterly Conference held at Mountain Spring Camp Ground, August 10, 1838; and said report indicated, as did preceding reports on the subject, that in matters involving a small sum of money for divine purposes, even great men will wrestle as if involved in a Herculean task. But to give a remarkable instance and by it an exact definition of *aggregation*, here is the report: "Alexander Sale, Chairman of the Committee on Parsonage, reported that the following sums had been obtained in subscriptions; (To wit,) Alexander Sale \$186, James Smith \$27, Richard C. Clark \$120, D. S. Goodloe \$20, A. G. Lewis \$14, making in the whole \$367."

Upon the receipt of this report aggregating \$367 in *subscription*, not in *cash*, from the entire Circuit, the following was adopted: "Resolved that the several members of said Committee pay the said moneys, so collected, to the Committee for the Purchase of the Parsonage House, and that the several collectors proceed promptly to collect and pay over the same by the 15 September next." Then came another item in the problematical enterprise as follows: "Robert Fenner from the Committee on Parsonage, reported the purchase by himself of Furniture for the same to the amount of \$22.38 and by Brother Mullens to the amount of \$23.75 which said sums are ordered to be paid out of the moneys

collected as above stated. Whereas, the subscriptions obtained for the Parsonage are deficient to the amount of some \$75, Resolved that said Committee be requested to obtain additional subscriptions to supply said deficiency, and, furthermore, to raise \$40 still due to Brother James C. Watkins from the Circuit for the Board of Brother Ferguson."

At the Quarterly Conference held at La Grange, December 15, 1838, the following was adopted: "Resolved That the Committee appointed to raise funds to pay for the Parsonage, be required to report to the next Quarterly Meeting Conference." The resolution was adopted, but the Committee did not report as required.

The next item on record on the subject is in the Minutes for the Quarterly Conference held at Russellville, September 7, 1839: "It was communicated to this Conference, that there is a deficiency in the amount of funds, heretofore collected, to pay for the Parsonage, and contingent expenses, and the Conference Resolved, to instruct the Committee, heretofore appointed to raise funds to defray said expenses, to renew their exertions to raise funds to meet said deficiency, and that William Hudson, and Davis Gurley be appointed to fill the places of A. G. Lewis and John C. Hicks removed."

When everything had been vanquished except carefulness and covetousness, and it had been demonstrated that the Latin proverb, "*Labor omnia vincit*" is false, something like a funeral dirge is heard in the item found in the Minutes for the Quarterly Conference held at Mount Pleasant, August 8, 1840, and reads as follows: "It being made known to the Conference, that there is yet a deficiency of \$140 or more in the amount raised to pay for the Parsonage on Franklin Circuit: On motion, it is ordered by the Conference, that a Committee, composed of Brothers Alexander Sale, R. C. Clark, William Hudson, James Smith, Davis Gurley, S. B. White, and John Wheeler, be requested to use their best exertions to raise funds to meet the deficiency; and that Brother R. C. Clark be authorized to rent out the Parsonage until our Preacher may want the same."

Festoons and bonfires were never in requisition in any of the stages of the long continued enterprise. After many written reports had been presented and many Committees had been appointed, and enough had been put on record concerning the



matter to make the basis of a good sized volume, the finale was reached in action on a *verbal* report made to the Quarterly Conference held for Franklin Circuit at the town of Tuscumbia, June 12, 1841: "A report (verbal) being sent to this Conference, that the Parsonage, on this Circuit, *is sold*, It is requested by this Conference, that the same Committee who sold the Parsonage, sell the Furniture also."

To a reflecting mind that chapter in the history of the Parsonage enterprise on Franklin Circuit is suggestive. It introduces to the thoughts things which have affinity, and contrariety, and which are conglomerate. Who in the presence of that chapter could keep from thinking of mind and mammon, of inadequacy and invention, of personal parsimoniousness and ecclesiastical penury, of pertinacity and pusillanimity, of sparseness and splendor, of force and failure? Men will, in official capacity, inaugurate measures for the consummation of which, as individuals, they will not work. Men will be liberal in the adoption of resolutions concerning ecclesiastical affairs and then grudgingly contribute of their means to further the ends contemplated by the resolutions. To some persons it is easier to say, Lord, Lord, than to do the will of God. "There is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty."

Tinkers' School-house was on the west side of Town Creek and about seven miles from the Tennessee River, and not far from where what used to be called the Tuscumbia and Decatur Rail Road crosses Town Creek.

"The first Quarterly Conference for Franklin Circuit was held at Tinkers' School House, January 21, 1826. Present: William McMahon, P. E., Finch P. Scruggs, A. P., John B. McFerrin, J. P., Alex Sale, L. E., David Hodges, L. P., John Harvey, L. E., James Smith, L. P., John F. Johnson, Exh., Jacob Smith, C. L., B. C. Burnett, C. L. Are there any Complaints or Appeals? None. The next Conference to be held at Tuscumbia, 1 & 2 April next.

ALEX. SALE, SECT.  
Quarterage \$31.56 $\frac{1}{4}$ .  
Public Collection \$09.00.

WILLIAM MCMAHON, P. E.  
Paid Bro. McMahon \$6.  
Paid Bro. Scruggs \$17.81 $\frac{1}{4}$ .  
Paid Bro. McFerrin \$15.25.  
Elements \$1.50."

The above is the Record of the entire proceedings of that

Quarterly Conference. That was the first Quarterly Conference ever attended by the Rev. John B. McFerrin as an itinerant preacher, and the Quarterage mentioned in the Record as paid to him was the first quarterage he ever received as a preacher.

At a place about, to only approximate course and distance, east of and two miles from the noble stream called Town Creek, and about southwest of and five miles from the little town of Courtland, on a point of the mountain is a bold Spring, the never-failing waters of which are ever clear and cool. Just below this Spring, at the base of the mountain, is a plateau. The combinations of mountain and valley, of fountain and forest make it a lovely place. The place was named Mountain Spring. A most elegant and suitable place it was for a Camp Ground. Its natural advantages were unsurpassed. Its surroundings were well calculated to broaden, elevate, and refine. It was the very place, with its uplifted peaks and outlying plains, its living fountains and verdant groves, to induce holy meditation and to prompt genuine eloquence.

The Methodists settled in the fertile and lovely regions round about decided to erect a Camp Ground at that place, and they did.

The first item found in the annals of the Church concerning Mountain Spring is in the Minutes of the Quarterly Conference for Franklin Circuit held at Tuscumbia, April 1, 1826, and is as follows: "The next Quarterly Meeting to be held at Mountain Spring, 8th June, next, at which time there is to be also a Camp-meeting." As the Quarterly Meeting and the Camp-meeting referred to here as in anticipation were the first of either ever held at that place, and as from the recorded proceedings of the Quarterly Conference it is ascertained who were there in official capacity and what was done by the official body on that occasion, it is proper to give here the said proceedings entire:

"The third Quarterly Conference for Franklin Circuit was held at Mountain Spring Camp Ground, June 10, 1826. Present: William McMahon, P. E., F. P. Scruggs, A. P., J. B. McFerrin, J. P., Alex. Sale, L. E., James Smith, L. P., Martin W. Richardson, C. L., Turner Saunders, L. D., David Hodges, L. P., Richard Thompson, Exh., Laban Jones, C. L., Alex. McCulloch, C. L., F. Fitzgerald, St., John Southerland, Jr., C. L., John F. Johnson, C. L., B. C. Burnett, C. L., Jacob Smith, C. L., W. S. Jones.

Are there any Complaints or Appeals? None. Are there any Licenses to be renewed? Bro. Rich'd Thompson, an Exhorter, applied.—Granted. The next Quarterly Meeting is to be held at Spring Creek Camp Ground, August 24, next.

TURNER SAUNDERS, SECT.                      WILLIAM McMAHON, P. E.

Quarterage \$43.12½.

Public Collection \$100.00.                      Paid Bro. McMahon, \$8.18½.

Paid Bro. Scruggs, \$30.18¾.                      J. B. McFerrin, \$31.31¼."

Many of the men who were members of the Quarterly Conference were Tenters at the Camp-meeting. It must have been a large congregation at the Camp-meeting as it was a very large public collection for that day and country.

The Second Quarterly Conference ever held at Mountain Spring Camp Ground was held there for Franklin Circuit, June 9, 1827, and at the same time a Camp-meeting was held, the second ever held at the place. The particulars of that Camp-meeting have perished, except as to what preachers were in attendance. They were William McMahon, P. E., F. P. Scruggs, A. P., J. W. Jones, J. P., John Hanie, L. E., James Smith, L. P.

The third Quarterly Conference ever held at Mountain Spring Camp Ground was held for the Franklin Circuit July 26, 1828, and at the same time a Camp-meeting was held there with grand results, as the communication of an eye-witness testifies. Here is the communication:

"COURTLAND, ALABAMA, August 10, 1828.

*Dear Brethren:*—I rejoice to be privileged to direct a small rivulet into that stream of religious information which flows through your paper, fertilizing the vineyard of the Lord.

At a Camp-meeting just held in this neighborhood, at the Mountain Spring Camp Ground, in the District of the Rev. William McMahon, and in the Circuit under charge of the Rev. James McFerrin, the Lord was pleased to manifest his power and goodness in a most signal manner. About 150 souls professed to find peace with God, and 182 joined the Church. 'Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will to men!' All circumstances considered, I have never witnessed such a meeting before, although accustomed to attend Camp-meetings for more than twenty years, some in Virginia, some in Tennessee, and some in this State. The attending congregation was comparatively small, averaging, perhaps, 1,500. The number of

preachers was also comparatively small, and among these but few much celebrated for what the world calls learning. Unusual plainness characterized the sermons delivered on this occasion. No attempts were made at *fine* or *embellished* discourses. Each minister who rose to fill the sacred desk seemed deeply impressed with a sense of his awfully responsible station. The glory of God and the salvation of souls was the prevailing object. God owned and blessed their labors. His power knew no distinctions, but, like a mighty, rushing wind, sweeping everything in its course, it bore down before it the rich and the poor, the learned and the unlearned. But although no class was exempted, the work abounded, for the most part, among the wealthy and well informed. The youth, male and female, the hope and pride of our country, with minds richly stored with intellectual treasures obtained in the best Seminaries of learning, regardless of expense, and whose persons were decorated with every thing that the fashionable world deems tasty or desirable—these, with common consent, thronged our altar during the greater part of our meeting, which lasted eight days.

Never, perhaps, in America, before, did any altar contain a greater fund of moral worth, or a larger amount of costly clothing and splendid jewelry. But in the anguish of their souls, on account of their sins, these were all forgotten, and literally mingled with the dust. The character of the conversions was pleasing beyond measure. They were *lucid*, *powerful*, and *confident*, in an unusual degree. Almost every convert immediately became a preacher, and exerted himself in strains of persuasive eloquence to bring his friends to God. The whole congregation was literally awed into solemn reverence. No voice was lifted in opposition to the work. The most perfect good order prevailed throughout; so much so, that not even a reproof was heard from the pulpit during the occasion. The glory be ascribed to our blessed Lord and Master, now and ever. Amen.

Yours in Christ,

T. SAUNDERS."

The account given of that meeting by the presiding elder, the Rev. William McMahon, is interesting: "Our Camp-meeting at the Mountain Spring, in the Franklin Circuit, beginning on the 24 July, exceeded all the rest. This was decidedly the best meeting that I have ever had on the District. It lasted eight days, and at the close we numbered 150 who professed



Justification by faith in Christ, and received 182 members on trial in the Society. The flower and pride of the Courtland Valley were brought into the covenant of saving grace at this meeting. Many who move in the first circles in society were willing to sacrifice all their distinctions, worldly honors, pleasures, and prospects, at the foot of the cross, and learn of him who is meek and lowly in heart, that they might find rest to their troubled souls. Indeed, all distinctions and gradations of rank in society seemed here to be forgotten, while age and talents, youth and beauty, the rich and the poor, the bond and free, seemed to mingle complacently together at a throne of grace, to which they found free access by faith in the name of Jesus. The glory of God rested on the congregation by night and by day, while every interest seemed to be forgotten but that of the soul. But I need not attempt a description, for pen, ink, and paper will never tell the glory of that meeting.

The holy flame has been spreading through all the regions round about ever since, and many souls have since found the Lord, who received their convictions there. We have another appointed on the same Circuit, to commence on the 16th inst. to which hundreds are looking with deep and prayerful interest, that God may crown it with his holy presence, and save many sinners.

My sheet is full, and so is my heart. Yours in the best of bonds. October 1, 1828.

WILLIAM McMAHON."

The year 1828 was a grand and glorious year on the Franklin Circuit throughout. The next Quarterly Conference for the Circuit after the one at Mountain Spring at which the Camp-meeting was held, the account of which has just been given, was held at Spring Creek Camp Ground, October 25, 1828, and a Camp-meeting was also held there at the same time, an account of which will be given in this connection.

At the Quarterly Conference held at Spring Creek Camp Ground, October 25, 1828, "Stephen M. Norris, and William M. McFerrin were recommended to the District Conference as proper persons to obtain Licenses to Preach, and also to be recommended to the Annual Conference as suitable persons for the Itinerancy." McFerrin was granted a license to preach, recommended to the Annual Conference and was admitted on trial.

That Camp-meeting was a time of heavenly visitation. A dis-

pensation of the fullness of the grace of God was given, and many believed and were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, and given an earnest of a heavenly inheritance, of a purchased possession. Here is a most thrilling account:

“HUNTSVILLE, November 4, 1828.

*My Much Esteemed Brethren:*—“I wrote you some time since that the Lord was doing great things for us on some parts of the Huntsville District, since which I have seen a letter in the *Christian Advocate*, written by my worthy friend and brother, Rev. T. Saunders, in which he gives a more detailed account of the Mountain Spring Camp-meeting than I could do in the hasty sketch which I wrote on the same subject. I have a few days since returned from another Camp-meeting which I held on the same Circuit at Spring Creek, about fourteen miles from the Mountain Spring Camp Ground, where we had another signal manifestation of Jehovah’s power, and willingness to forgive iniquity, transgression, and sin. This meeting commenced on Thursday, 23d of October, and lasted until the next Tuesday in the afternoon. The congregations were not as large as they would have been, but for another Camp-meeting which was held by the Presbyterians at the same time at La Grange, about four miles from ours; but our congregations were quite respectable as to numbers, and very serious, attentive, and much engaged in prayer throughout the whole meeting; and such was the orderly behavior of the congregation, which was very large on the Sabbath, that there was no reproof given, either in the pulpit, or in any other way during the meeting. Indeed, where the good sense and taste of an enlightened community, under a powerful influence of divine grace, become deeply interested in favor of religion, we need no guards, the congregations will want no reproofs, nor will it ever be found necessary in such circumstances to exclude the holy Sabbath out of our Camp-meeting arrangements. Our Sacrament on Sunday night was interesting beyond any description that I can give of it. More than 500 whites, and a large number of blacks received the Holy Communion, while they contemplated with holy pleasure, and with shouts and tears of joy, the great object of this holy institution. It would be useless for me to attempt to give in detail all the interesting circumstances of this meeting. Many will long remember the days and nights which they spent at the

Spring Creek Camp-meeting. I left the sacred spot on Tuesday about twelve o'clock. At that time 150 persons had professed religion, and 147 had joined the Church as members on trial. A young man who lives in Courtland, who left there after I did, informed me that three more had joined, making in all 150. This blessed work continues to prevail among the first ranks of society. The Lord in his tender mercy is permitting many 'camels to pass through the needle's eye,' in the Courtland Valley. Never have I seen such a work as this before. More than 1,000 souls have embraced religion in this rich and beautiful valley in the last six months, and more than 800 of that number have joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. More than 400 joined at three Camp-meetings, all held on the Franklin Circuit, not more than fifteen miles apart. Decatur, Courtland, Tuscumbia, and Florence, are all in a flame. There seems to be but little interest felt, or subject talked of, but that of religion. I believe there is scarcely a family in Tuscumbia that has not been visited by the revival in the conversion of some of its members. I do not believe there were ten persons of mature age at our last Camp-meeting who were not either converted, or deeply engaged in the great work of their salvation. It may be truly said that Zion's 'light has come, and the glory of the Lord hath risen' upon the valley.

WILLIAM McMAHON."

Frederick G. Ferguson and Robert A. Baker appeared for the first time that either of them ever appeared in official capacity, Ferguson as an exhorter, Baker as a class leader, in the Quarterly Conference for Franklin Circuit held at Mountain Spring Camp Ground, July 25, 1829.

The Church in that country about that time began to branch out a little beyond the ordinary routine business. At that Quarterly Conference, held July 25, 1829, the following action was taken and put on record: "On motion Resolved, That this Quarterly Meeting Conference form itself into a Bible, Tract, and Sunday School Union Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in conformity with the plan of the 'Parent Society' in New York, as suggested in the *Christian Advocate and Journal*; and appointed E. D. Sims, Robert Fenner, and W. S. Jones a Committee to draft a Constitution."

At the Quarterly Conference for the Franklin Circuit held at

Spring Creek Camp Ground October 24, 1829, "Hiram M. Glass, Frederick G. Ferguson, and Francis H. Jones were recommended to the District Conference for Licenses to Preach, and to be recommended to the Annual Conference as suitable persons for the Itinerancy." They were all three licensed to preach and were admitted on trial in the Tennessee Conference at its session at Huntsville, Alabama, November 19, 1829.

For a long while it was a general if not universal custom with the Methodists to secure money for the salaries of the preachers by public as well as private solicitations. For some reason the public collection for securing ministerial compensation incurred the displeasure of the people, and the custom was discontinued. At a Quarterly Conference held for Franklin Circuit at Mount Zion, February 13, 1830, an official deliverance on this subject was made and put on record: "On motion, Resolved, That this Conference pledge themselves to make use of all Lawful exertions to collect Quarterage from our respective Societies, so as to pay our preachers without resorting to *public collections* in our Large Congregations."

About the same time there developed an evil tendency which had to be checked among the class of workers known as Exhorters. On the part of human kind there is a disposition to usurp prerogatives. The Exhorters of the Church under the promptings of this disposition and the leadings of this tendency assumed the prerogatives of preachers, and the Quarterly Conference held for the Franklin Circuit at the Camp Ground near Russellville, October 2, 1830, adopted a Resolution limiting the prerogatives and defining the special work of an exhorter: "Resolved, That it is the opinion of this Conference that no Exhorter should make an appointment to preach, nor take a particular passage of Scripture as a Text at any appointment he may have; but may quote as many passages of Scripture as he may deem proper, *to comment on*, or support and prove any doctrine he may advance."

Probably this deliverance of the Quarterly Conference terrified the Exhorters, and served to hold them in proper bounds, but notwithstanding the manifest purpose of the Resolution it certainly did give large liberty to the Exhorters in the statement, exposition, and proof of doctrines, and in *comment on* the Scriptures.



The Rev. Rufus Ledbetter preached one year in Alabama. For 1825 he was the preacher in charge of the Franklin Circuit, and for his services that year he received as quarterage \$109.00, and for traveling expenses \$7.75. He was admitted on trial in the Tennessee Conference in November, 1821, and at the close of 1825 he transferred to the Virginia Conference, where he preached six or eight years, and then located. He afterward returned as a citizen to Tennessee; where he died during the war between the States. Physically, he was a good specimen. He was a devoted Christian, an able preacher, and in labors abundant. He was the brother of the Rev. Wiley Ledbetter, who was for some time a member of the Tennessee Conference. He was the son of the Rev. Charles Ledbetter, who was once a traveling preacher in Virginia and North Carolina, having been admitted into the traveling connection in the latter part of 1793, and having continued in that connection until the first part of 1799.

The preachers on the Franklin Circuit for 1826 were, Finch P. Scruggs, John B. McFerrin, Alexander Sale, Sup.; for 1827, Finch P. Scruggs, John W. Jones; for 1828, James McFerrin, Green M. Rogers; for 1829, James McFerrin, Wesley Deskins.

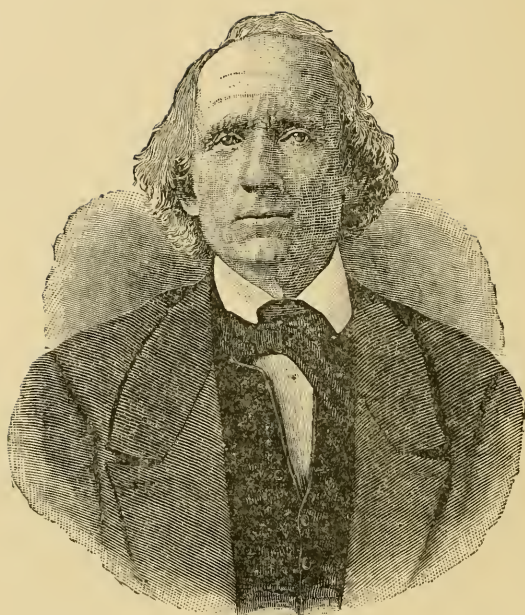
The Rev. Wesley Deskins was born in Tennessee, July 7, 1806; entered the traveling connection in the close of 1826; and died in Warren, Tennessee, October 3, 1830. The words of salvation and victory were on his tongue in the dying hour!

For Franklin Circuit for 1830, James W. Faris, William E. Doughty; for 1831, Samuel Gilliland, James W. Faris.

The Rev. James W. Faris gave three years of his itinerant ministry to Alabama, and rendered some service in the State as a local preacher. He was destitute of the graces acquired by education and he was naturally eccentric, but withal he possessed rare gifts as an orator, and was a chosen vessel of God. He was a man of solemn tone and awful mien. As an orator he swept all the chords of the human soul. He touched the emotions and excited the sensibilities. He swayed the vast throngs of a Camp-meeting as absolutely as the storm sways the trees of the forest. He could depict in awful grandeur "the dismal situation waste and wild" of one finally despoiled of divine bliss because here he stood as a barren tree in the Lord's vineyard.

He was first admitted on trial in the Tennessee Conference in October, 1816, and served the Flint River Circuit for 1817, and at the session of the Conference at the end of that year discontinued. At the session of the Conference at Huntsville, November, 1829, he was again admitted on trial and continued in the itinerant work until his death in 1832. His last charge was the Wesley Circuit in West Tennessee.





REV. THOMAS STRINGFIELD.



## CHAPTER IX.

### THE ENLARGEMENT AND ADVANCEMENT OF THE WORK OF METHODISM IN ALABAMA.

HUNTSVILLE was for a dozen years or more one of the appointments of the Circuit in the bounds of which it was situated, and for the most of that time the Methodists in that place were without a church, and worshiped in rooms improvised for the occasion; they were sometimes the rooms of private residences, and sometimes the rooms in common public use. The first deed made to a lot on which to erect a church for the use and benefit of the Methodists at the town of Huntsville bears date August 20, 1820, and was made, indefinite as it may seem, to the "Huntsville Church." The lot named in that deed was on West Clinton Street, and it was eventually sold by the Methodists to the Primitive Baptists, and at last said lot was abandoned by the Baptists, and is now, 1890, vacant, and has been for many years.

At the close of 1821, Huntsville was made a Station, and the Rev. Thomas Madden was assigned to it for 1822, but for reasons now unknown the appointments for Huntsville and Nashville were, after they were announced in the session of the Conference, readjusted, and the Rev. Thomas Madden went to Nashville and the Rev. Thomas Stringfield went to Huntsville, and so as a matter of fact the Rev. Thomas Stringfield served the Huntsville Station for the year 1822. He was also sent to Huntsville Station for the year 1823, and served it that year, making his pastorate there two years which was then the full time allowed by the law of limitation.

The Rev. Thomas Stringfield was born in Kentucky in 1796, and in 1804, in his native State, he was born into the kingdom of God, and united himself with the Church. In 1808 his father moved to Alabama, and settled on the Tennessee River, in Madison County. In 1813, though then but a youth, he joined the volunteer forces of General Andrew Jackson and helped to subdue the hostile Indians on the soil of Alabama. In that campaign, while on guard, he was shot by an ambushed savage,

and henceforth he carried on his forehead a scar which told how near he came to death at the hands of a Creek warrior. While a soldier, as well as during his whole life, he maintained his Christian integrity. He went through the whole campaign without a blot upon his moral character.

He was, after his return from the campaign against the Creek Indians, licensed to preach in Madison County, Alabama, and was admitted into the Tennessee Conference on trial in October, 1816. Five years of his ministry were given to Alabama. While in Huntsville, Alabama, as a preacher, he commenced the publication of a periodical called *Western Arminian and Christian Instructor*, of which he was the Editor. That periodical was his own personal property, and under the title here given he continued it for about three years. Then the property rights in it were transferred to the Holston Conference, and the name of the paper was changed to that of the *Holston Conference Messenger*. Under its new name and management he was elected and continued Editor.

Shortly after the *Arminian and Instructor* was commenced at Huntsville, Alabama, it was removed to Knoxville, Tennessee, and it continued to be published at that place until it was changed to the *Holston Conference Messenger*. The *Messenger* was published at Knoxville.

The *Arminian and Instructor* was filled with matter on miscellaneous subjects, such as biographical sketches, revival and missionary intelligence, and literary themes, but the real purpose of that periodical and that of its successor, the *Messenger*, was to defend Methodist doctrines, Methodist polity, and Methodist usages against the attacks of inveterate enemies. During the time the Rev. Thomas Stringfield edited these periodicals at Knoxville, Tennessee, he was engaged in an acrimonious controversy with a set of pugnacious ecclesiastics, a troop of unscrupulous Calvinists, who imagined that their sole business in life was to obliterate Methodism, and that they could accomplish their assigned task in a very short time.

The Rev. Thomas Stringfield was a coherent thinker, a logical reasoner, a cool debater, a courageous advocate, a profound theologian, a cogent preacher, and an intelligible and impressive writer. He was a ready champion, an inflexible antagonist. He was in himself a host, and unconquerable. He

repelled and swept from the Holston country the ecclesiastical gladiators who set themselves so fiercely upon Methodism. He instructed the population in the large and interesting field in which he exercised his ministry and circulated his periodicals in Arminian doctrines and in evangelical methods, and he took the field for Methodism. While others, by their labors, contributed to achieve a victory for Methodism against Calvinists and other antagonists, the Rev. Thomas Stringfield, who grew to manhood and who was licensed to preach in Alabama, was the champion leader in the great contest and the chief agent in the signal victory.

He was a laborious preacher and a versatile writer. He traveled and preached constantly over an extended region of country, and he wrote and published numerous sermons, doctrinal essays, and miscellaneous addresses. He was active in the inauguration and advancement of literary and moral institutions. At one time he was Agent for the Holston Conference Seminary, and at another time for the American Bible Society.

The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church assembled in Cincinnati, Ohio, in May, 1836, by official action, directed the establishment of a new paper which should bear the name of *South-Western Christian Advocate*, and which should be published at Nashville, Tennessee. For Editor of the prospective organ the General Conference elected the Rev. Thomas Stringfield. In due course the paper ordered and provided for was issued, and during the quadrennium ending at the session of the General Conference held in 1840, the Rev. Thomas Stringfield controlled the general make-up of that periodical, and filled its columns with editorial, contributed, and selected matter; and under the editorial management of that gifted and pious man of God the paper secured the confidence of that section of the Church for whose benefit it was instituted, and attained a degree of merit unusual in so short a time.

The Rev. Thomas Stringfield was called to legislate for the Church as well as to disseminate, defend, and establish her doctrines. He was an honored delegate to the General Conference of 1844, and punctually did he discharge his duties and faithfully did he meet his obligations on that memorable occasion. Through all that ordeal he sustained himself, and his cause.

Twice was he suitably and happily married, and he brought

up a family of children who have honored him and honored themselves, and have been a blessing to the Church. One of his sons was a preacher, and another occupied a seat in the highest councils of his Church. One of his daughters, Mrs. Butler, who inherited his mental endowments, is now, in the year 1890, and has been for several years, Editor of the *Woman's Missionary Advocate*.

The extraordinary intellectual endowments which he possessed, the abundant labors which he performed, the swiftness with which, as a messenger of light, he sped the divine cause, the profuse expenditures of money which he made in the dissemination of evangelical doctrines, entitled the Rev. Thomas Stringfield to appreciation and eulogy, but above all other things for which he was eminent and for which he was worthy of admiration was his moral excellence. His veneration of the Divine Being, his love of the divine law, and his devotion to the divine service were unsurpassed.

He was the first preacher stationed at Huntsville, and Huntsville Station was the last charge he served in Alabama.

He died June 12, 1858, and his body rests on the banks of the Holston River, in East Tennessee.

The preacher stationed at Huntsville for 1824 was the Rev. Wiley B. Peck. He was a man of good ability and of more than ordinary attainments. He was admitted on trial in the Tennessee Conference in October, 1820, was transferred to the Missouri Conference in November, 1825, and located at the close of the Conference year for 1826. He deserted the Church of his first choice and cast his lot with the Protestant Episcopal Church, where he read prayers and expatiated on apostolic succession.

The Rev. John M. Holland was stationed at Huntsville for the years 1825 and 1826, and at the end of his pastoral term there he married a most excellent young lady of that place.

The Huntsville Station was served in 1827 by the Rev. James Rowe, and in 1828 by the Rev. James W. Allen, and again in 1829 by the Rev. James Rowe.

The Rev. James Rowe entered the ministry in the State of Ohio. He was received in the Ohio Conference on trial in September, 1822, and he was received into full connection, ordained deacon, and located at the session of the Ohio Conference in September, 1824. At the session of the Tennessee Conference



beginning November 28, 1826, he was re-admitted to the traveling connection. He located again in November, 1830. Henceforth, till his death, which occurred about 1870, he was a local preacher. He died in Athens, Alabama, and was buried in the cemetery at that place. He was a good preacher. He was of commanding presence, tall, strong, and well made. He was sentimental and sanguine, imaginative and impulsive, eccentric and energetic. He was opposed to war, and the use of whisky, and tobacco.

About the close of his ministry in the Huntsville Station he married a young lady of native gifts and rare accomplishments; a lady well fitted for and suited to teaching, and he turned his attention to the profession of a pedagogue. He conceived the idea of establishing a school on the top of the mountains, exalted above the ordinary hills, and which should on account of its situation attract the school-girls of the country from far and near. Monte Sano seventeen hundred feet above the sea level, and more than a thousand feet above the public square of the city of Huntsville furnished the site in accord with his conception, and on that lofty eminence he erected a suitable school-building, and there, for a number of years, and until the death of his charming, and accomplished wife, he conducted a superior school. The following communication contains a scrap of history on this subject:

#### “MONTE SANO FEMALE ACADEMY.

This institution, within the bounds of our charge, and at which we preach regularly every two weeks, has been favored with the visitations of divine grace. Ten of the students have recently been made the happy subjects of pardoning mercy; and all the rest seem to be deeply and powerfully awakened to a sense of their lost and undone condition by reason of sin. O, may the great Head of the Church carry on his work among them!

This institution was established by the Rev. James Rowe, formerly a traveling preacher in the Tennessee Conference. At our last annual session a dispensation was granted him for the purpose of attending to some pecuniary business; since which time he has procured land, and erected suitable buildings on the above named mountain for the location of a permanent institu-

tion for female education. For the information of our friends abroad, I would say, 'This location combines peculiar and numerous advantages.' It is highly elevated, perhaps 1,800 feet above the surrounding plain, and affords one of the most delightful prospects in the western country. The air is salubrious. There is a chalybeate spring within one mile of the institution, to which many resort in the summer season for the benefit of their health. The purest of fresh water is in abundance. Experience evinces that this situation is very healthy, indeed. The retired situation of the academy is very favorable to study and improvement. It is only three and a half miles from Huntsville.

'It is proposed to teach in this institution Botany, Natural and Moral Philosophy, the Elements of Geometry, Chemistry, and Astronomy.' 'Terms of tuition and board moderate.'

Huntsville, Alabama, September 15, 1830.

ALPHA."

The Rev. William P. Kendrick was the preacher at Huntsville for 1830. That was the last year of his itinerant ministry in Alabama. The year before he was stationed at Florence. The most of his itinerant work was done in East Tennessee, and in the bounds of what was at one time the Holston Conference. It seems that he was rather vacillating in his attachments to the itinerant ministry. He was admitted on trial in the Tennessee Conference in October, 1820, and in due course he was admitted into full connection in the same Conference, and ordained deacon and elder. In October, 1825, being then a member of the Holston Conference, he located; in November, 1827, he was re-admitted to the Holston Conference, and in November, 1828, he again located; and immediately he was re-admitted to the Tennessee Conference, and for 1829 was appointed to Florence Station, and then to the Huntsville Station for 1830; for 1831 he was left without an appointment, and in November of that year he once more located. That was his last and final location. "How to perform that which is good, I find not. For the good that I would, I do not."

Notwithstanding his vacillation in the pastoral work, he was admired and applauded by the masses who flocked to his ministry. He was a man of pleasant bearing and attractive manners. He was a magnificent declaimer, and a logical reasoner.

His appeals from the pulpit were irresistible. He was a man of marked talents, and was famous as a pulpit orator. After his final location he became engrossed in secular affairs and very much devoted to politics. When the war between the States began he had passed beyond the age for military service, but he went out with the Confederate forces as a chaplain, and while engaged in that service he died. Notwithstanding his vacillations and the vicissitudes of his life he died while engaged in the work of the ministry. He died while he held a commission as chaplain to the Confederate soldiers.

The appointments for 1831 included the following: Huntsville, John B. McFerrin. For 1832: Huntsville, Ashley B. Roszel.

During the ten years beginning with 1822 and closing with 1832 there was in the Huntsville Station an increase of white members from sixty-one to one hundred and twenty-seven, and a decrease of colored members from two hundred and thirteen to fifty-six.

The Tennessee Conference held its annual session at Huntsville, Alabama, beginning November 26, 1823. That was an event in the history of the place, an event distinctive, extraordinary, and to the Methodists there, intelligent and refined as they were, delightful, and entertaining. That was the first session of an Annual Conference ever held at the place. At that Conference there were two Bishops, William McKendree and Enoch George, and more than sixty preachers present. A letter bearing date December 1, 1823, and written at Huntsville by Bishop McKendree still survives the ravages of time.

The presence of one noted individual, though neither a Bishop nor a Priest, and though not numbered among kings or scholars, created peculiar interest and gave occasion for special record. POLLY SMITH, a Cherokee Indian, who had been inducted into the Christian religion by a change of nature and an experience of grace, and who was a member of a Methodist Society organized and kept up at Richard Riley's, in the Cherokee Nation, twelve miles south of Fort Deposit, was at that first session of an Annual Conference at Huntsville; and was there on a special mission; on a mission in which were involved the issues of holy living.

About twelve months before the Conference convened at Huntsville, this Polly Smith found in the Nation a piece of

calico. She did not, as she could have done, conceal the goods and apply it to her own use, but she carried it to the nearest trading house to which she lived, and inquired of the proprietor if he had sold such goods, and if so, to whom. The merchant informed her that he had sold to some Creek Indians a piece of goods precisely like the piece she had found. She kept the goods with care and inquired diligently for the owner; but having failed to find the proper owners of the calico, she went to the town of Huntsville, arriving there at the time of the session of the Conference, and laid the case before the Rev. William McMahon, the presiding elder, and sought his decision as to the disposition she should make of the property. Than this neither legend, nor fiction, nor history can furnish a sublimer example of Christian integrity, virtue, and faith. That woman was a trophy from the depths of the forest, from the land of the heathen, and she and the ethical questions which she presented for solution magnified the occasion and intensified the interest in the business of the Conference.

At that Conference the following persons were ordained deacons in the Methodist Church, on Clinton Street, by Bishop Enoch George: Rufus Ledbetter, John Seay, Jacob S. Hearn, Thomas A. Young, German Baker, Finch P. Scruggs, James G. H. Speer, Abraham Overall, Nathaniel R. Jarrett, John Rains, John Rice, John Kelly, Richard Neeley, Nathan L. Norvell, William Patton, Thomas J. Brown, George Horn, David B. Cumming, and William B. Carpenter.

The following were on the same occasion, though at a different hour, elected and ordained elders: Robert Paine, John Brooks, John Kesterson, Hartwell H. Brown, Abraham Still, Lewis S. Marshall, Thomas Madden, Ellison Taylor.

At that session of the Conference nine delegates were elected to the General Conference.

At a meeting held for the purpose, in the town of Huntsville, April 26, 1829, a Society was organized with the constitutional designation: "The Huntsville Sunday School, auxiliary to the 'Sunday School Union,' and the Huntsville Bible and Tract Society, auxiliary to the Bible and Tract Societies of the Methodist Episcopal Church." The following persons were elected as the officers of the Society: John M. Taylor, President; James Rowe, Vice-president; B. M. Lowe, Treasurer; E. P.



Smith, Recording Secretary; C. R. Clifton, Corresponding Secretary; R. B. Purdom, David Moore, Thomas Brandon, John Kinkle, Joseph Ward—Managers.

This item, thought at the time worthy of record, gives the names of a few men in Huntsville who at that day participated in the affairs of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and it indicates the stage which had been reached there at that period in the development of Christian benevolence and Church enterprise. Though there had been a degree of tardiness in organizing that Society, such organization having been provided for by the general Church ten years previous to that date, yet at last there was organized benevolence and provision for active coöperation in the dissemination of revealed truth and the extension of the kingdom of God among men.

Another session of the Tennessee Conference was held at Huntsville, Alabama, beginning November 19, 1829. It was a grand occasion. The town was in prosperous condition, the Methodists there were in pleasant mood, the meteorological condition of the atmosphere was good, the concourse was large, and notable visitors were present. Everything was conducive to the pleasure and success of the occasion, except the indisposition of the Bishop, the Rev. Robert R. Roberts, who was to preside over the deliberations of the body. He was so indisposed he did not reach Huntsville until the Conference had disposed of a large part of the business; and even after he had arrived at the seat of the Conference he could preside over the body only occasionally. The preachers whom he ordained elders had to meet him in his room in a private house for the ordination service. The Rev. Robert Paine was elected president of the Conference in the absence of the Bishop.

The interest of the occasion concentrated in the Missionary Anniversary. The following statement is given from a communication to the Corresponding Secretary of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church: "The second anniversary of the Tennessee Conference Missionary Society was held on the 23 of November last, in the Methodist Church in Huntsville, Alabama. The meeting was opened by Bishop Roberts by reading the fortieth chapter of Isaiah, singing, and prayer. The president, then taking the chair, called for the reading of the report of the board of managers, which was accordingly

done by the Rev. Thomas L. Douglass, in which it evidently appeared that the missionary cause still continues to prevail with amazing rapidity, so that wonders are everywhere wrought among the heathen in the name of Jesus.

The collection from the congregation at the Anniversary amounted to \$100—a sufficient sum to support a missionary for the term of one year.”

A noted visitor in the person of an Indian Chief was at that anniversary, as the following from the communication already quoted from shows: “The interest of the meeting was greatly increased by the presence of several of the Cherokee converts, and also by the pleasing account of the extraordinary work of religion in the Choctaw nation, given by Colonel G. Lafleur, chief of the northwestern district of that nation.”

The communication from which the above quotations are made was written by the Rev. John M. Holland, and it bears date January, 1830.

Turtle Fields, a Cherokee Indian, was received into full connection in the Annual Conference and ordained deacon by Bishop Roberts at that session of the Conference, and Young Wolfe, another Cherokee Indian, was admitted on trial.

Savages upon whom the light of the Lord had come and upon whom his glory had arisen through the instrumentality of the ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church gathered themselves together at the beautiful town of Huntsville, and their feet pressed the aisles and their voices resounded through the auditorium of the neat sanctuary which the Methodists there had dedicated to divine worship. Savages now bearing forth tidings of peace entered the courts of the Lord. Princes from a savage land brought their gifts and praises to the Redeemer of nations. Such an incident was thrilling, and thereby the faith of the people of God was strengthened, their zeal intensified, their liberality enlarged, and their joy increased.

On March 7, 1832, William H. Powers and wife did, in consideration of the sum of seven hundred and fifty dollars, sell and convey to David Moore, William Cain, Joseph L. Clark, John M. Taylor, and Charles P. Smith Trustees, for the Methodist Episcopal Church, Lot No. 30, situated on Randolph and Green Streets. On that Lot since then has stood the Church of the Methodists of Huntsville.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE ENLARGEMENT AND ADVANCEMENT OF THE WORK OF METHODISM IN ALABAMA.

THE first mention ever made of Mobile in the ecclesiastical records of Methodism is found in the list of appointments made for the Mississippi Conference at its session at Washington, Mississippi, December, 1821. The last appointment in that list is: "Alexander Talley, Missionary to Pensacola, Mobile, Blakely, and adjoining country."

The first Methodist preacher ever appointed to Mobile was the Rev. Alexander Talley, though it is by no means probable that he was the first one who ever visited the place. It is quite certain that the preachers on the Tombechee and the Chickasawhay Circuits visited Mobile before the Rev. Alexander Talley was ever appointed to the place, although they never established any Societies there. In the memoir of the Rev. Alexander Talley, published in the General Minutes, it is stated that in "1819, he was appointed a Missionary to Mobile." This is a mistake. For the year 1819, the South Carolina Conference appointed "Alexander Talley, Missionary to Alabama Territory," and that year he organized, as has been stated in another place, the Alabama Circuit, the chief appointments of which were about where the Pine Woods, Autauga, Cotoma, and Swift Creeks form their junctions with the Alabama River. At the close of 1819 he located, and made his home at Vernon, on the Alabama River, at the upper point of Dutch Bend, and in the bounds of the Alabama Circuit. Here he administered medicine, and exercised the functions of a local preacher. In December, 1821, he was re-admitted to the traveling connection in the Mississippi Conference, and was appointed, for 1822, "Missionary to Pensacola, Mobile, Blakely, and adjoining country." At the end of the Conference year 1822 he again located, and then returned to the occupation of administering medicine to the sick in his old field of practice on the Alabama River. He again lived at Vernon, and at that place he remained, engaged in the administra-

tion of medicine, and in the exercise of the functions of a local preacher, until December, 1825, when he was again re-admitted into the Mississippi Conference, and appointed presiding elder of the Louisiana District. That ended his work in Alabama; henceforth his appointments were beyond the limits of the State.

No authentic record now accessible states where or when the Rev. Alexander Talley was born. He had six brothers, three, at least, of whom were Methodist preachers. The Rev. Nicholas Talley, his brother, who was for a long time an itinerant preacher, was born near Richmond, Virginia, and his brother the Rev. John Wesley Talley, who was for a long time a traveling preacher in his native State, was born near Greensborough, Georgia; but where the Rev. William S. Talley, another brother, and who was once a member of the South Carolina Conference, and who died in Greene County, Georgia, was born, is unknown. Probably Alexander and William S. were born in Virginia.

"Alexander Talley was recommended by a Quarterly Conference held at Walker's Meeting House for Appalachee Circuit, December 9, 1809," as a suitable person to be admitted on trial in the traveling connection. Walker's Meeting House was probably in Greene County, Georgia, as the Talleys lived in that County, and as the Appalachee Circuit embraced that and other Counties. On December 26, 1809, he was "admitted on trial" by the South Carolina Conference. In December, 1811, he was admitted into full connection in the Conference, and ordained deacon. January 15, 1814, at Fayetteville, North Carolina, he was elected elder, and the next day, Sunday, was ordained.

He was appointed in charge of Missions, Circuits, Stations, and Districts. He filled the prominent places, such as Charleston Station, and Edisto District in the South Carolina Conference, and the Louisiana District in the Mississippi Conference.

While he was not as elegant and eloquent as some others in the pulpit, yet he was a popular and successful preacher. His piety was commanding and impressive.

One at whose father's house he made his home for weeks at a time in Autauga County, Alabama, where he did his first work in Alabama as an itinerant preacher and his last work as a local preacher, says of him: "He was rather below the ordinary stature, being about five feet seven inches high, with full chest, and



weighing about one hundred and forty pounds. His hair was black, and he was of a bilious temperament. He had a custom when not engaged in conversation of walking back and forth across the floor, and whistling between his teeth, with an abstracted air, as if engaged in meditation. He gained the respect and confidence of the children wherever he went. I recollect well how I was in constant dread of being expelled from the Church by him for wearing a ruffled collar around my neck when I went to the house of God."

He found favor with the children and the adult population as well. His influence was marked and wholesome.

He was a man of strong Christian character, and of more than ordinary mental ability. He had a clear apprehension of whatever subject engaged his attention, and he was a steady devotee of the cause he espoused. He was capable of thoroughly analyzing a subject, and of writing out and setting forth his thoughts in clear and cogent composition. In December, 1827, he was appointed to the Choctaw Mission, which at that time was situated in the Choctaw Nation within the chartered limits of the State of Mississippi. When the Choctaws were removed west of the Mississippi River the Mission to them was continued in their new home, and the Rev. Alexander Talley remained Superintendent of that work until the close of 1834. A letter written by him when he first took charge of the Mission to the Choctaws, the contents of which are of interest in themselves, will give some idea of his mental and moral qualities. He wrote a number of letters concerning the Choctaw Mission of merit and interest which are still extant, but they are too long for insertion in this History. The letter here quoted was addressed to the Rev. John Emory, Corresponding Secretary of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

"CHOCTAW NATION, April 2, 1828.

*Dear Sir:*—It has become my duty to communicate an account of the state of the mission among this people. It is known to many of our distant friends, that the Methodist Missionary Society has not had a laborer in this mission for two or three years; and from the short time that I have been on this service, it cannot be expected that I have many subjects of joy and rejoicing to communicate.

I commenced my labor about the middle of January last, and

although much hindered by excessive rains, I have visited all the Chiefs and many of the most influential men in the nation, and have traveled through most of the important settlements. If the universal manifestation of friendship can insure me success, I shall certainly succeed. My reception has been flattering everywhere, and particularly so by the Chiefs and the United States Agent. But it is not to be expected that men who are strangers to the renovating power of grace upon their own hearts, can justly appreciate the only well founded hope of success in a Missionary. Their wishes for the success of every effort to civilize this people is no doubt sincere, and from the moralizing influence of Christianity much is expected. But it is not to be expected that the principal object of a Christian Missionary's hope should be recognized by them. Nothing less than a supernatural power changing the hearts of this people, can ever change their habits. But this aid is promised to fervent prayer, and I doubt not but that we are affectionately remembered by the Church in every part of our country.

I have found it difficult to obtain an interpreter, and even now am not certain that I have succeeded. But in such circumstances as have yet occurred to cast a shade upon my prospects, I have found an almighty hand to lean upon; consequently when my way appeared obstructed I have felt assured that the obstruction would be removed, or in some way sanctified to my good, or the furtherance of my work.—Could I paint the condition of this people in its true colors, I should certainly excite the sympathies of a Christian community. I would only touch one point. A few weeks ago, in the south, I passed a house in the yard of which was a fresh grave, surrounded by painted poles. On the tops of the poles were cloths waving in the wind like flags, and near them, bent to the ground with their heads shrouded in their blankets, were the relatives uttering the most piteous lamentations. Here I learned the value of Christian hope. Never shall I forget the sensations produced by the first sight of this kind that I witnessed.

I must communicate the painful circumstance that whatever may have been the prospects of our former Missionary among this people, that but very little fruit is now apparent.

Most Respectfully your obedient Servant,

ALEXANDER TALLEY."

He was true to the Methodist Episcopal Church and the ministry thereof till the day of his death. Whatever may have been his views on the questions which agitated the Church in his time, he was no disruptionist.

This consecrated man of God who spent so much of his time in frontier and missionary work in Alabama and among the Indians, the Rev. Alexander Talley, M.D., died of cholera, at Vicksburg, Mississippi, in the summer of 1835. Among his last words, uttered in peace, resignation, and triumph, were: "My work is done."

Perhaps no Missionary ever had a harder field than was "Pensacola, Mobile, Blakely, and adjoining country" in 1822, and no work was ever more fruitless than was the work of that year in that field. Not a member was reported in the entire Mission, and the appointment was discontinued at the end of the year, and Mobile did not appear again until the close of 1824.

While in 1823 and 1824, as in the past years, there was not a Methodist in the city of Mobile, and while for those two years no preacher was appointed to further the interests of Methodism in that city, yet the presiding elder of the Alabama District, the Rev. Nicholas McIntyre, had the place under his jurisdiction, and he kept a vigilant eye upon it, and constantly sought to get a foothold there for the Methodists, and finally a lot was secured in the place on which to build a house of worship for the use of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The deed to said lot was made May 10, 1824, and was made to the following Trustees: John McCrae, John H. Mallory, John Graves, Sr., William Godfrey and James Wilson. These Trustees were Methodists, but they did not live in Mobile. They were members of the Church on the Chickasawhay Circuit. John McCrae lived on the Chickasawhay River, in the State of Mississippi, forty or fifty miles from Mobile, and held his membership at Bethel, near his home, and William Godfrey lived in Washington County, Alabama, forty or fifty miles from Mobile, and held his membership at Providence, which was near his home. These men in the Chickasawhay Circuit were made Trustees for the lot in Mobile, because there were no men in Mobile then who were Methodists.

A review of the condition of things at Pensacola may help to a correct understanding of the situation at Mobile at the date

now under consideration. For the year 1824 Mobile was left, as has already been stated, without a preacher. For that year the Rev. Henry P. Cook was appointed to Pensacola Mission, and at the end of the year he reported thirty-seven white and forty-seven colored members in the Mission. Some of these, possibly all of them, were in the country from thirty to fifty miles north of the town of Pensacola. For 1825 the appointment reads: "Mobile and Pensacola Mission, Henry P. Cook." During the year the saintly Cook died of yellow fever at Pensacola, and at the session of the Conference ensuing thirty-seven white and forty-seven colored members were reported in connection with the Mission. These were the same thirty-seven white and forty-seven colored members which were reported the preceding year when Mobile was not in the Mission, and the report harmonizes with the fact that at the close of 1825 there was no Methodist Society in Mobile. The town of Pensacola itself at that date had very little in it, and it was then abandoned by the Mississippi Conference, and for 1826 was left without a preacher. The South Carolina Conference took Pensacola under its supervision, and appointed the Rev. Charles Hardy to Pensacola Mission for the Conference year 1827. After being there eleven months the Rev. Charles Hardy gave a very gloomy account of the moral condition of Pensacola, but reported a Sunday School of from twenty-five to forty scholars, and that the frame of a church had been raised, and that the work of completing the house was in progress. The following account will show the condition of matters in Pensacola at a little later date:

"PENSACOLA, August 6, 1828.

*Dear Brother:*—As to Pensacola we cannot say there seems to be much religion there, though we have a Sabbath School in operation, attended by from fifteen to thirty scholars, and I would think, with a little more perseverance in the teachers, and punctual attendance by the scholars, it would be attended with much good. Our congregations are tolerable in size, serious, and attentive during divine service, yet there does not seem to be that tenderness and feeling manifest among them that I could wish to see. I fear they are not sufficiently attentive to prayer, neither in their closets nor church, consequently they are not so well prepared to receive the word to profit thereby.

We have been making efforts for something more than a



year to have a church built, and have succeeded in getting a very good one built, and have it now in occupancy, though it is not entirely completed, nor is it yet paid for, which I fear will involve us in difficulties, though our embarrassments would not have been great, if at all, had it not been for a loss of money that we had collected, about \$351. This money has been detained by —. I forbear to mention names or circumstances, *but it is a fact*; or, I would rather say, it is probable we shall lose it. With this exception these people have been friendly, and many of them have been very liberal in their contributions toward our building, for which they are entitled to our best affections; and I pray the Lord to bless them with spiritual as well as temporal blessings. Ours is the first church of any Protestant denomination that has ever been attempted to be built in this place, nor have they ever had a stationed minister by any Protestant order but by us, nor by us until latterly; consequently they have not been often alarmed by the thunderings from Mount Sinai, nor have they attended to that law that is perfect, converting the soul, but many of them have indulged themselves in iniquity without reproof or disapprobation from others. It would pain your heart to walk the streets here on Sunday evenings, and hear the colored people dancing, singing, and playing on their musical instruments, and those in authority are not careful to suppress such practices. Surely, methinks, here is great need of the gospel to conduct these poor people out of the prison of sin, and disgrace of wickedness, to usefulness in society, and the happiness of religion.

Yours most affectionately,

JOSIAH EVANS."

The Rev. Josiah Evans, at the time of writing the above, was the presiding elder of the Tallahassee District, South Carolina Conference, and Pensacola Mission was one of the pastoral charges in the District, and the Rev. Isaac Boring was the preacher in charge of Pensacola.

Notwithstanding Talley and Cook exercised a vigorous ministry in the city of Mobile and dispensed a glorious gospel to that people, and notwithstanding the Rev. Samuel Sellers, the Rev. Thomas Griffin, and the Rev. Nicholas McIntyre, presiding elders of the District first called the Mississippi and then the Alabama, through a series of years beginning with 1813, devoted much attention to the city of Mobile, yet not until in the

year 1826 was a Methodist Society organized in that city, and not until in the year 1826 was any tangible outlay, or effective effort made to build a house of worship in the place for the use of the Methodists, except that a lot on which to build such house had been acquired, as has already been mentioned, and, *perhaps*, the foundations of a house of worship had been laid.

The Rev. John Russell Lambuth was the preacher for "Mobile Mission" for 1826 and 1827. In addition to the other embarrassments under which he prosecuted his ministry in that place, he engaged in the management of a literary school a part of the time. Here is subjoined a communication which gives the history of the time in which it was written:

"MOBILE MISSION, MOBILE, August 29, 1827.

I have tried to labor with this people this summer as much as I did in the winter season, though under greater disadvantages; for the greater part removed some short distance from the city, and but few having conveniences for traveling, they could not attend church in the city; therefore I preached at two places in the country, and occasionally in the city. The congregations have been generally large for the season of the year, and our prayer meetings in the week have been generally well attended. I think I have seen recently some very favorable omens, particularly on the last Sabbath. We had an uncommonly large congregation, while I was attempting to expose the sin of ingratitude, and prove, that unless we rendered to God that which was his, we should certainly be guilty of that crime, the Spirit of the Lord attended the word, and carried conviction to many hearts. There appeared to be an uncommon tenderness among the people. I hope that our labors here will be like bread cast upon the waters, that may be seen after many days.

This summer I have had charge of a school, which consisted of nearly fifty scholars, among whom I have labored, to teach them the fear of God, and show them the awful consequences of sin; and I feel thankful to God that my labor has not been in vain. I see a great change in the conduct of many, and several have affirmed that they desire religion above everything in this life. They are fond of reading the Scriptures, and not unfrequently do some of them, when they have a recess from their studies, retire with the Bible in their hands, and read to each

other. I hope, with the rising generation, the cause of God will be more abundantly advanced than it has ever been in this part of his vineyard. I fear that, as ministers, we too much neglect this part of our duty, viz., the instructing of children from place to place. I know, for my own part, that herein I have been too remiss; but I am resolved to be more diligent. What numbers of children there are, particularly in newly settled States, that are destitute of religious instruction because their parents are not sufficiently interested in these things to teach them, or ask others to do so. I hope, in this part of the Lord's vineyard, to see that Scripture fulfilled—'out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, shall my name be praised!'

May the Lord make bare his arm, and save this highly favored people is the prayer of his feeble servant,

JOHN R. LAMBETH."

A letter from Bishop Joshua Soule dated Baltimore, March 20, 1827, contains the following item:

"The Mission at Mobile is in a flourishing condition, and would have been returned a Station, independent of the funds of the Society, the present year, but for the extraordinary exertions of the infant Society, and the citizens in general, to finish the house of worship; an object of great importance to the success of the work in all populous places. This object is now nearly accomplished, without the burden of a debt. The congregation has a regular and commodious place of worship, and strangers visiting the place by land or sea, are directed to it as a temple of devotion equally free for the citizen and the sojourner. The prudence, perseverance, and zeal of the Missionary on this Station, are worthy of imitation and praise."

Yet one other communication is given here. It is the very essence of history in its items:

"MOBILE, January 1, 1828.

*Dear Brethren:*—For two years past I have been laboring to advance the Redeemer's cause in this city, and thanks be to God that my labors have not been altogether in vain. In the commencement there were many things to discourage; no Society had been formed, and we had no house of worship in the city. (I mean a Methodist church.) There was a house of that kind contemplated, and some exertions had been made by my worthy predecessor, who fell in the field of action, viz., the zealous H.

P. Cook, who now rests in Abraham's bosom. His memory will ever be sweet to me and hundreds of others in the bounds of the Mississippi Conference. By the assistance of one or more persons in this city, a sum was raised by subscription, that we thought would justify an attempt to build a church. In the early part of the first year, the house was so far completed that we occupied it. Soon after the opening of the church, I attempted to form a small Society, consisting of six or eight members; and before the close of the first year, there were about twenty persons who attached themselves to the Church. I was appointed to this city for another year, which has just expired. During the past year we had galleries erected in the church, for the accommodation of a larger congregation than could at first be seated in it. The congregations have been large and attentive; and there are at this time about forty-seven white and ninety colored members of Society in this city. Yours, etc.,

JOHN R. LAMBUTH."

The two years spent by the Rev. John Russell Lambuth in charge of Mobile Mission were to him and his flock glorious and successful years, and they terminated his itinerant labors in Alabama except as he worked under the employment of his presiding elders. At the end of his pastoral term in Mobile he located.

He was received on trial in the Kentucky Conference, at Lexington, in September, 1821, and immediately went to the session of the Mississippi Conference at Washington, Mississippi, December, 1821, and for the year 1822 was appointed to Cahawba Circuit in Alabama. After that he served the Franklin Circuit and the Tombecbee Circuit in Alabama, and the Attakapas Circuit in Louisiana one year each. Somewhere about the time he finished his ministry in Mobile and located he married a Miss Kirkpatrick, and then for a short time he lived in Clarke County, Alabama, in the bounds of the Tombecbee Circuit; and then he moved to Greene County, Alabama, and settled between the Tombigbee and Warrior Rivers about eight miles from Demopolis and about two miles from Forkland, and near enough to Ebenezer Church to affiliate with the membership thereof. The Greene Circuit was first placed in the list of appointments for 1831, with Robert L. Kennon presiding elder, and Ralph G. Christopher preacher in charge. The very first Quar-



terly Conference held for that new Circuit was held at Ebenezer, March 12, 1831. The presiding elder and the preacher in charge were both present, and John R. Lambuth, L. E., Reuben Mason, L. D., Benjamin Williams, C. L., William Raney, C. L., and Duncan McPhail, C. L., were present. John R. Lambuth was the Secretary of that Quarterly Conference, and was also at that time elected Recording Steward of the Circuit. He lived in that community as a local preacher until 1840 at least, when he moved to Madison County, Mississippi. While living in Alabama he was quite active, and effective as a local preacher, and was when needed employed by his presiding elders as a supply on pastoral charges.

His son, John W. Lambuth, who was a long time Missionary to China, and is now, 1890, Missionary to Japan, was born in Greene County, Alabama, between the Tombigbee and Warrior Rivers, about two miles from Forkland. Alabama is, therefore, the native land of one of the most faithful and efficient Missionaries ever sent out by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

About twenty years of the life and ministry of the Rev. John R. Lambuth were given to Alabama. He was a zealous preacher, and a gentle, meek, and cheerful Christian.

In November, 1853, he was re-admitted to the Mississippi Conference, and was appointed for the ensuing year to Jackson Station. He continued a member of the Annual Conference, sometimes effective, and sometimes not, until his death, which occurred November 6, 1864. With words of praise to God on his lips, he laid down his body and his charge.

For the two years 1828 and 1829 the Rev. Thomas Burpo was the preacher for "Mobile Mission." Notwithstanding there was on October 21, 1827, a most destructive fire at Mobile, the damage being estimated at upwards of one million of dollars, between two and three hundred houses having been burnt, yet it seems that for 1828 there was reasonable financial prosperity in the place, and it seems that Burpo succeeded admirably and the Society prospered greatly under his administration the first year, but the last year there was a decrease in the number of white members from fifty-three to thirty. The colored members increased from ninety-four to one hundred and fifty-five. That decrease in the white membership originated in the disruption produced by those called Reformers. The Reformers

distracted and tore asunder the Methodist Episcopal Church in many places, and that very year 1829 the Annual Conference of the Alabama District of the Methodist Protestant Church was organized. Under the lead of the Rev. Peyton S. Graves, a great agitator, and a refugee from a sentence of expulsion by the Methodist Episcopal Church, and who went to Mobile as the agent of the Reformers, twenty-three out of fifty-three white members in the place went off to the disruptionists. That of course greatly weakened the Methodist Episcopal Church, and dispirited the faithful little band which was left. The agitators that they were, the Reformers, so-called, never did anything in Mobile. Twenty-eight years after this defection here told of, the Methodist Protestant Church in Annual Conference assembled: "*Resolved*, That Mobile be made a Mission, to be called Mobile Mission."

The following communications bearing their own dates rehearse the history of the times to which they belong:

"MOBILE, March 3, 1828.

"*Rev. and Dear Sirs:*—It becomes my duty to lay before you the state of this Mission. Although I may not have as pleasing intelligence to communicate as you receive from many missionary stations which are under the control of our Superintendents, yet encouraged by him who despiseth not the day of small things, and who looks with complacency upon the feeblest exertions of his servants to promote his cause, I will give you a simple and brief relation of our state at present. I was appointed to this place at our last Annual Conference, and arrived here on the 3d of January. I had peculiar sensations of mind on receiving this appointment, arising from a sense of the importance of the work and the great responsibility of my station. And I do confess that those feelings were much augmented when I arrived, to see the importance of my charge, which far surpassed my previous expectations. I found upwards of forty whites in Society and more than that number of colored people, who, by the indefatigable labor and good economy of my worthy predecessor, were enjoying a large portion of peace and tranquillity. I commenced my labors on the first Sabbath in January, and have continued them ever since. I am truly gratified to see the number that attend church: three times on the Lord's day we generally have large and attentive congregations. Serious-

ness is often seen upon many countenances, and not unfrequently under the administration of the word the hearts of some are touched, while tears of penitence are seen to flow down their cheeks, bespeaking to us that our labor is not in vain. We have our class-meetings regularly every week, and can truly say they have been blessed in a peculiar manner. Such is the interest felt in these meetings by the members of Society, that they appear to be impatient for the evening to arrive, when they almost unanimously meet, looking with anxious desire and fervent prayer for a rich and heavenly repast; and, thanks be to God, we are not often disappointed. Our first Quarterly Meeting was held on the second Saturday and Sunday in February. The congregation was unusually large. The Sacrament was administered to a great number of communicants. It was truly, for this place, a pleasing scene to see everything like sectarian feeling laid aside, while Christians of different denominations surrounded the board of the Lord, meekly kneeling on their knees, and there receiving those sacred emblems of the broken body and shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. While viewing this scene my heart felt the sacred flame of love to God and my brethren. Truly this place felt awful—it was none other than the house of God and the gate of heaven. The prospect of religion wears a more favorable aspect in this place than it has at any former period. There have been considerable accessions to the Church recently, some of whom are young men of promising talents. It is my earnest prayer to God, while he is visiting many parts of the world with the rays of the Sun of righteousness, that in these regions and shadows of death light may spring up.

THOMAS BURPO."

"MOBILE, July 9, 1828.

"Notwithstanding vice and immorality prevail in this city to an alarming extent, yet there are some souls who have not defiled their garments; whose cry, both by example and precept, is, 'who will rise up with us against the evil doers?' With pleasing sensations we have beheld the increase of religious excitement during the last winter and spring. The number that crowded the house of God, the attention paid to the word, and the seriousness that frequently rested on the people, conspired to encourage us to believe, that the sound of our Master's feet was behind us, and that he would crown our feeble labor with

success. Our hopes have been realized in some measure—God's people have been edified, and some have been added to the Church. The prospect at this time is not so flattering, owing to the scattered state of society. More than half the members of the Church have left this place for some healthier clime; notwithstanding, there is still an extensive field for ministerial labor.

"The prospect is truly pleasing among the colored people. It is an affecting scene to witness the vast number of those poor offcasts of men, bending their course to the house of God every Sabbath evening (being an hour which we have set apart to preach to them,) with their dejected countenances, fixing their eyes on the speaker, listening with earnest solicitude to the words of endless life. It does my soul good to administer the words of consolation to those degraded and suffering sons of Africa.

"It is truly gratifying to our feelings to inform you, that our church, the foundation of which was laid three years ago, has been completed this spring, with the exception of a little painting of the inside work. Many of the citizens of this place have merited our gratitude and respect, for that generous liberality which they have exercised in defraying the expense which such a building must necessarily incur. The completion of the church must be attributed to their liberal contributions; there are, however, some demands for expenses incurred before the present year, but not very considerable.

"Our Sabbath-school has been in as flourishing a state this year as at any time since its commencement. We have not as yet been able to form ourselves auxiliary to our own parent institution, but believe we shall be able to do so the next year. We think the cause of God is gradually gaining strength, and we look forward with anticipation, when the great head of the church shall cause our desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose.

THOMAS BURPO."

The Rev. Robert L. Walker was the preacher in charge of Mobile, it still a Mission, for 1830. He reported the work during the year to the Corresponding Secretary of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, but there were few events of special import to relate. As was then customary, in the summer many of the citizens of the place repaired to the



country outside the city and to various parts of the United States in search of health and pleasure. That, for the time, depleted the congregation, and depressed the spirits of those who had to maintain the cause. In the midst of this condition of things the preacher reported: "We have peace and love among ourselves." It is common in Zion, when all are too inactive to produce friction and too dead to create antagonisms, to make a virtue of boasting of "peace and love among ourselves." A state of "peace and harmony" is in some instances the harbinger of death, and in other instances it is the residuum of a defunct Church. But in this case reported of his flock in Mobile by the Rev. Robert L. Walker the "peace and love" did not originate in the absence of aggressive measures and the want of a purpose adequate to positive achievements, did not arise from inactivity, nor from any absence of agitations and antagonisms. The agitations and antagonisms from without were enough to prevent any stagnation. There was no room for lethargy. The Reformers created bitter strife. That united in the bonds of love and the fellowship of peace the adherents of the policy of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The "peace and love among themselves" originated in the common cause which they espoused. They maintained the mastery in peace and purity.

The Rev. Benjamin A. Houghton was the preacher for Mobile Mission for 1831, and it appears that there was regained in the number of members during that year about the number which had been lost in preceding years. At the end of the year he reported the membership at fifty-nine white and one hundred and ninety-eight colored. He served the Church in Alabama as an itinerant about five years. The other years of his ministry were spent in the State of Mississippi.

"Mobile Mission, Robert D. Smith." That was the style of the appointment for 1832, and at the end of that year the membership in that place consisted of sixty-one white and three hundred colored persons. At the close of 1832 the charge in Mobile was for the first time in its history thrown upon its own resources and left without an appropriation from the Missionary Society. The Methodists of Mobile ought to be pre-eminently favorable to Missionary work, for the reason that there the cause was sustained by the Missionary Society for many consecutive years.

The Rev. Robert D. Smith was a native of Pennsylvania. Under the ministry of the Rev. Barnabas Pipkin he was brought to God and his grace and into the communion of the Methodist Episcopal Church at William Hunter's, in Wilkinson County, Mississippi, when only a few days past twenty-two years of age. When a little more than twenty-four he was licensed to preach, and when about twenty-five years and two months old he was received on trial in the Mississippi Conference. He was about twenty-nine years old when he was appointed to Mobile, and he was a single man during his ministry there. He gave only two years of his ministry to Alabama. He was stationed in the city of Montgomery, Alabama, the year before he was in Mobile. He was a scholar and a teacher, a holy and a useful man. He preached to white, and red, and black. He died in Madison Parish, Louisiana, May 16, 1845, in his forty-third year. There was nothing to dispute his passage to the skies, and he passed out from these mundane shores in holy triumph.

The first official mention made of the Sunday-school in Mobile, which is now extant, was made by the Rev. Thomas Burpo, on July 9, 1828. The time when it was organized is not there mentioned, but it is spoken of as having been in existence for some while. The facts known seem to indicate that so soon as the house of worship for the use of the Methodists was sufficiently advanced to admit of occupancy, though in an unfinished condition, a Sunday-school was organized in it. Then, in that case, it was organized in 1826, for it was in that year the church was first occupied for preaching and the organization of a Society of members. The Rev. John W. Lambuth, the son of the Rev. John R. Lambuth, is authority for the statement: "The Sabbath-school in the first Methodist Church in Mobile was composed of white persons, negroes, and Indians." The Rev. Henry D. Moore, D.D., is authority for the statement: "Dugo McVoy, the Superintendent of the first Methodist Sunday-school organized in Mobile, in addition to his other duties, taught a class of whites; and John Latouret had charge of a class of Indians, and Mrs. S. Redwood a class of blacks."

The first Church organized in Mobile acquired early in its history the sobriquet of "Bee-hive," an appellation of praise expressive of the character of the congregation as industrious and harmonious workers in benevolent and Christian enterprises.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE ENLARGEMENT AND ADVANCEMENT OF THE WORK OF METH- ODISM IN ALABAMA.

THE line which marked the boundary of the territory ceded to the United States by the Creek Indians in the Treaty of capitulation made between General Andrew Jackson and the chiefs, deputies, and warriors of the Creek Nation, August 9, 1814, after it left the Coosa River and crossed the Tallapoosa River, followed the Oakfuschee Creek to a distance of ten miles from the mouth thereof, thence a direct line to the junction of Summochico Creek and the Chattahoochee River, thence east from a true meridian line to a point which intersected the line then dividing the lands claimed by the Creek Nation from those owned by the State of Georgia. That line runs about one mile west of the present town of Union Springs, and about two miles north-east of the present town of Clayton, and goes out of Alabama about one mile above the present town of Fort Gaines. Soon after the ratification of that Treaty of capitulation, and the designated line was run and described, the Indians were removed from the ceded territory. Quickly settlements of civilized men were established therein. That part of that ceded territory which was in Alabama was properly within the bounds of the Mississippi Conference, but at the time the white settlements opened up in the newly ceded country the Mississippi Conference was not able to supply with preachers all the territory included in her chartered limits. All that region that is now, in 1890, embraced in the counties of Coffee, Covington, Crenshaw, Dale, Geneva, and Pike, and nearly all of Henry County, a large part of Barbour County, a part of Bullock County, a part of Butler County, a part of Conecuh County, and a part of Montgomery County, was in the newly ceded and newly settled lands, and unoccupied by the operations of the Mississippi Conference. All this region, therefore, fell under the supervision of the South Carolina Conference from the time of its settlement until 1830, and from then under the supervision of the Georgia Conference

until the close of 1832. The South Carolina Conference reached that territory by approaches to it from her own side of the field, and in connection with similar settlements in her own bounds. The first effort made by the South Carolina Conference to occupy that region was made in 1822. The appointment which anticipated the cultivation of that section was made in these words following: "John I. Triggs, Missionary to Early County and the adjoining settlements."

That Missionary to "Early County and adjoining settlements" found his field of labor and formed his Mission in the settlements on both sides of the Chattahoochee River, on the Georgia side and on the Alabama side. The Rev. Allen Turner, presiding elder of the Oconee District, South Carolina Conference, in a letter bearing date November 29, 1822, says: "I will just add, by way of conclusion, that Bishop George requested me to take some oversight of the Early Mission. Accordingly I was there in June last, and held a Quarterly Meeting. The country, both on the Early side of the Chattahoochee River, and also on the Alabama side (and the late Circuit formed by our Missionary includes both sides) is tolerably thickly settled by many respectable citizens. We had a gracious time at our Quarterly Meeting. Within the bounds of this missionary station nearly two hundred have joined our Society, and great numbers have been converted."

For 1823 the appointment to "Early County and adjoining settlements" gave place to Chattahoochee Mission, and John I. Triggs, and John Slade were appointed thereto. The following valuable communication, addressed to the Rev. James O. Andrew, gives the history of the Chattahoochee Mission and that part of Alabama in which it was located in 1823:

"CHATTAHOOCHEE MISSION, June 11, 1823.

"*Dear Brother*:—Through the goodness of our blessed Saviour myself and my colleague are in good health, preaching the gospel of Christ in the uncultivated woods of Georgia, Alabama, and West Florida, and gathering into the fold of our Adorable Redeemer, the scattered and lost sheep of the house of Israel.

"Since Conference the work of the Lord has not advanced so rapidly as it did some time before. Yet, thanks be to God, the members that were joined in Society last year are generally steady. Eighteen or twenty have professed conversion, and be-



tween thirty and forty have joined Society. In some places our prospects are gloomy, congregations small, the people seem hardened in wickedness. In others the congregations increase, the people weep, and we are encouraged to hope for better times. On Sunday, May 18, when I had finished my sermon and was about to sing, a man rose from his seat and said that he felt horribly, and begged the congregation to pray for him. This produced considerable excitement among the people, and many came forward weeping and desiring our prayers. Since that time ten have joined Society in that place. This was where I had but little success last year. At another place a certain Mrs. B. joined Society; her husband on hearing this grew very angry, and bid her pack up and begone, declaring if she said a word he would beat her. He became so sullen that he refused to eat for two days, cursing both preachers and people, wishing them all in hell together. On the evening of the second day, his brother (who was as wicked as himself, but not so much opposed to religion) remonstrated with him for his conduct toward his wife, saying that he would better cut her throat if he could not allow her liberty of conscience. This reached his heart, so that he went home, begged his wife's pardon, and sent for some of the Society to pray for him. They gathered and prayed for him nearly all night. He has since very much reformed, and his wife has found peace to her soul.

"When I was at Conference I was highly delighted at the Sabbath-school institutions, and earnestly wished to introduce them where I might be appointed to labor. Since I have returned to my Station I have got four in operation; two of them are very promising; the children learn fast, and the teachers appear to take an interest in this labor of love; but we are in difficulties in consequence of the scarcity of books in this part of the country.

"In consequence of a disease which prevails much in this country among horses, my colleague lost his the first time he went around his Circuit, and my own horse has become so poor that I fear I shall lose him. Blindness soon succeeds to the attack. Though, by parting with all his money, and pledging his credit for the remainder, my colleague bought him another horse, yet through the warmth of the weather, excessive rides, and other difficulties peculiar to the country, our horses are both

blind; but, supported by grace, and animated with the prospect of promoting the happiness of our fellow-men, we persevere, sometimes riding and sometimes walking over the bogs and through the mud, singing:

‘In hope of that immortal crown,  
We now the cross sustain;  
And gladly wander up and down,  
And smile at toil and pain.’

“I hope, my dear brother, you do not forget to pray for us, who labor in this wilderness, for I am sure none need the prayers of God’s people more than your humble servant,

JOHN I. TRIGGS.”

The first item in the itinerant ministry of the Rev. John I. Triggs was a recommendation of him to the Annual Conference as a suitable person to be admitted on trial in the traveling connection made by the Oconee District, October 20, 1820. The South Carolina Conference being in session at Columbia, admitted him on trial in the Conference, on that recommendation, on January 15, 1821, and at that session of the Conference sent him forth an accredited licentiate to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord to the inhabitants of Lappahee. Prior to that time Lappahee was unknown in the list of ecclesiastical appointments, and subsequent to that year never again appeared. At the end of his first year, he was appointed, as has already been stated, “Missionary to Early County and the adjoining settlements.”

The Rev. John I. Triggs was the first itinerant Methodist preacher who preached in Henry County, Alabama. He entered on his work there in February, 1822, and continued in that field until February, 1824. When he entered upon his work in that field and commenced the organization of the Chattahoochee Mission he had been only one year on trial in the Annual Conference, and he had not attained to orders in the ministry, and consequently he was not authorized to administer the Sacraments. His ministry was confined to making proclamation of divine amnesty to sinners through Jesus Christ. He announced to the people the terms of reconciliation to the divine government.

The South Carolina Conference commenced a session at Savannah, Georgia, February 20, 1823. In the presence of that assembled Conference appeared the Rev. John I. Triggs from the Mission field of “Early County and the adjoining settlements.”

It was the end of his first year on that Mission. He had come from the field to make report, and to be invested with qualifications for further aggressions and conquests. If an itemized statement of his report could be recalled it would be found to contain an account of privations and hardships endured in an inhospitable clime; a list of members gathered to the number of one hundred and eighty-two white and fifty-nine colored persons; and a deficiency in his annual stipend. On Monday morning, February 24, 1823, in the Conference assembled, "It was moved that Brothers Hammell, Mason, and Triggs, Missionaries, be referred to the Treasurer of the Missionary Committee for their deficiencies."

At that session of the Conference the Rev. John I. Triggs was received into full connection, and elected and ordained deacon. He was returned for the year 1823 to the charge he had just organized, called the Chattahoochee Mission, with John Slade as his colleague. He was ordained elder January 15, 1826, and at Camden, South Carolina, February 8, 1828, he located on account of temporal embarrassments.

The Rev. John Slade preached in Alabama only one year. When he was appointed to the Chattahoochee Mission in February, 1823, he had just been admitted on trial in the South Carolina Conference. In January, 1830, he located under the pressure of broken health. He afterward reëntered the traveling connection in the Florida Conference, in which he died in 1854. He was a native of South Carolina, and was about thirty years old when he preached in Alabama. He was physically strong, well proportioned, and tall, with a face striking, and pleasant. He was gifted in singing. He was "a plain, honest, good man, a faithful, earnest, laborious preacher, a Methodist, and a Christian, without fear and reproach. His death was peace and assurance by the blood of Jesus."

In 1823, under the ministry of Triggs and Slade, the Chattahoochee Mission had an increase of one hundred and ten members; and in 1824, under the ministry of the Rev. James Tabor and the Rev. Isaac Sewell, two preachers who had just closed their first year on trial in the Conference and were without ordination, there was an increase in the membership on the Mission, but not so large as the increase of the year before. Sewell located in January, 1826, and Tabor in January, 1827.

At the session of the South Carolina Conference held at Fayetteville, North Carolina, in January, 1825, a new District was made for that year and was as follows:

“TALLAHASSEE DISTRICT,  
Josiah Evans, Presiding Elder.  
Tallahassee Mission, Josiah Evans.  
Early Mission, Morgan C. Turrentine.  
Chattahoochee, John L. Jerry.”

The Chattahoochee appointment was now a Circuit, and was mostly on the Alabama side of the Chattahoochee River, the Early Mission taking the Georgia side. That year, 1825, under the ministry of the Rev. John L. Jerry, there was a large increase in the number of members. The white members increased one hundred and the colored members increased six.

At the time the Rev. John L. Jerry was on the Chattahoochee Circuit in Alabama he was a single man, and was about thirty-two years old, and had been preaching seven or eight years. He was a native of Fayetteville, North Carolina. His father was one of the soldiers who joined with and accompanied General La Fayette against the enemies of the United Colonies in the struggle for independence. Like his sire, the son was brave and patriotic. When he was a Missionary in Saint Augustine in 1827 a Romish Priest, impelled by a spirit of intolerance, threatened to inflict penalties upon him if he persisted in preaching at that place. The man whose sire had helped to achieve independence for the United States was not to be terrorized and silenced by the intolerant vassal of the Pope, and the Rev. John L. Jerry pointed to the American flag, which then waved over Saint Augustine, and said to the threatening Priest: “*No inquisition where that flag waves!*” He was a man of success. He was a man of faith and piety. He married an excellent woman in Florida in 1827. He died suddenly of congestion of the brain in the summer of 1859. He was a member of the Florida Conference at the time of his death.

For 1826 the Tallahassee District was enlarged by the addition of three more Missions, two of which were new, and one of which was in Alabama, namely, the Pea River Mission. The Rev. Josiah Evans was continued on the District as presiding elder, in fact, he was on the District four years in succession, beginning with 1825.



The Chattahoochee Circuit was now nearly or quite all in Alabama, and for 1826 the preacher on it was the Rev. James Stockdale, and the preacher on the Pea River Mission was the Rev. Daniel G. McDaniel. The Chattahoochee Circuit extended from the Chattahoochee River to the Choctawhatchee River and thereabout, and from the Florida line to the Indian boundary and the head waters of the Choctawhatchee River. The Pea River Mission embraced the region anywhere between the Choctawhatchee and the Conecuh Rivers that souls and settlements could be found, and extended the entire length of Pea River and across to the head waters of Line Creek. One statement, published June 3, 1826, said: "Pea River Mission embraces several counties in the south-east part of Alabama, containing a numerous and increasing population."

Some of the difficulties under which the preachers and people labored at that date in that section of Alabama and Florida are recited in a communication from the pen of the Rev. Josiah Evans, the presiding elder. His communication containing the statement concerning the impediments to the successful prosecution of the work of the gospel was written at Tallahassee, Florida, and bears date March 20, 1826. After describing the boundaries of his District, which, according to his testimony, extended from Saint Augustine, in the Territory of Florida, to Line Creek, in the State of Alabama, and which was about four hundred and seventy miles long and one hundred and thirty miles wide, he recited as follows: "I have to lament one obstruction, which I think is an almost insurmountable barrier in the way of the religious and civil improvement of this country: that is, the unsold state of the lands. Although Government has reserved a quarter-section in every Township, for the purpose of promoting literary institutions, these quarter-sections cannot be disposed of to advantage because the other lands are not sold. I know of but one class of persons that the present state of the lands seems to suit, and that class is no advantage or honor to any country. Until this difficulty is removed by the sale of the lands, our religious as well as our temporal affairs will continue in a fluctuating state; until this difficulty is removed we shall not be able to establish permanent Societies or build houses of any consequence for the purpose of divine worship; the people do not, they cannot feel that interest in im-

provement, in erecting churches and seminaries of learning which they otherwise would feel were they the owners of the soil; although their will is good, the prospect is too precarious."

Notwithstanding the uncertain tenure of real estate, the social inconveniences, and the temporal stringencies of things which prevailed everywhere in that region, and notwithstanding the settlers had but little money to contribute and but little time to devote toward building churches and establishing seminaries of learning because of the extra burdens of paying for their lands and clearing away the forest and putting their fields in a state of cultivation, and notwithstanding the impracticability of collecting large congregations because of sparseness of population, yet the work of the Lord prospered in a good measure, and that very wilderness rejoiced in the Saviour of men and in the Lord of glory.

In a letter to the Corresponding Secretary of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, written at Tallahassee, October 18, 1826, the Rev. Josiah Evans, the presiding elder, reports: "Our Camp-meeting in the Pea River Mission was truly a good time. The number that attended the meeting was but few; but the people behaved with great decorum, and manifested much attention to the word preached. We did not suppose that there were more than one hundred and fifty persons that attended the meeting at any one time; and out of that number there were twenty-one that professed to be converted during the meeting. I would suppose that near one-fourth part of the non-professors that attended the meeting were converted. It may not be amiss (for the encouragement of the aged sinner) to mention the conversion of an old man, in the seventy-third year of his age, who had been literally blind fifteen years. This man manifested signs of penitence at the commencement of the meeting. He seemed to be almost in despair. But on the third day of the meeting he realized that it is possible for a man to be born when he is old. His change was quite visible. He was exceedingly happy, and exhorted all around him to draw near the Lord; for, said he, I, an old sinner, have obtained mercy, and so may any of you. To make use of his own language—'I have been in the dark fifteen years, I have not been able to see my way, nor have I seen the sun; but now, glory to God, I can see my way to heaven as well as any of you!' But this rare in-

stance of late conversion should not encourage others to put off the concerns of their souls to a late period of life; for how very few live to this age!"

The Rev. James Stockdale never served any work in Alabama but the Chattahoochee Circuit, and at the end of his year on that Circuit he reported a decrease of eighty-eight white and fifteen colored members.

Pea River Mission at the end of the first year of its existence reported one hundred and four white and twenty-one colored members, and the Missionary who served that year, the Rev. Daniel G. McDaniel, received from the Missionary Society for his services fifty dollars. That was the only year that the Rev. Daniel G. McDaniel preached in Alabama. He was thirty-five years old when he was on the Pea River Mission. He was a native of Georgetown, District of Columbia. He was converted in the Light Street Church, Baltimore, Maryland, in 1811, and was admitted on trial in the South Carolina Conference, in January, 1821; and died a member of the South Carolina Conference in 1853. He was a man of energy, firmness, and sound judgment, a good preacher, and a holy man. He was true in all the relations of life. The last testimony of himself was: "My life has been one of constant toil, but of no merit; I trust alone in the merits of Christ, my Saviour." So died the man who organized the Pea River Mission.

The appointments for 1827: Chattahoochee, Elisha Calloway, Jesse Boring; Pea River Mission, John C. Wright.

That year the Chattahoochee Circuit, which was then, all, or nearly all, in Alabama, had a further decrease in the membership; the white members decreased thirty-four and the colored members decreased six. The two men on that Circuit that year, Elisha Calloway, and Jesse Boring, were prominent in Alabama Methodism in after years. That Chattahoochee Circuit was the first work ever served by the Rev. Jesse Boring. He actually commenced his itinerant ministry in Alabama, though, at the time he was on trial in the South Carolina Conference.

During the year 1827 the Pea River Mission was blessed with divine visitations, and prospered. The small Societies which had been formed the year before, and which was the year of beginning in that section, were greatly strengthened during 1827, and other societies were organized during that year. Awaken-

ings prevailed generally, and one hundred and seventy-three joined the Church during the year, and there was a net increase of over one hundred and fifteen white and fourteen colored members. Five meeting houses were built during that year, and there were twenty-one preaching places on the Mission. The charge at the end of that year passed off the Missionary list, and was constituted a Circuit. It was invested with the prerogative and charged with the duty of taking care of itself, and for 1828 the Rev. John C. Wright was again appointed to serve it as a preacher. During that year there was a net increase of ninety-five white and twenty colored members.

The Rev. John C. Wright was only a deacon when appointed to the Pea River Mission. At the end of his first year on that charge he was elected to elder's orders, but was not ordained because he was not present at the session of the Conference. At the end of his two years on Pea River, and at the close of 1828, he located.

The preacher for the Chattahoochee Circuit for 1828 was the Rev. Jeremiah Norman. During the year there was a decrease of fourteen colored members on that Circuit and a net increase of fifty-two white members. The Rev. Jeremiah Norman made upon the Chattahoochee Circuit an impression, and by the inhabitants thereof he was remembered, though he was there only one year. He was noted for his piety, talents, and homely features. It was commonly said that he was one of the ugliest men and one of the ablest preachers on the American Continent. He never married. He entered the itinerant ministry in January, 1825, and continued in it until his death, which occurred in 1839. In 1830 and 1831 he was on the list of the superannuated or worn-out preachers. At the session of the Georgia Conference held at Eatonton, in December, 1838, he was placed again on the list of the superannuated or worn-out preachers, and before the next session of the Conference, his soul was released from the woes of earth, and taken up where the mind never falters, and where loneliness never comes, and where dejection never molests.

For 1829 the Tallahassee District had a new presiding elder, the Rev. Zaccheus Dowling, and he was the presiding elder on that District for four years in succession, closing with 1832. For 1829 the preacher on Chattahoochee Circuit was the Rev.



William Steagall, and the preacher for that year on the Pea River Circuit was Vardy Woolly. The net increase on the Chattahoochee Circuit for that year was fifty-nine white and six colored members, and the net increase on the Pea River Circuit was fifty-nine white and ten colored members.

The Rev. William Steagall had been received into full connection and ordained deacon at the session at which he was appointed to the Chattahoochee Circuit; and the Rev. Vardy Woolly had been admitted to full connection in the Conference and ordained deacon at the same time. Woolly located at the close of 1832, and Steagall at the close of 1834.

For 1830 the following appointments were made in Alabama by the South Carolina Conference:

Chattahoochee, Robert Williams, William N. Sears.

Pea River, Mahlon Bedell, George Collier.

Escambia Mission, William Culverhouse.

The net increase for the year on the Chattahoochee Circuit was thirty-seven white and eight colored members. The net increase on the Pea River Circuit for the year was seventy-eight white and thirty-six colored members.

The Escambia Mission as an appointment filled up the vacant territory between the Pea River Circuit filled by the South Carolina Conference and the appointments filled by the Mississippi Conference. A communication, which is still extant, written by the Rev. William Culverhouse, who served it in the first year of its existence, and addressed to the Corresponding Secretary of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, indicates the territory occupied by that Mission at the time of its organization, and some of the particular points at which preaching places were established, and the success which attended the work the first year. The following is the communication:

“Escambia Mission, December 10, 1830.

“*Rev. Sir:* I have been apprised that my duty as a Missionary requires that I should transmit to you quarterly, information relative to the state of this Mission. In this respect I confess I have been faulty; but I solicit your forbearance, as I have been engaged in a great work, and will now endeavor to give you a succinct and comprehensive view of what has been done throughout the year.

"After a pleasant and safe journey from Conference, I arrived on my mission ground in good time, and after a few days' rest set out in order to arrange my appointments: part of them I made on the east, and part on the west side of the Escambia, or Conecuh River, in the following order: commencing in Alabama, Butler County—across the Conecuh in said county—down to Montezuma, or Falls of Conecuh, in Covington County, and through Conecuh County into Florida, to within twenty-six miles of Pensacola; then returning on the west side by Fort Crawford and Brooklyn across the Sepulgah—on the waters of Pigeon Creek—into Butler County again. This route formed a three weeks' Circuit, and contained seventeen appointments; three of them were given me from the Mississippi Conference, two from Pensacola Mission, and one from Pea River Circuit. Within the bounds of my Mission I found one hundred and ten members; I have, during the year, taken on trial sixty-eight, making in all one hundred and seventy-eight members. Recently my Mission has been enlarged, so as to form a four weeks' Circuit, and now extends down to the Escambia Bay.

"A Camp-meeting was held for this Mission on 4th to 8th November, at a new Camp-ground, whereon twelve large and commodious tents were built. It is situated on the waters of Conecuh, near Brooklyn. The congregations were good and appeared remarkably attentive to the preaching of the word. Much good was done, and ten were received as probationers among us. Also, we have commenced a church edifice, at the same place, of forty by thirty feet, which we expect will be finished the ensuing winter. There is also a probability of two others being shortly built within the Mission.

"Notwithstanding strong prejudices, which existed among some of the people, against Missions and Missionaries, when I first came among them, the major part of them have received me very kindly; and some who would not come to hear me preach in the commencement of the year, now come out, and appear to give great attention to the word. I think there is considerable religious excitement prevailing all round my Mission; and notwithstanding the 'reform' excitement has prevailed very much near our borders, there is nothing of it within the bounds of this Mission; we are all sailors of the old ship, and feel perfectly satisfied with her chart; and while we are passing on the

ocean of time we have peace and harmony abounding among us. Dear brother, pray for us, that the Lord may prosper his work in this part of his moral vineyard, to the glory of his great name, and the salvation of these people. Yours, Respectfully,

WILLIAM CULVERHOUSE."

At the anniversary meeting of the Georgia Conference Missionary Society held at Macon, Georgia, on Monday evening, January 10, 1831, and which was the time of the session of the Georgia Conference at the close of the ecclesiastical year for 1830, the following official statement was made:

"The Escambia Mission lies principally in Butler, Conecuh, and Covington Counties, Alabama, but includes a small part of Florida. The Rev. William Culverhouse, the Missionary sent there, states that he has twenty appointments, and two hundred and twelve members in Society, eighty-four of whom he has received on probation during the last year, and he thinks there is much religious excitement among the people."

The appointments made in Alabama by the Georgia Conference for 1831 were:

Chattahoochee, Mahlon Bedell.

Pea River, John Sale.

Escambia Mission, William N. Sears.

The growth in the Chattahoochee Circuit was exceedingly slow for a number of years. For the year 1831 the net increase on that Circuit was hardly enough to justify mentioning. Three white and four colored members was the limit of the increase. The Pea River Circuit had abundant success that year. The net increase was one hundred and seventy-seven white and forty-one colored members. For that year the Escambia Mission reported a decrease of seven white members and an increase of fifty-five colored members.

For 1832, the last year the Georgia Conference supplied the lack in Alabama, the following appointments were made under the jurisdiction of the Georgia Conference:

Chattahoochee, William Culverhouse, James W. Honeycut.

Pea River, John Sale, William C. Crawford.

Escambia Mission, George W. Collier.

The decrease on the Chattahoochee Circuit for 1832 was discouraging. There was a clear loss of fifty-three white and thirty-seven colored members. The Pea River Circuit had a net

gain of one hundred and six white members, but a clear loss of forty-one colored members. The Escambia Mission had good success for that year. Fifty-six white and forty-two colored members was the limit of increase. The decade and a year witnessed great growth in the region of Alabama covered by the Chattahoochee and Pea River Circuits, and the Escambia Mission. At the close of 1832, in these three pastoral charges, then served by five preachers and one presiding elder, there were thirteen hundred and forty white and two hundred and seven colored members. That was no mean achievement made in eleven years in a new and sparsely settled country, and by a Church under the ban of public sentiment. God smote his enemies, and gave a heritage to his servants. The Methodists by the rivers Chattahoochee, Choctawhatchee, Pea, Conecuh, and Escambia had occasion to praise God for his loving-kindness and his truth, as he had magnified his word and his name among them.

Henry County was constituted December 13, 1819; Pike County December 18, 1821; Covington County December 18, 1821; Dale County December 22, 1824; Coffee County December 29, 1841; Geneva County December 26, 1868.

The first emigrants to south-east Alabama settled along the several rivers and about the head waters of the numerous streams which flow through and water that part of the State. About the sources of the rivers and creeks were living springs which offered comfort and convenience to the settlers who had the choice of the country before them. At various points on Chattahoochee, Choctawhatchee, Pea, and Conecuh Rivers emigrants concentrated in sufficient numbers to constitute communities more or less strong. In Township one, Range thirty, and in Township one, Range twenty-nine, and in Township two, Range twenty-eight, in the lower end of Henry County, on and about the Chattahoochee River and the creeks thereabout which form a junction with the river, there were, at an early day, groups of families which made a strong community for a new country. Round about the junction of the Omussee and the Chattahoochee was another settlement which early formed an interesting community. By officers and commissioners, appointed by law for the purpose, a site was selected in Township four, and Range twenty-nine, near the Chattahoochee River, and by enactment of the Legislature of Alabama, approved December 20, 1828,



that site was established the permanent seat of justice in Henry County, and named Columbia. Within Townships seven and eight, Range twenty-nine, and Townships seven and eight, Range twenty-eight, in the north-east corner of Henry County, reaching from the Chattahoochee River across the Abbe Creeks, prongs of the Omussee, settlements were established at a very early day. About the sources of the Choctawhatchee and the Pea Rivers were early settlements made, in the midst of which, in due time, the villages of Louisville and Clayton sprang up. About the sources of the Conecuh River settlements were early established, one of which was known as China Grove, and in one of which Aberfoil became a village. Along down the rivers, ever and anon, were settlements in the midst of which sprang up the villages of Monticello, Montezuma, Dalesville, and Geneva. About the place where the present town of Ozark is situated there was a good settlement at an early day, and there was a settlement also quite early in Townships seven and eight, Range twenty-seven.

Within the first decade of Methodist preaching in that part of Alabama, a Society was formed and a church was built in the neighborhood on the Chattahoochee River a few miles south of what was long called Woodville, now called Gordon. At a place higher up the Chattahoochee River, going toward the place known as Franklin, was a Meeting House called Chitty's. About five miles and a little north of east from the present town of Abbeville there was a Methodist church named Ebenezer, called Gamble's Meeting House. On the east side of the Choctawhatchee River, in Township nine, Range twenty-seven, there is a large natural pond called White Pond. Between that place and the present town of Clayton, and on an air line about ten miles east of the present town of Louisville, and three or four miles southeast of what was then the line of the Creek Indian Nation, a Society was organized and a church was built in 1822, and called New Hope. New Hope Society and church, though the original members and house have passed away, continue till this day, 1890. The Rev. John I. Triggs preached there the year the Society was organized, and for years it was one of the Societies of the Chattahoochee Circuit. The first members of New Hope established a Camp-ground there, and it was called after the church. At the Camp-meetings held there most signal displays

of the divine presence and power were witnessed. The members of that Society held class-meetings and love-feasts from the very first, and the class-meetings and love-feasts rendered good service in laying the foundations for enlarging and perpetuating Methodism in that community. Many opinions were entertained and many reports were circulated detrimental to the Methodists by those averse to their doctrines and customs. For their class-meetings and love-feasts they were often abused and sometimes slandered. Holding their meetings with closed doors created prejudice, and gave pretext for many slanderous reports. In the community of New Hope was a family of numerous members by the name of Bush, and another family, related to the first by marriage, by the name of Thomas, all inclined to the doctrines and usages of the Baptists. Mrs. Mary Bush, impelled by a woman's curiosity, became exceedingly anxious to know the peculiarities of the services held with closed doors. So she decided to run the blockade, if possible, and see for herself what was done. The first opportunity she had she presented herself at the door of New Hope church for admission to the love-feast. The door-keeper for the occasion asked her the question: "Are you friendly to the cause?" She answered: "Yes," but, in an undertone, she said to herself as she passed into the church, for the door-keeper let her in, "I do not care for you or your cause either so I get in." She was captured by the service, and was so powerfully impressed with the divine presence that she joined the Society before she came out of the house. Ever after she was a host in the Methodist cause, and through her influence her son-in-law, Thomas, was converted from his Baptist notions and made a zealous Methodist. Largely through the influence of the two families, Bush and Thomas, New Hope church was perpetuated and strengthened. Many earnest, consecrated men of God have proclaimed from the pulpit of New Hope church the gospel of the everlasting kingdom, and many souls have sought and found pardon at her altar, and the bodies of many of her pious dead rest in the cemetery awaiting the resurrection morning, and many honored names are still on her roll. In the neighborhood of the present town of Louisville, and in what was then Pike County, a Methodist Society was established and a church was built as early as 1822, so tradition says. Tradition is not very accurate. In the south-east part of

Dale County, in the very beginning of Methodist work in that section, a church was built, called Whitehurst's Meeting House. Tradition is confident in the assertion that in 1828 a church was built one or two miles from the present town of Ozark, and called Claybank. Other preaching places were established through that section during the first years of Methodist preaching therein than those above named, and in the after years still many other Societies were organized and preaching places established in that region.

As names familiar in Methodist circles, and the names of persons who were Methodists, and who were in that region as pioneers and in the first decades of Methodist work there, may be mentioned: Baker, Birch, Cassady, Cruse, Chitty, Corbett, Dowling, Dawkins, Gamble, Gilpin, Grantham, Grace, Lawrence, Lucas, McDonald, McLendon, Messick, Miller, Mixon, Norton, Owens, Peacock, Pittman, Shanks, Stokes, Skipper, Whitehurst, Windham, Williams, Weatherby, Wright.

If tradition may be relied on, though some statements concerning the matter are known to be incorrect, about the time the Rev. John I. Triggs was preaching as "Missionary to Early County and adjoining settlements," Jesse Birch, a local preacher, erected himself a habitation in the neighborhood of the present town of Louisville, which, now in Barbour County, was at that time in Pike County. Tradition also states as a fact that about that same time John McDonald, some of whose descendants have been preachers, and his family, and the family of his brother-in-law, and the Rev. Jesse Birch and his family formed a Society and built for themselves a Meeting House in the community in which they lived near Louisville.

The Rev. "Dempsey Dowling was recommended by the District Conference of Pee Dee District for the office of elder, and was elected" by the South Carolina Conference in session at Augusta, Georgia, Tuesday morning, February 26, 1822. Some time after that, perhaps, in the early part of 1826, he entered abode in Dale County, Alabama, in which county he resided until his death, in 1865. He joined the Methodist Protestant Church as early as 1845. He was of the strict type of Methodists. He was of that class who reproved sin in word as well in life. He was as severe as the Judgment. In rebuking persons for sin he had the perseverance of endless patience. In

the lines of Christian doctrine, experience, and life to which he gave special attention he was well advanced and thoroughly established. He was the patriarch and leader of the numerous tribe of Dowlings in the Methodist ranks in the section of the State where he lived and died. He was buried, as was his wife, who preceded him to the grave five or six years, at Claybank Meeting House, one or two miles from the present town of Ozark.

So far as is now known, the first preacher in south-east Alabama to enter the itinerant ministry was the Rev. Daniel McDonald. At the time he was recommended for admission on trial in the Conference he was a citizen of Alabama and a member of the Church in the bounds of the Chattahoochee Circuit. "Daniel McDonald was recommended by the Chattahoochee Circuit Quarterly Conference and admitted" on trial by the South Carolina Conference in session at Camden, South Carolina, February 11, 1828. In due course, as provided by Discipline, he was admitted into full connection in the Conference, and advanced to deacon's and elder's orders. At the close of 1832 he was transferred to the Alabama Conference, as that Conference then had charge of the territory in which was located his home and in which his kindred resided. At the session of the Conference at Tuskaloosa, in December, 1835, he located, and henceforward made his home in Clarke County, Alabama. His mortal remains rest in that county. While a local preacher he had an appointment on Dog River, possibly under the direction of the presiding elder of the District, and while filling an engagement at that place, an adversary, one Wilson, set and baited a trap for him. He was allured by the bait and entangled by the trap, and his adversary, who was on watch, had, perhaps, not all he wished, but enough for his purpose, and so the preacher was put upon his trial for immorality, and was expelled from the Church. Who puts his feet in gins and snares is overthrown in a moment. An ill-advised step, taken under the allurements of an improvised and well-arranged temptation, though it proceeded no further than an approach to another's couch and the giving a single kiss, cost that man his ministry and his Church immunities. How necessary it is that every thought should be brought in subjection to the divine will! "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."



In the first years of Methodist work on the Chattahoochee and Pea River charges a group of kindred by the name of Shanks settled in the vicinity of the present town of Louisville, then in the bounds of Pike County, since 1832 in the bounds of Barbour County. That family came from South Carolina. The ancestors of the family, and the older children of the household, were acquainted with Bishop Asbury. One member of the family, born in South Carolina, in 1808, bore the name of the Bishop. In the assemblage of Methodist names found at that early day in that section of Alabama none was more illustrious than that of Shanks. Not to mention the sisters, who were women of piety, and gifted in song, three brothers, James, William, and Asbury H., were Methodist preachers. Along toward the fifties, or in the fifties, the exact date is not now recollected, William Shanks withdrew from the Methodists, and, by an immersion in water, allied himself to the Baptists; and for a number of years he resided on the road between the towns of Louisville and Troy, and was the pastor of a Baptist Church, possibly Churches, in the vicinity in which he resided. That defection of William Shanks, that abandoning the faith in which he had been brought up, in which he had been brought to a saving knowledge of God, and in which he had so long lived and preached, created quite a sensation among the Methodists. It annoyed and scandalized the Methodists not a little. Their displeasure was in the exact measure of their former appreciation, was in the ratio of the large influence which he had exerted among them. Whatever the influence and the motives which caused him to abandon the Church in which he entered upon his Christian and ministerial career and ally himself with the denomination which rejected and required him to repudiate his whole religious profession and life, the Methodists never excused him. They regretted his course as long as they recollected his career. Such defections are not likely to serve the general cause of Christianity.

James Shanks was a man of extraordinary force, and a man of admirable consistency of character. He was renewed by divine grace October 11, 1829, and was licensed to preach March, 1832. In connection with renewal of heart he received an overwhelming ecstasy which almost without intermission and with but little abatement continued for two years, and at

the time of his death he said, in the review of his life, he was, though he was in agonies, the agonies of death, happier than at any former period of his Christian experience. In December, 1833, he was received into the Alabama Conference on trial, and in due course was admitted into full connection, and to ministerial orders; for some reason he was one year longer than the ordinary time in reaching elder's orders, and he continued in the Alabama Conference until the close of 1847, when, on account of the physical infirmities of his wife, he located. During his connection with the Alabama Conference his appointments were all in the southern part of the State, and between the Chattahoochee and Alabama Rivers. For a number of years he served the Choctawhatchee, Pea River, and Clayton charges, and was consequently in the section of Alabama where he resided before he ever entered the itinerant ministry. Some time after he located he moved to Clarke County, Mississippi, and in December, 1869, he was re-admitted to the itinerant ministry. He was a member of the Mississippi Conference at the time of his death. He was a local preacher from 1847 till the close of 1869. This is correct, the statement in his obituary to the contrary notwithstanding. For half a century he was a preacher in the Methodist ranks, and his ministry was crowned with results commensurate with its length. He brought to Christ and added to the Church many souls. In the State of Mississippi, October 4, 1878, he fell on sleep. He went out in great physical pain, and in great spiritual ecstasy. He lacked forty-five days of being eighty years old when he departed this life.

In the vicinity in which he lived, the vicinity of Louisville, Alabama, Asbury H. Shanks, younger by ten years than his brother James, was reclaimed by the gospel, renewed by the Spirit, and under process provided was inducted into the Methodist Episcopal Church, and was possibly the second preacher in south-east Alabama who joined the itinerant ranks. He was renewed by divine grace April 7, 1829, and was licensed to preach July 16, 1831. The Georgia Conference being in session at Augusta, Georgia, on Monday morning, January 9, 1832, the Rev. Zaccheus Dowling, the presiding elder of the Tallahassee District, presented Asbury H. Shanks as a suitable person to be admitted into the Conference on trial. The Con-

ference considered the case, and after proper inquiries made and due reflection had he was admitted. He was a preacher from the Alabama part of the Tallahassee District, and at the end of the Conference year he was continued on trial, and in that relation he was transferred to the Alabama Conference, which Conference just then held its first session. In the arrangement of the ecclesiastical year the Alabama Conference met a little more than a month before the Georgia Conference. In due course he was admitted into full connection in the Alabama Conference, and into the orders of the ministry. He filled many of the chief appointments in the Church. He was appointed to Circuits, Stations, and Districts. He was a man of extraordinary ability, of exemplary piety, and of sterling integrity. He was a theologian of no mean attainments, a defender of the faith, and a preacher of remarkable power. His ministry was somewhat impaired by physical ills, and for a time he was superannuated, and for a time local. He was honored while living and lamented when dead. He died, triumphing in the faith of Jesus Christ, with immortality in view, October 20, 1868, in Rusk, Texas, where he was buried. He was a member of the East Texas Conference at the time of his death.

At Milledgeville, Georgia, December 23, 1814, a man who was then within thirty days of his majority and who was recommended from Brunswick Circuit was admitted on trial by the South Carolina Conference. The years passed, the processes provided by law went on, and he was received into full connection in the Annual Conference, and he was ordained deacon, by Bishop Enoch George, at Columbia, South Carolina, December 29, 1816, and elder, by Bishop R. R. Roberts, at Camden, South Carolina, December 27, 1818; and at the session of the Conference at which he was ordained elder, which closed December 30, 1818, he located. In February, 1819, he married, and for three years he lived in North Carolina where he had married. In February, 1822, he was re-admitted into the Annual Conference, and held membership and filled appointments therein until the session of the Conference at Milledgeville, Georgia, January 12-20, 1826, when he again located, henceforth to be a local elder. After that last location he lived two years in South Carolina. In the first part of the year 1828,

that man, with his family, left his native State for the newly found paradise, the land of Alabama. He crossed just over what was then the line of the Creek Indian Nation, and just into the edge of what was then Pike County, and settled, where he continued until 1835, near the present town of Clayton, Alabama. He was then in the bounds of or in proximity to the Chattahoochee Circuit, and he was quite an acquisition to the young and struggling Church in that newly settled section on the borders of the Indian tribes. That man was none other than the Rev. John W. Norton, the brother of the Rev. James Norton, who in 1813, by official appointment, traveled with Bishop McKendree. Than the Rev. John W. Norton none was more genial and generous, dignified and diligent. He was wise, discriminating, and conservative in counsel, discreet, and edifying in conversation. His life imparted to those with whom he was associated a benediction, and his death, though a happy release to him, inflicted an irreparable loss upon those he left behind. He founded and fostered Churches in the neighborhoods in which he lived. He was a man of but few tears, but he was a man of solid piety, true benevolence, and of spotless character.



## CHAPTER XII.

### THE ENLARGEMENT AND ADVANCEMENT OF THE WORK OF METHODISM IN ALABAMA.

THE Jones's Valley Circuit first appeared for the year 1823. Previous to that date it had been in and a part of the Tuskaloosa Circuit. Blountsville, Ebenezer, and Shiloh, places which have already been mentioned in connection with the Tuskaloosa Circuit, and Cunningham's Creek, Cedar Mountain, Bethlehem, Bethel, and Lebanon were leading preaching places in Jones's Valley Circuit when it was first made.

In Township sixteen, Range two, west, on the head waters of Cunningham's Creek, a branch of the Black Warrior, lived James Cunningham, an Irishman, and the man for whom the creek was named. In the residence of that Irishman the pioneer Methodist preacher commenced proclaiming the gospel as early as 1818, and there a Society was organized as early as 1819, and following close upon the organization of that Society a log church, eighteen by twenty feet, was built, near the residence of Cunningham, in which that Society worshiped for eighteen years. At that church James Cunningham, Jesse Pitts, William Carson, Goldsmith W. Hewett, and others, held membership. That church was superseded in 1837, by a log house, a mile away, across the little valley, and named Smith's Chapel, at which an organization is still, 1890, kept up.

The church called Cedar Mountain, which was at the mountain of that name, and which was twenty or twenty odd miles north-east of where the city of Birmingham now stands, was organized in 1819, when the Rev. John Kesterson was in charge of the work, and before the Jones's Valley Circuit was made, and continued as a place of worship until 1826, when it was superseded by a new church three miles away from it called Shiloh. The charter members at Cedar Mountain were the Rev. Perry Tunnel and wife, the Rev. James Johnson and wife, Francis Self and wife, George Taylor and wife. Upon the abandonment of the place at Cedar Mountain and the organization at

Shiloh in 1826, George Taylor and wife, the Rev. William Taylor and wife, Isaac Taylor, Jonathan Moreland and wife, and Jacob Wear and wife were transferred to Shiloh, and at the opening of the church at Shiloh, Mary Taylor, Catherine Taylor, and Harris Taylor joined as members. In that county and among Methodists the Taylors were distinguished.

In 1817, the year Alabama was made a Territory, George Taylor, a man of frontier tastes, and of religious instincts and Christian experience as well, with his family, came to the Territory, and took up his abode in proximity to the Cedar crowned mountain. He had four sons, Casper, William, Isaac, and Harris. Tradition says that the Rev. James Axley, a man noted for oddities, eccentricities, sterling virtues, solid piety, and extraordinary power, baptized the four sons here named on the same occasion, and that in eloquence, earnestness, and faith he prayed that the four sons might be called to preach. How near the prayer was answered can be apprehended when it is stated that three of them were made preachers and preached much, and Casper, the oldest of the four, admitted that he was called to preach, and while he was never licensed to preach he did much work in the Church and was quite useful. The boys were all under their majority when they came with their father to the Territory of Alabama, except, perhaps, Casper.

William Taylor was licensed to preach by the Quarterly Conference of the Tuskaloosa Circuit upon a recommendation from the Society at Cedar Mountain. On a small tombstone erected at his grave in the graveyard at Taylor's Chapel, in Section eight, Township sixteen, Range one, west, are engraved the following words: "Rev. William Taylor, born August 3, 1799, embraced religion at twenty-one years of age, soon thereafter commenced to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, and continued to do so until his decease which took place December 14, 1867." He was an able preacher, a man of more than ordinary powers of intellect, and through all the country round about the section in which he lived he preached much and well. He maintained a good name and was loved by the people among whom he exercised his ministry.

Isaac Taylor was licensed to preach by the Quarterly Conference of the Jones's Valley Circuit upon a recommendation of the Society at Cedar Mountain in 1824. On a stout marble

slab at his grave, which is beside the grave of his brother William, is found the following inscription: "In memory of Rev. Isaac Taylor, who was born January 27, 1802, died May 5, 1874. He was a minister of the gospel fifty years, and died in the hope and consolation of the same." In the dying day, in conversation with one of his best friends, in allusion to his credentials, he said: "These papers I have never dishonored. In the pulpit I have never uttered a word which I would rescind."

The event of his life brought a dark shadow and deep trouble. The event occurred about 1832. He then had a wife and six children, the youngest child then drawing its nourishment from its mother's breast. After the evening twilight and before the morning dawn the woman who had plighted him her faith and love, to live with him in the holy estate of matrimony, disappeared. Where she was gone and how she went were unsolved mysteries of the case. There was a sensation, a sensation in the circle of kindred, in the Methodist ranks, and in all the surrounding country. He lived at the head waters of the Cahawba River, and a couple of miles, perhaps, from Shiloh church. The event gratified the sensation loving propensities of the community for one whole generation. It was an event which gratified his enemies, and the enemies of Methodism and religion, and was sufficiently fraught with untoward influence to satisfy their evil designs. It was an occasion suited to the gratification of their malice, and they made the most of it; it was a vein in a mine suited to their purposes, and they worked it for all it was worth. It was an opportunity for mischief, and malice reveled, and Satan was happy. It was an occasion, it was a matter of gossip, and a matter for inspection. Ominous conjectures were indulged, and grave suspicions were created. Soon it was suspected and whispered about that the Rev. Isaac Taylor had killed the woman whom he had wedded, and whom he had pledged himself to love, comfort, honor and keep; soon he was charged with the crime; soon testimony to the fact was conjured up; the little domestic disputes of the household were arrayed; the unnaturalness of a woman leaving six of her own children, and, especially, an infant in her arms, was portrayed; the supposed lethargy of the husband in hunting for the missing wife was descanted on; and, finally, to cap the climax, bones found in some hollow stump, or cave, or gorge in the forest in the neigh-

borhood of the home of the family were exhibited as human bones, and as the bones of her who had so mysteriously disappeared; the excitement was intense, especially among the Church members; soon he was arrested and bound over to appear at the Court-house of Jefferson County before the proper court to answer to the charge and for the crime of uxoricide; with his witnesses he appeared in the town of Elyton, according to his bond, to answer the finding of the grand jury in the case, but after all the sensation, excitement, and preliminary proceedings in legal prosecution the case never reached the ordeal, the grandjury never made a bill of indictment, and the man of the missing wife went free. In the course of time a report was added to the case which perpetuated the sensation, and added another theory to the one of uxoricide as a solution of the mystery. It was reported that a man who moved from Murphree's Valley, Alabama, to Texas, and who knew the Rev. Isaac Taylor and his wife intimately in Alabama, was one day in a store in a town in which he traded in Texas, and a man and woman walked into the store and when he caught the sight of the woman looking her full in the face he recognized her as the missing wife of the Rev. Isaac Taylor, and he saw that she recognized him. Without speaking a word she and the man with her, immediately retired from the store, and disappeared. Then the theory which solved the mystery was elopement; a story was now added to the case which described her departure with some man who had resided near her home but in Blount County, going through the obscure regions and mountain fastnesses of Alabama along some deserted Indian trail until beyond where she was known, and on by New Orleans and out into the Republic of Texas: the story ran that she was disguised by dressing in man's attire. That was the last story in the mysterious affair. Her oldest child, who was eleven years old at the time of her disappearance, recollects the last day she was at home. He recollects that on that day he and his mother were in the field dropping corn, and that his mother went to the house to nurse the baby and that he went with her, and he recollects that while she was nursing the baby he saw a sad expression cover his mother's face; that night he went to bed, and next morning he was awakened by his father's voice calling his mother as though she were missing: she never answered, she never returned. The day which will reveal all se-



crets will reveal the secrets and explain the mysteries of that case.

That occurrence crippled the influence of the Rev. Isaac Taylor, and damaged Methodism in the country where it was known, though the conviction was established that he was an innocent man. He retained his ministry, and maintained the faith, and died exulting in the consolation of the gospel.

Harris Taylor was the first class leader at Shiloh, was only twenty years old when appointed to that office. He was licensed to preach by the Quarterly Conference of Jones's Valley Circuit upon a recommendation from the Society at Shiloh in 1829. He moved to Benton County, now called Calhoun, where he died. He was buried in the graveyard at the Methodist Church at the town of Alexandria. He was exceedingly popular through Benton and Talladega Counties. The following is copied from a large marble slab placed by his friends on his grave: "Rev. Harris Taylor died August 22, 1852, in his forty-sixth year. As a minister of the gospel he was one of the most faithful and talented members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Bold in preaching Bible truth, able in its defense, yet humble in mind, meek and quiet in spirit; a worthy citizen, a good neighbor, an affectionate husband, a kind father, a humane master, and a faithful friend; one who practiced religion in life, and enjoyed its happy effects in death. All that knew him revered and loved him."

The Rev. Walter Houston McDaniel preached the funeral of the Rev. Harris Taylor at a Camp-ground near the town of Alexandria. In the sermon he pronounced a very high, not to say extravagant, eulogy on Taylor. He said: "As far as the eagle, which sits on the summit of the mountain and soars above the clouds excels the wren which sits on the housetop, so far did Taylor excel in greatness, wisdom, and oratory Webster, Clay, and Calhoun. Taylor lived on earth and communed with men and communed with God, he lived on earth and had a home in heaven." At that point in the eulogy the audience broke out in a wild burst of shouting, and a singular light broke forth above the altar.

Beyond doubt the four sons of George Taylor were men of extraordinary gifts and power, and it is equally certain that God's ear was attent unto the prayer which the Rev. James Ax-

ley made for them at their baptism, and in answer to that prayer the Lord God remembered them for good, and upon them put his blessing forever, and with the gifts of the Holy Spirit they were endowed, and extraordinary manifestations attended them.

Elijah Self, who died this year, 1890, joined the Church at Shiloh the year the Society was organized there, and had his membership there at that one place for sixty-four years, and during that time was class leader and local preacher. In 1827 he married Catherine Taylor, who was and still is a member at Shiloh, and the sister of the Taylors above named. The Rev. Elijah Self was the father of the Rev. Nathaniel H. Self, who for long years has been an itinerant preacher in Alabama. The Selfs came to the neighborhood of Cedar Mountain in 1817.

In 1819, before Jefferson County was established and before the town of Elyton was ever thought of, the Rev. James Tarrant, who was born in the Colony of Virginia, and who was a Captain in the service of the United Colonies in the war for independence, and who lived awhile in South Carolina, and who possessed deep piety and fixed religious principles, settled on a creek in Alabama, about eight miles west of the present city of Birmingham and about four miles from the old town of Jonesboro. He brought with him to his new home in Alabama a young negro whose name was Adam, and who was noted for his religious excellence. In 1820 the Rev. James Tarrant caused to be erected near his residence a house for divine worship. That house of worship was made of logs, and the logs out of which it was made were cut and hauled by Adam, the negro, the slave. That house of worship was named Bethlehem. Till this present time, 1890, it is known as Bethlehem, and a preaching place is still maintained there with a flourishing Society, a frame building having superseded the log house.

The Rev. James Tarrant died in the thirties, at his home, and was buried on his own premises, a few hundred yards from Bethlehem church; and Adam, the negro, died in the eighties. The master and the slave were both good men, true Methodists, and useful Christians. Some time before Adam died he said to a friend and brother who had known him long and well: "For sixty years I have not told an untruth, and for forty years a drop of liquor has not gone in my mouth." There was a noble example of integrity and of sobriety.

William Saddler and his wife Nancy Saddler lived near Bethlehem and held their membership there. It is said that Mrs. Martha Rutledge, a member at that place, was the first person ever buried at Bethlehem. From the first, Bethlehem was one of the centers of Methodism, and there Camp-meetings were held, and the Methodist hosts of the surrounding country assembled. Grand times were witnessed at that place.

There were many worthy members at Bethlehem at the first, many worthy of mention, among them the Browns, but of all the men of Jones's Valley Circuit and of Bethlehem Society, there was not one more honest, true, clean, and worthy than James Rutledge. He was in the country among the first. For many years he was class leader and steward at Bethlehem, and he did much to advance the spirituality of the membership, and to support the temporal interests of the Society. His descendants are still there.

Bethel was at or near Nabor's Spring on the Huntsville or Tennessee road, and about seven miles north-east of the town of Elyton. That Church was organized before 1825, and a Camp-ground which was kept up many, many years was established there in the beginning. Bethel was one of the largest and strongest Societies in the county of Jefferson, and it continued and flourished until the Federal soldiers burnt the house of worship during the war between the States. Edley Hamilton and his wife Jane Hamilton were pillars in the Church at Bethel. John Hewitt and John Burford were there, and Vanzant was a name there not to be forgotten.

Lebanon was about six miles north-east of Blountsville, and it has been claimed that it was at Lebanon that the Rev. Ebenezer Hearn preached his first sermon south of the Tennessee Valley, but Mr. Hearn in his written Journal now in hand says that at Bearmeat Cabin he preached his first sermon as a Missionary. Lebanon, now, in 1890, is still in existence as a preaching place, with a pretty good Society.

At the close of 1823 there were in the Jones's Valley Circuit five hundred and twenty-five white and twenty-six colored members, and at the close of 1832 there were in the territory at first embraced in that Circuit seven hundred and eighty white and one hundred and sixteen colored members. That was not a large increase for a decade of years. Many of the members were un-

cultured, untrained, and unstable. Some years marked an increase and some years a decrease. There was fluctuation, like the tide they would flow in and then flow out. The largest number of white members reported any year during the decade was at the close of 1826, when there were eight hundred and fifty-three. The largest number of colored members during the decade was at the close of 1831, when there were two hundred and fifty-eight.

The preachers on the Jones's Valley Circuit were: 1823, Francis R. Cheatham, Daniel McLeod; 1824, Marcus C. Henderson, John Collier; 1825, Edmond Pearson, Thomas Burpo; 1826, John Patton, Orsamus L. Nash; 1827, Thomas E. Ledbetter, Isaac V. Enochs; 1828, Benjamin A. Houghton, LeRoy Massengale; 1829, Richard Pipkin, Benjamin B. Smith; 1830, Joseph McDowell, Francis Jones; 1831, Jesse Ellis, Cornelius McLeod; 1832, John Cotton, Lanson Jones.

The Lawrence Circuit, which embraced a part of Lawrence County and all of Morgan County, first appeared for 1824.

In the latter part of 1818, and a few days after the Cotaco Circuit had for the first time been announced among the appointments of the Tennessee Conference, the Rev. Ebenezer Hearn, in going south, passed through Gandy's Cove, which is in the southern part of Morgan County, it was then Cotaco County, and he called together a few of the settlers in that Cove, and the afternoon of the day preached them a sermon. After spending the night in a one-room cabin, with two old folks, a man and his wife, Hearn moved on to his destination. From that day the Methodists have had preaching in that Cove, and there in the beginning of the work a log house, which stood for a long time, was erected, and was known as Gandy's Cove Meeting House. It was one of the appointments of the Lawrence Circuit. Familiar names in the membership of that Society were: Bain, Cook, Gandy, Key, McGlathory and Turney.

In the time of the very first preaching in that country a Society was established at Center Springs, which was some five to seven miles north-east, perhaps, from Somerville, and till this time, 1890, that Society continues. A log house was built and a Camp-ground was established there in the beginning. Large assemblies have often met there at Camp-meetings, and scores have been adopted into the heavenly family on that sacred spot.



Among the original members of that Society were the names of Blackwell, Maxwell, Reed, Sharp, and Troup. About 1832 the names of Garrison and Lyle were found on the Register of that Society. That was one of the prominent places in the Lawrence Circuit.

A church, made of logs and with twelve corners to it, was erected at an early day on the mountain eight or ten miles west of Somerville. It was known as the Twelve Corner Meeting House, taking its name from its peculiar structure. McClanahan, Price, Strain, and Thompson were names prominent in the early membership of that Society, and it was one of the leading places on the Lawrence Circuit.

The Rev. Thomas A. Strain, who was received on trial in the Tennessee Conference in the latter part of 1823, and who was received into full connection in the Conference, and ordained deacon, and located in November, 1825, and who was re-admitted to the Tennessee Conference in November, 1827, and who again located in December, 1828, and who was ever after till his death a local preacher, and who for 1824 was on the Madison Circuit, and who was the other two years of his itinerant ministry, the years 1825 and 1828, on the Lawrence Circuit, lived through the years of his local ministry in the bounds of the Lawrence Circuit and in the neighborhood of Twelve Corners, and held his membership in the Society at that place. He was a man of deep piety, of extraordinary endowments, and in pulpit power and efficiency he was without a peer in all the country in which he resided and preached.

One of the very first Churches organized in the bounds of the Lawrence Circuit, and organized before the Lawrence Circuit was ever named, was in Lawrence County, and was near where, after it was organized, there sprang up a village called Oakville, and which was in Section sixteen, Township seven, Range nine. The Meeting House, like all the houses for religious worship first built in the country, was built of logs. There was a Camp-ground at the place. The old church near Oakville produced a number of men and women of piety and talents.

One individual who was among the first members of that Society may be mentioned here. Sallie Reedy, whose parents were from North Carolina, and who was born in Madison County, Alabama, during the first decade of this century, and

who, when a girl scarcely in her teens, living in Morgan County, then called Cotaco County, was, under the ministry of the Rev. Thomas Madden, inducted into a genuine Christian experience, was a member at the Log Meeting House near where sprang up the village of Oakville. About the time she reached womanhood she married Captain James Barbee, who was a United States soldier in the war of 1812. Eight children were the product of this marriage, three daughters and five sons. Four of the sons were called to the high vocation of Christian ministers. James D. Barbee, now, 1890, a member of the Tennessee Conference, and a Doctor of Divinity, and the Agent of the Publishing House of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, is one of the sons, and the Rev. S. W. Barbee, now, 1890, a member of the Montana Conference, is another one of the sons. Captain Barbee never made any profession of religion, and was, so far as is known, without any religious creed. The wife was a devout, cheerful, and hopeful Christian. She was a woman of strong faith. She had a clear apprehension of the dispensations of grace and providence. She was rich in grace, though she and her family were poor in this world's goods. One of her neighbors who had neglected the mental culture and religious training of his children, and who had lived without the fear and worship of God, and who drove and worked everybody and everything about him for the accumulation of wealth, and who had succeeded in possessing himself of "miles of land, scores of slaves, and coffers laden with gold," and who was far on the last decline of life, said to her: "Mrs. Barbee, we have lived neighbors for a long time, and each of us has brought up a large family of children. I have given my attention and labor to the making of money, while you have looked after the religious education of your children. I have outstripped you in money making, but you have achieved a success of which any mother may well be proud. I acknowledge my mistake." The acknowledgment could not correct the mistake. "There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing; there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches."

When Mrs. Sallie Barbee found that her sons were called by God to the sacred office of the ministry her soul was filled with a special ecstasy. When, too infirm to follow the active duties of life, she waited on the shore for exit to her home in the

skies she consecrated her children every day to God in prayer. Her work is perpetuated in her children. They are to her a crown and an honor.

Miss Polly Reedy, a sister of Mrs. Barbee, married Mr. Elry West, and she and her husband were members of the Society near Oakville. J. B. West, now, 1890, a Doctor of Divinity, and a member of the Tennessee Conference, is the son of Mrs. Polly and Mr. Elry West. It is said that Mr. Elry West was a man of strictest honesty. That he might be sure not to obtain an article for less than its real value he would never purchase anything at auction.

In the famous Crowd-about Valley a Society was organized as early as the Lawrence Circuit, and there were in that valley families who made the membership of that Society by the name of Clark, Dickens, Freeman, Hewlett, and Turrentine. Men of prominence and eminence sprang from the Society.

Chestnut Grove was one of the earliest plants of Methodism in Morgan County. Lile, Miner, Kimble, Johnson, Stephenson, and Grizzard were familiar names, and Sikes and Crompton were men of education, property, devotion, and influence.

Wolf Town, in Lawrence County, was an old center of Methodism established as early as 1830. There the Putmans held their membership. The Putman family was a family of preachers.

The first regular Methodist preaching in the town of Decatur, in Morgan County, on the Tennessee River, was done by the Rev. Alexander Sale and the Rev. John B. McFerrin in the year 1827, and for years it was an appointment in the Lawrence Circuit.

Summer Seat Camp-ground, five or six miles from Decatur, and near the present town of Trinity, was established in 1827, and was one of the famous Camp-grounds in the bounds of the Lawrence Circuit.

In March, 1830, C. A. Welch, from Kentucky, settled in Somerville, the seat of justice of Morgan County, since the county was made, and of Cataco before it was Morgan. Up to that time there had never been a Methodist Society in the town. Immediately upon the coming of Brother Welch, the Rev. Elisha J. Dodson, then the preacher in charge of Lawrence Circuit, with F. G. Ferguson as junior preacher, established a

preaching place and organized a Society at Somerville. They preached and worshiped in the Court-house. C. A. Welch, Eliza Welch, John T. Rather, Tunstill Banks, John P. Mosely, afterward a local preacher, Robert Francis, and his wife, Mrs. Martha T. Goff, and Rachel Campbell, were the members of the Society organized at first in Somerville.

There were other preaching places on the Lawrence Circuit previous to 1832. Notwithstanding much of the country in the Lawrence Circuit was rugged and full of mountains, it was a desirable region, and a good work. It had a large membership, and less fluctuation in the number than almost any Circuit in the same region of country. At the close of the first year after it was set off from the Franklin Circuit it reported five hundred and fifty-two white and sixty colored members, and the smallest number that was reported on it any year to the close of 1832 was five hundred and thirty-three white and fifty colored members. At the close of 1832 it had six hundred and fifty-three white and eighty-nine colored members. There was never any general liberality on the Circuit in supporting the gospel, except in maintaining Camp-meetings.

The preachers appointed to the Lawrence Circuit for 1824 were Daniel De Vinne, and Thomas Burpo. The Rev. Daniel De Vinne did not serve that Circuit more than three months. He went to the General Conference which met at Baltimore, May 1, 1824, and was transferred to the New York Conference, and at its session which met June 1, 1824, was appointed to Sullivan Circuit, in the State of New York. At a session of the Mississippi Conference held at the town of Washington, Mississippi, beginning November 17, 1819, the Rev. Daniel De Vinne was received into the Conference on trial, and he was the only one received on trial at that session. At another session of the Mississippi Conference held at the same place, beginning December 7, 1821, he was received into full connection and ordained deacon; and at still another session of that Conference held at Natchez, Mississippi, beginning December 25, 1823, he was ordained an elder. For 1820 and 1821 he was appointed to the Attakapas Circuit in the Louisiana District, and for 1822 he was on the Amite Circuit, and for 1823 on the Claiborne Circuit in the Mississippi District. At the end of his work on the Lawrence Circuit, which closed, as above



stated, about the end of March, 1824, having done hard work on all his appointments in the Mississippi Conference, he left for the State of New York, by way of the General Conference at Baltimore, Maryland, and made the whole trip of more than two thousand miles on horseback. He got out of the woods and away from the frontier.

While an infant, his parents brought him to America from Ireland, where he was born February 1, 1793. He was converted in the city of Albany, in the State of New York, January 2, 1810, and five days thereafter joined his destinies with the Methodists. Swayed by a holy passion, impelled by impulse, and fired with the Missionary zeal, he conceived the idea of leaving the State which had nourished him from the cradle to manhood, and of going, in person, to the people on the lower Mississippi River, to devote himself to their welfare in laboring for their salvation. Prompted by the impulse and following the idea, he left the State of New York in 1818, and made his way to Louisiana, where, applying himself to the first thing which came to hand in his line, he commenced his work by organizing a Sunday-school among the African slaves which were found in that section of the United States. Impediments in the way of that work soon appeared, and abandoning his chosen occupation and leaving his selected place of operation he made his way to another point of the country. For the time being, he labored, as best he could, in the work of religion. He was, in the midst of the passing events, licensed to preach in that country where the Mississippi River washes the shores of Louisiana and Mississippi States, in the year 1819. He was received into the Mississippi Conference and clothed with the functions of the ministry as elsewhere stated. In the land in which he commenced his itinerant career he did a vast amount of hard work. He rode long distances, braved numerous dangers, endured hard fare, preached incessantly, and received poor pay. He was uncompromisingly opposed to slavery, to African slavery as it existed in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. His sentiments on that subject were antagonistic to the sentiments of the people of those States, and among whom he had cast his lot and in the interest of whom he had purposed to work. Impelled by the same impulses which had moved him in the past, he finally, as stated on another page, returned to the State

which had nourished him in his infancy, childhood, and youth. He was a single man while in the sunny South. He married after his return to New York. After a long life and a noble career his body rests in the soil of the State wherein he grew to manhood. He died in Morrisania, New York, February 10, 1883. Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama, where he entered upon his ministerial career and where he worked so faithfully, have an interest in the Rev. Daniel De Vinne, cherish his memory, and acknowledge the debt of gratitude due to him from them.

Here may be recited a single incident as it will indicate what was the state of the country and what were the habits of the pious down South at the time the Rev. Daniel De Vinne was exercising his ministry therein. On the adjournment *sine die* of the session of the Mississippi Conference held at John McRea's, on Chickasawhay River, beginning December 5, 1822, the preachers left in groups, going to their appointments in different directions. One group of ten or more preachers, with one fair and beautiful bride, the wife of one of the preachers, all mounted on horseback, set off from the seat of the Conference westward. The country over which they were to pass between John McRae's Meeting House on the Chickasawhay and the Midway Meeting House west of the Amite River was mostly wild and drear. It took that company four of those December days to make the trip. The second night out on the journey the ten or more preachers and the one bride occupied one small room of the double cabin of a cattle tender. In that small room, where was quartered, for the night, that itinerant company, there was only one bed, and it a very scanty affair. The third night was spent in a settlement on the Taŋgipahoa River. The company had dwindled to seven preachers and the bride. They divided out into two companies of four each, and put up for the night each company at a house. The Rev. Daniel De Vinne, the Rev. William Winans, the Rev. Ebenezer Hearn, and his bride stopped at one house. After the baggage was deposited and the horses were provided for, De Vinne, Winans, and Hearn, in the twilight of the evening, went to the grove as the most suitable place they could obtain in which to offer their evening prayers and engage in their secret devotions. Near an old road, which had fallen into disuse, they

found, as they supposed, the conditions adequate to the retirement which they desired, and separating a little way from each other they got them down in a worshipping posture and composed themselves for the service which was to please the divine Master and improve their own graces. They had not more than commenced their silent prayers when they were very unceremoniously interrupted. A man on horseback, proceeding along the old abandoned road, came unexpectedly upon them. The horseman espied De Vinne a little way from the road in his attitude of devotion, and in a hurried, a tremulous, and an excited tone which indicated great consternation, he exclaimed: "Whoa!" and he immediately asked: "What are you doing there?" Winans, who was in a different direction a short distance from De Vinne, and who seemed to be in a communicative mood, and in the spirit of imparting information, answered the man's inquiry, and said: "We are offering prayers." The frightened horseman, not understanding the announcement made by Winans, inquired: "Did you say you are hunting calves?" Then De Vinne, in a tone which indicated that his soul was filled with mingled feelings of displeasure and commiseration, addressed the man this inquiry: "Did you never see any one pray?" To that interrogatory the frightened man answered: "Never in that fix," and then, quickly reining his horse round, and with masculine vigor applying to him the whip, he galloped down the old road at full speed the way from which he came, as if flying from impending danger, leaving the disturbed preachers to regain their repose and continue their devotions as best they could. The religious had been turned into the ridiculous, and it was exceedingly difficult to be sweet, reverent, and devotional under such circumstances.

The preachers on the Lawrence Circuit were: 1825, George W. Morris, Thomas A. Strain; 1826, Barton Brown, Benjamin S. Clardy; 1827, Alexander Sale, John B. McFerrin; 1828, Thomas A. Strain, George W. Bewley; 1829, Ambrose F. Driskill, Elisha J. Dodson; 1830, Elisha J. Dodson, Frederick G. Ferguson; 1831, George W. Morris, Robert Gregory; 1832, George W. Morris, Robert C. Jones.

The New River Circuit first appeared in the list of the appointments for 1824. It was organized just one year before the county of Fayette, Alabama, was established, and the

principal part of the Circuit lay in what constituted that county when it was first established, though the Circuit extended somewhat into the counties adjoining to Fayette County, and the Circuit possibly may have had a few appointments in the State of Mississippi. The Territory occupied by the New River Circuit had formerly been in the Marion Circuit.

The preachers on the New River Circuit were: 1824, John G. Lee, Daniel H. Williams; 1825, John Collier, Thomas S. Abernathy; 1826, Eugene V. Le Vert, Henry J. Brown; 1827, Thomas Burpo; 1828, Thomas E. Ledbetter, John Collier; 1829, Henry J. Brown; 1830, Nathan Hopkins, Benjamin B. Smith; 1831, Mark Westmoreland; 1832, Griffin R. Christopher, Sidney S. Squires.

The New River Circuit was the last appointment to which the Rev. Thomas E. Ledbetter was assigned by the Conference in Alabama, but there are indications that he did not serve that work, but that for the year he was assigned to it, the year 1828, he lived in Tuskaloosa, and had charge of Tuskaloosa Station and the Methodist interests of that town that year, and that notwithstanding the Rev. William Spruill was read out to that Station for that year. The following communications are authority for the view here expressed:

“TUSKALOOSA, ALABAMA, August 5, 1828.

“To the Editors *Christian Advocate* and *Journal*.

“*Dear Brethren:* Religion is spreading its happy influence over some part of the State, to a considerable extent. I attended a Quarterly Meeting about thirty miles distant from this place, some five days since, where six professed to have obtained religion, and about ten or twelve more appeared to be earnestly seeking its enjoyment. I also attended a Camp-meeting the week following in Monroe County, Mississippi, where I beheld some signal evidences of God’s mercy and love, in the reclaiming of blacksliders, and the conversion of unregenerate persons.

“In Tuskaloosa we have, I think, some omen of a revival. The members of the Society appear to be generally much engaged, and great peace and love dwell among us. The congregations are large, serious, and attentive. THOMAS E. LEDBETTER.”

“TUSKALOOSA, ALABAMA, October 1, 1828.

“To the Editors of the *Christian Advocate* and *Journal*.

“*Dear Brethren:* The Sims Female Academy, in Tuskaloosa,



Alabama, is just finished. It is situated in an eligible part of the town, and from the health of the inhabitants (a population between 2,000 and 3,000) the past year, it may be considered healthy. There is a commodious building with six rooms, two of them quite spacious, one in the upper story and the other in the lower, for the academical exercises. The other part of the building is intended for the accommodation of the students that may wish to board within the institution. The Trustees wish, through the medium of your paper, to open a door for the application of a suitable governess to take charge of the institution. We want a lady well qualified to teach the several branches of female literature. Any person feeling adequate to take charge of the academy, can apply by stating her mode of conducting a school, and various branches she is capable of teaching, etc.; every attention will be paid to such application if directed to the Trustees of Sims Female Academy.

THOMAS E. LEDBETTER, Secretary Board of Trustees."

Thomas E. Ledbetter came with his father and mother, Thomas C. Ledbetter and his wife, from South Carolina to the Dutch Settlement on the Alabama River, in the State of Alabama, arriving there in January, 1821. He joined interest with a farmer in Dutch Bend, on his arrival there, and followed the plow until the latter part of 1823. He was licensed to preach on the Alabama Circuit, in Autauga County, in Alabama, in 1823, the Rev. Nicholas McIntyre being the presiding elder, and the Rev. Joshua Boucher, and the Rev. Eugene V. Le Vert being the preachers on the Circuit at the time; and he was recommended by the Quarterly Conference of the Alabama Circuit to the Mississippi Annual Conference as a suitable person to be admitted on trial in the traveling connection; and on that recommendation he was admitted at Natchez, Mississippi, December 25, 1823. His appointment for 1824, the first he had, was the Tombecbee Circuit. At the session of the Conference held at Washington, Mississippi, beginning December 8, 1825, he was admitted into full connection, and ordained a deacon. At the session held at the same place, December 20-27, 1827, he was elected and ordained an elder. At the Conference at Tuskaloosa, Alabama, beginning December 25, 1828, he then being in Tuskaloosa, in charge of affairs, as stated above, Thomas E. Ledbetter located. That ended his itinerant work in Alabama. In course of time

he, with his mother, returned to South Carolina. At the session of the Conference which met at Lincolnton, North Carolina, January 30, 1833, he was re-admitted into the traveling connection by the South Carolina Conference, and in that Conference he continued, on the effective list, until January, 1853, when he located, and terminated his itinerant ministry.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE ENLARGEMENT AND ADVANCEMENT OF THE WORK OF METHODISM IN ALABAMA.

THE Mississippi Conference met, according to previous appointment, at Tuskaloosa, Tuskaloosa County, Alabama, December 22, 1824. That was the first session of an Annual Conference ever held in that town, and up to that date Tuskaloosa had been one of the appointments on the Tuskaloosa Circuit, but at the close of that session the list of the appointments for the year 1825 was announced and the last appointment in the list was: Tuskaloosa Station, William M. Curtis. The town was then capable of entertaining the Conference, and they assumed the responsibility of supporting a preacher for themselves, and from that time to the present Tuskaloosa has been a Station.

The Methodists commenced preaching in Tuskaloosa in 1818, when there were only a few board shanties and one or two log cabins at the place.

On the morning of October 24, 1818, on the east of Deep Creek, in the south-east corner of the State of Virginia, there was a completed family outfit for a long, lonely journey to the west. The outfit consisted of three vehicles, a carriage, cart, and wagon, and the horses necessary to draw them, and a tent and fixtures. The family by whom and for whom the outfit was provided consisted of one man, his wife, two children, the eldest less than four years old, and the mother-in-law. So far as is now known, there were none others with that household. The only additional attendant was the much appreciated and ever faithful dog! Everything to be transported was in the vehicles properly stored. About noon of the day above named that family with reins in hand rolled their wheels and started for the west. Passing over the road which led by Suffolk, Lynchburg, Abingdon, Knoxville, and Kingston, and through the Cherokee Indian Nation, and through Jones's Valley, and enduring, by the way, many vexations caused by mud and mire, rocks and hills, the antics of unruly teams, the upsetting of vehicles, the

breaking of axles and bolts, hames and traces, tires and tongues, and the fearful looking for of robberies and savage depredations, and by scarcity of food for man and beast, the emigrant family, on December 26, 1818, finally reached the town of Tuscaloosa, in the Territory of Alabama, and there took up abode. The man at the head of that family and in charge of its effects was the Rev. John Owen, a local elder. At Tuscaloosa he and his became members of the first Methodist Society organized at that place. That local elder, with his family, reached Tuscaloosa about the time the Rev. John Kesterson, the first preacher appointed to the Tuscaloosa Circuit, was making his second round on that work. Owen has been a familiar and honored name on the Register of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Tuscaloosa from the very beginning of Christianity in that town.

The Rev. John Owen, of whom mention is here made, was a member of the Methodist Church in Tuscaloosa for thirty years, having died there in the faith, February 6, 1849. By the close of 1820, his father and mother, who were Methodists, and four of his brothers, three of whom were Methodists, and two of whom were preachers, had followed him to Tuscaloosa, and had become members then of that Society. His father, Richardson Owen, died in Tuscaloosa, July 24, 1821, and his mother, Sarah Owen, died in the faith, at the residence of another one of her sons, Judge Thomas Owen, in Tuscaloosa, January 13, 1836, having been a member of the Society in Tuscaloosa for fifteen years.

At the session of the Virginia Conference held at Edmund Taylor's, Caswell Circuit, North Carolina, March 1, 1805, these three brothers, William Owen, John Owen, and Richardson Owen, were admitted on trial in the traveling connection. At the close of two years they were all three admitted into full connection in the Conference, and ordained deacons. At the session of the Virginia Conference in February, 1808, Richardson Owen located. At the session of the Conference in February, 1809, William Owen and John Owen were ordained elders. In February, 1810, William Owen located, and in February, 1812, John Owen located. These men, local preachers, then moved to Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and became members and local preachers there as before detailed. The Rev. William Owen died May 14, 1845. The Rev. John Owen married Ann K.



Sylvester, September 9, 1813. He carried, as has already been stated, his mother-in-law, who by second marriage had become Mrs. Frances Nemmo, with him to Tuskaloosa. She died in great Christian peace in the town of Tuskaloosa, January 15, 1833, in the fifty-ninth year of her age, having been fourteen years a member of the Church in Tuskaloosa.

The Rev. John Owen was at one time engaged in the practice of medicine, but he gave to it less attention than to other pursuits. He was devoted to the cause of religion, and gave much time and attention to the interests of the Church, preaching as occasion offered. He tented at the Camp-meetings, which were numerous in his day, and with great liberality extended hospitality and entertainment to the multitudes attending such meetings. He was a liberal contributor to the funds for building the house of worship for the Methodists in Tuskaloosa.

Judge Thomas Owen, his brother, was also a useful and devoted man in the Methodist Church. He was in Tuskaloosa as early as the close of 1820, and a member of the Church there. In 1831 he appears on the records as the Recording Steward for Tuskaloosa Station, and as one of the Trustees of the Church, and also a member of the Building Committee, which was appointed July 18, 1831. He died January 19, 1859, and was buried in the cemetery in the town of Tuskaloosa. A plain marble slab, with nothing on it but his name, marks the place where repose his mortal remains.

The wives of the Owen brothers were members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Tuskaloosa in the very first years of Methodism in the place. Ann K. Owen, the wife of the Rev. John Owen, was a member when she came to the place, and continued a member there until her death. She died in Tuskaloosa, June 30, 1865, in her sixty-ninth year. Thomas Owen and Hopson Owen were brothers and married sisters. Thomas Owen and Dolly Williams married in Tuskaloosa, Alabama, Friday, May 20, 1823, and Hopson Owen and Agnes Williams married in Tuskaloosa, Alabama, Tuesday, March 23, 1830. Their wives were the daughters of the Honorable Marmaduke Williams, a native of North Carolina, and a man of representative position and influence, once a member of Congress from his native State. Dolly Owen, the wife of Thomas Owen, and Agnes Owen, the wife of Hopson Owen, had their names on the Church

Register in Tuskaloosa among the first, and for a long while. Dolly Owen was born May 17, 1805, and died March 29, 1882, and her sister, Agnes Owen, a little younger, died five or six years after she did. They were members of great worth and extensive influence.

In the beautiful spring time of 1819, while the Rev. John Kesterson was making his faithful rounds on the extensive circuit of Tuskaloosa, the Rev. Robert Lewis Kennon, a local elder and an M.D., and who knew by experience what work on a large circuit meant, reached, with his little family, and took up abode at Tuskaloosa, Alabama, and became a member of the infant Methodist Society at that place. He was an acquisition to that Society. He was a sweet-spirited Christian, an attractive man, and a great power for good. He engaged in the administration of medicine and in the duties of a local preacher at and about Tuskaloosa until the close of 1824. He was an efficient local preacher during the years he remained in that capacity. He will receive further consideration on a future page.

In 1822, a man of family in the thirty-ninth year of his age, and of a large frame, robust health, great physical endurance, and indomitable energy, took up abode at Tuskaloosa, Alabama. He was a native of Caswell County, North Carolina, and he entered the nuptial bonds in Elbert County, Georgia, in 1811. His native county, in the time of his youth, was noted for a numerous tribe of the peculiar people called Methodists, and the county in the State in which he assumed the marriage vows was even then a stronghold of the Methodists, and he became affiliated, by marriage, with a prominent Methodist family, Miss Sarah Banks being his affianced. He was a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, strongly attached thereto, and thoroughly devoted to the interests thereof. That man was Edward Sims. Through life, and even till his death, which occurred August 4, 1840, he was faithful to the cause of Methodism. His wife was a member of the Methodist Society at Tuskaloosa from the time she became a citizen of that place in 1822 till her death. She survived her husband a number of years. Her mother, Mrs. Rachel Banks, deposited with the Methodist Society in Tuskaloosa a certificate of her membership, September 2, 1831, and was a member there for nearly or quite twenty

years. Edward Sims did much for Methodism in Tuscaloosa. He was a public-spirited man. He had wealth, and he spent it not only in the cultivation, entertainment, and enjoyment of refined and cultured society, but he devoted his wealth to the advancement of education and religion. By October 1, 1828, he had erected, complete from foundation to dome, in an eligible part of the town of Tuscaloosa, a two-story brick building with six rooms, some of them quite capacious, and turned it over to a Board of Trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church for school purposes. It was called "The Sims Female Academy." That school was not popular with the masses, because it was under the auspices of the Methodists, and the Methodists were not numerous enough at that day to give it the patronage which it needed and deserved, and the established success which its friends desired for it. At that time Tuscaloosa had not more than two or three thousand inhabitants in all, and then the Methodists had not more than ten thousand white members in the State of Alabama. Mr. Sims continued his liberal contributions to the cause of education to the end of his earthly pilgrimage. His advocacy of liberal education did much to form a proper sentiment on the subject. He was one of the best friends Tuscaloosa Methodism ever had.

At the close of an overland journey of forty-six days, on April 19, 1819, the Rev. Samuel M. Meek, M.D., a local deacon in the Methodist Episcopal Church, reached Tuscaloosa, Alabama. For more than a quarter of a century he took a prominent part, though, perhaps, not always the wisest part, in the affairs of Methodism in Alabama. He was for a few years a member of the South Carolina Conference, having been received on trial in that Conference at its session at Columbia, December 22-28, 1810. For 1811 he was on the Apalachee Circuit, in Georgia; for 1812 he was on the Milledgeville Station, in Georgia; for 1813, having been ordained a deacon, he was on the Charleston Station, South Carolina, as one of three preachers. On May 19, 1813, he married Miss Anna Aradella McDowell. At the session of the Conference at Fayetteville, North Carolina, January 12-19, 1814, he located, and went immediately to Columbia, South Carolina, where he engaged in the practice of medicine until he left for Tuscaloosa, Alabama. He was born in Laurens District, South Carolina, August 20, 1786. His parents

were among the first Methodists where they lived. He attained a Christian experience at an Annual Conference in his native State. Having espoused the cause of the Reformers, so-called, he withdrew from the Methodist Episcopal Church in Tuskalooza, Alabama, immediately after the adjournment of the Convention which met November 12, 1828, and which drew up "Articles of Association" for the "Associated Methodist Churches," and he was present at, and was a member of, the first Annual Conference under the Conventional Articles, held, a short while after his withdrawal from the Methodist Episcopal Church, at Rocky Mount, Autauga County, Alabama. Thus it is seen that he severed his connection with the Church of his fathers and of his early manhood, and cast his lot with the Methodist Protestant Church. He was a champion of the cause which antagonized the Episcopal form of Church government. He died in Tuskalooza, Alabama, May 27, 1846, and was buried in the cemetery in that city. On his tombstone it is stated: "He was for thirty-five years a minister of the gospel, and practiced what he preached. Allured to brighter worlds and led the way." He was a conscientious and benevolent Christian. Though brusque in his manner, he was a man of tenderness and sympathy. Energy and industry characterized him all through life. His sun went down undimmed. He educated his children, and his posterity honor him. His wife survived him a few years, and died in Tuskalooza, June 13, 1853. He was the father of the distinguished Alexander B. Meek, and of Samuel M. Meek, Esq., long a citizen of Columbus, Mississippi, and of Benjamin Franklin Meek, A.M., LL.D., long one of the professors of the University of Alabama, and long a superintendent of Methodist Sunday-schools.

Mrs. Jane Sexton, who has been mentioned in another place, and who was the daughter of Randall P. West, and the mother-in-law of the Rev. Thomas O. Summers, D.D., and who was born two miles south of old Saint Stephens, on the Tombigbee River, April 15, 1805, was a member of the Methodist Society at Tuskalooza as early as 1825, and continued a member there most of the time from then till her death, March 6, 1861. Her daughter, Miss Virginia Sexton, a young lady who was much esteemed by the Methodist Society in Tuskalooza, and who was for a number of years and at the time of her death, which occurred



March, 1848, a member of the Church there, was born in Tuskalooza, Alabama, September 30, 1825.

Alfred Battle and his wife, Millicent Battle, entered upon membership in the Methodist Episcopal Church at Tuskalooza, Alabama, in October, 1828. From that time till the end of life they had their membership in the Church of their choice, and nearly all the while in the town of Tuskalooza. For many years, indeed, until near the time of his death, Alfred Battle was possessed of considerable wealth, and he generously contributed his means in support of the institutions and enterprises of the Church in which he held membership. He was a man of piety, and as a layman he worked in all the departments of the Church with diligence and efficiency. He maintained the faith, attained a good name, and his memory is sacred. Reverses came to him, and near the end of his life he lost everything he had in the way of an estate. His valuable plantation had not passed out of his hands at the time of his death, but it was under liabilities to the full extent of its value. He died on his plantation, eighteen or twenty miles south of Tuskalooza, in January, 1877.

As early as 1824 a young man and a young woman, who were husband and wife, and who were destined to be prominent in Methodist circles in Tuskalooza, Alabama, during most of the remainder of their earthly pilgrimage, took up permanent residence at that place. That man, then about twenty-three years of age, was Henry W. Collier, and that woman was Mary Ann Collier. They had married in North Carolina. That woman, previous to marriage, was Miss Mary Ann Battle. She was the sister of Alfred Battle, and she was the equal in excellence and merit of her noble brother and her honored husband. In August, 1829, Mary Ann Collier and in November following Henry W. Collier joined the Methodist Episcopal Church at Tuskalooza, and from then till their earthly career ended they were Methodists at that place, and through all that time they honored and served the Church while the Church honored and blessed them. Henry W. Collier was born in 1801, in the southern part of Virginia, not far from the line between that State and the State of North Carolina. He had received a classical education, and had passed a course of training in legal lore and had been admitted to the legal profession before he became a

citizen of Tuskaloosa, Alabama. In less than five years from the time he became a citizen of Tuskaloosa he was one of the Representatives from Tuskaloosa County in the General Assembly of Alabama, and before he was thirty years old he was elected to a judicial position, and by the time he was thirty-five years old he had reached the Supreme Bench, and was soon Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Alabama, and finally he was, for four years, Governor of the State. He had a legal mind, and was a master in legal science. He was a statesman, a competent and a faithful public servant. As a judge he was affable, patient, and dignified. His very presence and his demeanor gave assurance of a clear and a correct rendering and exposition of law and of a just decision in the litigation pending. He was industrious in the prosecution of the work assigned him, and he was faithful in the administration of the public trusts committed to his care, and his devotion to the State did not surpass his devotion to the Church, and his services in the management of civil affairs did not impair or limit his services in the advancement of the divine cause. His religion was thoroughly implanted and firmly established. His personal character was beautiful; in his heart he was devout, and in his life and conduct he was considerate and upright. He was a man of faith and of prayer. He maintained religious worship in his house, and he led in the public services of the great congregation when occasion required and opportunity offered. He was a member of one of the classes organized by the preacher, and he attended the Class-meetings regularly. He was one of the most liberal contributors to the financial support of the ministers of the gospel and the enterprises of the Church. His name and contributions were on record in constituting and setting forward the work of the benevolent Societies of the Church. He dispensed a simple, generous, and elegant hospitality. His house was the home of the wayfaring preachers of the gospel. At the house of Henry W. Collier the preacher who visited Tuskaloosa found a home and a welcome. He had the honor, as he esteemed it, of entertaining Bishops Soule and Capers, and Dr. Bascomb and other noted worthies of the Church. His wife joined him in giving to all Methodist preachers who passed that way a generous and Christian hospitality. His eminent abilities and his steady piety fitted him for and

made him a wise counselor in the affairs of the Church of his choice. Ere he had reached old age he was called by the Master to the Elysian beyond the river of death. He died August 28, 1855.

There was advent of no mean significance to Tuskaloosa, Alabama, and to Methodism thereat in 1821. A man, then about twenty-four years of age, who had been married about three years, a man of handsome features, of well-proportioned limbs and body, of cheerful spirits, of affable manners, of culture and intelligence, of high rank and of royal bearing, came to that place at that time. He came from the State of Georgia, and his chosen occupation was that of a merchant. Than that man, who was none other than Benjamin B. Fontaine, there was not, in all the ranks of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Tuskaloosa, during all the years of his affiliation therewith, one truer to the principles espoused, or purer in the life assumed, or more efficient in the labors rendered. In 1831 his name appears on the records of the Church as a Steward, a Trustee, and a member of a Building Committee; and his name is the first in the list of paying members belonging to a Tract Society which was organized February 23, 1831, and called the "Tuskaloosa Tract Society, auxiliary to the Tract Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, New York." For a decade or more of years he was the Sunday-school Superintendent of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Tuskaloosa. For the work of that position he had special adaptation, and to it he was thoroughly consecrated. The work which he did in the Sunday-school was marvelous and lasting. He was possessed of a melodious voice, and it was fascinating and enrapturing to hear him sing the songs of Zion. He took great pleasure in Camp-meetings and in revival occasions, and at such meetings he would sing and shout with ecstasy, and in the very rapture of divine things he would slap together his hands and make the greatest demonstrations of his feelings. He died in Mobile in 1851.

Dennis Dent became a citizen of Tuskaloosa County, Alabama, at an early day, and engaged in farming, and he grew quite rich. According to the Church Register he and his wife, Martha Dent, were received as members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Tuskaloosa January 1, 1831, but the manner of receiving them is not stated, and the indications are that they

were members before that date at some other Society in the country, and on that day removed their membership to the town of Tuskaloosa. In the Register for 1831 Dennis Dent is designated as a class leader, and his name is entered in the Register July 18, 1831, the same day a Building Committee was appointed, as one of the Trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Tuskaloosa. He and his wife were members in Tuskaloosa continually from January, 1831, if not earlier, till they moved to Mobile, about 1850. He was in public life for many years. He was a Colonel of Volunteers in the United States service in the war with the Indians in Florida in 1836. He was a member of the Senate of Alabama from the county of Tuskaloosa from 1838 to 1850. In politics he was a Whig and a popular man.

Catharine Comegys, who came to Tuskaloosa at a very early day, and who had her membership with the Methodists in that place, died in the faith February 3, 1831. Edward F. Comegys, who was, perhaps, her son, became a citizen of the town of Tuskaloosa among the very first settlers there, and his name appears on the Church Register for 1831, while a letter with his name appears on record asking permission, as a probationer, to withdraw from the Church; this is not understood, for his name continues, and the record shows that on July 18, 1831, he was appointed Trustee for the Methodist Episcopal Church in Tuskaloosa. He may have withdrawn the request after it was granted and continued his membership. His name appeared on the roll all along as a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Tuskaloosa until October 22, 1844, when he withdrew his name, and for some reason, now unknown, joined the Protestant Episcopal Church. Associations of long standing are sometimes terminated for frivolous reasons.

George Curling was long a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church at the town of Tuskaloosa. In 1831 he was one of the Trustees of the Church, and a member of the Tract Society organized at that place. His tombstone has the following inscription:

“George Curling, born in Charleston, South Carolina, August 5, 1785; died in Tuskaloosa, Alabama, April 15, 1860. For fifty years he was a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, filling the offices of Steward and Class Leader.” His wife,



Mrs. Ann Curling, became a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Tuskaloosa at the same date that he did. She continued a member there till her death. She was born in the city of Charleston, South Carolina, February 11, 1790, and she died in Tuskaloosa, Alabama, in great peace March 1, 1847. Rachel A. Curling, the daughter of George and Ann Curling, and who became the wife of the Rev. James M. Wells, was born in Tuskaloosa June 27, 1831, and joined the Church of her father and mother October 26, 1838, when she was between seven and eight years of age. Other daughters of these parents became members there also.

At an early day, perhaps about 1822, Charles Drish and his wife came to Tuskaloosa, Alabama, and were members of the Methodist Episcopal Church there for some years. Mrs. Drish, according to the Register, died in faith October 4, 1835, and Charles Drish, according to a private Journal of the olden time, died August 14, 1837, at Blount Springs. The supposition is that he went to the Springs in search of health, but found release from an earthly state.

Mrs. Maria Dyer, the wife of Otis Dyer, became an inhabitant of Tuskaloosa, Alabama, by or before 1819, and at an early day united with the Methodist Episcopal Church at that place, and continued a member there until about the middle of the century. She was one of the most pious, useful, and influential women in the city of oaks. She was one of the fairest and noblest in the land. She was a zealous worker and an acknowledged leader in the Methodist hosts. She led the clans and bore rule in the courts of Zion, not by imperial authority, not by virtue of crested helmets, not by selected words of glowing complaisance, but by her meekness and patience, by her wisdom and worth. She laid gifts on the altar, and served her generation. She was plumed with the bright glories of her own godlike deeds. She possessed inherent strength and goodness. Her heart glowed with love, and her face was radiant with the outlines of virtue. She had charms all her own. Her benevolence was unrestrained and unlimited. She heard and responded to the importunate call from the poor for relief, and, by her beneficence, by her unwasting alms, she hushed the clamor of the destitute. While no one chiseled her name in marble, while no one fixed her fame in monumental piles, while no one in verse or hymn or solemn strain sang her praises, she was blessed many times by

the poor whom she relieved, by the sorrowing whom she consoled, and she lives in the radiance of the truth which she maintained, and she shines in her own effulgence, and in the undying glory of her own immortal deeds. She maintained and advanced the spirituality of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Tuskaloosa, as well as aided its finances and material interests. She was the *esprit de corps* of that congregation.

Edward H. Moore was a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Tuskaloosa at an early day. He was licensed to preach by the Quarterly Conference of the Tuskaloosa Station, and was recommended by the same Quarterly Conference to the Annual Conference as a suitable person to be admitted on trial in the traveling connection, and he was received on trial by the Alabama Conference at the session at which it was organized in Tuskaloosa, according to a private journal now in hand, December 12, 1832. During the years he belonged to the Annual Conference he filled good Circuits, and he located at the session of the Alabama Conference at Tuskaloosa, January 1-8, 1840.

In 1827 William B. Neal was regenerated at a meeting in Tuskaloosa County, Alabama, and joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1830 he moved to the town of Tuskaloosa, and put in his membership there. In 1831 he was appointed class leader. At the last Quarterly Conference for Tuskaloosa Station for 1833 he was licensed to preach, and recommended to the Annual Conference for admittance on trial in the traveling connection, and at the session of the Conference at Montgomery, December 11, 1833, he was admitted. He died, a member of the Alabama Conference, at Auburn, Alabama, January 5, 1889.

The Rev. Nathaniel H. Harris, a local deacon, became a citizen of Tuskaloosa sometime before the middle of the year 1829, and was a local deacon in the Methodist Episcopal Church in that town from the time of his first coming until, at least, into the year 1833. He was a classical scholar, and teaching was his business while he was in Tuskaloosa. He preached on Sundays when he could get a Methodist congregation. He was the Secretary of the Tract Society organized in Tuskaloosa, February 23, 1831. He maintained a good name. He was highly respected and sincerely loved.

The Rev. John W. S. Napier was also a local deacon in the

Methodist Episcopal Church at Tuskaloosa for some while. He engaged in the occupation of teaching. He moved away and carried his certificate of membership with him in the first part of 1832. Mary J. Napier, his wife, was also a member of the same Church, and carried her certificate with her when she went.

The name of James Guild, M.D., was entered on the Church Register, and he was accounted one of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church at the beautiful town of Tuskaloosa; but in 1831 he claimed, in a written statement, to be only a probationer, having, as he stated, never been admitted into full membership; and he asked permission to withdraw all connection with the Church, as he said, in writing over his own signature, after a scrutinizing examination of his own heart, and upon the belief that he was unworthy of being admitted or of continuing in any Church, and deeming such a course beneficial to him and possibly advantageous to the Church. The request was granted, and his letter containing his statement and conveying his request was put upon record by the preacher in charge who received it. In October, 1832, he joined again on probation, and after the expiration of his term of probation, on May 6, 1833, he was received into full membership, and henceforward, to the end of his earthly pilgrimage, he was a Methodist. He died in Tuskaloosa, in 1886. He was a citizen of Tuskaloosa about sixty-five years. Sometime after he established his home in the city since renowned for its numerous and majestic oaks, he married Miss Mary Williams, the daughter of the Honorable Marmaduke Williams, and they made the journey of life together, one preceding the other to "the undiscovered country, from whose bourn no traveler returns" only a few brief years. Mrs. Mary Guild joined the Methodist Episcopal Church in Tuskaloosa, in September, 1831, and through the years following she retained her membership. The children of James and Mary Guild became members of the Church to which they themselves belonged. Some of the children attained professional eminence. Dr. James Guild was a patriotic and popular citizen, a skillful physician, maintaining for long years an extensive practice, a devoted Methodist, and a man of kindness. He delighted in alleviating human suffering. He made long journeys, performed difficult surgical operations,

and for the service charged such small fees as indicated that he was actuated simply by the desire to relieve suffering patients.

Miss Stella Houghton, who was born in Lynden, Vermont, December 29, 1802, and who was associated with the Rev. Wilbur Fisk who was for some years Principal of the Wesleyan Academy, at Wilbraham, Massachusetts, came to Tuskaloosa, Alabama, and put her membership in the Methodist Episcopal Church there, in 1830. In the journey of Miss Stella Houghton from her native land to Tuskaloosa Cupid, winged and armed, adventured in the way and played a part in which he surpassed his own romantic wonders of ancient times. It was on this wise: A Board of Trustees contracted with Miss Houghton to take charge of a Seminary of learning at that town, and in obedience to and in furtherance of the objects of the contract existing she came to Tuskaloosa. The journey from her home in the far off north to Mobile was made by sea. The Board of Trustees of the Academy at Tuskaloosa delegated one of their number, Mr. David Scott, a confirmed bachelor, adjudged by the number of years he had spent in that state, to proceed to Mobile and to accompany from there to Tuskaloosa the lady who was coming to take charge of their school. Mr. Scott performed the task assigned him. On a pleasant steamer the trip was made. Miss Houghton took charge of the unpretentious school by the Black Warrior Falls. But the sequel of that journey from Mobile to Tuskaloosa is yet to tell. Between David Scott and Stella Houghton there was attachment and love at once, courtship immediately ensued, and before the year was out they stood together devotees at the altar of Hymeneus, and were bound with the nuptial chain. Henceforth they were one, henceforth she was Mrs. Stella Scott, and henceforth that name adorned the Church Register of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Tuskaloosa. She was one of the noblest of that noble galaxy which worshiped God under the auspices of Methodism in the lovely town of Tuskaloosa. She was a woman of great personal worth, and of considerable literary attainments. She was an intelligent, devout, and active Christian. With kind words and kind deeds she consoled the sorrowing and the suffering, and with liberal contributions she relieved the destitution of those about her, and with large contributions she fur-



thered the Kingdom of God. After serving her generation well, she died at Tuskaloosa, in peace, April 25, 1844. Mr. David Scott was born in South Carolina in 1792, moved to Tuskaloosa, Alabama, in 1822, and joined the Methodist Episcopal Church in Tuskaloosa, in 1830, or about the time he was married first. He married a second time. He amassed a good fortune. He died at Scottsville, in August, 1868. Mrs. Vaughn, the wife of William Vaughn, LL.D., of the Vanderbilt University, Mrs. McConnell, the wife of Col. J. W. McConnell, of Alabama, Mrs. Jones, the wife of John A. Jones, and Mrs. Hargrove, the wife of Bishop R. K. Hargrove, D.D., and others, all are daughters of David and Stella Scott. These constitute a large Methodist fraternity.

Two honored names, the names of John H. Vincent and Mary Vincent, were entered on the Register of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Tuskaloosa at an early day, possibly as early as 1822. They lived at Tuskaloosa in 1822, 1823, 1824, and in Mobile in 1825, 1826, and 1827, and again in Tuskaloosa from at least the latter part of 1830 till the latter part of 1837, when they moved to Pennsylvania. John H. Vincent was born April 20, 1798, and was brought up near Milton, Pennsylvania. He was a descendant of the Huguenots. His great-great-grandfather, Levi Vincent, was born in France, April 10, 1676, and was about nine years old when the sentence of death by law on all Huguenots in France was proclaimed, in 1685, by Louis XIV., in the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which Henry IV. issued in 1598, and he found a refuge from the cruel persecutions and intolerant prosecutions against his sect in the Colony of New Jersey, North America. The best information now at hand on the subject is that sometime from 1815 to 1817, when, according to the date of his birth, he was but a lad, John H. Vincent left his native Pennsylvania, and took up his abode in what is now Alabama. Mary Raser was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, July 31, 1803. Her father, Bernard Raser, by occupation and position a Sea-captain, was born August 10, 1764, and died in Batavia, West Indies, March 25, 1804, when she was less than two years old. Her mother was born July 22, 1765, and died February 17, 1810, when she was less than seven years old. Mary Raser passed under the dark shadow of orphanage. She had two brothers who emigrated South, and engaged in

business, one in Mobile and the other at Demopolis, Alabama. She and John H. Vincent met at the home of one of her brothers in Alabama, and the sequel of that meeting was love, courtship, and marriage. The record states that John H. Vincent and Mary Raser were united in holy matrimony at Demopolis, Alabama, September 6, 1821. Mr. Vincent had been brought up a Presbyterian, and Miss Raser was brought up a Lutheran. After their marriage they joined the Methodist Episcopal Church in Tuskaloosa. The name of John H. Vincent stands on the oldest Methodist Church Register for Tuskaloosa now extant as a Steward, a Trustee, and a member of a Building Committee. He filled at the same time these three important offices of the Church, and with his associates in office, managed the financial affairs of the Methodists of Tuskaloosa, superintended the construction of their house of worship, and held the property in trust for the congregation. In the supervision of the temporal affairs of the Church he was a valuable member, and in Sunday-school work he was quite useful. In that work he was versatile and skillful, full of tact, and a good talker. He was an earnest, faithful Christian. His ideal model of Christian character was one of rare excellence. He estimated the Christian ministry as of divine appointment, and questioned the motives of the minister of the gospel who proposed to turn aside from his holy calling to engage in secular pursuits, and predicted for all so doing religious deterioration and financial ruin. He maintained religion in his house. He had family prayers twice a day, and carried his children with him to public service. Among the intimate friends of John H. Vincent and Mary Vincent in Tuskaloosa, Alabama, were the preachers who had charge of the Station, and Henry W. Collier, Mary A. Collier, Alfred Battle, Melicent Battle, James Guild, David Scott, and Stella Scott. For many years after Mr. Vincent left Tuskaloosa several of these friends corresponded with him and Mrs. Vincent. Judging the character and standing of Mr. and Mrs. Vincent by their associates, it is manifest that they were possessed of social worth and personal merit. Taking his family with him, he left Tuskaloosa, Alabama, in the latter part of 1837, and returned to Northumberland County, Pennsylvania, and settled near Milton, where he was brought up. He died in Erie, Pennsylvania, in August, 1873. Mary Vincent was a noble woman.

Her price was above rubies. She was amiable, calm, cheerful, conscientious, firm, kind, and patient. One who was with her much said: "I never knew her to speak an uncharitable word of a living being." She was a loving wife, who brought honor to her husband; and a model mother, who established her offspring in righteousness. She was free from all affectation and hypocrisy. She was wise, devout, and pure. She was a consecrated Christian, who prayed for the peace of Zion, and worked for the prosperity of the Church of God. To recount her virtues and portray her merits in full might provoke a charge of partiality, and might, perhaps, be esteemed exaggeration, but she was, indeed, a saint. Her life was beautiful; her death was precious, and attended with glory and triumph. Death, in her case, was swallowed up in victory. She fell asleep in Chillisquaque, Northumberland County, Pennsylvania, February 16, 1852. Some of the children of John H. and Mary Vincent attained to eminence in religion and to position in the Church of God. John H. Vincent, their son, and of whom the preachers stationed at Tuskaloosa when he was a little boy were very fond, was born at Tuskaloosa, Alabama, February 23, 1832. He was licensed to exhort in 1849, and was licensed to preach in 1850. He filled various appointments in the Newark and Rock River Conferences, and was prominent in many of the activities of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and then he attained to the Episcopal office. He was elected and consecrated a Bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church, in May, 1888. He is an active, enthusiastic, and attractive man, who does his work well, and who honors his high office and his great Church; and he is an honor to his native town by the Black Warrior Falls in Alabama. Now, 1891, he still lives. The house of worship for the Methodists of Tuskaloosa, which was planned by the last half of 1831, and was finished by the first part of 1834, and which was constructed under the supervision of John H. Vincent and his associates, was repaired and improved in 1886 and 1887; and John H. Vincent, the son, who was born in Tuskaloosa about the time the house was in its incipency, put in, when it was repaired and improved, a neat and elegant memorial window, in honor of his parents. That was a generous act of an affectionate son. The names and the memory of John H. and Mary Vincent will be perpetuated in Tuskaloosa, Alabama, where they were first in-

itiated into the Methodist Episcopal Church, as long as the present house of worship remains. B. F. Vincent, another son, was born in Tuskaloosa, Alabama, in August, 1834. He is now, 1891, a preacher in the Methodist Episcopal Church, in charge of a congregation, under the auspices and the economy of his Church, in Pueblo, Colorado. He has attained the degree of D.D.

The first session of an Annual Conference ever held in Tuskaloosa, Alabama, was the session of the Mississippi Conference, which commenced December 22, 1824, Bishop Joshua Soule presiding. That was the first time Bishop Soule was ever in Alabama. He was then in his forty-fourth year. He had been consecrated to the Episcopal office the preceding May. He was a man of extraordinary ability, and was a great preacher. In person he was above medium height, erect, well proportioned, and spare, his eyebrows were projecting and heavy, his eyes were keen and penetrating, his face, as a whole, was striking and expressive, his voice was strong, his presence was commanding, and while he was not wanting in the graces of humility and meekness his general bearing was magisterial. He had the air of a master, and the endowment and authority of a ruler. He was one of the greatest ecclesiastical legislators American Methodism ever had. His administration of affairs was vigorous, and his preaching was profound and powerful. The sermon preached by him at Tuskaloosa, on that Conference Sunday, December 25, 1824, was such a masterly and comprehensive presentation of doctrinal truth, and was delivered with such majestic bearing, and with such power of utterance, and with such unction of the Spirit that the large audience present and listening became oblivious of the surroundings, and arising from their seats, they swayed to and fro, and gave expression to their enraptured feelings in audible sobs and in ringing shouts. He visited Alabama and Tuskaloosa many times in the years following that occasion.

On that Christmas day, and that Conference Sunday, a day pre-eminently proper for the proclamation of the gospel, and for the solemn service of inducting men into the sacred orders of the Christian ministry, in the presence of the Methodist people of Tuskaloosa, and others who assembled with them, William Alexander, Marcus C. Henderson, Jonas Westerland, William



M. Curtis, Elijah B. McKay, and perhaps others, were ordained deacons; and Samuel Patton, Henry P. Cook, Benjamin M. Drake, and possibly others, were ordained elders.

William M. Curtis, here mentioned as ordained a deacon, and who had just been admitted into full connection in the Conference, was at that time appointed for the next year in charge of Tuskaloosa Station, then for the first time made a Station. He was then a single man, in his twenty-seventh year. He was born in Norway, New York, August 6, 1798, received a liberal education, and grew up with good habits. At Cane Ridge Meeting House, Jefferson County, Mississippi, where he was teaching, he joined the Methodist Episcopal Church, November 16, 1821, and soon after obtained remission of sins. In the early part of the fall of 1822 he was licensed to preach, and at the session of the Mississippi Conference, at John McRae's, Chickasawhay River, December 5, 1822, he was admitted on trial in the Conference, and appointed to the Tuskaloosa Circuit, which then had the town of Tuskaloosa in it as one of the appointments. At the end of 1825, and the end of his work on the Tuskaloosa Station, he located in order to visit his parents in the State of New York, and to adjust some financial affairs. He returned to the Mississippi Conference at the session at the end of 1826, and continued a member thereof till the close of 1836, when he again located, and was a local preacher in New Orleans from 1836 to 1850, and then a local preacher at Fayette, Mississippi, till December, 1855, when he was again re-admitted to the Mississippi Conference. He was a man of polished manners, of deep piety, of rare qualities as a pastor, of superior ability as a preacher, and of great usefulness to the Church. He was a preacher of the Wesleyan type. He filled the first Stations in the Conference in his day. He was a delegate to the General Conference held in Philadelphia, May, 1832. He did a great deal of acceptable ministerial work while he was a local preacher. He was acceptable and useful as a preacher to the close of his life. He lived and died without a spot or blemish on his moral character. He died in Canton, Mississippi, February 9, 1863, and was buried in Sharon. He crossed the line which divides the visible from the invisible in peace and triumph.

In the list of appointments for 1826 is written: Tuskaloosa town, *Joshua Boucher*. The Rev. Joshua Boucher was a man

of more than ordinary ability, and it appears that at one time he was entirely consecrated to the ministry, and was thoroughly filled with the spirit of religion. He had great success in some places. At the end of the year at Tuskaloosa, the end of 1826, he located, and left the State of Alabama. He was a kinsman of a preacher of the same name, who was a long while a member of the Tennessee Conference, and who died at Athens, Alabama, in 1845. This Joshua Boucher stationed at Tuskaloosa for 1826 was admitted on trial in the Tennessee Conference at the close of 1818, and in two years was admitted into full connection, and by the close of 1823 had been ordained deacon and elder. For 1822 he was in the Kentucky Conference, and at the close of that year he transferred to the Mississippi Conference, and for four years he served appointments in the State of Alabama. Locating at the session of the Mississippi Conference at Tuskaloosa in December, 1826, he was re-admitted to the traveling connection in the Ohio Conference at the close of 1827. He did some good work in the Ohio Conference. He withdrew from the connection in 1843. The last tidings which reached Alabama concerning him and the last thing which the author of these pages ever heard about him was that in 1876 he was in the State of Missouri, in extreme age, being then more than eighty years old, and had a wife, then, also, in extreme age, and that he was in obscurity and in indigent circumstances, and that he was appealing to the Masons for help, and that he claimed, without having in his possession the evidence of the fact, that he was initiated into the mysteries of Freemasonry in Tuskaloosa, Alabama, in the twenties.

Mentioning the case of one Joshua Boucher in obscurity and poverty in the State of Missouri claiming to have been received into a Masonic Lodge in Tuskaloosa, Alabama, in the twenties, calls up the fact that throughout the year 1826, the very year the Rev. Joshua Boucher was in that place, there was in the Methodist Episcopal Church in the town of Tuskaloosa, Alabama, a fearful agitation, a bitter controversy, an unseemly strife, on the subject of Freemasonry, especially on the subject of ministers of the gospel affiliating with that Fraternity, in which the preacher in charge, the Rev. Joshua Boucher, and the presiding elder, the Rev. Robert L. Kennon, were implicated, and by which they were seriously hindered in their minis-

terial work for the year, and the effect of which was exceedingly damaging to Methodism in the place. During the year the white members were reduced from sixty-eight to forty-eight, a loss of nearly one-third the entire number. In that agitation and controversy the Rev. Samuel M. Meek, then a local preacher at that place, took an active part. He was as strenuously opposed to the initiation of preachers into the mysteries of Masonry and to their affiliating with that Fraternity as he was to clothing the officers of the Church with episcopal prerogatives. The controversy was carried on in private circles, and by debates in and addresses to assembled audiences, and by published articles in the newspapers of the country. A faction, consisting of a few members of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Tuskaloosa, upon their own motion, and without any ecclesiastical authority, and in defiance of all authority, assembled and adopted resolutions denouncing Masonry, and declaring that they would not acknowledge as their minister any man who had joined the Masons and continued to associate with them; and that if the minister who might be sent to them by the Bishops did not conform to their resolutions they would not receive him, nor feel themselves bound to give him quarterage, nor pay his expenses, nor abide by his official acts. The resolutions adopted by that faction were inserted in the newspapers then published at the town of Tuskaloosa, and they were copied by the newspapers in different sections of the country, and they were commented on in the usual style of the press, secular and religious. In some instances the comments and criticisms of the press were in the spirit of opposition to Methodism. It was reported as a fact that a presiding elder and a station preacher of the Mississippi Conference, and, of course, the presiding elder and the station preacher of Tuskaloosa were those intended in the statement, had appeared in a procession of Masons in Masonic uniforms, and had listened to an oration, had partaken of a feast, and had marched to the tune of "Yankee Doodle," all of which was considered distasteful and disreputable. There was, for the time, no allaying the storm. The issue was joined, the contest was furious. The strife was suicidal, and the year was worse than wasted. The membership, as already stated, was reduced during the year, and nearly one-third the number was lost. The question of ministerial affiliation with the Masonic

Fraternity agitated the Methodist Episcopal Church, at that period, in other places beside Tuskaloosa. The following item is found on record as a part of the proceedings of the South Carolina Conference in session at Charleston, South Carolina, February 19, 1824: "Joshua N. Glenn and Noah Laney were called, and it was stated by Brother A. Turner, that these brethren have, during the previous year, joined the Masonic Fraternity, which he thought exceptional, and after *much* having been said on the subject the following Resolution was submitted to the Conference and carried by a large majority: 'Resolved, that in the opinion of this Conference the frequent immoralities which occur among those who are called Freemasons, and the so usual admission among them of persons who entertain no respect for the Christian faith render it inexpedient and imprudent for any of our preachers to unite themselves with that body.' The cases of Brothers Glenn and Laney were laid over to afford an opportunity for free conversation with them by such brethren as may feel a wish to do so. After which Brother Laney arose and made acknowledgment of his sorrow for having grieved the hearts of his brethren by his conduct—and promised that he would not attend Masonic Lodges unless necessarily required so to do, his character then passed." The Record shows that the next day "Glenn made some statements, and his character passed."

While the strife on the subject of Masonry was going on at Tuskaloosa, Alabama, in which the Rev. Joshua Boucher and others were involved, the Mississippi Conference held another session at that place, and just two years after the first, and embracing December 14-20, 1826. Bishop Joshua Soule and Bishop Robert R. Roberts were both present. William Winans was Secretary. That was an auspicious event. It would serve to arrest attention and allay strife. That was a grand time in the town of Tuskaloosa. The General Assembly of Alabama was in session for the first time in that place, having convened there the 20th of the preceding month. Two noted bodies convened at the same time in a small town, in that day, was enough for public attention, and sufficient to create a sensation. On Sunday, December 17, the deacons and elders were ordained. Among the deacons ordained that day, and at that place, by Bishop Roberts, was Thomas Whitson, a local preacher, who lived in



that section of Alabama or in the bounds of the Walker Mission, and maintained a good reputation for many years. Eight traveling preachers were ordained deacons, and two traveling preachers were ordained elders. In addition to the business usually before an Annual Conference there was presented a Report, which was acted on, from the Board of Trustees of the "Elizabeth Female Academy," situate near the town of Washington, Mississippi, a school which was then presided over by Mrs. Caroline M. Thayer, and to which, as President, the Rev. John C. Burrus was appointed for the next year. The Elizabeth Female Academy was the first school ever put under the fostering care of the Mississippi Conference.

A report was also presented to the Conference from the "Mississippi Female Assistance Society," situate at Washington, Mississippi. The object of that Society was to assist the Mississippi Conference in supplying the deficiencies of the preachers who did not receive in their respective Circuits and Stations the amount allowed them by the Discipline of the Church. There was received and distributed by the Conference, as the result of the first year's labor of that Society, three hundred and twenty-five dollars. In answer to the address received from the "Mississippi Female Assistance Society" an elegant, appropriate, and appreciative response was written and sent by the Conference to that Society. The document bears date, Tuscaloosa, December 19, 1826.

The last act of the Conference session was to read the appointments for the next year, and for the place where the Conference was assembled the Bishop read: *Tuscaloosa town, William Spruill*. At the end of the year 1827 the statistical report showed ninety-three white and one hundred and fifty-eight colored members, a very gratifying increase for one year. There was held a Camp-meeting near town, beginning October 5, 1827, which, doubtless, gave accessions and contributed to the increase. The Rev. William Spruill was returned to Tuscaloosa for the year 1828, but as stated elsewhere, it appears that the Rev. Thomas E. Ledbetter served the Station for that year. It seems that the health of the Rev. William Spruill failed, and for that reason, possibly, Ledbetter was put in charge of the Tuscaloosa Station. For the year the charge had a net increase of twenty-six white and forty-two colored mem-

bers. A Camp-meeting held near town, commencing October 16, 1828, doubtless contributed the most of that increase. At the end of 1829 the Rev. William Spruill located.

The Mississippi Conference held its annual session again at Tuskaloosa, Alabama, beginning Thursday, December 25, 1828. Bishop Joshua Soule was present, and conducted the business of the Conference. Notwithstanding the storm long presaged by the state of the ecclesiastical atmosphere had commenced and was raging furiously, and the work of disruption inaugurated by the Reformers was progressing rapidly in some sections of the territory embraced in the Conference, and schism was in the body, yet the business of the Church pertaining to that session of the Conference went on, and the additions to the ministry were encouraging. Fourteen were admitted on trial; seven remained on trial; four were admitted into full connection; six traveling preachers were ordained deacons, and seven traveling preachers were ordained elders.

At that session one, the Rev. Peyton Smith Graves, was expelled from the connection. He was charged with falsehood and fraud. He did not answer to the charges, but evaded a trial by absenting himself, and by taking refuge at the shrine of the Reformers, and allying himself with their cause, and attaching himself to their organization. The Conference, however, proceeded with the investigation of the charges and expelled him from the connection. The Rev. William M. Curtis was his accuser, and one P. Thomson, of New Orleans, Louisiana, participated in making the charges against him. Ever after his expulsion from the connection Mr. Graves had a special spite against the Methodist Episcopal Church, and he showed a special animosity to the Rev. William M. Curtis, to Mr. P. Thomson, and to the Rev. Ebenezer Hearn. Some fifteen or sixteen years after his trial at Tuskaloosa, and his expulsion from the Methodist Episcopal Church he published some communications reflecting on the character of the Rev. William M. Curtis, and reflecting upon the character of P. Thomson, in which he alluded to Curtis as his accuser, and to Thomson as in league with Curtis in getting up one of the charges in 1828. The pressure against Graves on account of the publications damaging to the parties against whom they were fulminated was so great that the Alabama Conference of the Methodist Protes-

tant Church, to which he then belonged, had, out of respect for themselves, and for their own protection, to take cognizance of his publications, investigate the statements they contained, and call him to account for his conduct therein. The Conference declared his publications "exceedingly inexcusable and highly censurable," and that it was his duty to make full and immediate restitution to the parties he had damaged in peace and reputation, and that the restitution be made in as public a manner as the offense had been committed: he had to write letters to the parties concerned, and make confession of his wrong doing and ask pardon. The letters he wrote were published, and in that published form they are still extant. Their purpose considered, said letters are rather curious productions, and while they contain confession of wrong doing on his part, and while they ask that pardon be granted him, they must have been very offensive to the parties to whom they were addressed. In his recklessness Mr. Graves published also some statements detrimental to the Rev. Ebenezer Hearn, for which and upon which he was convicted of libel in the courts of Alabama. The records of the courts contain statements of his conviction, and the law books published in exposition of law make references to the case of the State against Graves. At last, in 1848, having, in the intervening time, been tried under charges and suspended from the ministry, and then restored to the ministry, all done in and by the Methodist Protestant Church, and under untoward circumstances not a few, he, by permission, withdrew from the Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church, the fact being published. It is supposed the fact was published for information to all concerned that the Methodist Protestant Church might not be held longer responsible for him, and that she might escape as far as possible the odium of his past misdeeds. These monstrous irregularities, schisms, personal animosities, and ecclesiastical strifes attaching to and associated with this man Peyton S. Graves greatly scandalized Methodism in the section where they occurred and in all the region where they were known. In Autauga, Butler, Conecuh, Dallas, Lowndes, and Wilcox Counties, the detriment to the general cause of Methodism was very great. Who takes to his bosom and therein nourishes a viper will be stung and damaged by that which he feeds, protects, and caresses. The Methodist Protestant

Church which interposed her protection to Peyton Smith Graves, a fugitive from ecclesiastical justice, and accepted in her interest his championship in disrupting the Church from whose judicial sentence he fled, paid at last the penalty of her unwise course; she found, when it was too late to rid herself of the stigma, that he was to her a moral upas whose influence was exceedingly deleterious, and she had to get rid of him, if not in mercy to him, at least in mercy and in justice to herself. Truth will assert itself, and justice will, eventually, be vindicated. The act of the Mississippi Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in expelling Peyton S. Graves from the connection has been thoroughly vindicated.

At that session of the Conference at Tuskaloosa, Alabama, beginning Christmas day, 1828, there issued the twilight of a new era. There and then was inaugurated the work of education in Alabama by the Methodist Episcopal Church. There and then "The Sims Female Academy" was reported to the Conference by the Board of Trustees as completed and on the threshold of its literary career. There and then the Conference, having received liberal offers and encouraging guarantees from persons residing at and around La Grange, Alabama, for erecting and sustaining a Male College, and having before them a proposition to unite with the Tennessee Annual Conference in the enterprise, appointed commissioners to select and secure a site, draft a Constitution, and appoint Trustees for said College. In due course and in due process La Grange College was in existence and in operation.

The Rev. Robert L. Kennon was the preacher in charge of Tuskaloosa Station for 1829 and 1830. Some one, not a member of any Church, writing from Tuskaloosa, Alabama, August 17, 1829, to the *Christian Advocate and Journal* and *Zion's Herald*, and enclosing, to the Editors, Ten dollars as a donation to the "Publishing Fund," and signing himself a "Friend to Religion and Methodism," gave his estimate of the numerical strength, financial ability, and the standard of benevolence of the Methodists of Tuskaloosa. His estimate of the benevolence of the Methodists of the place was not very flattering. He stated that there was a Methodist Church at Tuskaloosa, having, according to his information, seventy or eighty white members; that a number of them were well able to contribute largely to the enterprises



established for the promotion of the interests of the Church; that he had looked over the published list of contributors to the "Publishing Fund" for the names of Methodists at Tuskaloosa, and had looked in vain; and that he had two objects in view in making his small contribution, first, to throw in his mite to the holy cause, and, second, to arouse, *if possible*, the members of the Methodist Church at Tuskaloosa from their lethargy, and induce them, in the discharge of their bounden duty, to contribute of their means for the dissemination of religious knowledge through the publications of the Church.

The Minutes of the Mississippi Conference furnished for publication at the close of 1830 were defective in that they did not contain the numbers in Society at the close of that year. It is manifest that there was not any increase in the membership at Tuskaloosa for 1829 and 1830. The Society did not fully hold its own during those two years. It was a time of great agitation, and no doubt great wisdom and skill were required to conserve matters and maintain integrity.

At the close of Dr. Kennon's term of two years, the Mississippi Conference met again at Tuskaloosa, Alabama, Tuesday, November 24, 1830, and adjourned *sine die*, Friday, December 4, 1830, having been in session eleven days. That was a long and perplexing session. The situation had to be carefully reviewed, and the interests of the hour called for wise adjustments of affairs. An Agent was appointed for La Grange College. There was no Bishop present, and consequently there were no ordination services. A large number of preachers were elected deacons and elders, but none were ordained because no Bishop was present to perform the service. That was the fourth session of the Mississippi Conference which had been held at the town of Tuskaloosa, Alabama, in six years.

The Rev. Robert L. Walker was appointed in charge of the Tuskaloosa Station for 1831 and 1832. In a letter written by Mrs. Mary Vincent to friends in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and bearing date, Tuskaloosa, Alabama, June 12, 1832, are these words: "Our town is improving rapidly, but Zion is languishing. O, for more true, heartfelt religion! Yesterday we had an excellent meeting. The house was crowded with a very serious and attentive congregation. We feel the need of our pastor. I think he is calculated to do much good here, though I am fearful

we put too much dependence where we should not. I hope Brother Walker has been much with you. It will be a great gratification to hear from you by him." The Rev. Robert L. Walker, here mentioned by that godly woman, Mrs. Mary Vincent, then one of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Tuskaloosa, as "our pastor" was in Philadelphia through the month of May, 1832, in attendance on the General Conference, and he had not gotten back to Tuskaloosa, Alabama, when the letter of Sister Vincent to friends in Philadelphia was written. The General Conference session and the trip going to and returning from it consumed about three months of the time of the delegates who lived in Alabama. The latter part of 1832 was prosperous in the Tuskaloosa Station, and at the close of the year Brother Walker reported the membership at one hundred and ninety-five white and two hundred and twenty-nine colored members. A Camp-meeting held below town October 18-25, 1832, resulted in forty-nine accessions to the membership of white persons. The piety of the Church was deepened, her spirituality and her membership increased in that day by Camp-meetings. The members of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Tuskaloosa may not have been very generous in contributing to the "Publishing Fund" of the Church, but they did contribute with a princely liberality to the support of Camp-meetings and Annual Conferences. They held and maintained one or more Camp-meetings every year, and entertained an Annual Conference every two years for eight or ten years in succession. They certainly did a generous part on that behalf. Their hospitality abounded. Has any other place in Alabama ever equaled Tuskaloosa in taking care of Annual Conferences? In Christian hospitality Tuskaloosa is not excelled.

The history of Tuskaloosa Methodism would be incomplete were no account taken of the membership of Africans at that place. Through all that period of eight years of the Tuskaloosa Station now passing in review the roll of colored members of the Methodist Episcopal Church was longer than the roll of white members. The white members numbered sixty-eight at the beginning of the period and one hundred and ninety-five at the close of the period. The colored members numbered seventy-one at the beginning of the period and two hundred and twenty-nine at the close. The white and colored members were.

under the same ministry. He who preached to the one preached to the other; he who administered the ecclesiastical affairs of the one administered the ecclesiastical affairs of the other. The two classes, the white and the colored, met for religious service at different hours, but they were under the care of the same preacher. The great body of the colored members were the slaves of the white members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. On the Register for 1831 are found the names of the preachers, exhorters, and class leaders. York Fontaine, Robin Smith, Peter Banks, and Webster Banks are named as local preachers; Jack Dearing is named as an exhorter; David Collier and Jack Guild are named as class leaders. The Register shows a larger number of colored than of white members expelled. There were at least two reasons why more were expelled among the colored than among the white members. The Discipline could be administered with less friction with the colored than with the white members. It was not as difficult to arraign a colored member for immorality as it was to arraign a white member. The colored members did not have as keen perception, and as clear an apprehension of the enormity of offenses as the white citizens, and hence a greater number of them violated their vows and committed crimes. The colored members did not have as great facilities for concealing their sins as the white members, hence more of them were caught. The crimes for which the colored members were expelled are given in the Record, and are named immorality, intemperance, uncleanness, fighting, stealing, lying. Many of them were moral, honest, and temperate, true and truthful, pure and pious. Some of them are reported in the Register as having died in peace and in faith. Many of them upon dying were translated to the home of the pure and the good.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE ENLARGEMENT AND ADVANCEMENT OF THE WORK OF METHODISM IN ALABAMA.

THE Marengo Circuit first appeared for the year 1826. The name of the Circuit indicated the center of the Territory which it was to occupy. It was to embrace Marengo County, Alabama, and the points which touched thereabout. The Circuit included a part of Wilcox County, and at certain points, for a time, went into Clarke, Greene, Perry, and Sumter. Lines in that day were not well established, and in the work of the Church boundaries were indefinite. Previous to the organization of the Marengo Circuit the Territory which it was to embrace had been touched on its various sides and penetrated by the Tombecbee, Cahawba, Tuskaloosa, and Cedar Creek Circuits. These four Circuits here named touched each other, so far as they touched, in the Territory set off in December, 1825, to the Marengo Circuit.

The first preacher appointed to the Marengo Circuit was the Rev. John Collier. He was born in Virginia, in 1800, and at the age of eighteen years he joined the Methodist Episcopal Church; afterward he was licensed to preach, and, December 25, 1823, he was received on trial in the Mississippi Conference; at the close of 1825 he was admitted into full connection in the Conference and ordained a deacon; at the session of the Conference in December, 1826, he located, so the Marengo Circuit was the last appointment he filled in connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church. He spent a year or two, after locating, in sympathy with the Reformers, or the "Associated Methodist Churches," and finally, not later than May, 1829, he repudiated his ordination, his baptism, and his Methodism, and declared his acceptance of immersion for baptism, and received ordination at the hands of the successors of Ezekiel Holliman and Roger Williams. He lived in Marengo County, and preached the doctrine that immersion in water is a Christian ordinance, and necessary to the existence of a Christian Church. This he



did under the auspices of the Baptist Church. He and the Rev. Thomas S. Abernathy, Sen., married sisters.

For a long while there were but few, if any, houses of worship in Marengo County, Alabama. The public services were held by the Methodists in private residences, in School-houses, under trees and awnings made of brush. At the county seat after it was established the Methodists worshiped in the Court-house. In 1819, Nathan Hawkins, who was born in 1786, on Holston River, in East Tennessee, and who united with the Methodists in Christian County, Kentucky, and who had lived a few months near Erie, Greene County, Alabama, moved to Marengo County, Alabama, and settled near a place which bore the euphonious name of Screamer'sville, and not more than a section line or two from where Linden was finally located. In the house of this man, Nathan Hawkins, the Methodist preachers held public worship and proclaimed the word of life. At his house, in 1823, before the Marengo Circuit was formed, the Rev. Henry P. Cook, then the preacher on the Tombecbee Circuit, had an appointment once a month, though, of course, the appointment was not met with much regularity.

By an act of the General Assembly of Alabama, passed December 6, 1820, Commissioners were appointed to select a site for the permanent seat of justice for the County of Marengo; and said Commissioners having finally selected said site, the General Assembly of Alabama, by an act approved December 17, 1823, appointed Commissioners to survey, lay off, and sell lots at the site selected and named Linden; and to contract for, and cause the public buildings for the County of Marengo to be erected. A year later, by legislative enactment, a special tax was provided for to defray the expenses of erecting said public buildings; and in due course the buildings were completed. Previous to the erection of the permanent public buildings in the town of Linden a pine pole Court-house served the County. Public services were held by the Methodist preachers in the pine pole Court-house. From the earliest times the Methodists have worked at Linden, and thereabout, but religion has never flourished much there. In September, 1829, the Rev. William Fluker, the pastor of the Baptist Church at Linden, was convicted of adultery and excluded from the Church. He had for several terms represented the County in the Legislature. The

downfall of that preacher of the gospel brought scandal on the Church and great harm to religion. The Christian cause has not recovered from that damage to this day. The perpetration of sin, especially the sin of adultery, by a preacher of any denomination of Christians scandalizes religion and emboldens infidelity.

At an early day a Methodist Society was organized in a School-house about one mile from the present Old Spring Hill. By that Society a Meeting House was built of hewed logs, probably about 1827, and the place was called Mount Zion. That Society was composed at the first of intelligent, thrifty, and liberal citizens. Daniel Curtis, Thomas R. Curtis, and several members of the Curtis families, and Jane Lucy and her daughters were members at Mount Zion in the time of the building of the first Meeting House there. Enoch James, a local preacher, and John Tagart, a local preacher, were members there at an early day, and at a little later date John and Jake McCarty and their families, and the families of Raif Grayson, Martin Wilson, and James Renfroe were added to that Society. William McAlister and John Boyd were there in the early days. Later still came others who were most devoted Methodists, and whose liberal views, generous acts, and magnanimous support of the institutions of the Church contributed much to the elevation of religion and the perpetuation of the influence of the Methodist Episcopal Church in that section of Alabama. Daniel Curtis was the class leader at Mount Zion at an early day, and a good class leader has ever contributed much to the spirituality of a Society.

At various points in the territory of the Marengo Circuit Societies were organized as communities formed and opportunity offered. Camp-meetings commenced in that section of the State at an early day. A Camp-ground was established at Mount Zion in 1828, or in 1829, and Camp-meetings were held there annually for many years, and they were attended with great religious power and achieved grand results.

The preacher for Marengo Circuit for 1827 was the Rev. John Griffing Jones. That was his first and last work in Alabama. He did a good work and made a lasting impression on that Circuit. He was born in Jefferson County, Mississippi Territory, August 23, 1804. Just after he had passed seventeen summers he was, as a seeker of religion, admitted into the

Methodist Episcopal Church, and in three or four months thereafter he was pardoned of guilt and filled with love imparted by the Holy Ghost; as the days passed peace gave place to doubts, and then doubts subsided and assurance ensued; and subsequently, though in the same year, he attained a pure heart. By a District Conference at Bethel Camp-ground, in Wilkinson County, Mississippi, October 9, 1824, he was licensed to preach, and was recommended to the Annual Conference for admission on trial. At the session of the Mississippi Conference at Tuskaloosa, Alabama, December 24, 1824, his recommendation was presented and he was admitted. At the session of the Conference at Tuskaloosa, Alabama, beginning December 14, 1826, he was admitted into full connection, and on Sunday, December 17, he was ordained a deacon by Bishop Robert R. Roberts; and at the session of the Conference at Tuskaloosa, on Sunday, December 28, 1828, in the presence of the Conference and the congregation, Bishop Joshua Soule ordained him an elder. He was a delegate to a number of the General Conferences of his Church. He read, studied, and wrote much. He knew the Scriptures thoroughly. He was a man of prayer and of piety. He wrote a History of Methodism in the Mississippi Conference which is a very valuable work, and well written. He deserves a monument for that work, and it is a monument itself. He continued a member of the Mississippi Conference till the close of his earthly pilgrimage. On October 1, 1888, he left these earthly shores and entered into the mansions on high.

The Rev. Thomas S. Abernathy and the Rev. John A. Cotton were the preachers on the Marengo Circuit in 1828. That year there was a revival in that Circuit such as had not been in that country before, and over one hundred were added to the Society; and Preston Cooper, a young man of neatness and of industry, was licensed to preach and recommended from that Circuit as a suitable person to be admitted on trial in the traveling connection, and at the session of the Mississippi Conference at Tuskaloosa, Alabama, December 25, 1828, he was admitted on trial.

Hugh McPhail and John Bilbo were the preachers on the Marengo Circuit for 1829. That was the first and the last year of itinerant work by these two men in Alabama. They had for

the year on the Circuit a moderate increase of white members and a considerable decrease in colored members. The Rev. Hugh McPhail had been living as a local preacher in the section of Alabama embraced in the Marengo Circuit for a number of years, and he had just been re-admitted to the traveling connection by the Mississippi Conference when he was appointed in charge of the Marengo Circuit. At the end of the year he located again, and lived in the bounds of the Marengo Circuit, or in the surrounding region thereof for a long while, exercising as a local preacher, and administering medicine for a livelihood, and finally he removed to Mississippi, in which State he died. In December, 1811, he was admitted on trial in the South Carolina Conference, and in due course as provided in the Discipline he was admitted into full connection, and ordained deacon and elder. For the years 1816 and 1817 he was a member of the Tennessee Conference, and at the session of that Conference beginning October 30, 1817, he located, and then moved to Alabama. He was a good man and a good preacher, but he was too anxious about pecuniary interests to continue in the itinerant work long at a time.

For 1830 the Marengo Circuit was served by the Rev. Daniel D. Brewer and the Rev. Joseph P. Sneed. They were good men and true, but at that time they were without much experience and without great attainments, and it is not to be supposed that they succeeded on the Circuit in anything beyond ordinary achievements. The Rev. Joseph P. Sneed had just been admitted on trial in the Mississippi Conference, and that was his first Circuit. He made a faithful and successful preacher. He was an itinerant preacher from the time he entered the Mississippi Conference on trial December 17, 1829, till he died, November 21, 1881, except from the first of 1846 till the last of 1855, during which time he was a local preacher. He preached in Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas. In the prosecution of the work of the ministry he encountered dangers, endured hardships, and suffered privations, but to encounter, endure, and suffer he esteemed a privilege. Dismal swamps with hooting owls, hissing adders, prowling beasts of prey, and deathful miasma, and boundless prairies with unbroken solitude never daunted his courage, nor dampened his zeal, nor arrested his going. He moved grandly on in



his great mission in bearing a message of redemption and salvation to the wandering and the lost. For more than a quarter of a century he possessed in his own personal experience and enjoyed in his own life the blessing of entire sanctification. He died, at the date already mentioned, in Milam County, Texas, and was buried at Port Sullivan.

The preachers on the Marengo Circuit for 1831 were Eugene V. Le Vert and Ewell Petty; and for 1832 Daniel Monaghan and Hazlewood B. Farish.

At Tuscumbia, the town by the Big Spring five or six miles from the lower end of Muscle Shoals, subscription to a fund was secured, in 1826, to build, at that place, a Meeting-house for the use of the Methodists; and in September, 1827, the gratifying announcement was made that the Meeting-house provided by the subscribed fund, a building sixty by thirty-six feet and containing a spacious gallery, had been erected and was complete from foundation to roof. In July, just two or three months before the announcement of the completion of the Meeting-house was made, a few women organized themselves in a band to fast and pray for a revival, and while the godly women were fasting and praying a revival work deep in its nature and extending over that section of the Tennessee Valley went on, and at the altar of the Methodist congregation at Tuscumbia gathered large numbers of mourners, many of whom were justified and received into the Society under the provisions of the Discipline, and while joy filled the hearts of the worshipers, songs of praise and shouts of victory were heard in the assembly of the saints.

Under these circumstances, the house of worship just completed, and true piety and a genuine revival prevailing, the Tennessee Conference held its session at Tuscumbia, beginning November 22, 1827. Unusual love, harmony, and peace prevailed at that session of the Annual Conference. The Conference Sunday was a great day, notwithstanding it was a cloudy, cold, and rainy day; twelve deacons and seven elders were ordained. Bishop Joshua Soule presided over the deliberations of the Conference. On Sunday he delivered a grand sermon, lifting up an ensign upon the land, and showing the people the way wherein they might walk, and the thing which they might do. Less than two months before that, on the third day of October of that year, the degree of Doctor of Divinity had been

conferred on him by the University of Nashville. At that session of the Conference Tuscumbia was made a Station, and the Rev. Francis A. Owen appointed to serve it for 1828, and he was returned there for 1829.

The salvation of the Lord was seen in Tuscumbia during 1828. At a Quarterly Meeting held there July 25, of that year, a number were received into the fellowship of the Church, and during the following months an unusual work of reformation and of grace, such, it was thought, as never before was witnessed in that place, progressed without abatement, and a large number were added to the Society.

In June, 1828, the Tuscumbia Sunday School Union, auxiliary to the Sunday School Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was organized, and Managers were appointed, consisting of the following persons: Dr. George Morris, John Southerland, Jr., William Manifee, Thomas Wooldridge, D. S. Goodloe, Sen., and B. Merrill. There were connected with this Sunday-school, when first organized, one Superintendent, six male and six female teachers, and seventy-eight scholars. Only two of the teachers were professors of religion when first they connected themselves with the work of the school. In September, 1829, when it had been in operation about eighteen months, the school had increased in the number of pupils, and was, under the divine blessing, in a prosperous condition. Up to that date thirty-seven of the scholars had made a profession of religion, and had, after their justification, generally evinced that stability and firmness in the Christian cause creditable to those of maturer years; and the ten teachers, who when they entered the school were without faith and without renewing grace, had obtained the grace of regeneration, and were triumphant in Christian experience.

The preacher for Tuscumbia Station for 1830 was the Rev. Robert Paine. He was also Superintendent of La Grange College. He served the two together, though they were about ten miles apart.

For 1831 the Rev. Ambrose F. Driskill was at Tuscumbia, and for 1832 the Rev. Pleasant B. Robinson was stationed at Tuscumbia.

It is a fact not without its significance that from the close of the first year as a Station to the close of 1831 Tuscumbia had

an annual and continued decline in its membership both white and colored. At the close of 1828 there were reported at Tusculumbia one hundred and fifty-six white and ninety-four colored members; at the close of 1831 there were seventy-two white and thirty-seven colored members. During the year 1832 there was a gain of nine white and three colored members. After five years' work there were not half as many members at the town of Tusculumbia as there were at the end of one year.

There was a Paint Rock Circuit on the river of that name, which continued for three years beginning with 1824; there was a Saint Clair Circuit in the county of that name for 1826 and 1827; the town of Claiborne, in Monroe County, Alabama, was a Station for 1827, and then again for 1830; the Oakmulgee Circuit first appeared for 1829; the Prairie Circuit first appeared for 1830. None of these appointments has had separate notice, but as they were all in the bounds of territory which has passed in review in connection with other Circuits, and as they all were only temporary, except the last two named, it is not necessary to give them special consideration.

Florence, on the Tennessee River, was first made a Station for 1829, with the Rev. William P. Kendrick as preacher. According to the best testimony accessible, a Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized at that place in 1822, and of the following persons: John Cox, a local preacher, Mrs. Frances Cox, Miss Mary Cox, Thomas L. Cox, James Cox, Dr. Shadrach Nye, John Kerr, and Joseph Paddleford. After that Society was organized, and the same year, Thomas Farmer and Elizabeth Farmer, husband and wife, and Jacob Ellinger, a local preacher, moved to Florence, and being Methodists before they came, they united with the Society there. Farmer was a shoemaker, and Ellinger, in addition to being a local preacher, was a silversmith. A large room of a log house, the residence of John Cox, and the front room of the residence of Thomas Farmer, which was used as a shoe-shop, served, as occasion required, as a place of meeting to hear preaching and to hold class-meetings. These rooms were used for divine worship by the Methodists till a Church was built in 1826. The first Church built there was on what was then the west side of the town, and in size was about thirty by twenty-four feet. That house was afterward moved to where the Methodist Church now, 1891, stands.

For 1823 a new Circuit was put in the list of appointments, and named Florence, and Nathaniel R. Jarratt, the son of a Methodist preacher, and then about twenty-two years old, was the preacher on that new Circuit. He located, an act which, after it was too late to undo, he regretted. He died in the State of Mississippi, in the first month of 1862. At the end of one year the name of the new Circuit was changed from that of Florence to Cypress. Henceforth till it was made a Station, Florence was in the Cypress Circuit; and for 1824, the preachers for that place and that Circuit were George W. Morris, and James W. Allen; for 1825, Thomas Madden; for 1826, Jeremiah Jackson, and Francis A. Jarratt; for 1827, Elias Tidwell and William M. Holliman; for 1828, William M. Holliman and John W. Jones. During 1828 a grand revival swept through the Cypress Circuit. In August of that year a Camp-meeting was held near Florence, by the Methodists, at which upward of one hundred persons were brought to a knowledge of the pardoning love of Christ; and immediately after that meeting a gracious revival took place at the town of Florence, in which fifty-five members were added to the Methodist Episcopal Church at that place, while a goodly number were added to the Presbyterian Church there. Other Camp-meetings were held in the bounds of the Cypress Circuit, and that year there were between two and three hundred members added to the Methodist Episcopal Church in that Circuit. That grand revival and large increase in the membership at Florence induced that place to attempt to provide for a preacher all their own, and at the end of the Conference year Florence was made a Station and the Cypress Circuit, for the time being, went on without it. The Cypress Circuit for the series of years beginning with its organization at the close of 1822 to the close of 1828 had a steady growth in membership. At the end of the first year of its existence there were reported in its bounds one hundred and seventy-seven white and thirty-one colored members, and at the close of 1828 the number was five hundred and ninety-eight white and seventy-six colored members. At that period the revival culminated, and for the next four years, or from that time till the close of 1832 the Circuit did not more than hold its own in numbers. The Cypress Circuit was named for a large creek of that name which forms a junction with the Tennessee River not far from the town of Florence.



John Cox, the local preacher, and the leading man in that first Society at Florence, was born at Portsmouth, England, and was inducted into Methodism and licensed a local preacher under the administration of the Wesleyan Methodists. It is not known exactly when he came to America. He was in Marshall County, Kentucky, as early as 1808, and lived in Nashville, Tennessee, in the first part of 1821, and from there he moved to Florence, Alabama. He was, in addition to being a local preacher, the class leader of that first Society in Florence, and he was well qualified for and admirably adapted to the duties of that office. He knew the Scriptures, and was pious and zealous. His class-meetings were profitable and edifying. He was a tower of strength. Mrs. Frances Cox was the wife of John Cox, the local preacher, and the mother of Miss Mary Cox, Thomas L. Cox, and James Cox. She was born in England, and was the daughter of the Rev. Thomas Longley, who was one of the preachers and expounders of God's Holy Word, under the care and in connection with John Wesley, and who was named by Mr. Wesley in his Deed of Declaration made and signed February 28, 1784. She was prompt and punctual in attendance upon the services of the Church, and was a woman of beautiful Christian character, amiable, humble, pious, and pure. Miss Mary Cox demonstrated her faith, and attested her fidelity by searching out the poor and caring for them, and by visiting and nursing the sick. By marriage she became Mrs. George, and she last lived in Selma, Alabama. She departed hence to heaven, whither, by her alms and prayers, her memorial had preceded her. Thomas L. Cox was about thirteen years old when that Society at Florence was organized. He joined the Methodist Episcopal Church in Nashville, Tennessee, about one year before he became a member of that Society at Florence. In 1833 he was licensed to preach, and in November of that year he was received on trial in the Tennessee Conference, and immediately transferred to the Alabama Conference, and for 1834 he was on the Buttahatchee Circuit; for 1835 he was on Centerville Circuit, these two appointments being in the State of Alabama. At the session of the Alabama Conference at Tuskalooosa, beginning December 16, 1835, he was received into full connection, and on the Conference Sunday he was ordained a deacon, and at the close of the session of the Conference he was

assigned to the Chickasawhay Circuit, but his work was done. On January 18, 1836, a hemorrhage brought him to the gates of death, and he soon passed through the gates in grand triumph. He died in Mobile, Alabama.

John Kerr, one of the eight who constituted that first Methodist Society at Florence, Alabama, was a native of Ireland. He came to America in 1817, and in the very year the Society at Florence was organized he was recommended, as by Discipline provided, as a suitable person for the traveling connection, and in pursuance thereof at the session of the Tennessee Conference at Ebenezer, Green County, near Greenville, East Tennessee, in October, 1822, he was admitted on trial, and transferred in that relation to the Virginia Conference, in the bounds of which he spent his days and found his grave. He attained to the full offices of the ministry, and did successful work for many long years. He was a quiet, modest, and retiring man, who never sought earthly preferments. He continued a member of the Conference till his translation to the paradise on high. He died March 31, 1865.

Jacob Ellinger, the local preacher, and the silversmith, who came into that first Society at Florence just after its organization, joined the Tennessee Conference in the latter part of 1826, and continued therein till the close of 1831. He afterward moved to Kentucky. Till life's fitful close he maintained the faith.

Thomas Farmer, the shoe-maker, was emotional, and demonstrative. He went about the streets and from house to house declaring his joy and delivering to his neighbors exhortations on the subject of religion. He died in Florence. His wife, Elizabeth Farmer, lived to an uncommon old age. She ended her long pilgrimage at Florence, patient, and pious to the last.

Thomas J. Crowe became a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Florence as early as 1824, and was an active member for a number of years, but for some reason, now not known, he withdrew from the Church, and ever after stood aloof from her communion. When he died he was buried with Christian service, and on the occasion a suitable sermon was preached by that local preacher and judicial officer, the Rev. and Hon. William B. Wood, a man who, for his work for Methodism at Florence and the surrounding country, deserves a monument.

Mrs. Martha Brandon, whose earthly pilgrimage was pro-



JUDGE WILLIAM B. WOOD.





longed beyond that of all her descendants, was for more than half a century a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Florence, she having affiliated at that place as early as 1824, and there continued in the communion until her death. Her upright life was a power for good, and in class-meetings and in love feasts she constantly declared her love of God and attested her confidence in his goodness. She was without guile and without hypocrisy.

James Sample, a brother of Mrs. Martha Brandon, and his wife, Mrs. Parthenia Sample, a daughter of Gov. Hugh McVay, became members of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Florence by or before 1826. James Sample was a leader in every good work. In building houses of worship, in sustaining Camp-meetings, in hospitality, in benevolence, in prayer, and in song, he led the active, generous, and worshiping hosts. He was devoted to the Lord, and addicted to his service. His wife, Parthenia Sample, whose life was not long, was a woman of Christian zeal and of Christian hospitality. She died in Florence. James Sample married the second time, and sometime in the fifth decade of this nineteenth century he removed from Florence to the State of Mississippi, where he died in 1864.

The style of the appointment and the names of the preachers were as follows: for 1830: Florence and South Florence, Jacob B. Crist; for 1831: Florence and South Florence, Lorenzo D. Overall; for 1832: Florence, Wilson L. McAlister.

For some reason the Florence Station did not flourish, and at the close of 1832 it was relegated to the Cypress Circuit. At the close of its first year as a Station there were sixty white and twenty-eight colored members; at the close of 1830 there were forty white and twenty-eight colored members; at the close of 1831 there were forty-eight white and twenty colored members; and at the close of 1832 there were thirty-seven white and seventeen colored members. The decline, in a weak place as that was, was very great, and very perceptible, and exceedingly embarrassing. Everything was so feeble that the order of having a Station was abandoned and Florence was in the Cypress Circuit for 1833 and 1834.

The Methodist Episcopal Church at the town of Courtland, Lawrence County, just nine years after the town, by Legislative enactment, had been incorporated, undertook to sustain a Sta-

tion, and for 1829 and 1830 Lorenzo D. Overall, a single man, but an elder, was the preacher in charge. The flock consisted of eighty-six white and one hundred and thirty-four colored members. For 1830 the towns of Athens and Triana, they together having a membership of sixty, constituted a pastoral charge, under the oversight of the Rev. James W. Allen; and the next year Courtland and Athens were put together with Allen as preacher in charge. The two places, Courtland and Athens, had one hundred and eight white and one hundred and five colored members. Failing to sustain the position of a Station, Courtland fell back into the Franklin Circuit, and never appeared as a Station any more until 1859. Athens fell back into the Limestone Circuit, where it remained until 1836.

Under discouragements and disabilities incident to ailments, the Rev. James W. Allen, in November, 1831, located. During an itinerant ministry of nine years he filled acceptably the leading Stations at that day in the Tennessee Conference. At Athens, Alabama, where he did his last itinerant work, he was released from earth's sufferings and woes, on Monday, October 1, 1838, and in the cemetery at that place his comrades buried his body. There, through him who is the resurrection and the life, he will rise out of the grave, and from thence he will go up to meet the Judge of quick and dead.

In 1817, Andrew Dexter, from somewhere in the antislavery States, located a town in south-east and south-west quarters of Section seven, Township sixteen, Range eighteen, in Alabama Territory, and named it New Philadelphia. In 1818, a Land Company, with some cash, though without a soul, located another town on Section twelve, Township sixteen, Range seventeen, and adjoining New Philadelphia, and named it East Alabama. In the same year, some parties made another town just west of the two here above named, and called it Alabama Town. These towns, all in such proximity, were rivals of each other. The following quotation from the Laws of Alabama will show the time and manner of the origin of the town named therein, as well as the place of its location, and the limits assigned to it at the first:

"Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Alabama, in general assembly convened, That all that tract of land situate on the east bank of the Alabama River, of the following description, viz.: Fraction number twelve,

Township sixteen, Range seventeen, south-east and south-west quarters of Section number seven, Township sixteen, Range eighteen, including all that part of the river lying opposite to said Fraction, within sixty yards of its margin, in the County of Montgomery, is hereby incorporated, and shall be called and known by the name of the town of Montgomery." That act was passed December 3, 1819. That act of incorporation consolidated the towns of New Philadelphia and East Alabama, and obliterated their names, and left the Alabama Town to carry on its conflict and prosecute its rivalry with the newly incorporated and newly named town as best it could. Alabama Town disappeared in the on-going of matters.

The moral status of Montgomery during the first decade of its existence was suggestive of apathy, lethargy, and even things worse. In truth, for two decades and a half the place was openly and shamelessly immoral. During that period of its existence a more profligate place was not to be found in Alabama. For the first decade of its existence there was not an organized Church at the place, nor was there thereat a house of worship in any proper condition for divine service. Some missionary under the auspices of some Home Missionary Society of that day, visited Montgomery, in 1828 and in the middle of that year wrote an account of the religious condition of the place at that time, which was published in the *Family Visitor and Telegraph*, a paper issued from Richmond, Virginia, in which the following statement is made:

"The town of Montgomery, situated on the River Alabama, in Alabama, contains about twelve hundred inhabitants, of which five or six only are professors of religion. They have a Meeting-house, which is not yet finished, though commenced several years ago. They have no regular preaching, sometimes none at all for five or six weeks together. The Bible is seldom seen or used by the inhabitants, except in courts of justice, where it is used in the way of business, as if a sight of the Holy Book would operate as a charm to bind the conscience, while its truths and sanctions are unknown and unheeded. As to religion or morality, there is little of either in the place. These facts are derived from a source on which we may rely with confidence. The condition of this town is an index of the moral state of many places in the south and west, where the people perish because there is no vision."

This statement was copied into the *Christian Advocate* and *Journal* and *Zion's Herald*, of September 12, 1828, a paper published in the city of New York, and the Editor made such comments upon the facts set forth as he deemed proper and pertinent, whereupon the *Alabama Journal*, a newspaper published at Montgomery, gave the Editor of the *Christian Advocate* a severe castigation, charging him with entertaining an uncharitable opinion of the religious character of the citizens of Montgomery. The Editor of the *Christian Advocate* in response to the writers for the *Alabama Journal*, and in defense of himself against their castigation and accusation, proposed to them that if they would furnish him a well authenticated statistical account of the religious state of the town of Montgomery, he would publish the account for the information of his readers, and do all he could in that way to roll away any reproach which had been innocently brought on the people of Montgomery. No report—statistical, authenticated, or otherwise—was ever presented, and for the very reason that none could be furnished which would be creditable to the people of the place, or that would discredit the statements which had been made and published, and under which they writhed and raged. They writhed and raged, but they never denied the substantial facts which had been published.

The *Montgomery Republican*, a newspaper published at Montgomery, and afterward changed in name to the *Alabama Journal*, announced in its issue of February 17, 1821: "We are about to begin preparations for erecting a place of public worship." Look at the words used and see how far that people were from even the prospect of having a place of public worship. "We are about to begin preparations for erecting!" That was not even a beginning of preparation. Nothing ever came of it. In the early part of 1823, an address was set forth to the people by the Rev. Dr. Moses Andrew, a local preacher of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and at that time living at Montgomery, and William Sayre, a Presbyterian, declaring that "Montgomery is becoming conspicuous for its advantages, and is already respectable for its size and population" and "there is not a house of worship among us," and setting out a document for subscription with sums attached to be paid for erecting a house of worship at Montgomery, which should be "open to all orthodox ministers," and not "belong exclusively to any denomination of Chris-



tians." July 10, 1823, at a meeting of some of the citizens of the place, held for the purpose, preliminary steps were taken to erect a house of worship, and by the end of that year a house, forty-eight feet long and twenty-four feet wide, was commenced, on a lot owned by a Land Company. After herculean efforts, sometime in 1825, a weather-boarded and covered frame stood forth as the product of the benevolence of the whole people of Montgomery. In that rough, unceiled, unfinished condition, without a pulpit and without seats for a congregation, it stood for at least four long years. A school-master, at his own expense, and for his own personal accommodation, put some sort of school furniture in it and occupied it as a school-house. The court-house was the place where divine service was held when a passing or visiting preacher happened along; or, in absence of the court-house some private residence was used, and this was the case until the latter part of 1829.

This criminal neglect of the house of God and of the institutions of religion in a growing town, where, as early as 1822, it was boastfully stated, "the mercantile business done here very far exceeds that of any town of the same magnitude we have ever known," is found in the character of the people who gathered there, and controlled the public sentiment of the place. It did not originate in the fact that there were no preachers in the country. The preachers were accessible, and could have been had, but they were rather neglected and rejected than sought for and appreciated. The public advertisements and public notices of that day reveal the character of the citizens of that town at that time. In the beginning of 1821, one merchant of the place advertised that he had for sale or exchange "whisky, gin, cognac brandy, sugar, and molasses per barrel;" and another "offered for sale six barrels of sugar, five of gin, four of whisky, four of rum;" and still another "offered in a general assortment of goods forty barrels of whisky, four barrels of gin;" and yet another had "just received a general assortment of sugar, tea, coffee, rum, wine, tobacco;" and on Independence Day, "a grand ball was given at Montgomery Hall." In October, 1822, was made this announcement: "We are pleased to hear that there will be a public ball in this town on Wednesday, the 30th inst. . . . This elegant amusement, which tends so much to refine and polish the manners and soften the asperities of life,

we hope will not be discontinued during the winter." In December, 1823, the following announcement was made: "The Montgomery races will commence on Thursday next, and continue three days. A new race-course is progressing near the village. The gentlemen of the turf meet at the court-house this day to form a jockey club. It is probable that a jockey club ball will be given during next year's races for the gratification of the ladies." Preaching and piety never find much appreciation with people who are given up to balls and brandy, jigs and gin, mammon and mirth, and races and rum.

The first preacher who exercised his ministry at Montgomery, Alabama, was the Rev. James King, a local preacher of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He was born 1782, and joined the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1800. He married in 1802. He was licensed to preach in 1806, and was ordained a deacon, by Bishop William McKendree, in Wilmington, North Carolina, in 1816. He preached as a local preacher in North Carolina for twelve years, when he moved to Alabama. He says over his own signature: "On the 21st of April, 1819, I removed with my family to Alabama. I arrived at Alabama Town, where I met with some of my North Carolina friends, who prevailed upon me to stop there for the year. My ministerial labors during that year were as follows: One Sabbath at Alabama Town—the next at Philadelphia (now Montgomery). I was the first licensed preacher that ever preached in that place. This was one of the years of great trial and privation to me, there being no regularly organized Society, and I heard but one sermon preached during the time. In the winter of 1819, I removed to Conecuh River." The greater part of the remainder of his life he spent in Conecuh and Wilcox Counties. He was a local preacher to his death, which occurred January 12, 1870. He was buried at Oak Hill, Wilcox County, Alabama. He was a plain, good man.

On Sunday, August 26, 1821, the Rev. James H. Mellard, then a local preacher of the Methodist Episcopal Church, living in Autauga County, Alabama, conducted divine service in the court-house, in Montgomery, the town being without a Church. The Rev. Peyton S. Graves, one of the preachers on the Alabama Circuit at the time, was announced to perform divine service at the court-house at Montgomery, between three

and four o'clock in the afternoon of Sunday, October 20, 1822. No doubt, from time to time other preachers held services at the court-house, of which there is no record. The local and itinerant Methodist preachers in passing to and fro preached occasionally in the court-house from year to year, though there was no organized Society in the place. The Presbyterians and Baptists likewise had services occasionally in the court-house, conducted by their own preachers, though neither of these denominations organized a Church in the town until after the Methodists had organized a Society. It has been stated by what ought to be good authority that the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized September 15, 1829, in the Church built in the town for all denominations. This statement is made by M. P. Blue, Esq., in his "Churches of the City of Montgomery, Alabama." For good reasons it is believed that the Rev. James H. Mellard organized a Society in Montgomery in the latter part of 1828. That was the year he was on the Alabama Circuit as preacher in charge, and the Alabama Circuit was the Circuit which was round about Montgomery, and to which the Mills and Westcott Meeting House belonged, and it was just about that time that the "Associated Methodist Reformers" were agitating and disrupting the Methodist Episcopal Church in that section of Alabama and in other places. It was just then that the Rev. Peyton S. Graves, the junior preacher on the Alabama Circuit with the Rev. James H. Mellard in charge, took his leave of the Methodist Episcopal Church and led the hosts of the "Reformers" thereabout. All these things conspire in the support of the statement that the Society was organized in Montgomery in the last months of 1828. The Society first organized consisted of about ten members—nine women and one man, and a number of these had up to that time held their membership at the Mills and Westcott Meeting House, two miles from town.

For a number of years that Society experienced great inconveniences and many annoyances from a want of a suitable place of worship. That noted unfinished house started for a place of worship, and which did not belong exclusively to any denomination of Christians, was still there, was still there in a state of chaos, the ownership in all denominations, and the titles in no one, except that the titles to the lot on which the structure stood

were in a Land Company. Yes, that structure was still there, and just enough of it, and under just such environments as to be inadequate to any good purpose. Invested rights and joint claims made complete the something and the nothing! The pittance of money invested, the mutual ownership involved, the endless chatter about the fraternity, good will, and Christian union expressed and sustained through the use of a Union Church made complications which the wisdom of the serpent and the blamelessness of the dove combined could not control. That incomplete structure, then under decay, could neither be held, nor turned loose; could neither be kept, nor gotten rid of. It was offered and rejected, released and retained. It was a source of friction, and an object of strife. Satan hindered Paul by the agency of the persecuting Jews, and Satan hindered the few Christians of Montgomery by the agency of that structure called a Union Church. It was a damage to all the denominations, a blight upon the common cause, a public nuisance.

Notwithstanding the smallness of the Society and the inconveniences under which said Society labored, by then the organization was little more than a year old steps were taken to secure the services of a Station preacher, and at the session of the Mississippi Conference beginning December 17, 1829, the Rev. Benjamin A. Houghton was appointed to the town of Montgomery for the next year. He did his work faithfully, and notwithstanding the many disadvantages, added on probation, and by certificate, and otherwise, fourteen persons during the year.

The Rev. Robert D. Smith was the preacher on the Montgomery Station for 1831. The work in the year prospered, and at the end of the year there were reported sixty-four white and thirty-five colored members.

The preacher for Montgomery Station for 1832 was the Rev. Seymour B. Sawyer, who was when he entered on his work there just twenty-four years old, and a single man. That was his first pastoral charge, his first appointment as an itinerant preacher. That was a year of great prosperity to the Society at Montgomery in the addition of members. There was an increase of forty-six white and ninety-two colored members. The whole membership more than doubled and the colored membership more than tripled during the year. Notwith-



standing the Methodists of the town of Montgomery were, at the beginning of 1832, oppressed with impecuniosity and absolute poverty, and notwithstanding they were then without tenure or temple, and notwithstanding an adversary at that time with malicious purpose persistently enterprised their defeat in possessing themselves of a place of worship, and notwithstanding the untoward had then reached the utmost bound, victory came to the sacred cause, and there was during that year perceptible advancement and positive improvement in the temporal affairs of the Society. The end of the distress and the end of the strife came at last, and the notorious Union Church with the parcel of ground on which it stood passed into the possession of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The lot on which stood the Union Church belonged, as already stated, to the Alabama Company. That Company sold the lot and house at public auction. The Methodists bid for the property, but withdrew from the contest before it was closed because the property ran to a price beyond their financial ability to pay. The property was closed out to General John Scott for the sum of five hundred dollars, and General Scott, though not a member of the Church, generously donated it to the Methodist Episcopal Church for use as a place of worship. One liberal man was found where there ought to have been many, and that was a joyous day with that feeble band of Christian workers. The deed was made by the Alabama Company to the Methodist Episcopal Church, and was executed May 9, 1832, by John Gindrat and John H. Thorington, Agents of the Alabama Company, to John G. Rush, Robert Harwell, Zachariah Fields, Neil Blue, Thomas Hattchett, Robert Parker, and Andrew Crossley, Trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

At the session of the Mississippi Conference at Tuscaloosa, Alabama, beginning November 24, and adjourning December 4, 1830, the Greene Circuit was placed in the list of appointments, and the Rev. Ralph G. Christopher put in charge of it for 1831, the statements of his obituary to the contrary notwithstanding. The Greene Circuit occupied the country between the Tuscaloosa or Black Warrior and the Tombigbee Rivers, and extended from the junction of these rivers into Pickens county.

In order to give the names of the men who composed the Quarterly Conference and the names of the Societies which

constituted the Greene Circuit at the time of its organization, as well as a sample of the order of the business of a Quarterly Conference of that time the Minutes of the First Quarterly Conference held for that Circuit are transcribed here in full:

"Minutes of the First Quarterly Meeting Conference held for Greene Circuit at Ebenezer, March 12, 1831.

Members present: Robert L. Kennon, P. E.; R. G. Christopher, A. P.; John R. Lambuth, L. E.; Reuben Mason, L. D.; Benjamin Williams, C. L.; William Raney, C. L.; Duncan McPhail, C. L.

Q. 1. Are there any complaints?

A. None.

Q. 2. Are there any appeals?

A. None.

Brother Reuben Mason was received as a member of the Conference by letter from the Quarterly Meeting Conference.

Appointment of Stewards.

The following persons were nominated by the preacher in charge and elected by the Conference: J. N. Thompson, Benjamin Williams, William Anderson, and John R. Lambuth. John R. Lambuth was elected Recording Steward.

A list of Societies rendered to the Stewards:

|                  |         |
|------------------|---------|
| Ebenezer .....   | \$ 7 10 |
| Salem.....       | 4 70    |
| Thompson's.....  | 3 50    |
| Springfield..... | 4 00    |
| Ray's.....       | 0 00    |
| Everett's.....   | 1 50    |

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\$20 62½

Amount of Quarterage paid to R. L. Kennon:

|                 |          |
|-----------------|----------|
| Expenses.....   | \$ 1 62½ |
| Quarterage..... | 5 00     |

Paid to R. G. Christopher:

|                 |       |
|-----------------|-------|
| Quarterage..... | 14 00 |
|-----------------|-------|

No further business before the Conference, it adjourned to meet again on the 10, 11, and 12 of June, at Salem.

R. L. KENNON, P. E.;

JOHN R. LAMBUTH, Secty."

There is a mistake in adding the total.

Ebenezer was in the neighborhood of Forkland, just above the junction of the Black Warrior and the Tombigbee. The Rev. John R. Lambuth, a local preacher, and his wife's family, Kirkpatric, held membership there. The Rev. John R. Lambuth was the father of the Rev. John W. Lambuth, so long a Missionary in China and Japan. John W. Lambuth was born near Ebenezer. Springfield, one of the Societies named above, was two or three miles east of north of the town of Eutaw. In two years the Greene Circuit was enlarged until it took in Hargrove's Church, in Pickens County, and had eighteen or more appointments. At the end of the first year there were on the Greene Circuit one hundred and forty-eight white and sixty-two colored members.

The preacher on the Greene Circuit for 1832 was William Weir. That was his second year in the Conference on trial. The first Quarterly Conference for the year was held at Salem, the second at Ebenezer, and the third at Thompson's Meeting House, July 21, 1832, where and when it was: "Resolved, That, this Quarterly Conference do concur with the Quarterly Conference of the Prairie Creek Circuit in the resolution to carry into effect the provisions of the Discipline for the support of the traveling preachers and their families; and that we do appoint J. R. Lambuth one of our Delegates to attend a Meeting of Delegates from the different Circuits and Stations in the bounds of the Tuskaloosa District in order to devise means to effect this object."

Certainly there was a necessity in that day for inaugurating and executing plans and devising means for supporting the traveling preachers and their families, and the resolutions adopted indicated that there were some persons connected with the Prairie Creek and the Greene Circuits who appreciated the work of the ministry and understood the obligations of the people in the premises. A correct enumeration of the sufferings endured and the burdens borne by the priests of the sanctuary of that day brought to them and laid upon them by the meagerness of the means of subsistence and the actual scarcity of bread would a narrative unfold stranger than fiction. The people literally refused to let the men who had sown unto them spiritual things reap their carnal things, they refused to let them even glean among the sheaves, or about the hedges. The chil-

dren of the priest of the sanctuary often needed bread, and few from among the people gave unto them. The persons and the offices of the priests were not respected, and the elders were not favored. The people were as cruel as the ostrich of the wilderness, which is hardened against her young ones, as though they were not hers. The Rev. Robert L. Kennon, the presiding elder of the Tuskaloosa District, a man of noble spirit, of complete graces, of brilliant talents, wise in counsel, efficient in administration, the noblest among the noble, the chiefest among thousands, continually going forth making the crooked ways straight, breaking in pieces the gates of brass, cutting in sunder the bars of iron for the liberation of captive souls, bringing forth to the people the hidden riches of secret places, and opening to them the very fountains of bliss and immortality, actually presided over Quarterly Conferences and departed with the pitiful receipt of five and six dollars, and sometimes no receipt whatever.

There is a well authenticated tradition that Edward Clement with his family moved to where Greensborough, Alabama, now is, in 1820, when, at the place, there were but a few persons and a few log houses, and in the course of a year or two he built a well framed and neatly weatherboarded and ceiled house, on the lot, where, now, in 1891, stands the court-house of Hale County, and as he intended it for a Hotel, and used it for that purpose, he named it the "Planter's Inn." In that Inn, on April 7, 1823, was born James A. Clement, the eleventh child and seventh son of Edward and Margaret Clement. By an act of the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Alabama, passed and approved December 24, 1823, the town of Greensborough, in Greene County, was incorporated. In 1823 the Rev. Ralph Griffin Christopher, M.D., a local elder of the Methodist Episcopal Church, moved to Greene County, Alabama, and in the neighborhood of Greensborough. Immediately Edward Clement, who was a Methodist in South Carolina before he came to Alabama, invited Dr. Christopher to preach at Greensborough, and furnished to the preacher and his audience as a place for preaching, the reception room of the Planter's Inn. In that reception room of the Hotel, James A. Clement, in the same year he was born, was baptized, by Dr. Christopher; and there, in the same room, and in the same



year, the year 1823, Dr. Christopher organized a Methodist Society, the first ever organized at Greensborough. Edward Clement and Margaret Clement, his wife, and two of their daughters were members of that new Society. There is a tradition that there were six members of that original Society. Who the other two were is not now certainly known, but the indications are that Thomas M. Johnson and Eliza A. Johnson were the other two; they were there in the beginning of things, and a long while members of that Society, with their names at the head of the list. The Rev. John DuBoise joined at Greensborough, by certificate, December 21, 1834, Dr. William Jones joined there, on trial, November 22, 1835, and Robert Dickens was received in the Church there in 1834, and other prominent members about the same time, and still others in still later years, so it is evident that they were not of the original six.

One zealous and liberal man can do much for the cause of religion. There is a tradition which says that in the time from 1823 to 1826 John Nelson, who was not a member of any Church, donated a lot in the town of Greensborough, and on it, with his own labor and means, Edward Clement built a house of worship for the use of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The oldest Deed on record made to the Methodists of Greensborough was made March 12, A.D. 1836, and was made by John May, James Yeates, and Francis Thomas, Commissioners of Greensborough, and was made to Andrew Walker, Robert Dickens, William Jones, and Thomas M. Johnson, Trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The lot to which the Deed is made is designated as lot No. Fifty-four in the plan and plot of the Town of Greensborough, in the County of Greene, lying upon the back Alley in said Town, and north of Main Street, and directly north of Lot No. Twelve, and containing one half acre more or less. It is the same lot now owned by the African Methodist Episcopal (Zion) Church. It is not known where Mr. John Nelson, who donated the lot for the use of the Methodists in the town of Greensborough, was born. His donations, and the donations out of his accumulations, have been a benefit to Methodism about Greensborough.

Mr. Edward Clement was born in Amelia County, Virginia, September 21, 1780. His wife, Margaret Clement, *née* Mont-

gomery, and related to the poet of that name, was born in the State of Pennsylvania, November 7, 1780. During their minority, Edward Clement and Margaret Montgomery went to Spartanburg District, South Carolina, where they became acquainted, and where, about 1800, they married. Soon after marriage they joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1826 Mr. Clement removed from Greensborough and settled six miles from the place on the road leading to Centerville. He moved again and settled in four miles of Gainesville, Sumter County, Alabama, where he died September 21, 1841. He was buried at Gainesville. There he held his membership while he lived four miles from the place. He was a muscular man, weighing about two hundred pounds. He was a man of decision, and of purpose. Though a man of few words, he was affable in spirit, and social in disposition. He was pronounced on all questions of temperance, integrity, and piety. He led his household in righteousness. During all the years, nearly, he was in the communion of the Church he was a class leader, and enjoyed the meetings.

Mrs. Margaret Clement died in Perry County, Alabama, in the summer of 1855, and she was buried at Mount Hermon Church in that County, and eight miles from Greensborough. She was a woman of Christian principle, and of steadiness of character.

James A. Clement, who was baptized in the reception room of the Planter's Inn, in his infancy, and in the same year the Methodist Society was organized there, made a preacher, an able preacher, and was long a member of the Alabama Conference. He was licensed to preach at Mount Hermon Church, on the Centerville road, eight miles from Greensborough, in October, 1842.

Greensborough was first named in the appointments of 1832, and was put down in the following style: Greensborough, Erie, etc., *Thomas S. Abernathy*. At the end of the year the charge was reported as having sixty-one white and thirty-one colored members.

## CHAPTER XV.

### ANNUAL CONFERENCES, DISTRICTS, AND PRESIDING ELDERS IN ALABAMA.

DURING the period of years from the beginning of 1808 till the close of 1832, just a quarter of a century, several Annual Conferences held jurisdiction and operated in the different parts of the Territory set off in 1817 and named Alabama. During that period the South Carolina Conference, the Western Conference, or the Tennessee Conference, the Mississippi Conference, and the Georgia Conference occupied some part of what is now Alabama. From the beginning of 1808 till the close of 1811 the Tombebee Charge was attached to the Oconee District of the South Carolina Conference, with the Rev. Josiah Randle one year and the Rev. Lovick Pierce three years presiding elder. As stated in a former chapter, neither of these presiding elders ever visited the Tombebee work. At the close of 1811 the Tombebee Circuit was attached to the Mississippi District of the Western Conference, and for 1812 the Rev. Samuel Dunwoody was appointed presiding elder. The Tombebee Circuit was then the only pastoral charge which in that section touched what is now Alabama. For some reason unknown the Rev. Samuel Dunwoody did not go to the Mississippi District, but was changed and appointed to Charleston, South Carolina. Who took his place on the District is not known. For 1813 the Tombebee Circuit was in the Mississippi District of the Tennessee Conference, the Rev. Samuel Sellers, presiding elder, and for 1814, 1815, 1816 it was in the Mississippi District of the Mississippi Conference, the Rev. Samuel Sellers, presiding elder. Through those years the Mississippi Conference existed provisionally, and under contingent conditions and perplexing circumstances. It was while the Rev. Samuel Sellers was presiding elder of the Mississippi District, and as such had supervision of the Tombebee Circuit, the terrible massacre of Fort Mims took place, and the Creek Indians and the British Nation waged war to the danger and detriment of every one in

that section. Sellers was the only presiding elder in the Mississippi Conference for 1816, and at four consecutive Annual sessions of the Mississippi Conference he was the President, no Bishop being present. Bishop Robert R. Roberts reached the session held October, 1816, and presided during the last days of the occasion, Sellers having presided and guided the affairs in the first and advancing part of the session. At that session of the Conference Sellers located, having completed his eleventh year of an itinerant ministry. He lived only a few years after he located. He was physically well formed, though hardly of medium size, and he was of hardy mold, though his complexion was fair and his hair was of light color. In his mental and moral make-up he was a man of poise. He was an animated preacher, a leader of men, and an administrator of ecclesiastical affairs.

The Rev. Thomas Griffin was the presiding elder of the Mississippi District with the Tombecbee Circuit in it for 1817 and 1818.

The Flint Circuit was organized by a missionary, a part of it being in what is now Madison County, Alabama, and it was one of the appointments of the Western Conference for 1810, and for that and the next year was in the Cumberland District, with the Rev. Learner Blackman, presiding elder, and for the next seven years it was in the Nashville District, three of the years Learner Blackman being the presiding elder, and the other four years the Rev. Thomas L. Douglass being the presiding elder.

In less than one short year after he left the District in which the Flint Circuit was one of the appointments the Rev. Learner Blackman came to the terminus of life and labor. He was drowned in the Ohio River, near Cincinnati. He and his wife were traveling in a carriage, and in crossing the river in an open ferry-boat, the horses which drew the carriage became frightened and leaped from the boat into the river, and drew him who held the reins into the river with them, and the powerful billows swept him down, and instantly extinguished his life. His body was recovered and buried in Cincinnati, Ohio. He was a native of New Jersey. He was about thirty-four years old, and he had been an itinerant preacher about sixteen years. Though he was snatched away before he had reached the meridian of life, he had made proof of his ministry. His parish actually extended



from the Delaware Bay on the east to the neighborhood of the Sabine River on the west, and from twenty-ninth degree of north latitude on the south to the Ohio River on the North. He preached amid the luxuriant cornfields of the State of Delaware, in the swamps of Mississippi and Louisiana, and about the Cumberland Mountains and in the Great Bend of the Tennessee River. In the discharge of ministerial duty he traversed, back and forth, time and again, the wilderness where dwelt the Indian in his savage life and barbarous habits. He did hard and successful work. He was a man of polite manners, of great energy, and of Christian zeal without any offensive eccentricities. In the midst of his usefulness and in the midst of his domestic bliss he was hurried home to God and to glory.

At the Annual Conference convened in October, 1818, and at which the appointments were made for the next year, the Districts were re-arranged, and the Tennessee River District of the Tennessee Conference, and the Alabama District of the Mississippi Conference were made, and these two Districts contained all the appointments then in Alabama Territory. That year and the next the Tennessee River District was composed of the same pastoral charges, except one Circuit, and the Rev. Thomas D. Porter was the presiding elder. That District has been described, and the Rev. Thomas D. Porter has been sketched in a preceding chapter.

The Alabama District was constituted of three pastoral charges, two of them in Mississippi, and one, the Tombecbee Circuit, in Alabama. The next year the Alabama Circuit was added to it, and for 1821 the District was still further enlarged by the addition of the Conecuh Circuit. During these three years the Rev. Thomas Griffin was the presiding elder of that Alabama District.

At the session of the Conference in December, 1832, he located, having been in the itinerant ministry twenty-three years. He started in the South Carolina Conference, and on reception into full connection in that Conference he was sent to Louisiana. He was henceforth a member of the Mississippi Conference till his location. He was born in Virginia, at what time is not known, but he grew to manhood on the frontiers of Georgia, in Oglethorpe County. He was of Welch descent, and his mold, features, complexion, carriage, and traits of character clearly indicated

his nationality. He was about medium height, sallow in complexion, sturdy, industrious, decided, and firm. His mother was a member of the Baptist Church, and his father was of that faith, though not initiated. Thomas Griffin was inducted into a Christian experience, into the Methodist Episcopal Church, and into the ministry in early life. His parents were much opposed to his engagement to the itinerant ministry, but he was true to his convictions. He was, when he started in the ministry, very limited in his literary attainments, but he was, notwithstanding that, a great singer, and a rousing, stirring preacher, fearless, earnest, plain, direct. He did much for Christianity under the auspices of Methodism in Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi. He married one of the daughters of the Rev. John Ford, who lived so long on Pearl River.

At the close of 1820 there was a change made in the boundaries of the Tennessee River District, and a new district was made and called Cahawba. By the new arrangement the Tennessee District was all north of the Tennessee River, and the Cahawba District extended from the Coosa River, the head waters of the Mulberry Creek, and the Alabama River on the south to the Tennessee River on the north, and from Wills Creek, the Cherokee Indian line, on the east to the Tombigbee River on the west, and was composed of the Cahawba, Franklin, Marion, and Tuscaloosa Circuits; and Jones's Valley, Lawrence, and New River Circuits were added to it when they were made.

For 1821 the Rev. Thomas D. Porter was presiding elder of the Tennessee District; and the presiding elder on it for 1822 was the Rev. William McMahan, and at the close of 1822 the name of the District was changed to Huntsville, and the Rev. William McMahan continued on it as presiding elder for 1823 and 1824. The presiding elder of the Alabama District for 1822, 1823, 1824 was the Rev. Nicholas McIntyre. For 1821 the Rev. Thomas Nixon was presiding elder of the Cahawba District, and preacher in charge of the Cahawba Circuit. The presiding elder of the Cahawba District for 1822 was the Rev. John C. Burruss, and he was followed on the District by the Rev. Alexander Sale, who served it for 1823, 1824.

While his parents were in transit from Scotland to America on the high seas, the Rev. Nicholas McIntyre was born, October, 1790. By his father's dying charge, received when he was

about eighteen years old, he was aroused to a realization of his lost condition, and when he was about twenty years of age he obtained the forgiveness of sins, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. He was recommended from the Santee Circuit, and was admitted on trial in the traveling connection by the South Carolina Conference in session at Fayetteville, North Carolina, January 14, 1814. In January, 1820, he was sent from the South Carolina Conference, a missionary to the Mississippi Conference, and from then until his death, which occurred August 15, 1824, he preached in Alabama. He was the presiding elder of the Alabama District at the time of his death. He was true, able, faithful, and successful.

The Rev. John C. Burruss started in the Virginia Conference, being received on trial in February, 1814, and into full connection in January, 1816, and locating at the same time, and for about six years he was a local preacher, and most of that time, or at least a part of that time, he lived in the Franklin Circuit, in Franklin and Lawrence Counties, Alabama. He was a brother of the wife of the Rev. Alexander Sale. He was a brother of Richard Burruss, who was a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Ebenezer, near Courtland, Alabama, and at one time a trustee of the Church. This Richard Burruss was a man who judged the qualities and metal of a horse with great accuracy, and a man who obtained and lost religion every year—he obtained it in the summer, and lost it in the winter. He once, so it is reported, saw the Saviour in a hickory tree, and he finally turned Universalist. The Rev. John C. Burruss was re-admitted to the traveling connection in the Mississippi Conference at the time he was appointed presiding elder of the Cahawba District. He made a greater impression as a preacher in the bounds of the Cahawba District than any other preacher of that day. He was somewhat of a scholar, having made considerable literary attainments, and he was ornate in his style, and quite a fluent speaker. He was for four years, and while a member of the Conference, President of the Elizabeth Female Academy at Washington, Mississippi, and for two years, while a member of the Conference, he was Agent of the American Colonization Society. He was stationed in New Orleans, Louisiana, for 1835, and at the close of that year he located.

The General Conference in May, 1824, changed the boundaries of the Tennessee and the Mississippi Conferences, and the Tennessee Conference was so bounded as to include that part of North Alabama watered by those streams flowing into the Tennessee River. That extended the Tennessee Conference further South than it had been hitherto, and made a re-arrangement of the Districts necessary. The Franklin and Lawrence Circuits, hitherto in the Mississippi Conference, were, under the new boundaries, in the Tennessee Conference. At the close of 1824 the Districts were arranged according to the order of the new boundaries of the Conferences, and the Huntsville District was re-arranged, and under its new form extended entirely across the State of Alabama, from the Georgia line on the east to the Mississippi line on the west, and including in its bounds all the pastoral charges in Alabama belonging to the Tennessee Conference, except the Shoal and Cypress Circuits, which were for four years, beginning with 1825, in Forked Deer District, and then for four years, closing with 1832, with Florence, in the Richland District. The Cahawba District in the changes of boundaries lost the Franklin and Lawrence Circuits, and was given the Alabama Circuit; and the Alabama District, giving up the Alabama Circuit, took in the Mobile and Pensacola Mission. At the same time the Tallahassee District of the South Carolina Conference, which had in it the Chattahoochee Circuit, which was partly in Alabama, was made, and the next year that District took in other pastoral charges in Alabama.

For five years in succession, beginning with 1825 and closing with 1829, the Rev. William McMahon was presiding elder of the Huntsville District, the provisions of the Discipline to the contrary notwithstanding. The appointments to the Indians was attached to the Huntsville District through these years. The Rev. William McMahon was a grand man. He moved with imperial step, and with the moral tread of a giant, and his administration was royal and righteous. For 1830, 1831, and 1832 the Rev. Joshua Boucher was the presiding elder for the Huntsville District.

For four years, beginning with 1825 and closing with 1828, the Rev. Ebenezer Hearn was presiding elder of the Alabama District, and the four succeeding years, closing with 1832, the Rev. James H. Mellard was presiding elder of this District.



For four years, beginning with 1825 and closing with 1828, the Rev. Robert L. Kennon was the presiding elder of the Cahawba District; and for 1829 and 1830 the Rev. Ebenezer Hearn was the presiding elder on it; and for 1831 and 1832 the boundaries of the District were somewhat changed, and the name was changed to Black Warrior, and the Rev. Robert L. Kennon was the presiding elder.

For 1832 there was a Tombeebee District, and the Rev. Ebenezer Hearn was the presiding elder.

For four years, beginning with 1825, the Rev. Josiah Evans was the presiding elder of the Tallahassee District; and for the next four years, closing with 1832, the Rev. Zaccheus Dowling was the presiding elder of this District, with its boundaries greatly changed.

For one year each the Rev. Lewis Garrett, the Rev. Robert Paine, and the Rev. Thomas Smith was presiding elder of the Forked Deer District, with Shoal and Cypress Circuits within the District. For three years, the years 1830, 1831, 1832, the Rev. James McFerrin was presiding elder of the Richland District with Shoal and Cypress Circuits in the District.

There were in the State of Alabama, at the close of 1832, when the Alabama Conference was organized, in round numbers, about twelve thousand Methodists, the number of two thousand being colored members. There were at work in the State, at that date, about sixty-five itinerant preachers. It is not possible to ascertain the number of local preachers then in the State. The above estimate of twelve thousand does not count the members of the Methodist Protestant Church at that time in the State of Alabama; and the sixty-five itinerant preachers is exclusive of the itinerant preachers of that Church. The Methodist Protestant Church claimed in the latter part of 1830 to have in Alabama, eight hundred and eighty-one members; and in 1833 they claimed to have in the State one thousand members. That Church also claims to have commenced in 1829 with sixteen preachers.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### MISSIONS TO THE INDIANS IN ALABAMA.

THAT part of Alabama within the following designated lines has a peculiar history and a special interest: A line beginning on the eastern bank of the Coosa River opposite the mouth of Wills Creek; running from thence down the eastern bank of the Coosa River to a point one mile above the mouth of Cedar Creek, thence east two miles, thence south two miles, thence west to the eastern bank of the Coosa River, thence down the eastern bank thereof to the upper end of the Wetumpka Falls, thence east from a true meridian line to a point due north of the mouth of Okfuskee Creek, thence south by a true meridian line to the mouth of Okfuskee Creek on the south side of the Tallapoosa River, thence up the Okfuskee to a point where a direct course will cross the same at the distance of ten miles from the mouth thereof, thence a direct line to the junction of the Summochico Creek and the Chattahoochee River; from thence along the eastern line of the State of Alabama to one mile above the north line of Township fourteen; from thence a direct line to the beginning point on the Coosa River opposite the mouth of Wills Creek. The territory enclosed by the foregoing lines was the last of the ancient domain of the Creek Indians, ceded by them to the United States, and they ceded it by treaty made March 24, 1832; and it was in the bounds of this territory that Mission Stations and Mission work for the Creek Indians were located, and was prosecuted by the South Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Creek Indians resisted unto blood, striving against the surrender of the land of their fathers to the white man; some of them resisted unto blood even when the time of their departure by the terms of the Treaty had arrived; and it is not surprising. No deeper affliction, no more trying ordeal can befall a people than the dispossession of their native land, than separation from the land and graves of their ancestors. It is, therefore, not strange that these aborigines resisted the issue,

though they might have known that it was folly to fight against the inevitable, and to resist that which had already been consummated.

Noted history and special interest attach also to that part of Alabama enclosed by the following designated lines: Commencing at the Tennessee River, opposite the Chickasaw Island, running from thence a due south course to the top of the dividing ridge between the waters of the Tennessee and Tombigbee Rivers, thence eastwardly along said ridge, leaving the head waters of the Black Warrior to the right hand, until opposed by the West branch of Wills Creek, down the east bank of said creek to the Coosa River; from thence a direct line to the eastern line of the State of Alabama one mile above the north line of Township fourteen; from thence along the eastern line of the State of Alabama to the northeast corner of the State; from thence along the northern line of Alabama to the Tennessee River; from thence along the southern bank of the Tennessee River to the starting point opposite the Chickasaw Island. The territory embraced within the foregoing lines was of the last portion of the ancient domain of the Cherokee Indians ceded by them to the United States. They ceded it, as the last portion of land owned by them east of the Mississippi, in a Treaty made December 29, 1835. It was in that territory and in the adjoining section in Georgia and Tennessee and North Carolina that the Tennessee Conference established Missions to the Cherokee Indians.

The work of opening a Mission and introducing Christian civilization to the Indians in Alabama by the Methodist Episcopal Church was provided for at the Conference held at Columbia, South Carolina, commencing January 11, 1821, when Bishop McKendree appointed the Rev. William Capers Missionary in South Carolina, and to the Indians. For the delicate and difficult work undertaken no more suitable agent could have been selected than the Rev. William Capers, the amiable, intelligent, and eloquent son of South Carolina. Funds had to be secured to support the enterprise, and permission for ministers of the gospel to enter their territory and engage in preaching and teaching among them had to be obtained from the Chiefs of the Nation. The Rev. Mr. Capers applied himself diligently to the work, and he succeeded admirably in a part

of the enterprise. He enlightened, and enthused the Church on the subject, and secured liberal gifts for the enterprise. He, in September of the year, accompanied by R. A. Blount, a generous and noble Christian gentleman, and who, under a commission for the purpose, in 1826, superintended the running and marking the boundary line between Georgia and Alabama, went to the town of Coweta on the Chattahoochee River to lay before the chiefs whom he might find there the purposes of the Church in the premises, and to negotiate such articles of agreement as would further the work. In October he made a second visit to the capital town of the Nation on the Chattahoochee. A National Council was held in November, and the Chiefs of the Nation in Council assembled agreed that a Mission might be opened in their country, and their children might be instructed in Christian civilization. Consent was given to the introduction and prosecution of the work, but the consent was neither unanimous nor hearty. There was strong opposition in the Creek nation to having the gospel introduced among them. The Indians were opposed to any innovations upon their customs and habits.

In the Conference at Augusta, Georgia, on Saturday, February 23, 1822, "The report of the Conference Missionary was read," at the conclusion of which the Conference gave their Missionary a "unanimous vote of thanks for his indefatigable labors, wisdom, prudence, and success in forming Missionary Schools among the Creek Indians." The effort was made to have two Schools in the Nation. One, and the principal one, was in Alabama, about one milé from the Chattahoochee River, about nine miles below the present city of Columbus, and was near Fort Mitchell which was afterward established. The second School was to be in Alabama, in the neighborhood of the town of Tuckabatchee on the Tallapoosa River. At the same Conference at which the Report of the Conference Missionary was read, on the 27th of the month, it was moved by Daniel Hall and seconded by William Capers, and unanimously agreed to by the Conference, "that the site of our second Missionary School which is to be in the neighborhood of Tuckabatchee in the Creek Nation be called McKendree."

The appointments for 1822, in which and with which the actual work among the Creek Indians commenced, are as follows:



Indian Mission, William Capers, Superintendent, with the charge of the collections.

Asbury and McKendree, Isaac Smith, Andrew Hammill.

The Rev. William Capers was the Superintendent of the Mission for four years, or from the beginning of 1821 till the close of 1824. Then the Mission was placed as a regular appointment in a District, and the presiding elder was, by his official relation, the Superintendent of the Mission. For 1825, 1826 the Rev. Samuel K. Hodges was the presiding elder of the District in which it was placed. For 1827, 1828 William Arnold was the presiding elder, and for 1829 Andrew Hammill. Every year during its existence two preachers were assigned to the Mission. The Rev. Isaac Smith was one of the two and in charge for five years. For 1823 the Rev. Daniel G. McDaniel was with Mr. Smith. For 1824 the Rev. Matthew Raiford was there with him, for 1825, 1826 the Rev. Whitman C. Hill. For 1827, 1828 the Rev. Andrew Hammill was in charge of the Mission, and the Rev. Whitman C. Hill was his colleague. For 1829 the Rev. Nathaniel H. Rhodes was in charge of the Mission, with Robert Rogers as colleague. That year closed the Asbury Mission in Alabama.

When the Rev. William Capers was appointed Missionary in South Carolina and to the Indians he was just thirty-one years old. The Rev. Isaac Smith when appointed to take charge of the Asbury Mission was about sixty-three years old, and his colleague, the Rev. Andrew Hammill, was about twenty-four years old. These men of God, Capers, Smith, and Hammill, at the beginning of 1822, entered promptly upon their work, and prosecuted it with fidelity. The Superintendent, Mr. Capers, emphasized the financial affairs, and with all possible dispatch improved and fitted up the premises at Asbury for the proper prosecution of the work proposed by the Mission. A School-house was built in which Mr. Smith opened a School. It is said that at the opening he received and enrolled the names of twelve Indian children, and in a week he had as many more. It appears that the School which was to be in the neighborhood of the town of Tuckabatchee on the Tallapoosa River and called McKendree never formulated, and at the end of the first year all trace of it, even the name, disappeared. At Savannah, Georgia, on Monday morning, February 24, 1823, the Confer-

ence, in session, upon motion, referred Brother Hammill, Missionary, to the Treasurer of the Missionary Committee for settlement of his deficiency in salary. On the Wednesday morning following, "Brother Smith addressed the Conference on the subject of the Mission at Asbury."

That School at Asbury Station, one mile or so west of the Chattahoochee River in Alabama, was an innovation, and proposed radical changes in the habits of the aborigines. It proposed to take the children of savages, who in a state of nudity, and fantastically and grotesquely bedecked with the horns of the ox, the tails of beasts, the feathers of owls, and the talons of hawks, roamed the unbroken forest in degradation, and clothe them in comely garments, which would give decency and virtue, neatness and comfort, and put them in a Boarding School. Upon the inauguration of the Mission a small farm was opened in connection with the School, and it was kept up as long as the Mission and the Boarding School continued. As late as 1826 the farm was still small, there being only about twenty-five acres in cultivation, and the stock of cattle on it not exceeding thirty-five head. The farm was managed by a man hired for the purpose. In 1825, and not until then, the Missionaries obtained permission to engage the Indian children in manual labor. In that year the Rev. Isaac Smith, the senior preacher of the Mission, obtained from the Little Prince, and one of the Cusetau Chiefs liberty to teach the native children to work. That order gave an impetus to matters, and the business of the Mission was greatly improved. The children engaged in the work of the farm with promptness and with cheerfulness, such as had not been anticipated. After the edict giving permission to employ the children in domestic labor and instruct them in agriculture and the mechanical arts, there was a necessity for domestic tools and manufacturing implements which was not fully supplied. The boys needed carpenters' tools, and the girls needed cards, wheels, and looms. Some of the girls did attend to the domestic concerns of the household, and some learned to knit and sew. Some of them became very neat in dress.

The principal business of the School, aside from the immediate salvation of the soul, from its incipency to its final close, was to instruct the children in the ordinary branches of educa-

tion. They were taught reading, writing, grammar, and arithmetic, and many of them made gratifying advancement in these studies. Many competent judges who were not associated with the School, but who attended the examinations of its classes from time to time, expressed in high terms the excellence of the work done in the School, and declared in emphatic terms that the pupils acquitted themselves with credit.

The Mission work in the Creek Nation was, from the beginning to the end thereof, environed by many difficulties, and those who had the work in hand felt hope and fear by turns, the hope of success and the fear of failure. Some of the Chiefs openly opposed the admission of the Missionaries to the Nation, and even the Chiefs who consented to the establishment of the School for their people did not pay the slightest attention to the preaching of the Missionaries, or in any way give the slightest encouragement thereto. The indications are that not until the latter part of 1825 did a single Chief hear a single sermon from one of the Missionaries, and not until then was there even an indication of an opening for preaching to the aborigines at large, and that indication was deceptive, the hope it inspired was never realized. On December 13, 1825, a very cold day, the Rev. Isaac Smith met at the Council Square, which it is supposed was at the town of Coweta, some of the Chiefs, among them Little Prince, the head man of the Nation, and about fifty other Indians, and he preached them a sermon, which, on account of the extreme cold, had to be short, after which the Chiefs expressed a willingness to hear him at any time. The venerable man of God took that for an omen of good, but the future did not realize the good anticipated. One thing, however, is sure, the Rev. Mr. Smith had gained the confidence of the Chiefs as to his friendship for them. The United States Agent of Indian Affairs at the Agency near Asbury, Col. John Crowell, had as little appreciation of preachers as the Indian Chiefs had, and while he was, under the instructions of the United States Government, compelled to consent to the establishment of the School at Asbury, and recognize its existence, he did as much to hinder the preaching of the gospel as did the Indian Chiefs.

In addition to the difficulties and hindrances which originated in the natural opposition of natives and Agent, there were

feuds in the Nation, fearful commotions, constant migrations, and general uncertainties, all of which militated against the work of educating and evangelizing the clans.

At Indian Springs, on the twelfth day of February, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-five, a Treaty was concluded between the representatives of the United States and those claiming to represent and act for the Creek Nation, by the terms of which there was ceded to the United States all the lands of the Creek Nation then lying within the boundaries of the State of Georgia, and all their lands then in Alabama north and west of a line running from the first principal falls on the Chattahoochee River, above Coweta town, to Okfuskee Old Town, upon the Tallapoosa, thence to the falls of the Coosa River, at or near a place called the Hickory Ground. That Treaty was signed on the part of the United States by duly authorized Commissioners, and on the part of the Creek Nation by William McIntosh, Head Chief of Cowetas, and fifty-one other Chiefs, and was ratified by the United States on the seventh day of March, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-five, but a great majority of the Chiefs and Warriors of the Creek Nation repudiated it, and protested against its execution, claiming that its stipulations were void because it was signed on the part of the Indians by persons having no sufficient authority to form Treaties and make cessions. A great majority protested and resisted. The party protesting charged William McIntosh, Head Chief of the Cowetas, with betraying the cause of the Indians, and selling out to the Georgians, and it must be confessed that the stipulations of the Treaty, and the stipulations of the articles supplemental thereto, indicate that the charges made against McIntosh were founded in truth. That Treaty was in contravention of a known law of the Creek Nation. A storm of indignation arose, and raged unrestrained. A party of Warriors determined to avenge the injuries which they received at the hands of the Head Chief of the Nation, and they proceeded to the home of William McIntosh, and killed him. That did not allay the indignation, but rather intensified it. Parties formed, divisions and strifes ensued. While a great majority of the Nation were united against the Treaty and against the men who made it, there was a McIntosh party. There were sharp contests and bitter strifes, and unhappy con-



sequences were anticipated. The situation was so fraught with evil consequences that the United States Government had to take steps to remove the difficulties, and arrest an intestine war. A Council was called to meet in the city of Washington, and on the twenty-fourth day of January, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-six, a Treaty was made with the Chiefs and Head Men of the Creek Nation of Indians, in which the Treaty concluded at the Indian Springs, on the twelfth day of February, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-five, was declared to be null and void, to every intent and purpose whatever, and every right and claim arising from the same to be canceled and surrendered.

It was in 1825, while the tumults created by that noted Treaty, so offensive to a great majority of the Chiefs and Warriors of the Nation, and which cost McIntosh his life, were prevailing, that the United States troops were stationed at Fort Mitchell near the Asbury Mission School.

The cession of his lands to the white man was the thing which the Indian most of all dreaded, and the thing which he most earnestly opposed. To the aborigines the presence of the white man on the borders of their lands was a constant menace, and any movement which intimated the ceding of territory alarmed their fears and aroused their ire. The cession of that extensive district of country named for cession in the Treaty consummated under the treachery of McIntosh excited the Creeks as only the alienation of home and country can excite human beings. The Indian's already intense hatred of the white people was intensified by that business of Treaty and cession, and his already existing aversion to the white people's religion was thereby increased, and the disabilities under which the Missionaries prosecuted their work among the savages were thereby greatly multiplied.

The tragic events and untoward circumstances which followed the making of that fatal Treaty, for a time, diminished the number of pupils in attendance upon the School at Asbury, and threatened a general disaster to the Mission, but in spite of all evils, the Mission survived and the work went on. The Rev. Isaac Smith, the senior Missionary, became, in some way, implicated in the complications growing out of that ever memorable Treaty, and he was thrust at by his enemies, and distressed

in his feelings. It is judged that his influence with the Indians was not damaged by anything he did in the premises, but that his influence with the Indians was rather strengthened and helped. It appears that in the investigations of the Tragedies growing out of that notorious Treaty the Commissioners of Georgia proposed a number of written interrogatories to the Rev. Isaac Smith, and he did not answer said interrogatories as the Commissioners wished him to answer, and he was charged with interpolating one of the interrogatories, with untruth in answering another, and with evasion in answering others. The South Carolina Conference, investigating the charges, found nothing against him worthy of death. On December 19, 1825, just twenty-five days before the Conference met which investigated the charges against him, and while he was annoyed by the very censures which the case involved, he wrote over his own signature these words: "The sun is near setting with me, I expect soon to be beyond the censure or praise of mortals."

The Agent of Indian Affairs, Colonel John Crowell, was involved in some trouble growing out of the tragedies and political questions which followed the making of that mischievous Treaty. He was, in some way, through his Agency, or otherwise, associated with the tragedies which occurred in the Nation, and he was entangled by the strifes prevailing at the time. He was exceedingly offensive to those who had charge of the Mission at Asbury. He was an irreligious man, and had no sympathy with preachers, and was not disposed to tolerate their work or aid their cause. In the official management of the Indian Affairs and in his personal influence he was against the interests of the Mission and against the men who had control of it just as far as he could be. He made himself obnoxious, and the South Carolina Conference, led by the Rev. William Capers, prepared and adopted a memorial against him, and resolved to furnish the Governor of Georgia with a copy of the memorial. By the Conference in session on the afternoon of January 20, 1826, at Milledgeville, Georgia, it was "Moved and carried that the Governor of this State be allowed to have a copy of Brother Capers' Memorial against the Agent, Colonel John Crowell." That action of the Conference, or something else, seems to have had a good influence upon Colonel Crowell, for two years from

the time of that action, lacking a few days, he did; in the following certificate, give to the School faint praise:

“CREEK AGENCY, January 4, 1828.

“I was present at the examination of the Indian children at the Asbury Mission School, in this Nation, a few days since. Several of the larger children have, in the last twelve months, made considerable progress, and several smaller ones, and who had been but a short time at school, surpassed my most sanguine expectations, for which much credit is due to the gentlemen who have charge of the institution.

JOHN CROWELL, Agent for Indian Affairs.”

Colonel Crowell had not advanced further in his friendship for the Mission than had the Indian Chiefs, for the Little Prince, a few days later, gave the following commendation of the Missionaries in charge of the School:

“CREEK NATION, January 8, 1828.

“I, Tustinuggee Hopaie, or Little Prince, head man of this Creek Nation, certify that I reside in the immediate neighborhood of the Asbury Missionary School, in this Nation, and so far as I am informed, the conduct of those who have charge of the institution has been perfectly satisfactory, and I have no cause of complaint. The children seem to be satisfied, and say they are kindly treated.

LITTLE <sup>his</sup> X PRINCE.”  
mark.

During the time the Rev. William Capers was Superintendent of the Mission he visited the School at Asbury repeatedly, and the children at the School, Indians though they were, treated him with the tenderest affection, and made the greatest demonstrations of their joy upon his arrival at the place. In September, 1823, he spent several days at Asbury, and on Sunday, the twenty-first of that month, he baptized Mr. Martin, the man who was hired to manage the little farm which was in connection with the School, and he administered the Lord's Supper to the few who would communicate, and he considered the fruits gathered an earnest of the harvest to follow. A short time after that day's service, there was, among the children under the care of the School, a gracious religious awakening, and several of the children gave evidence of a genuine work of grace in the soul, and that interest was had with the children, notwithstanding the Missionaries, up to that time, and for some time afterward, were

not permitted to preach the Gospel to the adult Indians of the tribe.

The United States troops being stationed at Fort Mitchell, which was near Asbury, the Missionaries preached to them, and in December, 1825, there were eleven soldiers belonging to the Society at Asbury, six of whom, if no more, were born of God. There were at the same time eleven Indian children belonging to the Society, and three of the Indian boys at the School would conduct the prayer meetings, and there in the wilderness, among savages, Love-feasts and class-meetings were held.

Hardridge, a white man, born in South Carolina, but from a child residing in that part of the Creek Nation, his wife, an Indian woman, together with two soldiers, were baptized on the night of the eighteenth of December, 1825, at Asbury. Mr. Hardridge and his wife were valuable acquisitions to the Church. They were deeply experienced in the things of God, were zealous worshipers, active workers, and influential persons. Brother Hardridge was in great favor, as a man, with the Indians. They were his people. He had grown up among them, and had married one of their women. He could speak the English and the Indian languages, and rendered valuable services as an interpreter. The first sermon Brother Smith, the senior Missionary, ever preached to Chiefs and adults in the Nation was interpreted by Brother Hardridge. Brother Hardridge said of himself: "I am a poor ignorant creature, but God has had mercy upon me. What a Saviour I have found! I am a wonder unto myself." On Sunday night, March 26, 1826, in a Love-feast, Sister Hardridge, Indian though she was, arose, and told in her own mother-tongue, how she had been brought to know the Lord, and how happy she was since she had found the divine peace, never was she so happy before in her life. She told how her own people laughed at her in derision, and chided her with the folly of having turned Christian. In reply to their jeers and taunts, she said: "Till I die, I will never quit praying."

One of the Quarterly or Sacramental Meetings was held April 2, 1826, and the next Sunday, April 9, four of the boys belonging to the School were baptized, and received into the Church. Joseph Marshal was baptized by the name of Joseph Soule, Jesse Brown was baptized by the name of Jesse Lee,



Thomas Carr was baptized by the name of Thomas Coke, and John Winelett was baptized by the name of John Wesley. In that year the Missionaries obtained access to a few Indian families. There were that year about fifty children in School, but there was on the part of the children some unsteadiness, and there was scarcity of clothing, which was furnished by the Mission. At that time there were in the School three or four Indian girls, one of whom was named Ann Capers, and another Mary Ann Battis, who for neatness in dress and appearance would equal thousands in civilized life. Henry Perryman and Samuel McIntosh were young men, Indians, of piety and promise, and Daniel Asbury was an Indian lad there at the same time of good name and of religious bearing. September 2, 1826, the time of formulating the report for the year, there were present at the School above fifty pupils. The money expended in the interest of the mission for 1826 was \$1,681.95.

Through the last three years of the Mission the greater part of the congregations were Negroes, and though some of them were slaves owned by the Indians, they were valuable members of the Church. They could speak both the English and the Indian languages, and as they could interpret they were mediums of communication. The removal of a part of the Creek tribe to the west of the Mississippi River in 1827 reduced the number of pupils in the School at Asbury, though there was during that year a very good increase in the membership of the Church in the Mission. During the year 1827 seventeen Indians and thirty-three Negroes joined the Church at the Mission, and six members were discontinued, nine were removed, and two died. At the close of that year there were in the Society at that place sixty members, forty-three of them being Negroes, fifteen of them being Indians, and two of them being white persons. That year the Missionaries preached at the new town of Columbus, about nine miles above Asbury, and formed there a class of eleven white members. Another event of that year was the reception of one hundred dollars (\$100) from the United States Government to support the Asbury School. In a Treaty made at the Creek Agency, on the fifteenth day of November, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-seven, and which Treaty was signed in the presence of the Rev. Andrew Hammill, and the Rev. Whitman C. Hill, their names being at-

tached to the Treaty as witnesses, it was agreed to allow one thousand dollars toward the support of the Asbury Station, it being in the Creek Nation, and under regulations of the Department of War. That was all the aid the Mission ever received from the United States, so far as is known by the author of these pages. Those in charge of the School at Asbury applied to the Government for aid in supporting the School, and expected an annual contribution, as other Schools were being helped.

During 1828 four or five members were expelled from the Church for negligence, and at the close of the year there were sixty-nine members in the Society, forty-three of them being Negroes, twenty-four of them being Indians, and two of them being white persons. There were at that time over fifty children in the School. It was in the fall of 1828 that Samuel Chicote, who was born in the year 1819, on the Chattahoochee River, in Alabama, and was for years an able and influential preacher and member of the Indian Mission Conference, Indian Territory, was sent to "the Methodist Boarding School near Fort Mitchell," where he remained until sometime in 1829, when he went with his parents to the land west of the great Mississippi River. At the same time that Samuel Chicote was at the School at Asbury, James McHenry, who was born on Flint River, in Georgia, possibly about 1818, but had to, under the provisions of a Treaty concluded on the twenty-fourth day of January, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-six, move to Alabama by the first day of the succeeding January, and was long a preacher in the Indian Mission Conference, in the Indian Territory, was also "at the Methodist Boarding School near Fort Mitchell, in Alabama."

The Methodist women of that day at Camden, and Charleston, South Carolina, and at Augusta, Georgia, bestowed much labor on the Mission to the Creek Nation, they toiled with their own hands and gave much alms out of their own means to clothe, adorn, and civilize the Indian children gathered in the School at Asbury, Alabama. Their names are not known to this author, nor to many persons of this generation, but their deeds are on record, and their works do live, and shall endure to all generations. Their kindly offices entitle them to eulogy; were their names known they would adorn this page; their names are

worthy to be mentioned with the name of Phebe, who was a servant of the Church at Cenchrea, and with the name of Mary, who bestowed much labor on the Apostle to the Gentiles, and with the names of Tryphena and Tryphosa, two devoted sisters, who labored in the Lord in apostolic times.

From the beginning of the Mission among the Creek Indians to the close thereof the establishment was kept up at comparatively heavy expense, and with rather meager results, the prospect never very bright, but sometimes very gloomy, and, the vicissitudes being many, the embarrassments having accumulated until they were insurmountable, at last, the inevitable was accepted, and the field was abandoned. In a General Council, convened at Wetumpka, the third day of January, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-eight, the last vestige of the claim and title of the Creek Nation to lands within the chartered limits of the State of Georgia, was, by stipulation, obliterated. The Nation was then confined to the narrow limits of that territory in Alabama which had not yet been ceded to the United States. That day the tribe lost hope, and became more discontented and restless and more indifferent to religion and education than ever before. The white settlers approached the very borders and encroached upon the narrow limits of that reduced and enfeebled tribe, and in the vicinity thereof exposed to sale large quantities of intoxicants, and the savages, as much given to sensuality as their white neighbors were given to avarice, became more intemperate and indolent than they were in former years. The Mission was envired by a new set of opponents. The property of the Mission was in jeopardy as it had not been in the past years. The cattle, poultry, and corn belonging to the Mission were stolen, and it became evident that it was impossible to keep together enough of the property and products of the premises to prosecute the work successfully. Under these circumstances, at Columbia, South Carolina, Wednesday, February 3, 1830, the South Carolina Conference being in session: "It was moved and carried That the Asbury Mission established among the Creek Indians be discontinued." "It was then moved and carried That Brother Hammill be requested to furnish the Conference at as early an hour as practicable with a statement of the facts and circumstances which have led to the relinquishment of the Asbury Mission." Brother Andrew

Hammill made report according to request, and it was ordered printed in the *Advocate and Journal*. The Mission among the Creek Indians at Asbury, Alabama, was at an end. At the time the Mission was abandoned there were connected with it as members sixteen Indians, one white person, and a large number of Negroes. The supposition is that these all went in the course of the next few years to the lands assigned the Creeks west of the Mississippi River. About the last of 1836, or by that time, the last of that tribe left Alabama.

The Creeks have been represented by those who were among them as ignorant and superstitious, and corrupt and profligate; as full of conceit and deceit. Evidently they descended from fallen Adam; and many of them were no worse in any respect than their civilized neighbors, and many of them have made as good Christians as any of the pale faces.

The Rev. William Capers, who inaugurated the work of the Gospel among the Creek Indians, and who was often at Asbury, in Alabama, was a man of note and worth; who did much service for the Church in various relations and in numerous fields. He was the author of a Catechism, which has been recognized as of superior merit; and he was the firm friend of the slaves of the United States; was the founder of Missions to the slaves of his native State; and was elected and consecrated a Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at the first General Conference of that Church. He died at his home, in his native State, January 29, 1855. He was buried at Columbia, in his native State, the very same place at which he was appointed Missionary in South Carolina Conference, and to the Indians.

The Rev. Isaac Smith, a native of Virginia, for three years an orderly sergeant in the army under Washington and La Fayette, the friend and host of Bishop Asbury, and other of the Bishops of the Church, for more than half a century a minister of the Gospel, serving the longest term at Asbury Mission of any man ever connected with it, and terminating his active ministry at that place, was a man of noble character, a model Christian, and he made an honorable record. "Believing every word of God, meek above the reach of provocation, and thoroughly imbued with the spirit of love and devotion, he was a saint indeed."

An incident may be related here which will relate his patriot-



ism, and which will indicate his fidelity to the ministry and his constant adherence to his religion. In August, 1824, Marquis De La Fayette, the friend of Washington and of American liberty, made a visit to the United States, landing at New York, and he was tendered a reception worthy of his patriotic services and worthy of the country whose liberty he had helped to achieve. The Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Alabama in General Assembly convened, at Cahawba, Alabama, passed, by unanimous vote, a resolution, which was approved, December 24, 1824, as follows: "And be it further Resolved, That his excellency the Governor be requested to invite, in such manner as he shall deem most respectful, Major General La Fayette to honor the State of Alabama with a visit, and in the event of his acceptance of such invitation, he be received in such manner as shall best comport with the important services he has rendered the American people." In pursuance of the Resolution Governor Pickens invited the distinguished guest of the Nation to Alabama, and the invitation was accepted, and the visit was made. On March 31, 1825, the venerable and honored La Fayette, under an escort of Georgians, halted, in the midst of the Creek Nation, upon the eastern bank of the Chattahoochee River, whose western side laves the soil of Alabama. The Georgia escort delivered the hero of American liberty, and their guest, to fifty nude and painted Creek Indian warriors. The Indians, vying with the citizens of the United States in the homage paid the noble Frenchman, conveyed him across the river and put him down on Alabama soil. He was then about one mile from the Asbury School. One of the first white men to greet La Fayette when he set foot on Alabama soil was the man who for three years attended him as orderly sergeant, and carried messages for him while the struggle for the independence of the American Colonies went on. That man was the Rev. Isaac Smith, the Missionary in charge of the Asbury School for the Indians. They greeted, recollected, and recognized each other. There in the howling wilderness, and in the presence of painted warriors and naked savages, the old comrades in arms embraced each other, and gave expression to their friendship, and vent to their emotions, and the once young orderly, now a grave preacher of the Gospel and a devoted Missionary, prayed with and for the old Commander and patriot,

and with deep emotion, strong faith, and earnest petitions commended him to the court of Heaven, and besought for him citizenship in the kingdom of Christ, and the liberty which pertains to the sons of God. How anomalous and yet how appropriate all this! No event in all the course of that triumphal tour through the American continent made a deeper or more lasting impression upon the old patriot than that reunion of himself and the orderly sergeant of the former times, on the borders of Alabama. La Fayette tarried for the day, and he and Smith, the Missionary to the Indians, talked of the past and the present, in sweet counsel, and in the meantime witnessed one of those special contests and social pastimes peculiar to the aborigines, a game of ball. The meeting of his old Commander at the very spot of his missionary labors was one of the unexpected pleasures which the Rev. Mr. Smith enjoyed beyond description. That meeting recollected the reminiscences of the past, revived his spirits, renewed his youth, strengthened his patriotism, and made an epoch in his eventful life.

The Rev. Isaac Smith died in Monroe County, Georgia, at the age of seventy-six, and went to his eternal home. His children have honored him by religious lives.

The Rev. Andrew Hammill, a man of ability, integrity, and piety, an able minister of the New Testament, a Delegate to several General Conferences, and who made the last report ever made of Asbury Mission, died March 22, 1835.

The Rev. Matthew Raiford was a native of Georgia. He commenced preaching in 1818, and was one of the preachers appointed to Asbury Mission for 1824, at the close of that year he located, and as a local preacher he was connected with the Asbury Mission until it was discontinued, and he labored as a local preacher at that place "with pleasure to himself and profit to others." At the time the Mission was discontinued he was re-admitted to the itinerant ranks. He was punctual and faithful. He died in his native State, April 16, 1849.

The Rev. Whitman C. Hill was at Asbury for four years, beginning with 1825 and closing with 1828. He married one of the daughters of the Rev. Isaac Smith, the senior preacher at the Mission. He was born in 1790, and died in 1861, and was admitted into the South Carolina Conference on trial in December, 1809, all other statements to the contrary notwithstanding.

He was a man of more than ordinary ability, and achieved much success in the fields he served, when there were conditions of success. He was long on the Superannuated list. He will no doubt in the last day see the gathering of the results of his work at Asbury.

Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Hill, mother and daughter, the wives of the missionaries whose names they bore, and related by blood to the Remberts of South Carolina and Alabama, did much faithful and efficient work at the Asbury Mission. They were there in all Christian meekness moderating the domestic affairs of the School. The deeds of those noble women were of note, and worthy of praise. Upon the Indian girls at the School they bestowed great parental care, and thoroughly instructed them in the domestic affairs of civilized life. They taught them to cook, wash, sweep, sew, knit, and darn, etc.; and also instructed them, in so far as could be done under the surroundings, in the rules of politeness and etiquette. These women succeeded in giving good satisfaction to the boarders and patrons of the School. They helped to prepare the moral waste, and to sow the seeds of truth, and in the day when the final harvest is gathered and garnered, there will be sheaves the result of their sowing and culture.

In the lovely County of Rowan, in the patriotic and conservative State of North Carolina, in the midst of a generous and hospitable people, was the home of a reputable family by the name of Neely. In that home, and to that family, on January 13, 1802, was born a comely child, of small mold and feeble frame, to whom was given the name of Richard. From that home, in a few years, Richard was carried, by his parents, to Rutherford County, in the State of Tennessee, where he grew to a lad, trim and handsome. In that County, at a Camp-meeting, on August 20, 1819, that lad, Richard Neely, received the renewing of the Holy Ghost, and was initiated into the Methodist Episcopal Church. He entered at once upon an active Christian life, and his zeal increased as the field enlarged. In April, 1821, he was licensed to exhort, in September following, he was licensed to preach, recommended to the Annual Conference as a suitable person to be admitted into the traveling connection, and at the session of the Tennessee Conference in the succeeding November, he was admitted on trial by the

Conference, and was sent, as junior preacher, to the Jackson Circuit for the year 1822. The Tennessee River was at that time the line between the white settlements and the lands of the Cherokee Indians where the Jackson Circuit touched that river. For that year the Jackson Circuit traversed the length of the Paint Rock River to its junction with the Tennessee River, and with the Tennessee River as its southern boundary, went up to Belle Fontte and Bolivar, and Doran's Cove. On the south side of the Tennessee River opposite that Circuit then lived the Cherokee Indians in full right and possession. As Richard Neely served the Jackson Circuit he touched the borders of savage life. He fell into a place not where two seas met, but where two manner of people touched side by side. Silent influences often prepare the way for new developments and grand results. Mere happenings, not in any way dependent upon preconcerted plan or purpose, are often potent factors. The barest casualties direct and control the course of human events. Fortuitous associations, associations neither pre-arranged nor designed, become powerful in the inauguration and prosecution of even divine work. That which is spontaneous is often most potent and enduring. The drift of circumstances, as unforeseen as the course of the wind and the drift of the clouds, often decides the fate of Empires. The Apostle said, "The things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel." The dispensation of the gospel to the Cherokee Indians did not begin in pre-meditated purpose and pre-arranged plan, but commenced in fortuitous circumstances, accidental approximations, and incidental associations. No one was sent to the Cherokees as a preacher or Missionary. Richard Neely was sent to the Jackson Circuit, which terminated at the boundary line between the civil and the savage. Richard Neely, the white man, and Richard Riley, the native Cherokee, met. Richard Riley lived at that time twelve miles south of Fort Deposit. Fort Deposit is on the Tennessee River five or six miles north-west of Gunter'sville. Mr. Riley invited the Rev. Richard Neely to preach at his house, and the invitation was accepted.

It was in the Spring time of 1822, just after the burning of the woods, when the fresh, green grass in luxuriance was covering hill and dale, the wild flowers were out in variety, beauty,



and fragrance, the birds, responsive to the cheer of the season, were singing in the boughs, and the deer were feeding beside the rivulets which run among the hills, when the Rev. Richard Neely, with the dew of youth, the zeal of apostles, and the faith of martyrs, passed over the river which laved the borders of his Circuit, and entered the land of savages, to proclaim to the dwellers of the forest that gospel which brings to view, through its light, righteousness and immortality. From that time on through the Conference year, Brother Neely preached once a month at the house of Richard Riley, and in the summer he, assisted by the Rev. Robert Boyd, who was then junior preacher on the Limestone Circuit, all other statements to the contrary notwithstanding, held a meeting there at Richard Riley's, and organized a Society of thirty-three members, all natives, and appointed Brother Riley class leader. That was the beginning of Christian work among the Cherokee Indians in Alabama under the auspices of the Methodist Episcopal Church. That was the beginning of the gospel in the Cherokee Nation under the ministrations of Methodism.

The work performed and the success attained by the Rev. Richard Neely among the Cherokees, at Riley's, twelve miles south of Fort Deposit, was reported to the Tennessee Conference at the session in October, 1822, and considered by the Conference with marked interest. The Conference decided to take under the care and supervision of its ministry those whom the youthful Neely had by his labors gathered into the fold, and to establish a Mission to the Indians of the Cherokee Nation in the neighborhood of Mr. Richard Riley, and to provide a fund for its support; and in pursuance of said purpose the appointment was made and announced for the ensuing year as follows: Cherokee Mission, Andrew J. Crawford.

The Rev. Andrew Jackson Crawford was a man of sterling worth, a man of education, and of business qualities and habits, a minister of gifts and grace. He was, according to the action of the Conference, as a Missionary, to reside in Richard Riley's neighborhood, to preach to the Indians, and instruct their children. It was more than a month after the adjournment of the Annual Conference before Brother Crawford reached his assigned post of duty. On December 7, 1822, he reached Rich-

ard Riley's, and was, by Mr. Riley, welcomed to the Nation as a bearer of Christian tidings. A council was immediately convened, composed of the leading natives in that part of the Nation, to consider the question of establishing a School under the direction of the newly arrived Missionary. The council recommended the establishment of the School, and on December 30, 1822, the School was opened by Brother Crawford with twelve children, the number soon increasing to twenty-five. Some of the children made considerable progress in the elements of an education. During the year there was on the part of some of the natives considerable indifference to the School, but at the time the Conference met in November, 1823, there were fifteen children in the School, and the patrons made a tender of aid in the erection of a boarding house, provided the Conference could furnish teachers to carry on such establishment. The Rev. Mr. Crawford reported more success in preaching to the natives than in teaching the children. Upon his first attempts to preach to the natives there was manifested decided opposition, but through Mr. Riley's influence, the opposition was soon suppressed, and at once a comfortable house to be used for preaching was erected by the natives, and regular religious services were held in it every Sunday.

On Saturday and Sunday, January 18, 19, 1823, a Quarterly Meeting was held at Mr. Riley's, the Rev. Thomas Stringfield attending in the place of the Rev. William McMahon, presiding elder, and several other preachers also being present. It was a time of peace and power, of unction and happiness. At a love-feast, on Sabbath morning, the natives were present, participating in the services to their own profit and to the delight of the preachers. The Indians spoke in their own language the wonderful works of God. After the love-feast Stringfield and Crawford preached, and during the services of the day three Indians obtained peace in believing.

At the request of Brother Riley, the preachers on Paint Rock Circuit for that year, 1823, the Rev. Greenberry Garrett, and the Rev. Ambrose F. Driskell, preached at the appointment on the Mission once a month, and Mr. Riley provided for paying their ferriage over the Tennessee River. Upon consultation, of preachers, Richard Riley, and other leading Indians in the neighborhood, a resolution was reached to hold a Camp-meeting

at Riley's, and in pursuance thereof preparation was made and completed, and on Thursday, July 31, 1823, the force of preachers for the occasion met at the place, and found Richard Riley, and his brother, and several other Indians in tents on the ground, with due preparation for the entertainment of the preachers and others. All who attended the meeting, and many natives were there, some from sixty miles away, were comfortably lodged and generously fed. When this is said it must be remembered that the meeting was in the forest and among savages. The preachers lodged in a tent erected for their use, and supplied with clean beds. The crowds of natives in attendance were attentive to the word preached, it was a time of gracious visitation, and, for a work among savages, grand results followed. Thirty-one professed to find peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and twenty-five adults and twenty children were baptized. It was difficult to close the meeting, so intense was the interest. When, on Monday morning, the time for the final adjournment of the meeting had come, and the congregation was dismissed for what was intended the last time, twenty or thirty of the Indians gathered in the altar, and requested the preachers to tell them how to obtain the favor of the Great Spirit, and be happy like those of their tribe who were praising God. They listened with the profoundest attention while one of the preachers, through an interpreter, pointed out to them Jesus, as one with the Great Spirit, and the way to heaven. The concourse of natives dispersed and returned to their homes with the greatest reluctance, and one Indian, a man of wealth and piety, proposed to his people to return to the Camp-ground, devote their entire property to the cause, and continue the meeting so long as the property would furnish adequate supplies. The revival power continued, a new Society was organized at another place within the range of the Camp-ground, and the Society, the only one, except the one at the Camp-ground, was greatly strengthened by the work of the Camp-meeting. At the close of the Conference year of 1823, there were in the Mission at Riley's over one hundred members, and among them were two native exhorters, of fine ability, Gunter and Brown. Brown was a young man of good English education, and a fluent interpreter. He possessed unction, and was full of missionary fire. This was a grand change which

had come to a people who awhile ago were in a state of savage darkness, starless, rayless, and hopeless.

At the close of the first year of the Cherokee Mission there were a number of children who had been to the School who could write a fair hand, and who could read the word of God. Certainly that was a wonderful attainment for one year. The entire expenditure of money for the Mission the first year of its existence did not exceed two hundred dollars.

The work was enlarged for 1824, and the Rev. Thomas L. Douglass was appointed Conference Missionary and Superintendent of Indian Missions, and the Rev. Richard Neely was appointed to Lower Cherokee Mission, and the Rev. Nicholas D. Scales was appointed to Upper Cherokee Mission. The work of the Rev. Thomas L. Douglass, under the appointment which he had, was to travel through the bounds of the Tennessee Conference, form Missionary Societies, as branches of the Auxiliary Society of the Conference, collect funds, superintend the Missions, and visit such parts of the field as were most convenient and as he judged most important. The Upper Cherokee Mission did not touch Alabama. The point at which the Rev. Nicholas D. Scales was stationed was at Ross's Post Office, or near it, at Mr. Coody's, and about one hundred miles from Richard Riley's. Mr. Coody had been changed by grace, and had the gospel preached in his house, was a good exhorter, and a leader among his people, and had voluntarily offered to contribute one hundred dollars annually for the support of the Mission. The Lower Cherokee Mission to which the Rev. Richard Neely was assigned was the Mission in Richard Riley's neighborhood. There Brother Neely preached and taught, but he also made preaching tours to adjoining neighborhoods. At the close of the year there were in the Lower Cherokee Mission a membership of one hundred and eight Indians and forty-three Negroes, and in the Upper Cherokee Mission eighty-one Indians and twenty Negroes. At the session of the Conference in the latter part of 1824, the amounts necessary for the Missionaries for the ensuing year were estimated and fixed at three hundred and fifty dollars for Missionaries with families, and one hundred and fifty dollars for Missionaries without families. A contingent fund of one hundred dollars for the Missions was also allowed.



The religious interest among the Cherokees having deepened and widened, the work, for 1825, though no Superintendent was appointed to it for that year, was still further enlarged, and three men were assigned to the field. The Rev. Nicholas D. Scales was assigned to Upper Cherokee Mission, which was the School at Coody's near Ross's Post Office, and the same work he had the year just closed. The Rev. Isaac W. Sullivan was appointed to Middle Cherokee Mission, which was the School at Richard Riley's. These two Missionaries, Scales and Sullivan, were to devote themselves to the work of teaching the children the ordinary literary branches. They could preach as opportunity offered and occasion required.

The Rev. Richard Neely was appointed to Lower Cherokee Mission. He was not to take charge of a School, but he was to preach. He was to organize in the Nation and supervise a regular Circuit, a work which hitherto had not been attempted in a heathen land, and among wild men of the woods. Ever zealous, active, and aggressive, he had resolved to devote his life to the religious awakening and salvation of the Cherokee Indians. He went regular rounds on a Circuit in the Nation, employing all his time in preaching, just as did Methodist preachers among the white people in Tennessee, Alabama, and other States, leaving the work of teaching the children to cipher, read, and write to others. The most of his Circuit was in Alabama, though the entire Nation was before him, and there was not a rival in all the field. There was nothing to arrest his march or to circumscribe his operations from Wills Creek to within the chartered limits of North Carolina. He had as established points from which to operate the Society at Riley's and two others in the regions thereabout, and the Society at Coody's. The following lines encompassed his Circuit: A line from Chickasaw Island in the Tennessee River to the junction of Wills Creek and the Coosa River, the Coosa River to the junction of Etowah and the Oostanaula, from the junction of these rivers to the point of Lookout Mountain, where Chattanooga now is, from there the Tennessee River to Chickasaw Island. He preached anywhere he could gather a congregation in the bounds of that territory, and he would have gone further but it was physically impossible, and anywhere he was was home, and the spot of ground where night overtook him in the

journey was his bed. He was, for Christ's sake, a rover among savages, and, for Christ's sake, he adopted the style of life peculiar to that wild tribe, and, for Christ's sake, he accepted the people as his people. He married one of the natives, a Miss McNair; a woman of education.

For 1826 the appointments in the Cherokee Mission were: Newtown, Francis A. Owen; Gunter's, Ambrose F. Driskill; Wills Valley, Richard Neely. That management was about the same as the year before, except a change in the name of the appointments and a change in two of the preachers. The Rev. Richard Neely was continued in the same work and on the Circuit, and he reached his appointment on his return from Conference on Sunday, December 4, 1825, and was received by the native Christians with demonstrations of intense pleasure, and earnest declarations of their confidence in him and love for him. The Indians were much attached to those in whom they confided. They were as good as the sinners of other branches of the human family, they did good to those who did good to them. As late as March 10, 1826, which was a very rainy and disagreeable Friday, Brother Neely had not obtained any one to travel with him and interpret for him, and at that date was without prospect of such assistance, but nevertheless he had filled all his appointments. Notwithstanding that winter was very cold, and the preparation for comfort was very meager on the part of most of those denizens of the forest, the Missionary had considerable congregations of worshipers, and while not many new adherents were added to the Societies, the Christians had seasons of rejoicing, and grew in the knowledge of divine things, and developed a true concern for the salvation and happiness of others. The outlook for the work was encouraging, the prospect for good promising. One of the stopping-places for Brother Neely on the Wills Valley Circuit in the Cherokee Nation was Brother Coody's. There have been some variations in the orthography in writing the name of the Rev. Richard Neely. The orthography found in his own communications has been followed in these pages.

The year 1826 closed the effective work of the Rev. Richard Neely. At the session of the Conference which commenced November 28, 1826, being broken down in health, and unable longer to perform the full amount of labor which a pastoral

charge required, and unable to endure longer the exposure incident to the field in which his lot was cast, he was granted the relation of a supernumerary preacher, and in that relation his name was attached to the Jackson Circuit, which was in proximity to the Cherokee Nation and the Missions therein, and he continued to live in the Indian country, and he expended the fragment of strength which was left to him in preaching to the natives among whom he had introduced the glorious gospel of the blessed God. At the Conference at Tuscumbia, Alabama, in November, 1827, he was placed in the list of superannuated preachers, just before which he preached his last sermon, a farewell sermon to the Cherokees, whom he loved as his own soul, and for whom he expended his strength, exhausted his health, and had sacrificed his life. His last sermon was preached in great weakness, in much suffering, and in many tears. In January, 1828, he was carried a journey of four days, to Dr. Wright's, near Knoxville, Tennessee, in search of medical aid, where in February ensuing, he died of consumption. His intense interest in and his zeal for the elevation and salvation of the Cherokees was shown to the last day of his earthly sojourn. His estimate of the states on the different sides of the line which separates the visible and the invisible was given in his last audible words on this side of the line: "Heaven is a better place than this." Though he lived among and preached to the savages of the Cherokee tribe, he lived, and preached, and died amidst grand scenes and inspiring surroundings. Beside the majestic and gracefully bending Tennessee River and in sight of the lofty Lookout Mountain he lifted up an ensign to the heathen and proclaimed to listening mortals him who "by his strength setteth fast the mountains; being girded with power;" and who "cutteth out rivers among the rocks," and whose "eye seeth every precious thing." The name of the Rev. Richard Neely shall live so long as self-denial is practiced, philanthropy is appreciated, and the history of the gospel among the aborigines of Alabama is known.

The work was still further enlarged for 1827. The only man retained in the work for that year who had been previously engaged in it was the Rev. Francis A. Owen. He was returned to Newtown. The Rev. George W. Morris was sent to Gunter's. The Rev. William P. Nichols was appointed to Coosewattee.

These three appointments were Schools. The Rev. James J. Trott was appointed to Wills Valley Circuit, and the Rev. Turtle Fields, a native Cherokee, was appointed to travel and preach in the Nation, under the direction of the Superintendent, or the presiding elder of the Huntsville District, the Rev. William McMahon.

Coosewattee was in Georgia.

In the latter part of May, 1827, Owen and Trott were reported in good health and fine spirits, and Fields, the native Cherokee, was at that time reported as having great success, God being with him in truth and power. During the preceding months of the Conference year more than one hundred natives had been received into the Church on trial, and the old members were steadfast in the faith, and were walking steadily in the way of life. Three Camp-meetings were held in the Nation during that year, and there were added at least two hundred and seventy-five members. There was perceptible improvement in the condition of the people throughout the Nation; they were adopting the habits of civilized life. As the Indians learned the gospel, believed in Christ, and were allied to God, they abandoned, so far as they could, their wild state in the woods, left off praying to water-falls, snakes, and clouds, enlarged their cabins, improved their habitations, and made provision against nakedness, hunger, and cold.

The appointments for 1828 for Cherokee Mission: Wills Valley, Greenberry Garrett; Oostaknahla, Turtle Fields (a native Cherokee); Echota, James J. Trott; Ooithkellogee, G. T. Henderson; Creek Path, John B. McFerrin; Chatooga, Allen F. Scruggs; Salakowa, Dickson C. McLeod.

During the year 1828 Bishop William McKendree made a tour through the Cherokee Nation and profoundly impressed the men of the Nation with whom he came in contact. It was estimated at that time that there were in the Cherokee Nation about fifteen thousand souls, and the three Circuits then existing and to which preachers were assigned extended over about half of the territory then belonging to the Cherokees in their ancient domain, and there were about seven hundred members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the three Circuits; about three hundred and forty-five of these members were in Alabama. There were four Schools, two of them organized that year, and



there were about one hundred pupils in the four Schools, and some of these pupils had attained proficiency in English Grammar. At one of the Schools there was a Tract and Sunday School Society. In the month of September, 1828, there were three Camp-meetings held in the Nation, at which good order prevailed, and many natives received the renewing of the Holy Ghost, and Christians rejoiced and were intensely happy. The Cherokee Christians at that time were orderly, and were perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment, and were not behind in any of the ordinary gifts of the Spirit, and they were enriched in utterance and knowledge. They were pious in heart and blameless in life. There were, however, a few cases of apostasy, and some had to be expelled. There were, in that year of grace, two licensed preachers and nine licensed exhorters among the native Cherokees, all men of marked piety, and men who labored zealously for the salvation of their people, and who exerted a good influence wherever they went.

The amount collected for Missions in the Tennessee Conference during 1828 was three hundred and fifty-six dollars, of which sum the two Missionary Societies in Alabama, Huntsville and Courtland, paid one hundred and twenty-one dollars, Huntsville sixty-one and Courtland sixty. At Murphreesborough, Tennessee, December, 1828, the Tennessee Conference being in session, there was held a Missionary Anniversary, the great theme of discussion and the sole subject of interest being the Cherokee Mission. Three native Cherokees took an active part in the exercises of the Anniversary. These three natives were John Fletcher Boot, Turtle Fields, and Edward Gunter. Boot was a full blood Cherokee, and when baptized was given the name of John Fletcher, was a man of considerable talents, and a licensed preacher, and made an efficient itinerant preacher. At that Anniversary Boot delivered a speech in his native tongue on the subject of Missions and religion among his people. The speech was interpreted by Edward Gunter, who was a half blood Indian, and a man of deep piety, and a licensed exhorter; and who was a soldier with General Andrew Jackson, and was at the famous battle of the Horse Shoe, on the Tallapoosa River. Gunter also made a speech at the Anniversary on the subject of religion among the Cherokees. Turtle Fields

made a good speech on the same subject. He was an eminent Chief, a man of deep piety and of holy power. He was a long while a preacher, and quite useful and successful in the itinerant ministry. These three men made a deep impression on the white persons who attended that Missionary Meeting.

The appointments for 1829 were as follows: Wills Valley and Oostanaula, John B. McFerrin; Coosewattee, Turtle Fields; Mount Wesley and Asbury, D. C. McLeod; Chatooga, Greenberry Garrett; Salakowa, Nicholas D. Scales; Neely's Grove, Allen F. Scruggs; Conesauga, Thomas J. Elliott; James J. Trott, General Missionary to travel through the Nation.

The work for the year commenced with encouraging prospects alike for the increase of intelligence and stability among the members, and additions to their numbers, and the increase of the Schools in numbers and efficiency, and an increase of the funds to carry on the work. All the good which was anticipated in the beginning of the year was realized by the close. The work in the Schools flourished. The members of the Church prospered and there were additions to their numbers. Eleven hundred and fifty dollars and eighty cents was the sum collected in the bounds of the Conference during the year for Missions; and at the Anniversary held in the Methodist Church at Huntsville, Alabama, November 23, 1829, the above sum was added to by a contribution from the congregation for Missions of one hundred dollars. There were a number of Cherokee Christians present at that meeting, giving interest to the occasion and new life to the cause.

The Rev. William McMahon was connected with the work among the Cherokees, being presiding elder, from the beginning of that work in 1822 to the close of 1829; and he held Quarterly Meetings and from one to three Camp-meetings every year in the Nation from the time of the first appointment of a preacher to that work until the close of his presiding eldership there.

The field was filled for 1830 by the following appointments: Superintendent of the Cherokee Mission, Francis A. Owen; Wills Valley, Dickson C. McLeod, Spear, interpreter, Boot; Conesauga, G. M. Rogers, Young Wolfe, E. Graves, interpreter; Valley Town, Robert Rogers, W. McIntosh, interpreter, Turtle Fields; Chatooga, Joseph Miller; Mount Wesley and Asbury, J. J. Trott; Coosewattee, Jacob Ellinger, Joseph B. Bird, in-

terpreter; Selacoa, Greenberry Garrett; Agency, William M. McFerrin; Lookout, Nicholas D. Scales.

The men who entered upon the Mission work among the Cherokee Indians in the beginning of 1830 found the condition of that people much improved in many respects. It is true that they had not as a people, abandoned altogether their savage habits and barbarous customs, nor had they formally renounced their peculiar superstitions, but many of them had built for themselves comfortable houses, and had productive fields about them, and had attained some tolerable knowledge of handicraft and useful implements, and had donned habiliments which gave comfort, inspired cleanliness, and protected virtue. Many of the young Indians had a thirst for knowledge and learning, and many children were seeking places in the Schools taught by the Missionaries. The then principal Chief of the Nation, Mr. John Ross, had, on the north bank of the beautiful Coosa River between the mouth of Wills Creek and the junction of the Etowah and the Oostanaula Rivers, a dwelling house equal in style to the houses owned and occupied by men of enlightened habits and ample fortunes, and his dwelling was surrounded by well cultivated fields. Mr. Ross was a man of splendid talents and brilliant attainments, and owned and used to profit a well selected library. He was a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and was a zealous worker and an influential leader in the divine cause. At the home of Mr. Ross, on the Coosa River, there was a house of worship, and a Society of native Christians. An officer of the United States Government, who, with a small party of United States soldiers, visited the Cherokee country in 1830 to quell some disturbances which had arisen through the intrusions of some white men in the Nation, and who in the discharge of the commission with which he was invested visited Mr. Ross, the principal Chief, has given an account of a religious service which he witnessed on the Sunday of his arrival at the home of the Chief. The officer attended the services upon the invitation of Mr. Ross. There were present about fifty Indians, who were dressed much after the manner of white people, and in garments of their own manufacture. There were at and participating in that service two regularly ordained preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, one a full blood Indian, and the

other one-fourth white. The service was conducted in the Cherokee language according to the order of service used by the Methodist Episcopal Church. The hymns sung by the congregation were in the Cherokee language, having been translated from the English, and the tunes were English. Hymn Books printed in Cherokee were used on that occasion, so says the reporter, and nearly all the congregation participated in the singing. The Scriptures were read, a sermon was preached, and exhortations were delivered after the style of the Methodists of the time. The congregation was orderly, attentive, and devout. Christ was owned in the wilds of the Cherokee Nation, and worshiped in the tongue of the savage tribe, and the wilderness and the solitary place were made glad.

One School, if no more, was organized in the Nation in the beginning of 1830, and one new Circuit was made at the same time. The Coosewattee School had twenty-seven children beginning in the alphabet, not one of whom could speak English. The Superintendent, the Rev. Francis A. Owen, changed the work of Joseph B. Bird, and appointed him to teach the School at Coosewattee, as he could speak and interpret both the English and Cherokee languages. The Valletown Circuit, which lay among the lofty mountains and romantic and sublime scenes within the chartered limits of North Carolina, was organized that year and traveled by the Rev. Greenberry Garrett, William McIntosh being his interpreter, and the Rev. Turtle Fields, one of the Chiefs of the Nation. During that year there were five Schools and five Circuits in the Nation, and one hundred and forty-four children were connected with the Schools, some learning the letters and syllables, some spelling, some reading, some studying geography, some arithmetic, and some English Grammar. There were Schools at Mount Wesley and Asbury Stations, and at Asbury, a brother Crutchfield, a resident of the Nation, and a volunteer teacher, working at his own expense, and without compensation, was teaching, with fifteen children under his instruction. The most advanced pupils in all the Nation were at Lookout. Including a few interpreters, there were employed in 1830 in the work in the land of the Cherokees, seventeen Missionaries. William M. McFerrin was at the Agency, and had sixty additions to the Society there. The Second Quarterly Meeting on Wills Valley Circuit was



held for three days, beginning Friday, April 30, and was an occasion of profound interest. Favorable reports were made from the different Societies of the Circuit, and Boot, the native preacher on the work, was doing acceptable work among his kindred and for his tribe. At that Quarterly Meeting the natives camped on the ground, and the work was marvelous, not so much for its extent as its thoroughness and profoundness. There was a noted case, a young Indian from the wilds of Arkansas, who previously knew nothing of salvation, even as a theory, was wrought upon in a marvelous manner and converted, and he and six others joined the Church. At a Quarterly Meeting, just after the one for Wills Valley Circuit, held at Chattooga, a marvelous work was witnessed. Two women, one seventy and the other nearly ninety years old, joined the Church, and a man eighty years old, named *Bonecracker*, was changed in heart, and united with the Church, producing a sensation wide sweeping. The work throughout the Cherokee Nation that year was thorough and profound. The Nation was stirred with a religious awakening. There have been more extensive ingatherings in other years among other peoples than was had that year among the Cherokees, but there was never a more profound work and thorough renovation anywhere than was witnessed among that people of the woods. In many instances the aborigines packed their victuals to the places of meetings, and remained on the ground throughout the entire services of from three to four and more days. A part of the work done in the midst of heathen superstitious was the Sunday-school work. There were in the Cherokee Nation during 1830, three flourishing Sunday-schools, in which sixty children were instructed in the Holy Scriptures. Twenty-three hundred and eighty-seven dollars and twelve and a half cents were expended in the support of the Missions in the Cherokee Nation for the year 1830. The Cherokees, when inducted into the divine mysteries were loving, generous, and benevolent. They desired a dissemination of divine truth. At Mount Wesley, in the Nation, a Missionary Society was established called the Branch Missionary Society of the Cherokee Nation, auxiliary to the Tennessee Conference Missionary Society, and from that Society of the Cherokee Nation was forwarded to the Missionary Society of the Tennessee Conference at its Anniversary held on

the evening of November 9, 1830, twenty-three dollars, accompanied by an interesting address from Mr. W. S. Adair, a native of the Cherokee Nation. The little children of that benighted land cast in their mites to swell that sum sent as a gift to the treasury of the Church. That benevolence of the converts from heathenism to Christianity was of the spirit of the gospel, was in accord with the commission of Christ, and was a rebuke to many who boasted of superior advantages and intelligence.

The Cherokee Mission was kept up continuously by the Tennessee Conference until the close of 1834, when it was discontinued by that Conference, the great body of the Indian members outside of the bounds of the Holston Conference emigrated west, and those remaining in the Holston Conference were turned over to that Conference. By the close of 1838 the provision for the emigration of the last of the Cherokees was complete, and the last Indian preacher was transferred from Holston to Arkansas. From the close of 1830 the membership steadily decreased, and the field contracted, not because the Indians were less interested in the gospel than formerly, not because the membership apostatized, not because the Missionaries engaged in the work were not efficient and faithful, but because many emigrated to the Cherokee possessions west of the Mississippi River. At the close of 1830 there were one thousand and twenty-eight Indian members in that Mission, which was the largest number ever reported in the Cherokee Nation under the supervision of the Tennessee Conference. The work was all the while most successful in that part of the Nation within the chartered limits of Alabama, and the smallest results were attained in that part of the Nation within the chartered limits of North Carolina. The Wills Valley Circuit was the first and the strongest in the Nation. When the Cherokee Mission was discontinued by the Tennessee Conference at the close of 1834, there were five hundred and eight Indian and seventeen Negro members then in the bounds of their ancient domain.

Some of the preachers engaged in the work among the Cherokees were there a number of years, others were there only one or two years. Ambrose F. Driskill, John Wesley Hanná, Uriah Williams, Frederick G. Ferguson, and Hiram M. Glass were

each there only one year. Driskill and Ferguson were as teachers and were not in charge of Circuits.

The Rev. James J. Trott, after being an itinerant preacher in the Tennessee Conference eight or nine years, and preaching to the Cherokee Indians for about five years, withdrew from the Methodist Episcopal Church and joined the followers of the Rev. Alexander Campbell. He married a woman of the Cherokee tribe.

The Rev. Turtle Fields was the first Cherokee Indian ever employed as an itinerant preacher under the auspices of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In December, 1826, he was named in the Minutes of the Conference as employed to travel and preach in the Nation under the direction of the Superintendent of the Cherokee Mission. At Tuscumbia, Alabama, in November, 1827, he was admitted on trial in the Tennessee Conference, and at the end of two years he was admitted into full connection and was ordained a deacon, and in the on-going of matters he was ordained an elder. He was a member of the Tennessee Conference, serving his own tribe as an itinerant preacher, until the close of 1834, when he was transferred to the Holston Conference. At the Holston Conference in October, 1835, he was put down on the Minutes as transferred to the Alabama Conference; it is, however, probable that he never had any official relation to the Alabama Conference, as at the close of 1836 he appeared again as a member of the Holston Conference. In the fall of 1837 he was transferred to the Arkansas Conference, and at the close of 1839 he located. He was physically well made: tall and strong, and in the days before his adherence to the Christian religion, he was a warrior and he proved himself a hero. He was a soldier under General Andrew Jackson in the war with the Creek Indians. He was an earnest man, a good and successful preacher. He did much hard work in his day.

The Rev. Dixon C. McLeod, born in Anson County, North Carolina, March 13, 1802; admitted on trial in the Tennessee Conference November, 1823; and died April 10, 1840; spent five years of his ministry, beginning with 1828 and ending with 1832, among the red men of the forest. His only work in Alabama was among the Cherokee Indians. He was one year on the Wills Valley Circuit, and two years he was Superintendent

of the Cherokee Mission, in which position he swept the whole field, which extended from Wills Creek, in Alabama, to the lofty mountains and majestic scenes in North Carolina. In the discharge of his duties to the sons of the forest he endured manacles, indignities, and maltreatment. "Upon one occasion, because of his attachment to his work and his devotion to the interests of the people whom he served, he was arrested by the *pretended officers* of justice, and deprived of his own horse, and dragged on foot a distance of seventy or eighty miles as a prisoner." He was thus treated, not by the reputed savages, not by the Indians, but by the white people of a State which boasted of civilization.

The Cherokees were recognized as a Nation, and were by Treaty stipulations under the protection of the United States of America, and were to be secured in the possession of the country occupied by them, they were to be secured against the intrusions of all white persons whatsoever. The Treaty stipulations provided that if any citizen of the United States, or other person not an Indian, should settle on any of the Cherokees' lands, such person thereby forfeited the protection of the United States, and the Cherokees might punish him or not, as they pleased. Georgia became impatient of the presence of the Indians within her chartered limits, and undertook to extend her jurisdiction over the lands owned and occupied by the Cherokees. Collisions between Governments ensued. The Cherokee Nation resisted the encroachments of Georgia. The United States, true to Treaty obligations with the Indians, undertook to restrain the State of Georgia from intrenching upon the Cherokees, and the State of Georgia resisted the authority of the United States. The conflict was sharp, the contest strong, the excitement intense. The people of Georgia determined by any means, dishonorable or otherwise, to get rid of the Indians, and they became embittered against the preachers of the gospel, the Missionaries to the Cherokees, and accused them of giving the Indians such advice and exerting over them such an influence as obstructed the furtherance of the plans of Georgia in the political purposes involved, and the Legislature of the State passed laws the purpose of which was to expel the Missionaries from the Cherokee Nation. The Missionaries could not desist from preaching the gospel because Georgia had the audacity to en-



act laws detrimental to their work. The Missionaries could not afford to abandon the work of preaching the gospel to a Nation because the State of Georgia disregarded the national compact, and the fidelity of the United States to treaty stipulations, and interposed laws in conflict with such compact and such stipulations. It is history that the State of Georgia arrested the Missionaries, the men who preached the gospel to the Cherokees, and harassed men, whose only crime was that of doing good, with criminal prosecutions. It is history that the State of Georgia confined in the Penitentiary at hard labor the Rev. S. A. Worcester, and the Rev. Elizur Butler, two Missionaries to the Cherokee Nation in the employment of the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions. In a Court convened by authority of the State of Georgia, and on September 15, 1831, these two men were convicted of violating a law which demanded that all white men who were found residing on Cherokee lands within the chartered limits of Georgia after a certain date, without having taken the oath of allegiance to the State of Georgia, should be imprisoned in the Penitentiary at hard labor for four years. These men believed that as Missionaries to the Nation, preaching the gospel to the Indians, they were not under any obligations to take an oath of allegiance to the State of Georgia, and the interpretations of the United States of her obligations to the Treaty stipulations with the Indians, and the course of the United States Government in the premises justified these men in this belief, and as the law was doubtless enacted simply for the expulsion from the Nation of the Missionaries, and to terminate their ministry to the Indians they refused to obey the law. They suffered, and gloried in a dispensation of suffering. It was under that sort of administration that the Rev. Dixon C. McLeod was arrested, dismounted, and dragged seventy or eighty miles, and abused and beaten! He would better have fallen into the hands of savages. He managed, however, to escape the Penitentiary, and resume his work in preaching the gospel of peace to the men of the woods.

Boot was a Cherokee, without taint of blood, born in the ancient land of his fathers. He was a leader among his people, a warrior, and a patriot. He knew and spoke only the Cherokee Language. He was ever true to whatever cause he espoused. About the year 1827, when he was about thirty-four years of

age, he was baptized into the Christian religion, receiving the name of John Fletcher, and was admitted into the Methodist Episcopal Church, by the Rev. William McMahon. Some time in 1829 he was licensed to preach, and was employed by the Superintendent, on the Wills Valley Circuit, for the ensuing year; and in November, 1830, he was admitted on trial in the Tennessee Conference. His name was printed wrong in the General Minutes, when it was put down among those received on trial. It was printed John F. Burnum, when it should have been Boot. His full name was John Fletcher Boot. For 1832 he was again on Wills Valley Circuit. At Nashville, Tennessee, November 11, 1832, having been received into full connection in the Conference, he was ordained a deacon, by Bishop James O. Andrew, and he was returned to Wills Valley Circuit for the next year. At Lebanon, Tennessee, November 8, 1834, he was ordained an elder, by Bishop James O. Andrew, and was transferred to the Holston Conference. In the fall of 1838 he went to the home of the Cherokees West of the Mississippi River, and was transferred to the Arkansas Conference. In his native land and in his native tongue he preached the gospel and administered the Christian Sacraments. For about ten years he ranged over the mountains and through the valleys of his native land to give to his benighted people the everlasting truth and redeem them from the superstitions of heathenism. He was a grand preacher. He grasped the subject in hand with master mind, and with a sublimity and majesty seldom surpassed he uttered gospel truth and poured forth appeals which were absolutely irresistible. He died in the itinerant work, true and devoted through all the years of his ministry. He gave also special attention to the civil interests of his people. He was a member of the Indian Mission Conference at the time of his death, and filling a Circuit, and at the same time a member of the Executive Council of the Nation. He was on his way to an appointment to preach when the summons of death met him. He died at his post, August 8, 1853.

At Huntsville, Alabama, in November, 1829, William McIntosh, a native Cherokee, then about thirty-three years of age, and fluent in the use of the English language, as well as in his native Cherokee, was appointed as interpreter for the Missionaries in the field. About a year previous to that time he had been

renewed in nature and inducted into the Methodist Episcopal Church. He continued to interpret for the Missionaries in his native land until 1834, when he emigrated to the home of the Cherokees west of the Mississippi River. He continued to interpret for the Missionaries in the land whence he went. He was devout and pious, warm and enthusiastic. He was one of the best interpreters that ever translated for a speaker. He was a fine specimen of a Christian, and he was finally licensed to preach, and, in 1841, he was admitted on trial in the Arkansas Conference, and was a member of the Indian Mission Conference from the time of its organization till his death. His Christian life extended over about thirty years, during which time he wrought much for God and his Nation. He died near Tahlequah, Indian Territory, December, 1858.

Edward Graves, Joseph B. Bird, and John Spear were interpreters in the Mission Field of the Tennessee Conference, and did good work in giving the gospel to the Cherokees.

The gospel did more than all things else to deliver the Cherokee Indians from errors, delusions, and degradations which so long held dominion over them. The work of giving the gospel to that savage tribe, in view of the complications surrounding them, involved most delicate tasks, and required great wisdom, prudence, and endurance, but the Cherokee Christians never gave the Methodist Episcopal Church special trouble. The work with the redeemed Indians was promotive of the Kingdom of Christ. The Christians in the Cherokee Nation never annoyed the Church with heresies, schisms, or ecclesiastical tumults. There were many hindrances encountered in the work, but they were not from ecclesiastical sources. The Cherokee Christians maintained a commendable type of piety. Inspired with humble fear, and filled with the principles imparted by divine grace, they shouted with a mirth born of devotion, and served God, spreading his praise through earth and sky. The work begun in the land of their fathers was transferred to their Western home, and still goes on. Many happy souls have been translated to the heavenly courts and the upper choirs, where they "ascribe their conquest to the Lamb, their triumph to his death," and still many more, of that once benighted tribe, are on their way to the city of golden streets and splendid mansions. The redeemed of the Lord shall come from every land, and so they come from the land of the Cherokees.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE AGITATION IN AND SECESSION FROM THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN ALABAMA.

THE Methodist preachers of America, in Conference assembled, in the city of Baltimore, Maryland, December 24, or Christmas eve, 1784, unanimously agreed to become a separate body, and following the counsel of John Wesley, who recommended to them the Episcopal mode of Church government, formed themselves, without a dissenting voice, into a separate and independent organization, under the denomination of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In the on-going of affairs, the vast extent of country occupied by that Church made presiding elders indispensable to the exercise of the Episcopal prerogative, and the environments of some preachers have made it necessary for them to desist from the itinerant work, and so the Methodist Episcopal Church, by her peculiar organization and by her unique administrations, has had the orders of deacons and elders, the offices of bishops and presiding elders, and the classes of itinerant preachers, local preachers, and members.

In the ranks of the Methodist Episcopal Church there have arisen every now and then agitators and innovators. Agitators and innovators have ever assumed that it is a popular thing in America to denounce ecclesiastical authority, and it has ever been a chief occupation of such persons to denounce the exercise of ecclesiastical power. In the estimation of such persons the firm administration of law and the vigorous enforcement of Discipline are the same as usurpation and despotism. The Rev. James O'Kelley, one of the men who participated in the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and who gave a hearty approval to the Episcopal form of government, and who was ordained an elder at the same time, in a little more than seven years from that date, became a vehement agitator, and led, a fiery and restless Irishman that he was, a furious assault on Episcopal prerogative, and then seceded



from the Church. That was the beginning of attempts at abridging Episcopal prerogative, obliterating ecclesiastical distinctions, and paralyzing aggressive movements.

An effort was made in the General Conference, in May, 1820, to transfer from the Bishops to the Annual Conferences the prerogative of choosing the presiding elders, and fixing their stations. The measure was prosecuted and contested with great vigor. The discussion of the subject was more than ardent, it was bitter and stormy. The measure was carried, but the storm was not allayed. The Rev. Joshua Soule had been elected Bishop, but before the day had arrived for his consecration to the office, that measure, which he considered an innovation, and unconstitutional, had been adopted, whereupon he declined to be inducted into the office. That presented a protest and a dilemma! The General Conference finally receded from the position assumed, and suspended the new rule for four years, a most singular proceeding, but Joshua Soule was not inducted into the Episcopal office until the rule was abolished four years later, and he was re-elected.

At the same General Conference of 1820, the Rev. William Capers, of the South Carolina Conference, introduced a measure which was adopted, providing by law a District Conference for local preachers, and clothed with the functions of granting license to preach to suitable persons, and of recommending suitable persons to the Annual Conferences for admission into the traveling connection, and for ordination.

The debates on the prerogatives of the Bishops in choosing the presiding elders, and fixing their stations, and the establishment of the District Conference of local preachers encouraged the agitators and the disaffected. The close contests in the General Conference, and the approach to success of the measure of transferring the prerogative of the Bishops to the Annual Conferences greatly emboldened the innovators, and the local preacher's District Conference gave them organization, which was a most suitable preparation for their agitations, and added temptation to debate the issues inaugurated. So soon as they found themselves organized they finished the equipments for carrying forward their work by the institution of a suitable organ of communication. About 1821, the "Western Repository" was brought into existence for the purpose of discussing

and advocating the ecclesiastical rights of the local preachers and the laity. In many places the District Conferences for local preachers were used to set forward the schemes of the innovators. The District Conference of local preachers for the Roanoke District of the Virginia Conference, prepared and sent to the Virginia Conference an elaborate address, bearing date December 7, 1821, in which it was asserted that the General Conference was without authority to pass laws or make rules to govern local preachers, and in which was entered a solemn protest against the exercise of such power, such usurpation. At the Roanoke District Conference held in the latter part of 1822, the address prepared the year before, with a circular letter to accompany it, was ordered sent to all the District Conferences of local preachers throughout the United States. The circular letter bears date, Washington, North Carolina, January 1, 1823. It is said that these documents were forwarded to the local preachers of the connection, in District Conferences assembled, for the purpose of calling their attention to the consideration of their common rights as preachers, and also to call attention to the enormous prerogatives with which the itinerant preachers invested themselves, and, moreover, to rebuke the assumptions of the traveling preachers which would not allow the local preachers to be more than mere ciphers in point of authority, nor to maintain any better than a kind of proscribed standing. The spirit of agitation was fully aroused, and the work of innovation was fully inaugurated.

Notwithstanding Methodism in Alabama, at the time of which note is now being made, was not more than six years old, except in the sections originally occupied by the Tombecbee and the Flint Circuits, the spirit of innovation had reached the State. In 1823, in Dutch Bend, Autauga County, Alabama, a meeting was held composed of some of the local preachers of the Alabama Circuit, of the Alabama District, of the Mississippi Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church through the transactions of which was prepared a memorial on rights and grievances, and which was addressed to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church to meet May, 1824. There is no official record of that meeting of local preachers now known to be extant, but there are some accounts of it, and it is certain the meeting was held, and that its business was transacted with enthu-

siasm. It is stated upon reliable authority that the following men, all at that time being local preachers residing in the bounds of the Alabama Circuit, were present in that meeting and participated in its proceedings: Eli Terry, Peyton Bibb, Britton Capel, Elijah Myers, Arnold Campbell, Mark Howard, Alexander Talley, Joseph Walker, Henry Whetstone, Jacob Whetstone. There may have been others. It is said, and it is no doubt true, that the Rev. Alexander Talley, M.D., wrote the memorial for that body of local preachers. In the memorial was set forth in strong terms the grievances of the local preachers, and therein a vigorous petition was made for the redress of said grievances. The memorial charged that in the economy and administration of the Methodist Episcopal Church the merits of local preachers were discounted, their rights discarded, and that as men, and preachers, they were graded below their brethren of the itinerancy. The petition in the memorial asked the removal of all restrictions, oblivion of all distinctions, the obliteration of all grades, and that they should have granted to them as local preachers representation in the Annual Conferences and in the General Conferences. As though they were appealing from the tyranny which denies the right of conscience, incarcerates the innocent, and terrifies the helpless, that body of local preachers, in common with their fellow innovators, demanded the abolition of all restrictions, classifications, distinctions, and grades in the Church; and, yet, they demanded the recognition and perpetuation of the distinction and grade of local preachers, and that by the enactment of a constitutional provision that they should be represented in Annual and General Conferences as local preachers, and by local preachers. Consistency is a jewel, but partisan bias which will destroy established order will not be likely to preserve consistency, and hence it is not surprising that there was discord in the demands of these innovators. In the meeting of these local preachers, in Dutch Bend, in 1823, commenced the agitation in Alabama which ended in strife and secession.

To the General Conference which met in May, 1824, was presented a number of memorials on the much stressed subject of rights and privileges. The memorials conveying to the General Conference the petitions of the innovators were in different forms and contained slightly different details, but were all uni-

form in charging itinerant preachers with usurpation of ecclesiastical authority, and with tyranny in the exercise of absolute power; and all these memorials agreed in demanding a surrender of legislative rights, and a division of ecclesiastical power. Said memorials were filled with complaints, criticisms, and claims. Whether the authors of the numerous petitions were impelled by convictions of duty or by inordinate thirst for power they were bold and defiant, threatening persistence in their demands for redress of grievances and a lease of rights even to secession.

The General Conference appointed a Committee of twelve, consisting of one delegate from each Annual Conference, and to that Committee referred all the memorials on the subject of innovations. The Committee had two men on it who at that time lived and preached in Alabama, the Rev. William McMahon, then presiding elder of the Huntsville District, Tennessee Conference, and the Rev. Alexander Sale, then presiding elder of the Cahawba District, Mississippi Conference. In the course of events the Committee reported the result of their deliberations on the affairs committed to them, and the General Conference acting upon the Report of the Committee adopted a document which embodied the views of the Conference on the matters involved. By order of the General Conference, a document, with the Bishops' names attached, was published as a response to the petitions which had been addressed to the Conference for determination and action. The document was dispassionate, and incisive. In it the General Conference said to the innovators: "We believe the proposed change to be inexpedient," and assigned the reasons for the belief.

That action of the General Conference of 1824, demonstrated the fact that the great body of the Church, both of the clergy and the laity, were opposed to the innovations petitioned for, and that it was as impossible to effect the asked for changes as it was to disorganize the Church. The few among the innovators who simply desired a change in the form of Government, accepted the action of the General Conference, and refrained from further agitation on the subject. Among the few who were of that mind and pursued that course was the Rev. Alexander Talley, M.D., at that time a local preacher in the Alabama Circuit, and residing in Autauga County, Alabama. He desired the Conferences



represented in part by laymen, but he did not desire disintegration, he was not a disruptionist, and he accepted the action of the Church in 1824, and was true to her interests till the day of his death. He, at the close of 1825, re-entered the itinerancy, and ended his days a member of the Mississippi Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

But the action of the General Conference of 1824 did not satisfy the larger number of the innovators, and, as if the forces had been organized in advance, and results had been anticipated and provided for, a meeting of a party of those who were determined to continue the work of disintegration at all hazards was convened in the city of Baltimore, Maryland, immediately on the final adjournment of the General Conference, even before the Bishops had finished the Circular ordered in response to the petitions; and in that meeting such measures were instituted and perfected as were deemed best calculated to sustain the purposes and accomplish the work in view. Provision was made for the publication of a periodical entitled "*The Mutual Rights of the Ministers and Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church;*" and also for the organization of Societies in all parts of the United States, whose duty it should be to advocate the principles and inculcate the doctrines of the innovators. At that meeting the "*Union Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the City of Baltimore*" was organized under a constitution with eleven distinct Articles. The periodical thus provided for was issued without delay. These agitators persevered, and became vehement in their policy of disorganization. The work proceeded, and the Union Societies multiplied as the months and years went by. The whirlwind passing through a field raises a dust and rattles in a small way, in like manner the disruptionists raised a dust and noise in the ecclesiastical field. Of course, as, through the Mutual Rights paper and the Union Societies, war was made without ceasing on the action of the General Conference, and on the Government, administration, and administrators of the Methodist Episcopal Church, there was collision and there was resistance, sharp and steady.

As Union Societies multiplied and the Mutual Rights periodical extended its circulation, the Discipline of the Church, and the administration of those in authority were inveighed against

with increased boldness and mischief. In social discourse, in speech and oration in the assembled Union Society, and by written and printed communication the Government of the Methodist Episcopal Church was denounced; and, in the furtherance of their designs, the innovators made provision for Conventions, both State and General. As a matter of course the Discipline of the Church had to be maintained, and the Church herself had to be protected and defended. Those to whom was committed the oversight of the flock were not so pusillanimous and supine as to offer no resistance to a party of Schismatics who covered their designs with the pretext of reforming the Government they would abolish, and continued to work under the ægis of the very Church they would disintegrate and destroy. As a natural consequence and in the interest of self-preservation, those who engaged in inveighing against the Discipline of the Church, whether preachers or laymen, were arrested in their nefarious designs, whenever detected, and when they persisted they were expelled. Those very innovators who with such flippancy imputed to the Bishops of the Church evil purposes and charged them with usurpations of ecclesiastical power, and with the inauguration of oppressive and cruel measures persisted in maintaining that inveighing against the Discipline, and pertinacious resistance to authority were commendable acts performed in the exercise of a divinely given liberty; and that such acts were not in any sense, under divine economy, censurable. They constantly insisted that an active campaign against the Methodist Episcopal Church in which she was constantly denounced as despotic, and cruel, was virtuous and commendable. In the estimation of those in authority, traducing the Church and her ministers, sowing dissensions, instituting and perpetuating disputes, strifes, and divisions were offenses of sufficient turpitude to forfeit communion and fellowship in the Church, and in the on-going of affairs a number of innovators in different places were expelled from the communion of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

In November, 1827, a General Convention of innovators, consisting of delegates appointed by the State Conventions and Union Societies, met in Baltimore, Maryland, and prepared a memorial to the General Conference to meet in May, 1828, renewing the demand presented to the General Conference of

1824, for a change of the form of Government so as to transfer the executive and legislative prerogatives from the Bishops and itinerant preachers to the local preachers and laymen. That memorial was presented, and others on the same subject were also presented, and the General Conference took action upon and made response to all memorials presented, but, adhering to the purposes of the great body of the Methodist Episcopal Church, they made no fundamental changes in the government of the Church and made no unreasonable concessions to the agitators. The contest became more intense, expulsions and withdrawals were multiplied, and, by those expelled and withdrawn from the Methodist Episcopal Church, Societies were organized from time to time as matters culminated at different places. The first of the independent Societies was organized, in advance of the General Conference of 1828, in Baltimore, Maryland, December 23, 1827. November 12, 1828, a General Convention of the Seceders met in Baltimore, Maryland, and prepared seventeen "Articles of Association" under which was organized the "Associated Methodist Churches." By these "Articles of Association" the newly formed Societies were governed until a subsequent Convention, which met November 2-23, 1830, in Baltimore, formally organized the Methodist Protestant Church, under a Constitution and Discipline by that Convention made and adopted.

The form of Government and the Constitution adopted by the Seceders in the organization of the Methodist Protestant Church indicate the purposes by which they were actuated and the views which they entertained in the war which they waged against the Methodist Episcopal Church. In the Methodist Protestant Church bishops and presiding elders were discarded, and so far as authority inhered it reposed in the hands of the laity. These Seceders denounced bishops and presiding elders as privileged classes, as distinct grades invested with special rights, clothed with monopoly of power, and vain of distinctions, and having dominion over conscience, and being intolerable, and oppressive tyrants, and lords over the divine heritage. In connection with the grave charges against the Episcopacy, these patriotic Seceders, in the Constitution which they adopted, enacted that "No higher order of ministers shall be authorized than that of Elders," and declared that "all Eld-

ers in the Church of God are equal" and that "ministers are forbidden to be lords over God's heritage, or to have dominion over the faith of the saints." Truth is sometimes mixed with false assumptions, and attached to false accusations, and marshaled in the service of slander rather than the cause of justice; but truth is truth, and slander is slander still.

A displeased and disconcerted party, violent, intemperate, and insubordinate, dealing in defamation, fostering divisions and schisms, is an element of death from which any Church may desire to be delivered. When that body of innovators seceded, the Methodist Episcopal Church experienced positive relief—relief from internal strife, a strife which none can afford to carry very long. The great body of the Methodists of America were satisfied with the Church as it was organized at the first, and they remained steadfast. The party which withdrew was so few in numbers that no vital part was affected and no material interest was hurt. With that little party of seceders went the clamor, din, and fuss, and the Methodist Episcopal Church was left intact, with her grand forces and aggressive agencies, to prosecute her legitimate work. However, it must not be imagined that no damage accrued to the common cause of Methodism by the secession and through the Methodist Protestant Church, of which more will be said further on. The Schismatics contested for division of power, and quarreled about who should govern the Church; and then, when they instituted a Church for themselves, they made all alike governors and interpreters. Every one was to govern and no one was to be governed. They instituted a headless Church—a Church founded on rights and prerogatives, and responsible to the irresponsible masses, an associated anarchy. A rope with the twist out of it is worthless, for it is soon fretted and gone. About that Methodist Protestant Church there was, strange as the phrase may sound, a positive slackness, and the most apparent thing connected with it was its inanity, a constitutional provision of inefficiency. That which antagonizes governmental power tends to anarchy and disintegration. The elements and principles of the Methodist Protestant Church are the elements and principles of anarchy. The men who constituted the Methodist Protestant Church could distract and destroy, but could not control, unify, and build. There has never



yet been a Government that was too strong, nor an administration that was too powerful and too aggressive.

The Methodist Protestant Church received its organic form of government in the false assumption that ecclesiastical and civil authority are identical in their principles, and the "Constitution" and "Declaration of Rights" set forth by that Church abound with senseless verbiage which originate in that assumption, and the bungling Articles of said official documents have more of the texture of a political paper than of the elements of the Bible. Ecclesiastical and civil authority are not of the same nature, though it is not necessary to state here the difference. There is necessarily such a thing as government in the Church of God, and that government has been committed to officers—officers designated bishops, elders, deacons, pastors, teachers, and overseers. The man who would abolish these offices or deprive their incumbents of power and authority in the administration of ecclesiastical affairs is too much prejudiced in mind and perverted in judgment to give a correct exegesis of the Scriptures or a proper analysis of ecclesiastical polity. Would as well deny the utility of fire and abandon its use, because in its use there is liability of burning the house which shelters the inmates, and of burning the chattels which serve their purposes, as depose the officers of the Church and abolish ecclesiastical government, because, forsooth, some one may, in his administration, be guilty of injustice and oppression.

The authority to ordain ministers and install pastors never vested in the people, but in the ministers themselves. The ministers, the rulers of the Church, are to execute the laws, and the people are to obey. Rights, prerogatives, and duties are distributed in that order. The exercise of authority in the Church is ordained for the inculcation and perpetuation of sound doctrine, and to secure to the flock union, peace, and edification. The minister is to govern the Church, admonish and reprove the wayward, and expel, under due forms, the incorrigible, and all this is to be done without infringing private judgment or personal conscience, and without infringing personal liberty; and the people are to concur in the authority of the pastor, co-operate in his administration, and obey his godly admonitions. They are to aid and not hinder his work. The

people are to obey those who have rule over them, and not interpose objections to their authority.

God has ordained the Church and the State, the minister and the magistrate, but has not prescribed any particular form of government, either ecclesiastical or civil. The form of government is subject to modifications, and it is perfectly legitimate to organize under such forms as may suit the manners and customs of men in different places and countries, provided nothing be enjoined or allowed contrary to the Holy Scriptures. Any form of government having under it righteous laws righteously administered has the divine approval. God appointed over the people of Israel Judges, and for about the space of four hundred and fifty years the Judges ruled with the divine approval and blessing. Then the form of government was changed, and Kings were in authority, and whenever the Kings ruled in righteousness God approved and the nation prospered. The men who organized the Methodist Episcopal Church organized under the principle that there are no prescribed forms of government, and that the most efficient form of government should be adopted. They judged the Episcopal form of government to be the best, and organized accordingly. They were as free from the lust of power and the spirit of tyranny as were those who organized under other forms. Time, experience, and results have demonstrated that they organized well and wisely, and that other forms of government among Methodists of these United States have not been needed. The Methodist Protestant Church was organized upon such principles and for such purposes and embodied such elements as made failure inevitable. As there is no form of government prescribed in the Scriptures so there is no absolute standard and no uniform ratio of representation provided in the management of ecclesiastical affairs. The ministers of the gospel are officers clothed with authority to guide the affairs of the Church, and do whatever is necessary for the administration of the Sacraments and the edification of the body of Christ. There is no such thing in the Church as constituency and delegated power. There is a divinely authorized ministry, and in the hands of that ministry are the oracles of God. Delegated power to enact laws for the Church of Jesus Christ is an absurdity and a farce. Any system of representation which undermines any divinely estab-

lished order of society should be rejected. The theory that callings, classes, colors, grades, and sexes must have chosen representatives in the departments which adopt and execute the laws and regulations of a Church or State in persons belonging to said callings, classes, colors, grades, and sexes is unscriptural and absurd, is a theory born of ignorance and arrogance, and fostered by demagogism and fanaticism, and in its turn fosters infidelity, communism, and anarchy. The qualifications of representatives are not found in complexion, gender, or occupation, but in the ability to enact judicious and effective laws, and to wisely administer public affairs.

The agitation and the commotion created by the schismatics was not more intense in any part of the connection than in that part of Alabama then included in the Counties of Autauga, Butler, Dallas, Lowndes, Montgomery, and Wilcox. All those local preachers, except the Rev. Alexander Talley, M.D., who have been mentioned, on another page, in connection with a meeting in Dutch Bend, in Autauga County, Alabama, in 1823, and in connection with a memorial then prepared and presented to the General Conference at its session in 1824, were discontented agitators, and were active agents, through all the various stages of the issue, in organizing the Methodist Protestant Church. Other local preachers and some itinerant preachers in that part of the State were equally active in the strife. There were Union Societies organized in various localities, though it is difficult to fix the dates of the organizing of many of them at this distance of time. At the village of Greenville, Butler County, at that time one of the appointments of the Cedar Creek Circuit, a Union Society was organized in November, 1827. There was a Union Society of considerable strength at Rocky Mount, Autauga County. At that place the Seceders gathered on Friday, May 1, 1829, to organize an Annual Conference for South Alabama. The first thing they did when they assembled on that day was to call the Union Society of that place together and read to it the Articles of Association agreed upon by the Convention in Baltimore, Maryland, the preceding November, when the Society dissolved itself by adopting the Articles of Association and organizing itself into an Associated Methodist Church. That work finished, there and then, at that place and that day, those present, and there were preachers

present from different parts of the State, organized the Annual Conference of the Methodist Associated Churches of the Alabama District, and transacted such business as was esteemed proper for the occasion. There were sixteen preachers present who became then members of the Conference and participated in its business, and there were six others who sent up their names, not to be members, at that time, of the Conference, but as sympathizers with the cause. The work was, in initiation, formed into appointments and preachers were assigned thereto. The Rev. Britton Capel was chosen President of the Conference, and so to him belongs the distinction of being the first President of the Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church in Alabama. He was also a delegate to the General Convention which met November 2, 1830. At that session, at Rocky Mount, May 1, 1829, at which it was said peace and love prevailed, it was ordered that another Conference should be held in the latter part of that same year, but at this distance of time and in the absence of Journals, official documents, and periodicals of that date it is impossible to state whether the Conference ordered for the latter part of that year was held. One historian says, "a second Conference was held in September of that same year," and another historian, and one of an earlier date, says, the "second session" was "held September 16, 1830." This statement of the earlier historian is corroborated by the published Minutes of more recent date in which the sessions are numbered. Only one session for 1829 is counted. It is not certainly known who were the preachers at Rocky Mount at the organization of that Conference. It is certain that the Rev. Peyton Bibb, the Rev. Britton Capel, the Rev. Arnold Campbell, the Rev. Peyton S. Graves, the Rev. Samuel M. Meek, the Rev. Elijah Myers, and the Rev. Eli Terry were there, and active in the work of organization. It is very probable that the Rev. Joseph Walker was there, fiery, and fanatical. He was one of the first and leading agitators. He was among the first contributors to the "Mutual Rights" paper, and in his published communications he denounced the government and administration of the Methodist Episcopal Church in undisguised, and bitter terms. He was one of the local preachers found near Montevallo, Alabama, in 1818, by the Rev. Ebenezer Hearn. He was the father-in-law of Hearn, and the



father of the Rev. Robert L. Walker, who for a number of years was an efficient member of the Mississippi and Alabama Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The son-in-law, the Rev. Ebenezer Hearn, and the son, the Rev. Robert L. Walker, were uncompromising defenders of the Methodist Episcopal Church, through all the strife, and to the last. The great majority of the preachers present that May day, in 1829, were local preachers belonging to the Alabama Circuit of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and lived in the section where Autauga, Dallas, and Montgomery Counties joined, principally in Autauga, and Montgomery Counties. The Rev. Peyton Smith Graves had been for a number of years a member of the Mississippi Conference, and for 1828 was on the Alabama Circuit, and left the Mississippi Conference and the Methodist Episcopal Church as related in another place.

During the year 1830 the agitation carried on by the innovators ran high throughout the Cedar Creek Circuit, which Circuit embraced a part of Butler, Dallas, and Wilcox Counties, and during that year a number of the disaffected seceded from the Methodist Episcopal Church and openly espoused the cause of the Associated Methodists. Benjamin Dulany, John Jenkins, James Jenkins, and Robert Durham, all local preachers, at that time, residing in Wilcox County, and members of the Quarterly Conference of the Cedar Creek Circuit, withdrew, that year, from the Methodist Episcopal Church and joined the new organization. Samuel Oliver, a local preacher, residing at or near Greenville, Butler County, and a member of the Quarterly Conference of the Cedar Creek Circuit, withdrew and joined the new Church in that same year, and the great majority of the Society at Greenville withdrew in a body with him, and it was one of the strongest Societies of the Methodist Protestant Church in Alabama for many long years.

Benjamin Dulany was recommended by a Quarterly Meeting Conference held at Harper's Meeting House, Edisto Circuit, December 19, 1807, and was admitted on trial by the South Carolina Conference, December 30, 1807, and he located December 22, 1814. He was re-admitted into the traveling connection by the Mississippi Conference, December, 1825, and for 1826, 1827 he was in charge of the Cedar Creek Circuit, and he located again in December, 1827. It was currently reported and gen-

erally accredited that he, while an itinerant preacher in charge of the Cedar Creek Circuit of the Methodist Episcopal Church, secretly circulated the "Mutual Rights" paper, and secretly inveighed against the Government and administration of the Church of which he was then a member and preacher, and from which he was, for the time, drawing a stipend, by advocating the innovations proposed by the "Mutual Rights" periodical. He was the secret leader of the Schismatics, and sowed the seeds of dissension. He was the man who inaugurated and fostered the damaging secession at Greenville, Alabama. The members of the Methodist Episcopal Church who knew him personally and were acquainted with the part he took in the premises considered him a bad man at heart, a wolf in sheep's clothing, a traitor to his vows, and utterly devoid of principle. Understanding his attitude, and his treasonable course, the Rev. James H. Mellard, the presiding elder, and the Rev. Le Roy Massengale, preacher in charge of the Circuit, passed him, and others above mentioned with him, by in the administration of the Lord's Supper on the occasion of a Quarterly Conference at Shady Grove, near Camden, Wilcox County, Alabama, in 1830. When he discovered, as he did by that act of withholding from him the elements of the Sacrament, that his treason was known, and that further disguise was impossible he went out to his own and made a virtue of going, pleading that he had been driven out of the Methodist Episcopal Church by unwarranted insult. The Methodist Protestant Church honored him, and though he was a poor preacher, they gave him position. Once, if not oftener, they elected him President of their Annual Conference. He died in Wilcox County, Alabama, about 1852.

The Rev John Jenkins was a man of ordinary capacity and of limited influence. He died about 1854. The Rev. James Jenkins was born in South Carolina, February 9, 1785, and emigrated to Alabama some time previous to 1813. He was at the famous battle of Burnt Corn, July 27, 1813, and in that battle was wounded. He was for more than twenty years a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and severed his connection with that Church, in 1830, having inveighed against her polity until she refused to give him the Sacrament, and espoused the cause of the Church with a bill of civil rights. He was a man of ordinary capacity and of moderate influence. He was esteemed

a man of integrity by his associates in the bill of rights. He died at his residence, in Wilcox County, Alabama, May 8, 1849.

The Rev. Samnel Oliver was an Irishman, and a fair preacher.

In that secession at Greenville, Alabama, as at some other places, there were transactions which involved questions of equity, and in which equity was violated. A majority of the Society at Greenville seceded from the Methodist Episcopal Church and allied themselves to the new organization. A minority, consisting of Judge James Lane, James Holmes, Mr. Bonner, and a few others, maintained allegiance to the Methodist Episcopal Church. The house dedicated to the worship of God, and in which the Methodists had been accustomed to meet for divine service at the town of Greenville was the property of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and by every law, human and divine, it was for the use and benefit of those true to the Church to which it belonged, but the party which seceded possessed themselves of it by seizure and continued to occupy it as their own. They claimed it on the plea that it belonged to the majority. The preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church preached in that house only by the grace and permission of the Methodist Protestant Church members. That was strange procedure for a people who claimed specifically to be "trusting in the protection of Almighty God." It was a strange spectacle to see a faithful band, because they were in the minority, dispossessed of their house of worship by those who claimed to be moving in the securement of the best forms of Church government, and who asserted that "nothing is expedient that is unjust," but so it was. The loss of their house of worship, and the domination of the Methodist Protestant Church put the Methodist Episcopal Church at a great disadvantage at Greenville, and for many years the cause languished and the faithful were greatly depressed.

The Rev. Le Roy Massengale was a prominent actor in the great issues and stirring events of the year 1830 on the Cedar Creek Circuit. He was the preacher in charge of that Circuit that year, and he defined the issues and aligned the parties. He unmasked the innovators and exposed their intrigues, and forced them to an open assumption of their work and to an open avowal of their purposes, and into the organization of the disintegrators.

At the session of the Annual Conference, which in the official count is numbered as the second in order, which was held, beginning September 16, 1830, in connection with a Camp-meeting, near Smith's Ferry, on the Cahawba River, in Perry County, Alabama, there were appointed to pastoral charges: the Rev. Peyton Bibb, the Rev. A. J. Blackburn, the Rev. Britton Capel, the Rev. Benjamin Dulany, the Rev. Peyton S. Graves, the Rev. J. D. Lee, and the Rev. J. McCormick; and as "unstationed Ministers and Preachers," there were present: the Rev. A. J. Campbell, the Rev. G. A. Campbell, the Rev. J. Holly, the Rev. Elijah Myers, the Rev. John Meek, the Rev. Samuel M. Meek, the Rev. James Meek, the Rev. Samuel Oliver, the Rev. William Rice, and the Rev. Eli Terry. There were a few other preachers connected with the Circuits. They had, few as they were, more ministers and preachers than pastoral charges. Dulany, Graves, and Rice were, by their associates in the new organization, considered "great revivalists." At that Conference in September, 1830, there were reported in the new organization, in the bounds of Alabama, "eight hundred and eighty-one members."

The innovators constantly asserted that defeat and ruin were inwrought in the Episcopal form of government. They constantly boasted of the vast numbers who advocated their views and sympathized with their movements. Through all the years from 1820 to 1831, when the work culminated, and the work was completed in a new organization, they indulged the delusion that the great majority of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church were in sympathy with the principles they cherished and the movements they anticipated. They, in profound blindness, fostered the belief that, in the final separation, they would carry with them the great body of the laity and the local preachers belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church, and that they would leave the itinerant preachers and bishops in terrible isolation, without congregations and without access to the mass of the American citizens. The results never confirmed the assertions of the innovators, and their expectations were never realized. At the close of 1833 and the beginning of 1834, the organization of the new Church being complete, and the first General Conference thereof in session, they claimed a total membership of "twenty-six thousand five hundred and



eighty-seven," and ministers and preachers of something "over five hundred," about "one third" of whom were itinerant; whereas, at the same time the Methodist Episcopal Church had "six hundred and thirty-eight thousand seven hundred and eighty-four members, and two thousand four hundred and fifty-eight traveling preachers," and, at the close of 1836, when the first census of the local preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church was given, there were "four thousand nine hundred and fifty-four." The difference in Alabama was as great as in the other portions of the country. At the beginning of 1834 the Methodist Protestant Church had in Alabama one thousand members, and the Methodist Episcopal Church had in Alabama sixteen thousand one hundred and seventy-three members, and about eighty traveling preachers in the bounds of the State of Alabama, in the members and preachers in the State connected with the Alabama and Tennessee Conferences, and the local preachers in Alabama, at the close of 1836, when first given, in the Methodist Episcopal Church were about two hundred and fifty. That did not look much like absorbing the Methodist Episcopal Church, nor like her chosen ministry and ordained bishops were left alone.

The aggregation at the beginning was not so great as had been anticipated by the friends of the measure, and the success in the following years was not equal to what had been boastingly promised. The facts in the case and the truth in the premises demand the statements that the Methodist Protestant Church had its genesis in petty jealousies and sordid ambitions, and that the secessionists who inaugurated it "raised impious war" against the Methodist Episcopal Church, and in default of reason, and without even the semblance of scriptural emulation, prosecuted the war with imprecations. They were the dupes of their own illusions, and the resistance to which they had recourse consumed what little force they possessed, and their work not only failed of good results to themselves, but was detrimental to the common cause of Christianity. Assuming to be the advocates of representative government, and assuming to provide elective assemblies, they made, demagogues that they were, appeals to popular sentiment, but failed of success, or at least of any large measure of success.

That new departure and adventure in ecclesiastical affairs was

attended with great strife, especially was that the case in the bounds of the Alabama and the Cedar Creek Circuits, which then covered a large territory in the State. Fierce debates and angry disputes were frequent in family circles and in social and religious meetings. At meetings for divine worship, in the Meeting Houses, unseemly wrangles often occurred, and were as polluting to the house of God as would have been the abominations of the heathen. The participants in these strifes, who claimed to be contending for divine principles rather than groundless and absurd speculations, were often on the verge of pugilism, and showed decided disposition to resort to physical blows rather than to the use of logical arguments. They seemed to have more confidence in physical force and in carnal weapons than in Scriptural analysis and spiritual weapons. They seemed to think the obtuse and the perverse could be reached more effectively by the fist of the champion than by the argument of the orator. An analysis of their conduct would indicate rather a preponderance of temper and a deficiency of grace, and that the parties were in the terrestrial rather than the celestial sphere. Families were divided and Churches were disrupted. The administration of Discipline and the enforcement of law was then, as ever, offensive to the formal, listless, and lawless, and under a rigid administration to which the Methodist Episcopal Church was committed many of the members belonging to the classes here noted were filled with discontent and unfriendliness, and while one in his right mind can but know that the Church which courts the alliance of the incorrigible and the unruly courts ruin and death, yet, the Methodist Protestant Church encouraged the disaffection found in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and offered in their fold to the disaffected protection against all disabilities incurred by offenses and guaranteed unwarranted leniency, and many withdrew from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and accepted the proffered alliance and protection. This, of course, widened the breach, and intensified the war between the two organizations. In the contest houses of worship built for the Methodist Episcopal Church were seized and retained by the seceding party, and the Church for which they were built was dispossessed. In addition to the case at Greenville, already mentioned, may be named the Mills and Wescott Meeting House, built under

the leadership and by the efforts of Thomas Hatchett, on the land of Hance Baker, Sen., about two miles from Montgomery, which was seized, just after it was finished, in 1829, by the Associated Methodists, and Mr. Hatchett and the few others who remained true to the Methodist Episcopal Church had to find quarters and immunities at another place. It must, however, be said to the credit of the parties who seized the Mills and Wescott Meeting House that they refunded the money expended by Mr. Hatchett in its erection. Hope Hull, about ten miles from Montgomery, went, both House and Society, into the new organization. Strife reigned in all that section. Some of those who had been prominent members of the Methodist Episcopal Church who led off in the secession may be named here.

At Asbury, the Church named for Bishop Asbury, in Dutch Bend, Autauga County, were Lewis Houser, Mark Howard, already mentioned, William Keener, James Mitchell, James Stoudenmire, John Stoudenmire, and Benjamin Taylor; at Washington, in the same County, were James Goodson, Buckner Harris, and Thomas Smith; at Lebanon, in Dallas County, four or five miles south-east of Cahawba, were William Olds, L. C. Graham, and James Alexander; in Lowndes County, were E. H. Cook, a member of the Convention which formulated the Discipline of the Methodist Protestant Church, J. P. Cook, Hudson Powell, Seymore Powell, Robert Russell, and Benjamin F. Tower; in Montgomery County, were B. S. Bibb and Abner McGehee, a man of wealth and worth, who in after years made considerable contributions to benevolent objects; in Butler County was James K. Benson; and in Wilcox County, was Mr. Steadman. Many of these men here named, if not all, were persons of sterling worth, and possessed of a measure of piety, and this, notwithstanding they were leaders in tumult, disruption, and secession; and were at the head of the most belligerent column ever marshaled on the field of the militant hosts; and notwithstanding they were the champions of incoherent principles, and the adherents of a form of Church government essentially weak, inherently defective, a form of government which guaranteed folly and failure.

Space would fail should the attempt be made to tell of the Rev. Moses Andrew, M.D., and the Rev. William Terry, local

preachers, and Charles G. Rush, James E. Nicholson, James Howard, Thomas Hatchett, and others of the Alabama Circuit; Judge James Lane, Barr, Luckie, Harrington, Grimes, Barns, Warren, Yeldell, Godbold, McArthur, Ross, Davis, Muldrow, and others of the Cedar Creek Circuit who, through all the agitation, secession, and desertion, stood firm against every innovation on the Episcopal form of government.

The men who, where prevailed in deepest rage the unrestrained contention, defended the Methodist Episcopal Church against innovations, and against the assaults of the Methodist Protestant Church were the Rev. Robert L. Kennon, the Rev. James H. Mellard, and the Rev. Ebenezer Hearn. There were many others who were in the active campaign, and who did valiant, and efficient service in the cause of Episcopal Methodism, but these three men here named were in the lead, and were face to face, and hand to hand with the foe. These three men were presiding elders much of the time when the controversy was at its highest.

The Rev. Robert L. Kennon was conspicuous in the battle. He was rigid in his construction and administration of law, he was calm, collected, and considerate in his manner, and his sermons were logical, convincing, and popular. He was a tower of strength, and the cause he espoused engaged his resources.

The Rev. James H. Mellard was an untiring defender of the faith, polity, and works of the fathers. He clung with tenacity to the old landmarks of Methodism, and fought with persistence the party engaged in disruption. He was presiding elder in Alabama much of the time during the period in which the Methodist Protestant Church was inaugurating and perfecting its organization. He had a special gift for and took a peculiar delight in polemics. He never tired of controversy. He had vast stores of information, which was ever at his command, and which he used to good effect. It was no uncommon thing for him to preach three hours at a time, and apparently without effort on his part and without fatigue to himself. The length of his sermons sometimes exhausted the patience of some of his auditors. The Journal of the South Carolina Conference, where it records the proceedings of the Conference on the afternoon of January 1, 1801, contains this item: "James H. Mellard proposed as a traveling preacher. Accepted." The



same Journal, where it records the proceedings of the Conference on Thursday, January 2, 1806, contains the following item: "The Conference voted that Brother James Mellard shall have a letter wrote by the Committee of Address as a mild reproof for his too long preaching, praying, &c., and speaking too fast." The Journal, recording the proceedings of the Conference two days later, January 4, 1806, says: "An address was written to Rev. James H. Mellard and approved." From these items it appears that the South Carolina Conference in the early part of the ministry of the Rev. James H. Mellard, and in the first decade of this century, tried by a letter of reproof to cure him of the fault, as they esteemed it, of delivering unduly long sermons and of making long prayers, but it appears that the effort made was not successful, for, in Alabama, during the third and fourth decades of this century, he was still noted for his exceedingly long sermons. His sermons were not long because he was slow of speech, for he was reproved for "speaking too fast." The only consolation that can be entertained concerning the failure to cure him of the evil of preaching long sermons is that his resources were used in his sermons of undue length, as occasion required, in the defense of the doctrines and polity of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and against one of the most virulent attacks ever made upon a body of Christians.

The Rev. Ebenezer Hearn, though neither learned nor brilliant, was a man of great will power, courage, and personal force. He had no sympathy with those who rebelled against the adopted polity and made war upon the authorized administration of the Church. He was steadfast in the faith of the fathers, and he entered the lists, when the issue was presented, in defense of the polity of the Methodist Episcopal Church against the attacks of the turbulent party of innovators who had undertaken to regulate the ecclesiastical affairs of the Methodists of the United States. He resisted the adversary with the might which was in him, and made a vigorous and successful defense of the cause which he espoused. He was a man of strict construction, vigorous administration, and of imperious bearing, and there is no doubt but that in some instances he failed in, at least, the appearance of proper leniency, and thereby subjected himself to the charge of being haughty and overbearing, and consequently damaged the cause he would serve. In the untoward movement

he was peculiarly environed, and was peculiarly related to some of the antagonistic agents, and he suffered more persecution and annoyance than any other man, perhaps, in Alabama. His father-in-law, the Rev. Joseph Walker, long a local elder in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and who at the time of the secret workings of the innovators lived in the same Circuit with him, was one of the most inveterate agitators and fiery Schismatics in the United States, and was prominently arrayed against him. The whole body of Protestant Methodists were exasperated against the Rev. Ebenezer Hearn, and persecuted him with a desperation which indicated a determination to effect his ruin. This was kept up for fifteen or more years. He finally convicted the Rev. Peyton S. Graves of Libel in the courts of the State, after which the Protestant Methodists suspended their efforts against him. He stood like a wall to the end. They beat him with successive blows, but never demolished him or his principles.

In Alabama the Methodist Protestant Church was complete in its organization and in good working order by 1832, but having little, if any, existence in any of the prominent places it was without any controlling influence in the State. Cahawba, Demopolis, Florence, Huntsville, Mobile, Selma, Tuskaloosa, and Tuscumbia, which were at that time most of the prominent places in Alabama, were without any Society or house of worship of the Methodist Protestant Church. There were a few members of that Church living at Montgomery as early as 1830, and a house of worship was built by them facing Coosa Street about the close of 1832, though it "was destroyed by fire on Monday morning, April 28, 1834," and not until 1842 did they build again. In October, 1842, a house was dedicated by them in the town of Montgomery, and the Society at that time consisted of about nine members, two of whom were males.

In 1832 the disruption had been effected, a new Church organization had been made, the Methodist Episcopal Church had been relieved of a troublesome faction and internal strife, and the handful of would be Reformers found themselves by themselves, in all respects feeble enough, and needing relief and Reformation more than any other body of Christians around them. There were enough of them to hinder the work of Methodism, to impede the cause of Christianity, without the possi-

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bility of accomplishing sufficient good to counterbalance the evil. There were some able men and women among them, but the folly of the movement was apparent in its incipency, and the folly of it was demonstrated at every step, and the folly of it has long since been confirmed, though there are still a few to defend the movement, and the folly.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE BEGINNING OF THE WORK OF EDUCATION IN ALABAMA UNDER THE AUSPICES OF METHODISM.

AT the time of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, May 1-24, 1828, there were, in successful operation under the control of the several Annual Conferences where they were located, six or seven institutions of learning, two of them having college charters. The following were these institutions: Augusta College, in Kentucky, Madison College, in Pennsylvania, Elizabeth Female Academy, in Mississippi, Tabernacle Academy, in South Carolina, Maine Wesleyan Seminary, in Maine, Wesleyan Academy, at Wilbraham, Massachusetts, and two Seminaries, in the State of New York, the names of which were not given. To that General Conference there was reported an Academy, at that time in course of erection, at Tuscaloosa, Alabama, which was finished in September following, and called The Sims Female Academy.

At the session of the Tennessee Conference at Nashville, beginning November 28, 1826, a Standing Committee, a Committee to work in the intervals of Conference, was appointed to inquire into the propriety of founding a College under the patronage of that Conference. The Committee was composed of five traveling preachers and five laymen, some of whom were local preachers, as follows: William McMahon, Robert Paine, Thomas L. Douglass, Alexander Sale, Lewis Garrett, William McNeil, James L. Armstrong, Turner Saunders, James Frazier, and Joseph T. Elliston. It was declared in advance of the appointment of the Committee that it was not the object of the Conference to establish a *religious* or *theological* institution; such the members of that Conference believed might not be serviceable, but it was simply their wish to give their friends an opportunity of educating their youths where their *morals* and *principles* would not be ruined by bad examples and erroneous sentiments. At the session of the Conference at Tuscumbia, Alabama, beginning



November 22, 1827, in which unusual peace, love, and harmony prevailed, the Committee appointed at the previous annual session reported that nothing had been matured on the subject. Upon further consideration of the matter, the Standing Committee was continued, this time composed of William McMahon, Robert Paine, Thomas L. Douglass, Lewis Garrett, Alexander Sale, John Lytle, Turner Saunders, John M. Taylor, Joseph T. Elliston, and H. R. W. Hill. The Committee was instructed and authorized to keep the subject open for the reception of proposals of sites and contributions, and report the progress made to the next annual session of the Conference. At the session of the Tennessee Conference held at Murfreesborough, Tennessee, beginning December 4, 1828, the Standing Committee, appointed at the preceding session of the Conference on the subject of founding a College under the patronage of that Conference, reported that a communication on that subject had been received from a number of gentlemen acting as a Committee on behalf of a number of subscribers at La Grange, Alabama, and its vicinity. The communication was presented and read to the Annual Conference, and after diligent inquiry, in which satisfactory information was elicited relative to the eligibility of the place and the various advantages of the situation, and the fact was made to appear that about ten thousand dollars had been subscribed for establishing the institution at that place, it was unanimously "Resolved, That the Tennessee Conference College be located at La Grange, in North Alabama; and on motion it was Resolved, That William McMahon, Robert Paine, Lewis Garrett, James McFerrin, John M. Holland, Francis A. Owen, Turner Saunders, John Southerland, John M. Taylor, Thomas Preston, Weston T. Rucker, Henry S. Foote, Hartwell King, John J. Winston, Alexander Sale, and Moses Hall be, and they are hereby appointed Commissioners for the purpose of securing the site, raising funds, and carrying the institution into operation. Also Resolved, That William McMahon be appointed an Agent to visit the Mississippi Conference, and propose a union with them in the establishment and advantages of the College contemplated at La Grange. And believing, as we do, that the best interests of the Church and the community are identified with the success of our Conference College, we do solemnly pledge ourselves to each other to use our best exertions

on our respective Districts, Circuits, and Stations, during the ensuing year, to collect funds for the benefit of the institution."

The Rev. William McMahon appeared before the Mississippi Conference, convened at Tuskaloosa, Alabama, December 25, 1828, and presented the propositions of the Tennessee Conference relative to the College to be established at La Grange, Alabama. The Mississippi Conference, by formal action, acceded to the propositions tendered, and appointed Commissioners to participate in the proposed work of establishing an institution of learning.

The Commissioners, instructed and empowered by the two Conferences to erect, equip, and set in operation a College of the style and title prescribed, met at La Grange, Alabama, January 10, 1829, and disposed of the initial affairs committed to their hands with promptness and facility. They selected a site on which to erect the edifice to be appropriated to the use of students, formed a constitution for the government of the College, and prepared an address to the public setting forth the design and character of the institution so auspiciously inaugurated. From the many choice plots of land offered the Commissioners at La Grange for the College site "that beautiful and commanding eminence called Lawrence's Hill" was selected by unanimous agreement.

La Grange, Alabama, is situated on the summit of the mountain which overlooks the lower part of the Tennessee valley. Its origin can be easily told, and its composition in the first years of its existence can be readily described. At that point of the mountain there are numerous springs of water, some of which are mineral, and the atmosphere is supposed to be pure and salubrious. Immediately on the discovery of the supposed natural facilities for health and comfort, a few of the thrifty families owning farms in the adjoining valley took up residence at that point on the mountain. These few families constituted a community, it was scarcely a village, and its center, where clustered a number of its springs, was called La Grange. During the years 1828 and 1829, there was at La Grange an Academy, and Edward Drumgoole Sims was the Principal.

Why was that place, La Grange, Alabama, selected as the place for the College? Several causes operated, and a number

of influences were potent. The persons living in the community of La Grange and in the adjoining valley were intelligent and prosperous, and had an instinct for and an interest in such an institution of learning as a College, and were able financially to contribute to its establishment and support. A larger number of persons in that section took an active part in the enterprise and made more liberal offers for it than in any other section within the bounds of the Tennessee Conference. That had a controlling influence.

As stated above, La Grange was scarcely a village, and, it may be added, was remote from cities and thoroughfares, and that commended it to the people of that day as a choice location for a seat of learning. In that day it was agreed, and by common consent maintained, that a large commercial town, or even the neighborhood of a large town of any kind, was not a proper place for the location of a large school, and that if such a school were located even in a village the village should be so inconsiderable and moral as to derive its whole importance from the school. The absence of population at a seat of learning was held to be an absolute guarantee against the introduction of expensive habits and destructive vices. In commending the place to the public the Commissioners, who selected the site at La Grange, said: "The secluded position of the College seems in no small degree to sanction the hope that the enticements to dissipation and idleness, which are too frequently observed to assemble themselves in the vicinity of institutions of this kind, will not dare to exhibit themselves here."

La Grange as a natural situation was unsurpassed. The prophets have spoken of "the glory of Lebanon," and "the excellency of Carmel;" and much has been said, in prose and poetry, of Pisgah's summit, from whence the whole land of Canaan may be seen; and Mount Sinai, in the Arabian desert, with bare and rugged sides, towering peaks, and divine associations, possesses lofty grandeur and awe-inspiring memories; but that site, in Franklin County, Alabama, whereon was erected La Grange College, with its unique surroundings of forests, hills, mountains, springs, streams, valleys, and expanse of view, is not a whit inferior to any of the mountains of Bible history, and is "beautiful for situation." From the site of La Grange College was seen the ideal landscape. The Commis-

sioners were enticed by the scene, and inspired by the view, and they said: "The view from this point is almost as extensive as at sea. To the north may be distinctly traced the majestic curvatures of the Tennessee River, rolling its plenteous tide through the bosom of the fertile valley to which it has imparted its own name, and gliding peacefully onward in the direction of the Ohio. At the distance of ten and twelve miles, and on opposite banks of the Tennessee River, stand the flourishing villages of Tusculumbia and Florence. The interjacent country is one of uncommon beauty and productiveness, divided into farms of convenient extent, and graced with the rural dwellings of the cultivators of the soil. At a distance may be descried the blue summits of the Black Warrior Mountains, streaking their varying outline along the southern horizon. Nearer at hand on hills of milder elevation, whose tops are crowned with romantic forests of pine and oak, and which serve to complete a scene of as much blended sublimity and beauty as any in the Western country—perhaps in the United States."

Towering mountains, rising hills, outlying valleys, meandering rivers, and skirting forests do not guarantee the permanent success of a college. To reject the populous and enterprising place, where thoroughfares converge, and select the inaccessible and insignificant place is to throw away possibilities and advantages without any compensation. The school to be large, self-supporting, and permanent must be in the midst of thrifty enterprises, and accessible to a numerous population. The larger the field the brighter the prospect, the grander the opportunity. Temptations to vice will ever be found by the vicious, whether in the city full or the country waste. The sequestered spot is not the place for a large school. In monastic institutions licentiousness in its worst forms has held sway, and vice in its worst features has prevailed.

At the sessions of the Tennessee and Mississippi Conferences, the first in November and the latter in December, 1829, the Constitution drafted for the government of the College by the Commissioners was amended and approved, and the Rev. William McMahon was appointed Agent for the College, and the preachers of the Conferences subscribed about three thousand dollars for the enterprise. It is not known what amount the laymen of the country had contributed for the cause, neither is



it known what amount was expended in the purchase of the grounds, the erection of the buildings, and other improvements and outfit.

Just one year and one day from the time the Commissioners met to select the site for the College, the necessary improvements had been made and the College opened. It opened and went into operation January 11, 1830. It went into operation without ostentation, but vigorously, and with encouraging prospects. While it had a Preparatory Department, the curriculum adopted was extensive and thorough, and the men engaged in the different Departments were men of superior worth and attainments. In two months from the time it opened there were within its halls seventy pupils, with assurances that in less than four months the number would exceed one hundred. In planning the College the Trustees appended a Deaf and Dumb Asylum, but the want of funds prevented the erection of buildings for that appendage at the first, and the Trustees proposed to petition Congress to donate unappropriated lands within the State for that part of the institution. It seems that that part of the enterprise never formulated. In addition to the College building there were a Steward's hall and dormitories.

There were two sessions in the year of five months each. The first session of the first year closed June 11. The second session commenced July 12, and closed November 12. At that time the tuition was twenty dollars for the year of ten months, and the board for the ten months was eighty dollars, and the incidental expenses did not exceed for the ten months four dollars. During the first year the College had neither apparatus nor library.

The College opened on the day above named with the following Faculty: The Rev. Robert Paine, Superintendent; Mr. William W. Hudson, Professor of Mathematics and Modern Languages; Mr. Edward D. Sims, Professor of Ancient Languages.

The Committee appointed by the Tennessee and Mississippi Conferences to visit La Grange College to inspect and report its condition, which Committee consisted of Lewis Garrett, Gilbert D. Taylor, Fountain E. Pitts, William P. Kendrick, and Ebenezer Hearn, were present at the examination of the students on June 9, 10, 11, which closed the first session. The Committee

reported seventy-nine pupils present, and the examinations exceedingly gratifying and highly satisfactory. The Faculty was at that time appointed on Committees to collect a Library, and Chemical and Philosophical Apparatus, Minerals, etc., for the College. The Committee reported with emphasis: "This institution is purely literary and scientific; *no theological professorship shall ever belong to this College*, and the inculcation of the peculiar tenets of any religious denomination is expressly forbidden by the Constitution."

It was "enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Alabama in General Assembly convened, That a seminary of learning, be, and the same is hereby established at La Grange, in Franklin County, to be denominated the La Grange College." This act with its several sections was approved January 19, 1830, eight days after the College opened its doors for the reception of students. Section third of the act is as follows:

"And be it further enacted, That the following persons have been duly chosen Trustees of the College, and are recognized as residing in La Grange and its vicinity, to wit: Turner Saunders, Alexander Sale, Alexander Sledge, John Davis, Moses Hall, John Southerland, Jr., Benjamin B. Jones, Claiborne Saunders, Epps Moody, Henry S. Foote, Sion L. Perry, James B. Lockhart, William H. Winter, Dudley Dunn, Thomas Woldridge, Hartwell King, Bernard McKernan, John W. Hodges, John W. Scott, Freeman Fitzgerald, Richard Ellis; and the following persons have also been chosen Trustees and are considered as residing at a distance from the institution, to wit: William Winans, Edmund McGehee, Alexander Covington, Greenwood LaFlow, John Ross, William McMahan, Alexander Talley, Joseph McDowell, James McFerrin, John M. Taylor, Henry W. Rhodes, Jack Shackelford, Samuel W. Mardis, Robert Paine, Weston T. Rucker, Henry R. W. Hill, Thomas Brandon, John D. Bibb, Gilbert D. Taylor, Jesse Coe, Richard Jones, James Saunders, John M. Holland, James H. Mellard, Robert L. Kennon, David Moore, Robert H. Watkins, John B. Rowe, and John Coffee."

The fifteenth section enacted, "That the institution hereby incorporated shall be purely literary and scientific; and that the Trustees are hereby prohibited from the adoption of any system

of education which shall provide for the inculcation of the peculiar tenets or doctrines of any religious denomination whatsoever."

In founding a College in Alabama the Methodists were in advance of the State, and of all Churches, and of all denominations of Christians. The first College opened and chartered in the State of Alabama was the La Grange College. At the time it opened its halls and went to teaching as a College, and at the time it was chartered by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Alabama as a College, there was no other School opened in the State having the grade of a College.

One would naturally suppose that a College founded by a denomination of Christians, and which College was to continue under the auspices of such denomination, had been founded for giving instruction in Christian doctrines, for inculcating religious tenets, but the founders of La Grange College, extraordinary as it may seem, by constitutional provision, as has already been seen, prohibited the inculcation of religious doctrines at that institution, and they commended the inhibition as a meritorious provision, giving to the School a supreme excellence. Nothing was to be taught but literature and science. The founders of that College did not wish to establish a theological institution; they were uncompromisingly opposed to theological schools, theological departments, and theological chairs. However, it must not be inferred that these noble men and women were opposed to a school of a religious character and whose influence would advance the cause of Christianity. La Grange College was founded to furnish an institution where the youths of the Church and the country could be educated without hazard to their morals and principles from evil associations and false sentiments.

The Rev. Robert Paine, the first President of the La Grange College, and who was President for more than fifteen years, and did more than any one else by his work and influence to give the College character and to sustain it in its mission, was born in North Carolina, November 12, 1799, and when about fifteen years old he removed with his father and family to Giles County, Tennessee, where before he was nineteen years of age he was admitted to the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Rev. Robert Paine was a personable man. He was

descended from neither Titan nor Pigmy. He was neither emaciated nor corpulent. He was without undue length of limb or body. In form, stature, and weight there was consonance and congruity. He was elegant, genteel, graceful, and modest. His features were symmetrical, his complexion lustrous, and his eyes mild and brilliant. His face was expressive of blended strength, grace, and sweetness. There was nothing about him of the somber or the silly, he was neither austere nor obsequious. He was alike free from the imperial bearing of the autocrat and the cringing of the mendicant and the menial. While he was not endowed with any extraordinary genius, he had a clear judgment, a steady will, and was capable of lofty conceptions. He was refined, elegant, brilliant, and witty. His qualities of heart were not inferior to his intellectual endowments. He had a love for beauty, truth, and justice. There was nothing in his person, dress, or manner which would provoke criticism. He was exactly fitted, well endowed, and duly qualified for President of a College. For that office none surpassed him. When he took charge of La Grange College he was in the full bloom of young manhood, and was about the meridian of life when he resigned the charge to other hands.

He was endowed with rare talents for teaching, in which work he was seldom surpassed. His lectures on Moral Science were sublime productions, terse, logical, pure, finished, and unctious withal. He was an able preacher, though not uniform. He sometimes failed, utterly failed in his attempts at preaching. His audiences always regretted his failures, for his failures were attended with a promise of something sublime and edifying. Even when he made mortifying failures there were given such marked indications of ability, there were such flashes of intellect, there were such scintillations of heavenly inspiration, there were such outlines of divine truth set forth in the beginning of the sermon, it gave to the audience intimations of approach to a sublime effort, and left with the audience the feeling that had he succeeded according to the conception he had of the subject in hand they would have received a message of superior excellence, and no little edification. In diction, thought, and sentiment he was pure, elevated, and refined.

He served the College as President, though at the first, out of pure modesty, he would not be called President, but Super-



intendent, until he was ordained Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in May, 1846. His first work as a Methodist preacher was in Alabama. His first pastoral charge, to which he was appointed before he was nineteen, was the Flint River Circuit, which was partly in Alabama, and included Huntsville. His second Circuit was Tuskaloosa, and extended from forty to fifty miles in width along the whole length of the Tuskaloosa or Black Warrior River, or at least from Hardwick's Shelter, where Carthage is, to Bristow's Cove, near Wills Creek. The Rev. Robert Paine filled every position assigned him with fidelity to the cause and with credit to the Church. He was Chairman of the Committee of nine of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church of 1844, which drew the plan and presented the paper for the division of the Church. His name will live as long as the History of Methodism in America is known. He was President of La Grange College at the time he wrote that memorable paper, called the Plan of Separation. He died at his residence, at Aberdeen, Mississippi, October 19, 1882.

The two Professors first elected to chairs in La Grange College filled them only two or three years. William W. Hudson, who filled the chair of Mathematics and Modern Languages, and who was graduated at Yale College, left La Grange upon being elected to the chair of Mathematics and Mental Philosophy in the University of Alabama, in 1833.

Edward D. Sims, who filled the chair of Ancient Languages, who received his A.M. at Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and who was under twenty-five years of age when he entered upon his duties in La Grange College, filled his chair through the sessions of 1830, and then left the College to enter the Christian ministry. At the Fourth Quarterly Conference for Franklin Circuit, held at the Camp Ground near Russellville, Alabama, October 2, 1830, Edward D. Sims was licensed to preach, and recommended as a suitable person to join the traveling connection. Just one month from that day the Tennessee Conference met, and he was received into the Conference on trial and appointed for the next year to the Nashville Circuit. At the next session of the Conference he was appointed, as the Minutes for 1832 show, "Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy in La Grange College." At the close of 1832 he

was transferred to the Virginia Conference, and he never returned to La Grange. For a number of years he was a member of the Virginia Conference and Professor in Randolph-Macon College. In December, 1841, he was elected to the chair of English Literature in the University of Alabama, and in November, 1842, he was transferred from the Virginia to the Alabama Conference. He died suddenly at Tuscaloosa, Alabama, in April, 1845, and was buried at that place. He was honored at his burial. Being a man of accurate learning and of classical attainments, he was eminently fitted for University work, and he gave reputation to the Colleges with which he was associated, and he filled his chairs in the same with benefit to the students under his care. He was a devout Christian, and was strongly attached to the work of the ministry. He was simple, modest, sincere and amiable. In the social circle he was pre-eminent. He was equal to the companionship of kings and courts. He was the peer of princes.

The Charter of the College provided for and named fifty Trustees in the Board. The purpose was doubtless to attach as many as possible to the College, but the wisdom of appointing so large a Board might be questioned. There are many objections to so large a Board.

The second man named on the Board of Trustees to take charge of La Grange College was Alexander Sale, than whom a wiser counselor and a truer friend the College never had. He was a native of Amherst County, Virginia, and was born near the close of the war for Independence. The Rev. Alexander Sale joined the Virginia Conference on trial in February, 1808, and located in February, 1814. He moved to Alabama, and settled in the Tennessee Valley, south of the Tennessee River, about 1820. He was re-admitted to the traveling connection in the Mississippi Conference in December, 1822, and was presiding elder on the Cahawba District for the two succeeding years, which District at that time extended from the Tennessee River to the Alabama River. At the close of 1824 Mr. Sale transferred to the Tennessee Conference, which then took in that part of the Tennessee Valley in which his home was situated, and which up to that time had belonged to the Mississippi Conference. At the close of 1827 he again located, and remained a local preacher until his death. He died in Louisiana some time

in the sixties of this century. For a considerable period of his life he was a man of wealth, but in the last years of his pilgrimage he lost his worldly possessions. Like Saul, the king, he was from his shoulders and upward higher than any of the people, and he was proverbially straight. His eyes were as keen, and searching as an eagle's, his features indicated strength of character, and he had a will as firm as the everlasting hills. Bold and brave, he was as lordly as a nobleman. He was noted for his imperial bearing, lofty dignity, and rigid piety. He was a man of faith, and an intelligent, and powerful preacher. He was a leader and a commander. He brought up children who were an honor to him, and a joy as well. Hon. John B. Sale, his son, was educated at La Grange. He had a brother, the Rev. John Sale, who was for more than thirty years, or from November, 1795, till January, 1827, an itinerant preacher. He preached mostly in Ohio and Kentucky. He was a member of the Ohio Conference when he died, January 15, 1827.

The Rev. Alexander Sale engaged himself as a systematic peace-maker. He devoted Monday of the week to that work. Every Monday he went through the community, removing misunderstandings, adjusting disputes, allaying strifes, reconciling enemies, and putting a truce to neighborhood broils and private hostilities. Who attempts to adjust the disputes of enemies, and to allay the strifes of contentious spirits undertakes a work which is always difficult, and which is seldom successful. No doubt the Rev. Alexander Sale was sincere and religious in his purpose in that special work which he did so systematically as to devote Monday of each week to it, and no doubt he claimed the blessing which the Saviour pronounced upon peace-makers, but a professional peace-maker is often an officious and curious meddler, "a busybody in other men's matters." The work of peace-makers upon which the Son of God pronounced a blessing is a broader, deeper, grander work than listening to a confidential recital of the grievances, supposed or real, of angry and belligerent neighbors.

Jack Shackelford, M.D., one of the Trustees of La Grange College, born in Virginia, March 20, 1790, though brought up under the shadow of orphanage, made a bright record for himself. He moved to Shelby County, Alabama, in the latter part of 1818 or the first part of 1819, where he occupied positions of

honor. He was a member of the House of Representatives of the State of Alabama from Shelby County in 1820, and was a member of the Senate of the State of Alabama from Shelby County for three sessions, beginning with the session in 1822. He moved from Shelby County to Courtland, Lawrence County, Alabama, probably, in 1829, where he died January 27, 1857. In 1825 or 1826, while living in Shelby County, Alabama, he joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. He was a man of courage, integrity, faith, piety, and benevolence. He served the cause of liberty, humanity, and Christianity. While he was a man of lively disposition and of mirthful spirits he was a man of delicate feelings, of refined nature, and of great reverence, as a Resolution introduced by him and adopted by the Quarterly Conference held for Franklin Circuit, at Courtland, Alabama, April 4, 1835, will indicate: "The following by Brother Shackelford was adopted: Resolved, That we recommend to all the members in our Church, to abstain from the use of Tobacco, while in attendance at the House of God, regarding its use, while in our Houses of Worship, as extremely offensive, indelicate, and indecent, and often a source of great annoyance to the members and congregation in their devotions." One of the most remarkable incidents in the life of Dr. Jack Shackelford was connected with the war which resulted in the establishment of the State of Texas. In 1835 the people in that part of Mexico now known as Texas resisted the arbitrary proceeding of Santa Anna and his associates in the attempt to establish over the country a military despotism. Upon the manifestation of the disloyalty of the people to the military reign inaugurated, Santa Anna sent an army into the country to enforce the requisitions of his government. The people met the invading forces of the military chieftain with armed resistance. The war was hot, the contest sharp and bitter. There were numbers of men in the United States who sympathized with the people who offered resistance to the usurpations of Santa Anna, and in considerable numbers they rushed to their assistance. In the generosity of his nature Jack Shackelford despised usurpation and despotism, and under the promptings of the love of liberty he gathered in North Alabama a company of volunteers, and rushed to the help of the struggling Texans. In March, 1836, Shackelford and his men, about one hundred in number, were all, except, perhaps, seven,



captured by Santa Anna's forces on one of the broad plains of what is now the State of Texas. When captured, Shackelford and his men were marching with all possible speed to join Colonel Fannin and his forces, who had surrendered just before Shackelford arrived on the field. Fannin and his men and Shackelford and his men, in all about four hundred, were carried to Goliad, where, notwithstanding Fannin had surrendered on the condition that he and his men should be treated kindly and should be transported to the United States, they were treated with indignity, and were finally massacred. Jack Shackelford was the only one who escaped with his life. He begged to be executed with his men, but the Mexicans refused to grant him his request, and held him a prisoner for a long while. He eventually escaped from prison in spite of the vigilance of the guards, and returned to his home in Courtland, Alabama, whence, as already related, he went to his final reward.

Hon. Henry C. Foote, one of the Trustees of La Grange College, lived awhile at Tuscumbia and also at Courtland, and finally moved to Mississippi. He was a lawyer of ability, and an orator.

Hon. Samuel W. Mardis, for whom Mardisville, Talladega County, Alabama, was named, was a man of talents and of influence.

George W. Foster, who filled the offices of class leader and steward in the Church, and at one time held his membership at Ebenezer, not far from Courtland, and who was a brother-in-law of Hon. James E. Saunders, was a most liberal contributor to La Grange College. He died in Florence during the war between the States.

It is necessary, in order to have a perfect knowledge of the subject, to state that the Rev. William Winans, D.D., one of the Trustees of the College, bitterly opposed that provision in the charter of the College whereby it was enjoined that the institution incorporated should be purely literary and scientific, and that the Trustees should not adopt any system of education providing for the inculcation of the peculiar tenets or doctrines of any religious denomination whatsoever; and in his position on this point Dr. Winans had a numerous following, though he and his followers were in a fearful minority. The majority of the Methodists of America were until in recent years opposed to

theological schools. However, it must not be supposed that La Grange College and its founders were against religion or religious influences. The Rev. Robert Paine, the President, delivered to the students of that College some of the finest Lectures on the Evidences of Christianity ever delivered to a body of students, and the College was noted through its entire history for its moral and religious influence.

Agents were appointed by the Tennessee and Mississippi Conferences to advocate the interests of La Grange College and to solicit funds for its support. The Rev. William McMahon was the Agent for the College appointed by the Tennessee Conference for 1830, 1831, and 1832; and then he was the accredited Agent to attend the Session of the Georgia Conference at La Grange, Georgia, January 2, 1833, and present to that Conference communications soliciting the aid and support of that Conference for La Grange College at La Grange, Alabama.

The Rev. Ebenezer Hearn was the Agent of the College appointed by the Mississippi Conference for 1831; and the Rev. Joseph McDowell was the Agent appointed for it by the Mississippi Conference for 1832. There are no data in hand from which to ascertain the amounts the Agents gathered for the College during the years here named. The Rev. Ebenezer Hearn states in his Journal that for 1831 he acted as Agent for the College, and that in the discharge of his duty he traveled through Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, and Tennessee, and that he succeeded in collecting money and in securing subscriptions for the College quite as well as he anticipated. The Georgia Conference organized and held its first session at Macon, Georgia, beginning January 5, 1831; and according to the Journal of that Conference, on Monday, January 10, 1831, the Conference being in session in the Hall furnished by the County, and the Rev. Thomas Samford presiding: "Brother Hearn of the Mississippi Conference was introduced by the President to the attention of our body, after which he presented his credentials which were read announcing him as an accredited Agent to collect funds for the La Grange College, whereupon our worthy brother addressed the Conference explanatory of the objects of his mission." For the next day the Journal records the following item: "On motion, Resolved, That this Conference highly approve the object of the Mississippi Conference in supporting

the College of La Grange, and the appointment of our respected brother Hearn as an Agent for that purpose, that they deem him fully entitled to the confidence of the community generally, and sincerely hope that the liberality of the Methodist public will be extended to the object of his agency."

The Georgia Conference met at La Grange, Georgia, January 2, 1833, and the Journal for Thursday morning, January 3, contains the following item: "Brother John Early, of the Virginia Conference, and Brother McMahon, of the Tennessee Conference, made separate and distinct communications to this body—the first in reference to the Randolph-Macon College, and the second in reference to the La Grange College, which communications were referred to a Committee consisting of Brothers Stephen Olin, Ignatius A. Few, Lovick Pierce, A. Howard, and William Arnold."

The Journal records as a fact that on Friday, January 4, the Committee on Randolph-Macon College and La Grange College made to the Conference a report on the subject in hand, and the Conference adopted Resolution "4. That we have full confidence and take a lively interest in La Grange College, will recommend it to the support and liberality of our friends and the public, and will do what we can to promote the success of any Agent who may visit us for the promotion of its interests."

On Monday, January 7, the Conference, as the Journal records: "On motion, Resolved, That the Rev. William McMahon as Agent of La Grange College be invited to take up collections within the bounds of this Conference, and that he be furnished with a copy of the Resolution reported by the Committee and adopted by this Conference recommending the said College of La Grange to the confidence of our brethren."

From these items it appears that the Mississippi and Tennessee Conferences endeavored to enlist the Georgia Conference in behalf of La Grange College located in Franklin County, Alabama, and that they did so far succeed as to get a recommendation to the favorable notice and the liberal donations of the Methodists of Georgia. The actual amount of Georgia's pure offerings to that literary enterprise is not now known, but it is presumed that it was not very large.

The Rev. William McMahon was one of the most efficient Agents ever appointed for La Grange College. He was well

qualified for the work, and had a cause which commanded attention and deserved benevolence, and no doubt he would have succeeded in gathering larger sums for that institution of essential worth but that there were so many of those to whom he appealed "who with dust inanimate held wedded intercourse." He was not born to luxurious life, nor to hereditary fame, and he was not of those who strove for place, and eminence, and swelling titles, and pompous names. He was equally free from sloth and ambition. He was sincere and true, faithful to vows, stern against sin. He was an honest seer. He had decision of character, and never yielded to chance. He was a native of Virginia, and had the sorrow to lose his father in his early childhood. His mother was a pious woman. He was received on trial in the Western Conference at Cincinnati, Ohio, October, 1811. For sixteen years, or from the latter part of 1819 to the latter part of 1835, he lived near Huntsville, in Madison County, Alabama, and discharged the duties of his ministry mostly in North Alabama; preaching to the civilized and the savage, to the white man, the Negro, and the Indian. He attended more Camp-meetings in North Alabama, and did more ministerial work at them, perhaps, than any other one man. He did the grandest work in North Alabama, in the Tennessee Valley, of any man ever in it. It was the Rev. William McMahan who kept out of North Alabama the strife of the innovators, and prevented, in that section, the establishment, in any measure of strength, of the Methodist Protestant Church. He stood a tower and a strength against that movement, and in that behalf is entitled to all praise. He was a leader in Israel. He was a member of many General Conferences. He attained the degree of Doctor of Divinity. His first wife, Mrs. Rachel McMahan, *nee* Rachel Lewis, ever fearless and ever faithful, ever pious and ever patient, preceded him to the grave and to the better land nearly fifty years. She died about sunrise, Wednesday, November 24, 1820, at the residence of Mr. Richard Harris, near Huntsville, Alabama. He died June 15, 1870, at the house of his son-in-law, the Rev. J. N. Temple, in Paducah, Kentucky. After the death of his first wife, he married a Miss Saunders, of Alabama. She also preceded him to the grave. He was a grand man everywhere. In the pulpit, and in the legislative bodies of the Church he had few equals, and in the presidency



of the Quarterly Conferences, and in the administration of affairs he had no superiors. Devotion, energy, judgment, superiority, and success were his. He was a member of the Memphis Conference at the time of his death. He commenced the world poor, and died in the same condition. He went on foot, when a young man, having a satchel and some kind of walking stick, from Virginia to Ohio. He attained to affluence in the course of years, but was reduced, before he died, to extreme poverty. There was nothing wrong in the providence, and there was nothing wrong in the poverty. His faith never failed, and at death he entered upon an inheritance which shall never fade away. "Ye shall be redeemed without money." "The redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away."

## CHAPTER XIX.

### THE ANNUAL SESSIONS OF THE ALABAMA CONFERENCE OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

THE formation of the Alabama Conference was anticipated and provided for at the session of the Mississippi Conference in November, 1831. The Districts were arranged and the appointments of the preachers were made then with reference to the boundaries of the Mississippi and the Alabama Conferences which were to be, and the places and times of the meeting of the two Conferences were fixed. As anticipated and provided for, the General Conference which met in May, 1832, authorized the organization of the Alabama Conference, and fixed the boundaries, which included all that part of the State of Alabama not included in the Tennessee Conference, West Florida, and the Counties of Jackson, Greene, Wayne, Clarke, Lauderdale, Kemper, Noxubee, Loundes, and that part of Monroe east of the Tombigbee River in the State of Mississippi. That part of North Alabama watered by those streams flowing into the Tennessee River was included in the Tennessee Conference.

The Alabama Conference was organized at Tuskaloosa, Alabama, Wednesday, December 12, 1832. Whatever statements or intimations there may be to the contrary, this date is nevertheless absolutely correct. Bishop James O. Andrew presided over the body at that its first annual session, and if not the very first that Conference was among the first presided over by him after his consecration to the Episcopal office.

It fell to the lot of the Rev. Robert L. Walker to provide for the entertainment of the members of that Conference as he was in charge of the Church at Tuskaloosa at that time.

At that session of the Conference six preachers were received on trial, ten continued on trial, five admitted into full connection, five ordained deacons, three ordained elders, two located, two put on the supernumerary and two on the superannuated roll, reported eight thousand one hundred and ninety-six white and two thousand seven hundred and seventy colored members

in Society, made four Districts, and assigned to work, including two supernumerary men, forty-nine preachers. That was a splendid array of men and a magnificent outline of work for that day. A multitude of seraphs burning in ineffable glory could not present to the Lord of the vineyard a more sublime spectacle than was presented by that outline of sacred work and that party of consecrated workmen.

The preachers of the Conference, to the number of twenty-three, on Tuesday of the Conference session, December 18, in a meeting held for the purpose, formed themselves into a Society, the style and title of which was: "The Preacher's Society of the Alabama Annual Conference." The Constitution adopted declared: "The object of this Society shall be to create a fund, the proceeds of which, after the capital amounts to two thousand five hundred dollars, may be appropriated to the relief of such preachers as may be peculiarly necessitous." The Constitution provided that "Every traveling preacher of the Alabama Annual Conference, who shall pay two dollars and fifty cents annually, shall be a member of this Society; and the payment of fifty dollars at one time shall constitute a member for life."

With song and music, prayer and sermon, such as stirred the emotions and inspired the faith of saints and alarmed the fears of sinners, public worship was carried on from day to day and from night to night during the entire session of the Conference.

The last night of the first session of the Alabama Conference came. The moment for adjournment *sine die* came. The benediction was pronounced for the last time just after the appointments of the preachers for the next year had been announced. Just before announcing the appointments, the Lord's Supper was dispensed, Bishop Andrew conducting the administration. The reception of the holy communion is a most solemn service, and what was a delightful occasion, the showing forth the Lord's death by a company of divinely appointed ambassadors, was marred by the untimely performances of the Rev. Job Foster, the eccentric, who while the service of the holy communion was proceeding pranced up and down the aisle of the Meeting House with such vehemence as to endanger life and limb, and frighten and disgust the audience; and all this in the

name of religion and the assumption of ecstasy. But the holy men retained their equilibrium in the midst of the provocation, and, in good order and with solemn reverence, proceeded to the finale.

The second session of the Alabama Conference was held at Montgomery, Alabama, beginning December 11, 1833, Bishop John Emory, presiding.

The Constitution of the Preacher's Fund Society of the Alabama Annual Conference provided that its Annual Meetings "shall be held on the first Monday in the session of the Annual Conference." In accordance with that provision the Society met in Montgomery, Monday, December 16, 1833, and transacted its business.

An increase for the year of twenty-four hundred and eighty-six white and three hundred and ninety-three colored members was reported at that session of the Conference, and sixty preachers, including Supernumeraries, Professors, and Agents, were assigned appointments.

One of the preachers, then at the end of his first year on trial, and who was present, makes the following statement concerning that session of the Conference: "In due time we were at Montgomery, and homes assigned us. My sleeping apartment was in an old vacated Hotel, near the river, in company with a crowd of young preachers, and we had to go out and get our meals at different places in the city. The weather was extremely bad, rain, snow, and sleet fell on us. The Conference convened at the appointed time. Bishop Emory presided, much to the satisfaction of the brethren. Business was dispatched by the Bishop, carefully and safely, so that on Sunday the ordinations were attended to, the Bishop preaching at 11 o'clock. I confess I had either looked for too much, set my estimate of the Bishop's preaching abilities too high, or else I was in a bad condition to hear; probably this last; for I was really disappointed, but in looking round I saw a number of the older preachers in tears, viz., E. V. Le Vert, R. L. Walker, R. L. Kennon, James H. Mellard, Ebenezer Hearn, and others, so that I decided certainly it is in me, but could not help thinking that if I were up there saying those identical words, using the same gestures and intonations of voice, not a tear would have been shed, their heads would have been hung, perfectly ashamed of



me. I was not the only one that entertained such thoughts. Brother James Thompson, an excellent local preacher of the Cedar Creek Circuit, who was at the Conference for ordination, and who heard the Bishop's sermon, told me he had the same thoughts. We both concluded that a position and name had a great deal to do in producing effects by some divines. Bishop Emory was certainly a good divine, a good writer, and an intellectual preacher; but somehow it did not, to my weak capacity of judging, so appear that day. In due time the work of the Conference was closed, and every one ready to leave, and only waiting for the secret roll to be unfolded, and receive their appointed sphere of labor for the next year. The Bishop very gravely approached the stand and announced the appointments."

At Greensborough, Greene County, Alabama, December 10, 1834, the Alabama Conference met in Annual session, Bishop James O. Andrew presiding. The Secretary for that session of the Conference alleging that he had lost the paper containing the statistical answer to the question, What numbers are in Society? never furnished said statistics for the General Minutes. The answers to five of the regular questions in the Conference business were not furnished. The Secretary seems to have been a man lacking in carefulness and promptness.

One of the preachers who was received into full connection and ordained a deacon at that time, gives the following account: "We proceeded to Greensborough. My lodging was assigned me, as at Montgomery the winter before, with a crowd of young preachers, among whom were Walter H. McDaniel, Theophilus Moody, and others, in the upper room of an old building, the lower part of which was used as a machine shop for the putting up and sale of spinning-jennies by a Mr. Peter McIntyre. We took our meals at a Brother Dickens', a prominent member of the Church at that place. He entertained a number of the older preachers, Bishop Andrew among them. My class consisted, as the year before, of Robert Smith, E. H. Moore, Isaac N. Mullins, Robert Dickson, Humphry Williamson, Theophilus Moody, and myself. All of whom were examined and passed, except Brother Moody, he was deficient in his studies, and left on trial by the first vote taken, much to his mortification; but the vote was afterward reconsidered, and he was received, and with the

others elected to deacon's orders, which were conferred by the imposition of Bishop Andrew's hands the Sunday following. Brother Paul F. Stearns had been stationed at Greensborough that year, and upon him rested the labors of conducting the outside business at this session, which he discharged, I think, to the satisfaction of all."

The Alabama Conference again convened at Tuscaloosa, Alabama, December 16, 1835. When the hour for the Conference to open arrived Bishop Joshua Soule had not reached the place, and the Rev. E. V. Le Vert was chosen by ballot President. On Saturday of the Conference session, December 19, the Preacher's Fund Society of the Alabama Annual Conference met, Dr. R. L. Kennon in the chair. On Sunday, December 20, Bishop Soule preached one of his grand sermons, and ordained a number of deacons and elders.

The Quarterly Conference of the Chickasawhay Circuit recommended to the Alabama Annual Conference to meet at Tuscaloosa, Alabama, December 16, 1835, the Rev. Stephen Fatherly Pilley as a suitable person to be admitted on trial into the traveling connection. Immediately on the presentation to the Conference, in due form and officially, of that recommendation, strong opposition to the reception of the applicant into the Conference was developed. The presiding elder who officially presented the recommendation and a number of the older members of the Conference vigorously resisted the admission of the applicant to Conference prerogatives. Objections were urged against the Rev. Stephen Fatherly Pilley on the following grounds: First, he had been a member of a Theatrical Troupe, was a good fiddler, loved fun and frolic, and it would be impossible for him to attain the gravity and the influence of a minister of the gospel in the places where he had led theatricals, fun, and frolic, and had fiddled for the entertainment of the frivolous, and especially in Mobile where he had been notorious in that line of things. Second, he was a married man, with a wife and one child.

With such environments and with the influence of the men of age and position against him the prospect for the Rev. Stephen F. Pilley was gloomy, indeed. The Rev. Abiezer Clarke Ramsey, a young man then at the end of one year's membership in the Conference, and who had never made a

speech on the Conference floor, a young man of frail mold and feeble body, in personal appearance as contemptible as ever Saul of Tarsus was, heroically espoused the cause of the applicant.

On the Chickasawhay Circuit, in the early part of 1833, the Rev. A. C. Ramsey witnessed the introduction of Mr. Pilley into the kingdom of grace and into a new life. Mr. Ramsey went to spend the night at the house of Jesse Graves. Brother Graves insisted on having a sermon, Brother Ramsey consented, a small congregation was summoned and assembled in one of the rooms of the dwelling, Ramsey stood on the floor, at the back of a chair, and delivered his message, and at the close of his sermon he invited persons who desired salvation to make themselves known. Mr. Stephen F. Pilley, with apparent concern, and with signs of deep penitence, approached and knelt on the floor with his head in the chair by which the preacher had stood in the delivery of his sermon. There and then, while prayers were being offered for him, Mr. Pilley professed to find pardon and experience regeneration. The next day at the Meeting House, where Mr. Ramsey preached, Mr. Pilley presented himself as a candidate for membership in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and, in due time and by process provided, he was admitted. The Rev. Mr. Ramsey had for Mr. Pilley a concern which others did not have, and saw in him the elements of success which others did not see, and he admitted his claim to recognition and advocated his reception into the ministry of the Church.

In the animated discussion which ensued on the subject, Brother Ramsey resorted to *argumentum ad hominem* in his defense of Brother Pilley. Upon the altar on which they would sacrifice Pilley every one of his opponents might have been immolated. By the tests applied to Pilley and the rule enforced in his case not one of his opponents would have been admitted to the ministry. Brother Pilley had once been a sinner, so had the men who opposed his reception. Possibly, they had done many things worse than acting on the Stage and performing on the Fiddle. They claimed that their hearts had been changed by divine operation and their lives by a new principle and that they were witnesses of the efficacy of divine grace; even so Brother Pilley claimed that his heart and life

had been changed and that he was a witness of the divine clemency. The heart of an Actor and of a Fiddler could be changed by divine grace applied by the Holy Ghost, and the work of divine power might be just as thorough in such cases as in others. The power which changed the hearts of the preachers of the Alabama Conference and which changed Saul of Tarsus could as effectually change Pilley, the Actor and Fiddler. Even before Brother Pilley united with the Church he was not given to vicious habits, such as profanity and fraud, drunkenness and debauchery.

In response to the objection that Pilley had a wife and a child Ramsey asserted that there was no sin in being the husband of a wife and the father of a child. Methodist preachers were not required to vow the estate of single life, or to abstain from marriage. There was no reason for refusing those who had a wife and children admission to the ministry, as those admitted to the ministry without them would very soon have them. If they were not married they ought to marry, and they would. These are not the utterances of mere idealism and poesy. In the course of his speech Brother Ramsey said to the Bishop that, left to his own choice, he would as soon take Brother Pilley, the next year, for colleague on his Circuit as any one untried. The Rev. Stephen F. Pilley was admitted into the traveling connection, and was the colleague of the Rev. A. C. Ramsey for the two years succeeding. Pilley was a man of lofty conceptions, deep piety, great efficiency, and long usefulness.

The Conference appointed a committee consisting of J. Foster, R. L. Kennon, and E. Hearn to consider the propriety of establishing a Periodical.

An offer from the North-east part of the Conference territory to establish a Manual Labor School under the care of the Conference was presented by the Rev. Greenberry Garrett and a Committee was appointed to carry the project into effect under certain regulations. The Committee consisted of G. Garrett, J. Foster, R. Smith, J. Matthews, W. Murrah.

For Delegate to the General Conference William Murrah received thirty-two votes, William Wier twenty-nine votes, Eugene V. Le Vert twenty-five votes, and Robert L. Kennon twenty-three votes, and were elected.



At that Conference steps were taken to make the examinations of the undergraduates in the ministry more thorough and satisfactory. More than a half century has passed since that action of that Conference, and the examinations of undergraduates are still superficial and unsatisfactory.

The next session of the Alabama Conference opened at Mobile, Alabama, January 4, 1837, Bishop Thomas A. Morris, a very amiable man and a pleasant officer, presiding. Though the ordinary business of the Conference was dispatched pleasantly and properly, the session was attended with events which caused deep sorrow and with developments which created painful solicitude. The year 1836, the year just then passing in review, had been a year of sore trials with the Methodist preachers and people of Alabama. Not only were there great spiritual declension and financial stringency in the Church, but there was mourning on account of two fallen comrades who had fallen during the year, the first who had fallen by death since the organization of the Conference, and one went down by the destroyer during the session of the Conference.

The Rev. Thomas L. Cox, who started out in the ministry from Florence, Alabama, in the latter part of 1833—his license bears date September 21, 1833—and who served Buttahatchee Circuit for 1834, and the Centreville Circuit for 1835, and was appointed to the Chickasawhay Circuit for 1836, was stricken with a violent hemorrhage from the lungs January 18, just after he reached his Circuit, and soon passed to "the undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveler returns." His death was triumphant. His body was laid away in the burying ground in the city of Mobile.

The Rev. Robert A. Smith, who had served the Oakmulgee Circuit one year, and the Jones's Valley Circuit two years, and who was appointed to the Montgomery Station for 1836, and who served it faithfully till he was stricken with fever in the month of August, died October 25. After he was stricken with fever the kind family in which lived the lady to whom he was betrothed, conveyed him in a carriage from Montgomery to their home near Elyton, Alabama, and nursed him tenderly and ministered kindly to his wants till he surrendered to the king of terrors, and went to join the bloodwashed throng in the enjoyment of the sublime realities of the land of paradise. He

was buried in the graveyard at Elyton. A small, rough stone still stands, 1891, at the head of his grave with the following inscription: "Rev. Robert A. Smith, Died October 25, 1836, Aged 27 years."

The Conference held memorial services for these two comrades, and during the session of the Conference the Rev. George W. Cotton, who had served the La Fayette Circuit for the year just then closed, 1836, and who was then eligible to membership in the Conference and to deacon's orders, and who during the session of the Conference was being entertained at the house of Brother Gascoigne, died of pneumonia, and died in peace. Brothers Pilley and Ramsey witnessed his struggle with death and closed his eyes. Bishop Morris, in the presence of the Conference and the congregation, preached his funeral from Colossians iii. 3, 4, and then he was laid away in a grave beside the grave of the Rev. Thomas L. Cox in the burying ground in the city of Mobile. The members of the Church in Mobile paid the expenses of his burial. He left a wife and daughter behind who mourned on account of his death.

That Conference session was peculiarly sad. Many of the preachers were induced to locate at that time, and the Conference was greatly weakened by the loss of its greatest and most promising men. It was maintained by some that there was a neglect of duty, a decline of piety, a conformity of the Church to the world, and a loss of moral influence throughout the Alabama Conference. There was such a lack of ministers that the work was not properly supplied. Bishop Morris said: "There are plenty of able ministers in the bounds of the Alabama Conference to supply the work fully, if they could be had; but they are attending to their farms, their merchandise, etc." The Church was worldly and penurious. The preachers, under the pretext, possibly under the necessity, of making a living, and in some cases under the influence of covetousness, were giving attention to secular affairs, and every department of Church work suffered detriment. Notwithstanding the sombre aspect of the general situation presented by the depletion of the ministerial forces and the decrease in membership, two or three preachers less receiving appointments for 1837 than for 1836, and there being a decrease in the membership for the year 1836 of near three hundred, there was, perhaps, a disposition on the

part of some to brood over the disasters of the year and unduly disparage the state of the Church.

The Preacher's Fund Society met in Mobile, Alabama, Monday evening, January 9, 1837, and again the next evening after the session of the Conference, R. L. Kennon in the chair. The fund increased very slowly. The whole amount in hand at that time was seven hundred and ninety-nine dollars and sixty-four cents. Nothing to disburse.

The Alabama Conference met at Columbus, Mississippi, Wednesday, January 3, 1838, Bishop James O. Andrew presiding. The regular business vested in the Conference under the genius of Methodism was conducted with propriety and completed with facility. In the examination and estimation of ministerial character and in the determination of ministerial relations the Conference at that session exercised more than ordinary care, and in the discharge of the public function devolving in that behalf enforced the rules governing in the premises with rigid exactness. Goaded to desperation by threatened calamity to the Church by the loss of ministers, the Conference absolutely refused to grant the request of more than one who asked a location.

Eight preachers were admitted on trial, four located, one was expelled, one died, there had been an increase of thirty-six members during the year, and six hundred and forty-two dollars and seventy-nine cents had been contributed to the Conference Collection. To the friends of Christianity not stolidly indifferent the state of things represented by these facts and figures must have been depressing.

The Sunday before Conference met was the last day of the year 1837. The rules of the Conference providing for the examinations of the preachers seeking Conference relations and orders required the Committees of examination and the men to be examined to be at the place of meeting some days in advance of the opening of Conference, and in accordance with this requirement a number of the preachers spent Sunday, December 31, at Columbus. On that day at 11 o'clock A.M., Dr. R. L. Kennon preached there in the Methodist Church from Isaiah xxvi. 3-5. The Doctor was in good health and buoyant spirits, and preached with vigor, animation, and eloquence. The children of God were devout and prayerful, and great emotion was

evinced throughout the congregation. A watch-night service was held at the Church in which the old year was watched out and the new year was watched in. In that watch-night service, which was closed just after the new year came in, Dr. Kennon participated, and was quite animated, exhorted and prayed with extraordinary fervor and power. On Monday he helped in the examination of the classes, a work in which he was deeply interested, in the evening he complained of being unwell, and on Tuesday he took his bed, from which he never again arose. The Conference proceeded with its business, and on Tuesday, January 9, 1838, just as it was finishing up the business for adjournment *sine die*, the sad announcement was made in the Conference room Dr. Kennon is dead! A solemn pause ensued and deep sighs and numerous tears evinced the profound grief felt by the members of the Conference. The Conference appointed the Rev. S. B. Sawyer and the Rev. William Wier a Committee to prepare and publish a proper memoir of Dr. Kennon. Bishop Andrew preached his funeral to a crowded and weeping assembly; the body was conveyed to Tuskaloosa, Alabama, and on January 12, 1838, was committed to the ground in the cemetery at Tuskaloosa, in hope of the general resurrection at the last day. As Dr. Kennon's death took place just as the Conference had assembled to read out the appointments of the year, and the announcement of his death was made just at that juncture, and as he was the man who was to go to Tuskaloosa Station, his death left Tuskaloosa to be supplied for that year. A Rev. Mr. Hardy filled the Tuskaloosa Station, as a supply, till September 21, when he died.

The Rev. Robert L. Kennon was born in Granville County, North Carolina, in 1789, and was regenerated when eleven years old, and was ever after a pious, working Christian, deeply interested in the salvation of souls. The Rev. Robert L. Kennon was recommended by a Quarterly Meeting Conference held in Sparta Circuit, Pine Woods Meeting House, December 17, 1808, and was admitted on trial by the South Carolina Conference at Liberty Chapel, Georgia, on the afternoon of December 27, 1808, Bishop Asbury presiding. He was admitted into full connection and elected to deacon's office, December 24, 1810. He was elected to elder's orders, and located December 22, 1812. These items are taken from the Journal of the



South Carolina Conference. He located on account of feeble health.

After locating and acquiring medical tuition he administered medicine as a profession and for a livelihood, and, as opportunity offered, exercised the office of local elder, in the Church until December, 1824, when he was re-admitted to the traveling connection in the Mississippi Conference. From 1819 to the close of 1824, as stated in another place, he resided at Tuskalooosa, Alabama; and after that, thirteen years of his active life and ministry were given to Methodism in the State. He did grand work for the Church. He exerted during all his years in Alabama a salutary influence. No man was more extensively known, felt, and appreciated in Alabama Methodism in his day than Dr. Kennon. His work was not limited by the number of miles he traveled and the number and character of sermons he preached, though he traveled extensively and preached often and grandly. The horizon swept by his vision was outlying and expansive, and he planned for filling the extensive field with efficient agencies and holy influences. He planned wisely and for large results. By the ideas he inculcated, he expanded the views of others, and by the plans of work he devised and inaugurated he made others efficient.

For four years, beginning with 1825, the Rev. Robert L. Kennon was presiding elder of the Cahawba District, which was composed of the Alabama, Cahawba, Jones's Valley, Tuskalooosa, New River, and Marion Circuits, and Tuskaloosa Station. For 1829 and 1830 he was preacher in charge of Tuskaloosa Station. For 1831 and 1832 he was presiding elder of Black Warrior District, which consisted of Marengo, Prairie Creek, Tuskaloosa, New River, Marion, Columbus, Greene, and Oakmulgee Circuits, and Tuskaloosa Station. For 1833 he was preacher in charge of Greenesborough and Marion Station. For 1834 he had a supernumerary relation. For 1835 and 1836 he was preacher in charge of Mobile Station. For 1837 he was preacher in charge of Tuskaloosa Station. These appointments give the field which he occupied for so many years. A magnificent field it was, and well did he occupy it till his Lord came and took him to himself.

Dr. Kennon was about medium height, of spare mold and straight form, blonde, with features indicative of intellectuality.

His step was agile and elastic. He was gentle, sincere, generous, and benevolent. He was dignified while he was free from stiffness and affectation, and was of cheerful disposition and of mirthful spirit without being silly and frivolous. With elegant address, pleasing manners, and social qualities richly endowed he was an agreeable companion, ever inspiring affection and awe. His conversation was often brilliant, sometimes profound, and always pious and profitable. As a preacher he was earnest, emotional, and eloquent. Salvation with him was a reality, and he loved the souls of men, and in his estimation it ought to be the chief concern of mortals here below to attain salvation. He labored to secure the interests and advance the happiness of all classes. He worked for the elevation and salvation of the Negroes no less than the Caucasians.

He married Miss Martha Bush, in Warren County, Georgia. He made his home honorable and his household happy. He was a loving husband and a kind father. His children cherish his memory, and bless his name, and praise his deeds.

Before his death he was considered the father of the Alabama Conference. His wise counsels, pious example, loving spirit, and ardent interest in his fellows gave him a warm place in the affections and the confidence of his brethren. They were strongly attached to him. When he died one of his comrades said: "He left not his like among us."

The Alabama Conference convened in annual session at Montgomery, Alabama, January 2, 1839, Bishop Thomas A. Morris in the chair; and nine preachers were received by transfer, including two who had just been admitted on trial by the Conference from which they had been transferred; fifteen others were admitted on trial; so that, though a number located, a number discontinued, one had been expelled, and one had died, there were assigned to appointments for the ensuing year seventeen more preachers than had been the year just then closed.

The Conference held its annual session at Tuskaloosa, Alabama, beginning Wednesday, January 1, 1840, and adjourning *sine die* the next Wednesday. On December 29, 1839, the Sunday before the Conference assembled, Bishop James O. Andrew, then at Tuskaloosa awaiting the opening of the session of the Conference, over which he was to preside, preached on his favorite theme: "The Relative Duties of Parents and Chil-

dren, Husbands and Wives." At night of the same Sunday the Rev. Robert Paine, then President of La Grange College, who was also at Tuscaloosa awaiting the approaching session of the Conference, preached in the Methodist Church. The Rev. William Wier, who heard the sermon, said: "He had a good plan, and labored hard to give energy and animation to his enlarged thoughts, but he was dull in spite of all." The Rev. Mr. Wier pronounced Bishop Andrew's sermon "a most profitable discourse."

The average preacher of that time had but little genius for companionship with books, and in the study of theology and in the acquisition of literary taste and knowledge he was neither diligent nor efficient. The Course of Study prescribed for undergraduates was not mastered. At that session of the Conference in a class of seventeen preachers who had been on trial one year there were only seven present for examination, and of that seven examined on Watson's "Life of Wesley," three had a tolerable idea of the book, the others had barely read it, and not one of the class had ever read Watson's "Dictionary."

A very tranquil session of the Alabama Conference, presided over by Bishop James O. Andrew, was held at Selma, Alabama, beginning December 30, 1840, and adjourning *sine die* January 6, 1841. During that session of the Conference, January 2, 1841, an Act was approved, which was passed by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Alabama, in General Assembly convened in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, incorporating the Centenary Institute of the Alabama Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the County of Dallas. Of course the Centenary Institute thus incorporated engaged the attention of the Alabama Conference assembled in the town of Selma.

The next annual session of the Alabama Conference was held at Mobile, Alabama, beginning December 15 and adjourning *sine die* December 22, 1841. That was a busy session. The Rev. Fountain E. Pitts, of the Tennessee Conference, attended that session of the Conference in the interest of the *South-western Christian Advocate*.

December 28, 1842, the Alabama Conference convened in the city of Montgomery, Alabama, Bishop James O. Andrew in the chair. The Conference was in session more than a week. The Rev. John B. McFerrin, and the Rev. George McClintock, two

men who made reputation, attended that session of the Conference.

The Alabama Conference convened at Columbus, Mississippi, December 27, 1843. At 11 o'clock A.M. on Sunday, the last day of the year, Edmund S. Janes, afterward Bishop, preached a sermon touching the office of deacons in the Church of God. Immediately upon the close of the sermon ten traveling deacons were ordained. At 3 o'clock P.M., the same day, the Rev. John B. McFerrin, Editor of the *South-western Christian Advocate*, preached a sermon defining the office and expounding the duties of elders in the Church of God. Upon the close of the sermon six traveling elders were ordained. Probably a number of local deacons and elders were also ordained. Bishop Joshua Soule presided at that Conference, and he conducted the ordination services. The services were conducted with the holy unction, solemn awe, and sublime dignity peculiar to Bishop Soule. The spectators were awed and rejoiced. The impressions of that day lasted. The name and house of God were exalted. By that ordination service the people present were made to feel: "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness." At that session of the Conference delegates to the General Conference were elected consisting of Jesse Boring, Jefferson Hamilton, William Murrah, and Greenberry Garrett.

The Alabama Conference met at Wetumpka, Autauga County, Alabama, Wednesday, February 26, 1845, and adjourned *sine die* the next Wednesday, March 5. These are the correct dates, all statements wheresoever found to the contrary notwithstanding. Bishop James O. Andrew presided. On Sunday, March 2, ten traveling deacons and eight traveling elders were ordained. The state of matters at the time of that Conference produced friction. There were difficulties to settle. The whole connection was agitated on the subjects of slavery and separation. That was the time at which the Alabama Conference had to take action on the necessity of the Conferences in the slave-holding States uniting in a distinct ecclesiastical connection. The questions involved were of grave character, and the agitation over them was intense. Passion ruled the hour. Bishop Andrew was presiding over the Conference under the disability imposed on him by the action of the General Conference and



by the action of the Bishops in leaving his name entirely out of the plan of episcopal visitations. By the plan made out Bishop Soule was to preside over the Alabama Conference. But the Conference continued its work, kept intact, provided, so far as its action affected matters, for the settlement of the great questions before the Church, finished its business, sent out its preachers, and adjourned in usual form.

## CHAPTER XX.

### THE FURTHER ENLARGEMENT AND ADVANCEMENT OF THE WORK OF METHODISM IN ALABAMA.

ON March 24, 1832, a Treaty was made between the United States and the Creek tribe of Indians, the first Article of which was: "The Creek tribe of Indians cede to the United States all their land East of the Mississippi River." The land hereby ceded was bounded by and lay within the following named lines: Beginning near the mouth of Wills Creek and running down the Coosa River with its eastern bank to the upper end of Wetumpka Falls, from thence east from a true meridian to a point due north of Oakfuschee Creek, thence south by a meridian line to the mouth of Oakfuschee Creek, thence up the same, according to its various meanders, to a point where a direct course will cross the same at the distance of ten miles from the mouth thereof, thence a direct line to the mouth of Semochechaba Creek, which empties into the Chattahoochee River, thence along the eastern line of Alabama to about one mile north of Township fourteen, thence along the line which was then between the Creeks and the Cherokees to the Coosa River near the mouth of Wills Creek. With that Treaty of March 24, 1832, went the last of the ancient domain of the Creek Indians. Immediately on the ratification of that Treaty white population began to flow into the territory ceded; and the Alabama Conference at its first session in December, 1832, appointed a preacher to the population who had crossed over into that newly ceded and beautiful country. Talladega Mission was the name given to the new appointment, and the Rev. Jesse Ellis was the man put in charge of it. Before the Creek Warrior got out of the country Christian Societies were organized and Quarterly Conferences were held therein.

There is but little recorded concerning the Talladega Mission for 1833. The proceedings of one Quarterly Conference for that year are on record. It was the first one held for the Talladega Mission, though it should have been the second, as the one

for the first round was never held. That Quarterly Conference, the first one ever held on the eastern side of the Coosa River in the State of Alabama, was held at Bethel Meeting House, May 25, 1833, and was presided over by the Rev. R. G. Christopher, then the presiding elder of the Coosa District. The members present and constituting that Quarterly Conference were: Jesse Ellis, the preacher in charge of the Mission; Leonard Tarrant, Harris Taylor, John Gilliland, J. Hutchinson, local preachers; James T. Whitehead, John Box, exhorters, and Adam A. Lackey, class leader. All the local preachers here named as present presented that day the certificates of their official standing and were thereupon recognized. Harris Taylor, James M. Hutchinson, William Garrett, Robert C. Wilson, and Richard R. Jones were severally nominated by Brother Ellis and were elected Stewards for the Mission. James T. Whitehead, recommended by Zion Society, presented an application for license to preach, and the license was not granted. Leonard Tarrant was the Secretary of that Quarterly Conference. Bethel Meeting House, at which that Quarterly Conference was held, was four miles from the Town of Talladega, and in what is now familiarly known as the Cove. There is still, in this year, 1891, a Meeting House at that place in which the Methodists meet and worship. That meeting house in which that first Quarterly Conference for that Mission was held did not belong to the Church; at least, there was no title to it. There was probably not a house of worship in the Mission that year which belonged by deed to the Church. The Talladega Mission was organized and announced as an appointment by the Alabama Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the same month that Talladega County was constituted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Alabama, and at the end of its first year reported two hundred and sixty-six white and twenty colored members.

The Quarterly Conferences for the year 1834 were all held. The presiding elder, the Rev. R. G. Christopher, was at only the third and fourth. The preacher in charge of the Circuit for that year, William C. Crawford, and the preacher who was a supply, Tapley Bynum, were present at all the Quarterly Conferences. The Records state "that the preachers this year got their Disciplinary allowance."

The Rev. William C. Crawford, who was in charge of the Talladega Circuit for 1834, says: "When I went to the Circuit I found that our people were working under the shadow of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and believing that the Methodist Episcopal Church was a plant which could not grow well in the shade, I resolved to spend one year in establishing a distinction between it and other Churches, and I succeeded. I held a Camp-meeting at Jones's Camp-ground, down the creek from Talladega Town several miles. I was the Bishop. A Cumberland Presbyterian tented at that meeting, and three of his preachers attended. Then and there was my time and place for decisive battle. There was opportunity for the accomplishment of my purpose to make Methodists of my people. I had Judge Tarrant and Dr. Sevier, local Methodist preachers, with me, and I did not ask the Cumberland preachers to preach. My brethren would say to me, 'Why do you not ask them to preach?' I would reply, 'I really do not wish them to preach, and how can I say that I do? I am not hypocrite enough for that. If you wish them to preach ask them, and I will say nothing.' Well, that they would not do. These things went on until Sunday of the meeting, when the victory was won. The Cumberland Presbyterian tore down his tent, and moved home, and the Cumberland preachers left with him. For a while it appeared that I stood alone. At 11 o'clock A.M., Dr. Sevier preached, and we had one convert. It was whispered about by some that I had killed everything. Not a man could I get to lift the collection usually taken for the preachers in charge of the work. Then I said, 'Stand aside, brethren, I was never mealy-mouthed about such things, I can do it myself.' I made a little talk, sent round the hat, and got twenty-six dollars and twelve and a half cents, the largest public collection which had ever been taken at any one time and place in the Circuit. I was encouraged, and I concluded things were not as dead as my big men appeared to suppose. The people on that Circuit from that day were Methodists and not Cumberlandands."

The Rev. William C. Crawford, who rendered that valuable service to the common cause of Christianity by curing the people of an unrighteous sentiment about the union and coöperation of Churches which hold conflicting doctrines and discord-



ant forms of government and modes of worship, though not highly educated, was a man of sound judgment and sterling worth. He was about thirty years old when he settled that conflict in the alliance of antagonistic forces, having been born September 13, 1804. At Macon, Georgia, on Friday, January 7, 1831, he was received on trial by the Georgia Conference; and at La Grange, Georgia, January 3, 1833, he was received into full connection by the same Conference, and elected to deacon's orders, and ordained on the following Sunday, by Bishop James O. Andrew; and at that session of the Georgia Conference he was transferred to the Alabama Conference, and appointed to Pensacola and Escambia Mission, which he served, some of the appointments of the Mission being in Alabama. He closed his work on the Talladega Circuit for 1834, and at the session of the Annual Conference in December he located, and immediately left the State of Alabama. About the time he closed his work on the Talladega Circuit he married Miss Rhoda Watkins, the daughter of Lewis Watkins, who lived two miles or more from the town of Talladega. In January, 1835, he, with his young wife, took up abode west of the Sabine River, in the Province of Texas, and in what is now Shelby County, Texas. He was involved in all the wars of Texas from then till now, 1891, and he is still living. He was one of the signers of Texas Independence, and was a member of the Convention which made the Constitution of the Lone Star State. He rendered some service in that Convention of which he has been justly proud. He and his wife had their first child baptized by a Methodist preacher in 1836, and they were members of the first Methodist Society organized in what is now Shelby County, Texas. He has been an active, zealous local preacher in the land of Texas.

The chief places on the Talladega Circuit at which Societies were organized and public worship was held during the years closing with 1845, were, Bethel, Talladega Town, Jacksonville, Kelley's Spring, Cedar Creek, Jones's, Owens Spring, Renfro's, Terrapin Creek, White Plains, Mount Pleasant, Mardisville, Boiling Spring, Cold Water, Syllacauga, Cane Creek, Ashley's, Alexandria, Antioch, Chinnabee, Murphree's, Ohatchee, Bethlehem, Mount Olivet, Dry Valley.

March 24, 1838, the Quarterly Conference appointed N.

Ganaway, W. L. Rideout, and Thomas H. P. Scales to procure a right to the ground on which to build the Church denominated Bethel, and also to contract for building the same, agreeably to the rules of our Discipline. At a Quarterly Conference, November 16, 1839, the Trustees of Bethel Church reported that a Deed had been procured for the ground, and that they were in debt for the Church seventy or eighty dollars. That was the beginning of the ownership of Church property at that place, notwithstanding the Methodists had been meeting there for worship for nearly six years previous to that time.

At the Talladega Battle Ground, adown the Spring branch, and not far from where the United States soldiers who fell there in battle in 1813 are buried, in some sort of a Meeting House, the Rev. Jesse Ellis preached in 1833; and there a Quarterly Conference was held for Talladega Circuit. March 8, 1834. At that Quarterly Conference a Committee was appointed to secure a lot in the Town of Talladega for a Meeting House and Parsonage. On September 20, 1836, Commissioners of the County of Talladega having due authority in the premises, in consideration of one hundred dollars to them in hand paid, did execute a Deed to the Trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church to Lot No. 113 in the plan of the Town of Talladega. A small wooden church was erected on that Lot, and there the Methodists worshiped, perhaps, for twenty years, or more.

Jacksonville, in Benton County, is first mentioned in connection with a Quarterly Conference held there April 19, 1834. At another Quarterly Conference held there June 11, 1836, a Committee was appointed to superintend the building of a Meeting House at Jacksonville, and at a Quarterly Conference held August 8, 1840, it appeared that there was not a full Board of Trustees for the Jacksonville Church, and a number of persons were elected trustees thereof. From the records setting forth these several transactions it is inferred that some time between the middle of 1836 and the beginning of 1840 a Church was built in Jacksonville.

Kelley's Spring was in Talladega County, five or six miles north-east of the town of Talladega, and not far from what was once the noted home of the father of Hon. J. L. M. Curry. It first appears in the annals of Methodism in connection with a Quarterly Conference held there August 8, 9, 1834. Men of

note and worth were there. There was a Camp-ground there. It appeared on the records as one of the paying Societies until down in the forties, possibly as late as 1845.

Cedar Creek became a preaching place about as early as any. A Quarterly Conference was held there September 27, 1834. It was at, or near the place now known as Fayetteville, in the lower end of Talladega County. It was kept up by the name of Cedar Creek until 1838, when it gave place to the name of Fayetteville. Methodism still lives there.

A Camp-meeting, which has been mentioned in another place, was held at Jones's Camp-ground in 1834. That Camp-ground was on the north side of Talladega Creek, and near where the Selma, Rome, and Dalton Railroad now crosses said Creek, and it was kept up for some years. A Quarterly Conference was held at that place, September 8, 1838, at which twenty-five official members, fourteen of whom were local preachers, and the presiding elder were present; and to which was reported thirty dollars quarterage paid by the members of Jones's Camp-ground, and the public collection taken for quarterage at that meeting was thirty-six dollars and eighty-seven and a half cents.

Trustees for a Meeting House to be built at Owens Spring on Chockolocko Creek were elected at a Quarterly Conference held at Kelley's Spring, August 8, 1834; and on September 19, 1835, a Quarterly Conference was held at "Owens Spring encampment;" and from that time "Owens Spring Camp-ground" was a noted place, financially one of the strongest appointments on the Circuit, at which a Quarterly Conference was held nearly or quite every year. To this date, 1891, there is still a Methodist congregation which worships there. Owens Spring is nine or ten miles from the Town of Talladega and a little east of north.

Terrapin Creek Church was on a Creek of that name which runs through the eastern part of Benton County and empties into the Coosa River in the County of Cherokee. The church was probably north-east of Jacksonville, it appears on record for the first time in February, 1835. There was a Camp-ground at that place.

White Plains is first mentioned in March, 1836, with a contribution to the support of the ministry to the amount of two

dollars. August 8, 1840, "Trustees for the Camp-ground at the White Plains" were put on record, they had been elected previous to that time. White Plains is in the beautiful Chocklocko Valley, east of Jacksonville. The Methodists still worship at White Plains.

About the first of 1834, Hon. Samuel W. Mardis, a man of talents and of piety, for many years a Methodist, at one time a member of the Congress of the United States, moved to Jumper Springs, in Talladega County, and in honor of this man the name of the place was changed. Henceforth it was called Mardisville. It is south-west of the Town of Talladega five miles. The Honorable man for whom it was named died there November 14, 1836. Mardisville first appeared in Methodist records April 25, 1835, with a contribution for the support of the ministry of two dollars and a half. It has been a preaching place through all the intervening years. Most of the time the Society there was rather small. For three years, beginning with 1842, Talladega and Mardisville were together as a pastoral charge. The first Quarterly Conference ever convened at Mardisville met there April 1, 1837.

Boiling Spring is credited with five dollars quarterage June 11, 1836, and a Quarterly Conference, of very respectable numbers, was held there February 16, 1839, and about one year and a half afterward Trustees were elected for the Church there, and instructed to use their best efforts to procure a title to the Church property at that place as early as practicable. That Church was about one and a half miles south-east of Oxford, in the County of Benton.

There is a large Spring, from which flows off a clear, and majestic stream, in Section twenty-nine, Township sixteen, Range seven, East, and in what was originally Benton County. In the neighborhood of that noted Fountain of water the Methodists established a preaching place, and, finally, in a beautiful grove on the banks of the clear, and majestic stream which flows forth from that immense Fountain, and a short way below the same, a Camp-ground was established. The place was named Cold-water, and the name was entered upon the Journal of the Quarterly Conference of the Talladega Circuit, September 2, 1837, by virtue of the fact that one or more persons at that preaching place contributed quarterage to the amount of seventy-



five cents. On August 8, 1840, "Trustees were elected for the Society or Church at Coldwater." There a Quarterly Conference met March 9, 1844, and many have been held there since that. There is still a Methodist Church at "Coldwater Camp-ground." That community has always had a numerous white population, and the Methodist congregation there has always been large, and the contributions for Church purposes have been uniformly small. That seventy-five cents in 1837 was every way indicative, was prophetic, was the precursor, and the omen of that which was to follow.

Syllacauga appears in the annals of Methodism at the same time that Coldwater is put on record. In the Quarterly Conference Journal Syllacauga is written just under Coldwater, and is credited with twenty-five cents quarterage. A Quarterly Conference was "held at Syllacauga, Talladega County, Alabama, June 16, 1838," and at that time was the place credited with quarterage to the amount of eight dollars. For long years Methodism was quite weak at that place.

Cane Creek Society was on a Creek of that name, in Benton County, and is supposed to have been in the neighborhood of what has long been known as Morrisville. Cane Creek is first mentioned with Coldwater and Syllacauga. It went on the record as having contributed three dollars quarterage. There was held a Quarterly Conference at Cane Creek Meeting House, March 7, 1840. Through all the years since, the Methodists have had a place of worship there.

The Quarterly Conference held at Talladega, March 24, 1838, upon resolution "appointed a Committee to procure the Ground on which to build a Church near to Brother Ashley's, according to rules of our Discipline." March 17, 1840, a deed was made by John Ashley and his wife to three and thirteen-fortieths acres of Ground in Section eight, Township twenty, Range four, East, to Martin McElroy, William Kelley, William H. Hudson, M. E. Charr, George Riser, and John Ashley, Trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church. There is a Methodist Church there still. It is commonly called Riser's.

At Alexandria, a place in Benton County, and in one of the most beautiful valleys in the State of Alabama, the Methodists established an appointment for preaching and organized a Society, and the place is mentioned in the Records of the Circuit

as early as October, 1838. At the fourth Quarterly Conference for 1839, under the question, Are there any complaints? the preacher in charge of the Circuit presented before the Conference complaints against the Society at Alexandria to the effect that the members thereof manifested a want of interest in the cause of Christ, by not attending their Class Meetings and Circuit Preaching generally and almost universally. The Conference resolved that Brother Sawyer, the presiding elder, inform the Society, by letter, that for their non-attendance at Class Meeting and Circuit Preaching, unless they reformed in that respect, the Society would be left out of the plan of the Circuit. The action of the Quarterly Conference seems to have had a good effect upon the Society, as it reported next year more quarterage than had been reported therefrom at previous Quarterly Conferences. The Society continued in the plan of the Circuit.

Antioch was east of the Town of Talladega five or six miles. Carter's School House, which was four miles north-east of the Town of Talladega and on or near the place known as the J. L. M. Curry place, was a point at which the Methodists preached, but the members who worshiped there moved south and helped to establish Antioch. Through the payment of one dollar for the support of the ministry, "Antioch Society" went upon the Record of the Circuit September 28, 1839. In September, 1843, a Committee was appointed to build a church at Antioch.

Chinnabee was in a valley of that name east of the Town of Talladega, and about ten miles from Talladega. For many years there was a Camp-ground there. The name of Chinnabee first goes on the Record November 16, 1839, with eight dollars quarterage annexed. Trustees were elected for Chinnabee Church, August 8, 1840.

Bethlehem, which was about eleven or twelve miles from the Town of Talladega, and north of east from that place, and three or four miles from Chinnabee Camp-ground, first appeared in the affairs of the Circuit in June, 1843, and in September of that year reports the existence of a Sunday-school under its auspices with a Superintendent, a Secretary, a Librarian, two male and four female teachers, and thirty scholars.

There is a valley between Chockolocko and Blue Eye Creeks called Dry Valley. In that Valley the Methodists had an ap-

pointment and a Society. In November, 1843, a Committee was appointed to build a Meeting House in Dry Valley for the Methodist Episcopal Church, and Trustees were appointed for said Church.

According to the official Rolls, the leading and active men in the Talladega Circuit during the period from the beginning of 1833 to the close of 1845, were: "Leonard Tarrant, Harris Taylor, James T. Whitehead, William Garrett, Robert C. Wilson, Richard R. Jones, James H. Hutchinson, Tapley Bynum, John Box, James Long, James H. Thomason, John N. Goulding, James W. Poe, Thomas Hicks, Adam A. Lackey, Josiah H. Hill, John Gilliland, Lewis Watkins, Peter Rubel, Elbert F. Sevier, James Cole, Michael Armbrester, Thomas H. P. Scales, Jacob D. Shelley, Thomas Roland, James L. Wright, Benjamin O. Stripland, Matthew Carter, John Driskill, William McClellan, William McPherson, A. D. Gaskill, Alexander Douglass, Pollard Rhodes, Bartlett Renfroe, Solomon Martin, John Nabors, Francis Self, John Renfroe, Francis M. Cary, John Ashley, William Cattingham, William W. Hendrick, Edward Patton, W. L. Rideout, Thomas D. Barr, John C. McGee, James J. Carpenter, John L. Seay, John Brooks, Eli Bynum, Edward L. Woodward, Edward McMeans, James B. Watson, Brown Seay, Willis Franklin, William H. Mabry, James S. Stockdale, Jacob Stoner, James Hampton, Jennbeth Winn, Nicholas P. Scales, Henry Fullingham, James F. Grant, William Gore, George Riser, William S. Carpenter, Joseph Camp, William Hufferd, Daniel C. McIntire, Rees Pickens, Elijah Teague, William B. Turnipseed, James C. Francis, Robert H. Broils, Jared E. Groce, Green Penn."

Many of these men here named were in that Circuit at work through all the period named, and afterward; others were there only a part of the time.

In the spring of 1833, just previous to the holding of that first Quarterly Conference for Talladega Mission, the Rev. Leonard Tarrant, a local preacher, moved to Jumper Springs, in the County of Talladega, Alabama; and as he spent most of his Christian and ministerial life, about twenty-nine years, in Talladega County, and inasmuch as he was a member and the Secretary of the first Quarterly Conference ever held for the Talladega Mission, and inasmuch as he was one of the great

factors of Methodism in that section of the State, a sketch of his life properly comes in at this part of the history.

The Rev. Leonard Tarrant was, perhaps, a native of Virginia, and was born June 26, 1785. His education, which was quite thorough and extensive, was obtained in Garrard County, Kentucky. He possessed more than ordinary talents, and superior business qualities. He was a fine scribe, an admirable reader, and something of a poet. For a time he engaged in teaching, and he was an able and efficient teacher. September 22, 1812, he was married to Miss Jane Estill. He brought up two daughters and a son. Virginia Caroline was born October 9, 1813; Edwine Ethelbert was born July 10, 1815; and Harriet Eliza was born September 24, 1817. For a while he lived at Winchester, Tennessee, and removed from there to Shelby County, Alabama, not later than 1824. He was a member of the House of Representatives of the State of Alabama from Shelby County, Alabama, for 1831 and 1832, and a member of the Senate of Alabama from Talladega County, for 1849 and 1851.

The Treaty made between the United States and the Creek Indians, March 24, 1832, engaged to allow ninety principal Chiefs of the Creek tribe to select one section of land each, and every other head of a Creek family to select one-half section each, which tracts should be reserved from sale for their use for the term of five years, unless sooner disposed of by them; and also stipulated that said tracts of land might be conveyed by the persons selecting the same, to any other persons for a fair consideration, the contract to be certified by some person appointed for that purpose by the President of the United States. Under that provision of the Treaty, the President of the United States, Andrew Jackson, appointed Leonard Tarrant Certifying Agent; and that notwithstanding Tarrant was in politics a Whig, and Andrew Jackson a Democrat, and held the self-evident proposition that to the victors belong the spoils. That appointment carried Tarrant to Jumper Springs, in the bounds of the Territory where lay the lands to be disposed of and where lived the Indians interested in the compensation to be received.

The office of Certifying Agent continued for a number of years, and until the business involved by the stipulations of



the Treaty was finished; and Leonard Tarrant filled the office so long as it existed; and he managed the business committed to his hands with entire satisfaction to the United States Government, and to the entire satisfaction of the Indians interested in the transactions involved, but not to the satisfaction of the speculators, and swindlers who were engaged in trading in the newly acquired lands. Never were more iniquitous frauds attempted and never were there more wicked devices resorted to in any dispensation of business than were attempted and were resorted to in that time and section by the land dealers. Corruption and collusion ruled the hour. From various States and many sections men poured into the ceded territory to secure the lands selected by the heads of the Indian families, by nominal sums and worthless considerations. Mr. Tarrant, the Certifying Agent, was a terror to the swindler. He had been placed in office by the United States Government to see that the Indian received a just compensation for the land guaranteed by the Treaty, and he was faithful to his trust. The sharpers tried to deceive him, and to bribe him. He was hard to deceive, and could not be bribed. When the land traders had tried him, and found him forever on the side of right, and always on the side of the poor savage against the swindler, they offered him a large sum of money to vacate, or resign his office, but he could not be bought. He retained his position, and helped the Indian in securing a just compensation for his land. Tradition tells that on one occasion some misanthrope was in conversation with Andrew Jackson, the President of the United States, about the citizens of Alabama, and said to the President: "There is not an honest man in Alabama;" to which the President replied: "Leonard Tarrant is in Alabama, and I know he is an honest man."

For a number of years Mr. Tarrant was Judge of Probate, and with credit to himself and with benefit to his constituents discharged the duties of the office.

The exact day when, the precise place where, and the special ministrations in which, Leonard Tarrant emerged from the moral shadows which dimmed his perceptions and hedged him about with death, and entered into the light of the sons of God are now unknown; but the event, so full of bliss and splendor, occurred at some time before all the days of the year 1825 had

rolled away, and at some place less than twenty leagues from the geographical center of Alabama. He joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. Renewed of heart, forgiven of sin, constantly rapt in celestial transports, enchanted by the melting strains of divine music heard in the assembly of the saints, inspired with the hope of finally obtaining admission to imperial realms, and of forever enjoying imperial bliss, Mr. Tarrant no longer, as once he did, engaged in the sports of the turf, no longer, as once he did, took pleasure in frolic and fun; but he at once entered upon the work of Christ, and sought to learn of sainted sage and bard divine. Without any the least delay he commenced preaching. He commenced preaching even before he had opportunity to obtain license from the Church. In the stately length and wide expanse of the Christian field he found ample room and verge enough for the full employment of his heaven given endowments. He was never engaged in any other than in the local ranks, but in that relation he was active and useful.

The date of his license to preach is unknown. He was ordained a deacon by Bishop James O. Andrew, at Tuscaloosa, Alabama, Sunday, December 16, 1832. The Legislature of Alabama was in session at Tuscaloosa at that time, and Mr. Tarrant was a Representative in attendance from Shelby County. He was ordained an elder by Bishop James O. Andrew, at Montgomery, Alabama, on Sunday, January 1, 1843. He was made a Life Member of the Missionary Society, at Chinnabee Campground, in Talladega County.

In physical structure the Rev. Leonard Tarrant was large and portly, measuring more than six feet two inches in height, and weighing at least two hundred and twenty pounds. In complexion he was lively, fair, and flushed with red. His eyes were clear and grey; his eyebrows were heavy, and his hair was thick; by the use of the razor he kept his face bare of beard. Mustache and whiskers he never allowed on his lip and face. His countenance was frank, mild, and benignant. He had character and reputation, and both were without blemish. He was a holy man, and above suspicion. All who knew him respected and revered him. He was popular in the households of the country. In a blank book, pocket size, he recorded, in a neat and beautiful hand, the names of the various

couples which he married ranging over the years from 1837 to 1861. This little book contains the names of fifty-two couples at whose marriage he officiated. Many of these names are familiar in Talladega County; such as William Simmons and Ann C. Cruikshanks; Hugh G. Barclay and Mrs. Margaret A. Brown; Joseph N. Savery and Nancy M. Givens; Benton W. Groce and Caroline B. McEldery; William Wilson and Caroline M. Estill; Andrew Lawson and Priscilla Douglass; Boliver Eason and Sarah J. Shelly; James H. Joiner and Carolina E. McLane; George K. Armbruster and Missouri E. Griffith.

The subject of this sketch wrote poetry, none of which was ever published, so far as is known, and none of which would rank with the best pieces written by Wesley and Watts, but some of his poetical productions have merit, and are superior to many pieces of other authors which have been published and praised.

The Rev. Leonard Tarrant died at his home, at Mardisville, Talladega County, Alabama, February 25, 1862. The day he died the jonquils, harbingers of coming spring, were blooming in profusion in the yard before the door, and the snow, which had fallen the night before to the depth of two or three inches, in a freak of departing winter, lay upon the ground. A friend, the Rev. John Corley, on a visit to him, took leave of him, and in taking his last farewell, asked: "What shall I tell your friends about your prospects?" The dying man answered: "Tell my friends that last night I was up to my ankles in the cold waters of death, this morning I was up to my knees, now I am up to my loins, but I have no fear, as the flowers in the yard before the door are blooming amidst the snow which lies about them, so my soul is blooming for glory." In a few hours after that utterance his soul went forth from this realm of woe and death to glory and to God. In the precincts of light his soul is ever blooming, full of love and full of joy. He is now before the throne and with the Ancient One.

The Rev. Leonard Tarrant planted Antioch, Chinnabee, and Bethlehem Societies. He established them.

The Rev. Harris Taylor, a local preacher, associated himself with the Talladega Circuit at the very beginning, and continued associated with the same in that section of the country,

and among its most efficient men, until his death, in 1852. He was buried at Alexandria, Benton County.

William Garrett, one of the stewards elected at the first Quarterly Conference held for Talladega Mission, was, at that time, a young man who had just emigrated from East Tennessee and settled in the bounds of that Mission. He served the Talladega charge in the office of steward, exhorter, class leader, and Trustee for a number of years. He was a class leader in that charge as late as 1840. In 1837 he entered the public service of the State of Alabama. For some years he was Clerk of the House of Representatives. For thirteen years he was Secretary of State. He served also in the House of Representatives and in the Senate of the State. He filled the places of public trust with distinction. He wrote and published a large and estimable volume bearing the title: "Reminiscences of Public Men in Alabama, for Thirty Years." He maintained his connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church through life, and was a valuable member. For years he resided in Coosa County, and died there.

The Rev. Elbert F. Sevier, a local elder, was admitted as a member of the Quarterly Conference held for Talladega Circuit, at Kelley's Spring, August 8, 9, 1834, and was connected with that Circuit for three or more years. He was admitted into the Tennessee Conference on trial in the latter part of 1823, and was a member of the Holston Conference until the latter part of 1831, when he located, and in due course came to Alabama. He returned to the State of Tennessee, and in the latter part of 1839 was re-admitted to the Holston Conference. He was a man of talents, social rank, learning, and piety. During the time he was associated with the Talladega Circuit in Alabama, he was efficient in the cause of Methodism. He did much in that formative period in guiding affairs. His wise counsels in the management of matters were invaluable, and his able and profound sermons helped to extend the Redeemer's kingdom.

One instance of his guiding wisdom in the extremity of the hour may be given. The relation of Methodism to the abolition of slavery was an interesting question in the newly settled regions of Alabama. The opponents of Methodism used the agitation of the hour to the detriment of the cause dear to Methodists. It became necessary to avert the damage. At a



Quarterly Conference held at Owens Spring Encampment, for Talladega Circuit, September 19, 1835, a Quarterly Conference composed of nineteen official members, and which was presided over by the presiding elder, the Rev. Greenberry Garrett, and whose Secretary was William Garrett, the following preamble and resolutions, under the lead of the Rev. Elbert F. Sevier, were, with great emphasis, adopted: "Whereas, certain Fanatics to the North are publishing numerous incendiary papers on the subject of Abolition, calculated to stir up the Slaves to insurrection and rebellion, and thus endangering the peace and civil order of society and also the civil and religious institutions of the Country; and, whereas, reports have been put into circulation, implicating the Methodist Episcopal Church, and especially the Ministers of said Church as favoring the wicked and nefarious schemes of said Abolitionists, We, the members of the Quarterly Meeting Conference held for Talladega Circuit in the Alabama Conference, at Owens Spring Camp-ground, on the 19th September, 1835, having taken the subject into consideration, adopt the following resolutions: 1. Resolved, That we totally disapprove of the doctrine and schemes of the Abolitionists and Fanatics on the subject of Slavery. 2. That we believe the views and sentiments of the Church throughout our whole country are in accordance with ours as expressed above. 3. That we will use our best exertions to stop the circulation of all papers, tracts, or pamphlets, calculated to stir up insurrection or excite rebellion among the Slaves of the South and West, and to crush all plans or devices coming within our knowledge having any such tendency. 4. That the above preamble and resolutions, be published in the newspaper published in the Town of Talladega, the *Christian Advocate* in New York, and *Western Methodist* in Nashville."

There is nothing found anywhere on the subject excelling that document. It shows intelligence, adaptability, patriotism, and piety. It was an admirable paper for the emergency of the hour. The Rev. Elbert F. Sevier had the insight and the patriotism and the piety to engineer such a good production and such a timely deliverance to acceptance and adoption.

Much of the time that the Rev. Mr. Sevier was in the itinerant work in the Holston Conference he was presiding elder on the best Districts. Occasionally he was on Stations, such as

Knoxville and Chattanooga. He died somewhere about Chattanooga in the year 1862. His works endure, and praise him.

The Rev. Thomas H. P. Scales was received as a local preacher and a member of the Quarterly Conference of the Talladega Circuit, April 25, 1835, and was intimately associated with and an active and intelligent worker in the Circuit until December, 1841, when he was received on trial in the Alabama Conference. It is not known when or where he was licensed to preach. He was eligible to deacon's orders when he joined the Talladega Circuit, though he was not ordained till the close of 1839. He made three distinct efforts to obtain admission into the Annual Conference before he succeeded, the Quarterly Conference of the Talladega Circuit, or the Jacksonville whichever it was called at the time, recommended him as a suitable person for admission every time he asked for it. The last time he was recommended at Owens Spring, October 16, 1841. He professed to have perfect love and entire holiness of heart, and he made a useful preacher, and filled some of the best appointments. He died in 1853.

So far as is now known James H. Thomason was the first man ever licensed to preach by the Quarterly Conference of the Talladega Circuit. He was licensed at Kelly's Spring, in August, 1834. Tapley Bynum was the first one ever recommended by the Quarterly Conference of that Circuit to the Annual Conference for admission into the traveling connection. He was not admitted by the Annual Conference.

The preacher on the Talladega Circuit for 1835 was Daniel B. Barlow, and it was provided that one should be supplied. At the second Quarterly Conference for the year John Poe appeared as the supply. He filled that position till the close of the year, and at the fourth Quarterly Conference held at Owens Spring, September 19, 1835, he, together with James Cole, and James H. Thomason, was recommended to the Annual Conference for admission into the traveling connection. He was admitted by the Annual Conference upon that recommendation, but at the end of two years on trial discontinued. Cole and Thomason were not admitted.

All the preachers connected with the Circuit for the year were paid their full allowance for quarterage and traveling expenses, and there was a surplus of money which was sent up to

the Annual Conference for distribution under the law of that day. The Talladega Circuit in that day was first-class in financial affairs.

In two years the membership on the Circuit had nearly thribbled. Immigration, no doubt, helped to swell the number.

The preachers for Talladega Circuit for 1836 were Edward H. Moore, and Benjamin L. West. Moore was a native of Oglethorpe County, Georgia, born August 20, 1810. West was a native of Robeson County, North Carolina, born March 29, 1810. There was an increase in the number of the members of the Church on that Circuit that year of two hundred and ninety-six. At the fourth Quarterly Conference held for that Circuit October 29, 1836, R. M. Richards and James M. Mitchell were licensed to preach as local preachers.

The Rev. Wiley W. Thomas was the preacher on the Talladega Circuit for 1837. The Rev. Edward Patton was received as a local preacher and a member of the Quarterly Conference of the Talladega Circuit, April 1, 1837, and the Rev. James Willis, a local deacon from the bounds of the Holston Conference, presented the certificate of his official relation and was recognized as a member of the Talladega Circuit that year. Francis M. Cary was licensed to preach by the Quarterly Conference of that Circuit November 4, 1837. The Quarterly Conferences for that year engaged much in the consideration of financial plans, and in efforts to build a parsonage for the Circuit. Many resolutions were passed on these subjects.

The building of a parsonage for the Circuit elicited much attention through the year 1838. The subject was of profound interest, but the task seems to have been herculean.

The following certificate of membership was presented to the Quarterly Conference held at Syllacauga, June 16, 1838: "The bearer hereof, William W. Hendrick, has been an acceptable member and local elder in the Methodist Episcopal Church, in Buckingham Circuit, Virginia Conference, September 16, 1837.

GEORGE W. S. HARPER."

"Also Mrs. Frances W. Hendrick and Miss Mary V. Hendrick have been acceptable members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Buckingham Circuit, Virginia Conference, September 16, 1837.

GEORGE W. S. HARPER."

This man, the Rev. William W. Hendrick, was born in Vir-

ginia, December 17, 1788; was converted and joined the Church in 1804; licensed to preach, and joined the Virginia Conference on trial, at Newberne, in North Carolina, in February, 1807; in due course reached full membership in the Conference and elder's orders, and located in February, 1812. He left Virginia about the time his certificate of membership bears date, and by due course of journey reached Mardisville, Talladega County, Alabama, and took up residence there. He died at his home in Talladega County, Alabama, January 17, 1863. After a long life of usefulness he died in the faith. His descendants are Methodists.

At a Quarterly Conference held for Talladega Circuit, at Mount Pleasant, Benton County, November 19, 1838, Thomas D. Barr was licensed to preach, and there and then he and Francis M. Cary were recommended to the Annual Conference to be admitted on trial in the traveling connection. Barr was then in his twenty-fifth year, and a native of North Carolina. He was regenerated at nine years of age, and he united with the Methodist Episcopal Church five years after his conversion. He moved to Talladega County, Alabama, in the latter part of 1833. Cary, when he received from the Quarterly Conference that recommendation for itinerant work, was in his twenty-fourth year, and was a native of Madison County, Alabama. In his nineteenth year he was regenerated. In pursuance of the recommendations which had been obtained Barr and Cary were both admitted on trial by the Alabama Conference in January, 1839. Cary remained on trial in the Conference three years, and then discontinued. In due process Barr was advanced to membership in the Conference and to the order of an elder. He continued in the Alabama Conference to the end of his earthly pilgrimage. His last appointment was Marianna, Florida, and there he died of fever September 4, 1843. He was a man of integrity, seriousness, humility, and piety. He succeeded in the work of the ministry, and died in the faith.

In November, 1838, in the whole length and breadth of the Circuit from Fayetteville in the lower end of Talladega County to Rabbit Town in Benton County there were but two Sunday-schools with three Superintendents, ten teachers, fifty scholars, and two hundred volumes in Libraries. At what points these two schools were is not certainly known. The next year, the



Circuit then having been divided, there was only one School in the Jacksonville Circuit, and that was at Bethel. In that region covered by the Talladega Circuit at its first organization and up to the year now under consideration the Baptists and the Cumberland Presbyterians had the controlling influence. The Baptists then in that region were mostly anti-missionaries, who opposed Missionary Societies and Sunday-schools. The Cumberland Presbyterians were prosecuting their effort at popularizing themselves with the insinuating policy of union. They were for union meetings and union Sunday-schools. With the union proclivities fostered by the Cumberland Presbyterians and the anti-missionary doctrines disseminated by the Baptists to contend against, with other potent influences and untoward environments against them, the Methodists had a hard time in organizing Sunday-schools in that Circuit.

At the close of 1838 the Talladega Circuit was divided into two, one called the Talladega and the other the Jacksonville. The Talladega Circuit as it existed in 1839 was mostly in Talladega County, and the principal appointments on it were Talladega Town, Mardisville, Ashley's, Syllacauga, and Fayetteville. Jacksonville Circuit had Jacksonville, Alexandria, Boiling Spring, Coldwater, Mount Pleasant, Ohatchee, and White Plains in Benton County, and Antioch, Bethel, Chinnabee, Kelley's Spring, and Owens Spring in Talladega County. The preacher on the Talladega Circuit for that year was William Moores. The preacher on the Jacksonville Circuit for that year was Jesse Ellis.

The members of the Quarterly Conference held at Boiling Spring, February 16, 1839, for the Jacksonville Circuit formed themselves into a Missionary Society, and adopted a Constitution. The first Article of the Constitution is as follows: "This Association shall be called the Jacksonville Circuit Missionary Society, Auxiliary to the Missionary Society of the Alabama Conference." The seventh Article constituted the members of the Quarterly Conference of the Jacksonville Circuit the Board of Managers. The eighth Article decreed that there should be an annual meeting of the Society held at the time and place of holding the third Quarterly Conference for the Circuit. At the Quarterly Conference for the Talladega Circuit held March 27, 1836, it was resolved to form the Quarterly Conference into

a Missionary Society, but the resolution was not carried into operation until 1839. By action of the Quarterly Conference August 20, 1842, the Missionary Society of the Circuit was discontinued. The Society operated under great disadvantages, and the results achieved were comparatively small. Out of a subscription of one hundred and fifty dollars made on the Circuit in 1839, about thirty-five dollars were collected.

Strong resolutions were passed in 1839 in favor of securing a Parsonage for the Jacksonville Circuit, but beyond the resolutions not much was done. Much complaint was also made about the neglect of class-meetings, and resolutions were adopted concerning the increase of the number to be held and the increase of those who attended. That was the Centenary year of Methodism, and the Jacksonville Circuit, through its Quarterly Conference, provided for holding two Centenary Meetings on the 25 of October, one at Owens Spring Camp-ground, the other at Jacksonville. At the third Quarterly Conference for that year, held at Owens Spring, September 28, W. L. Rideout and William McClellan were licensed to preach. During that year the Rev. James T. Whitehead, who was a member of the first Quarterly Conference ever held for the Talladega Mission, fell under charges of a serious nature, and, while upon investigation he was acquitted of the charges, the Quarterly Conference held at Bethel, November 16, 1839, by action had in the case, declined to renew his license; whereupon, he fled to the Methodist Protestant Church, and he obtained license to preach in that Church. He was not very efficient among his new associates. He stood on their record in connection with Benton Circuit among the unstationed preachers. The same Quarterly Conference which, by formal action, refused to renew the license of James T. Whitehead, recommended the Rev. John Brooks, a man of note and of worth, to the Annual Conference for re-admission into the traveling connection, and the Alabama Conference at the ensuing session re-admitted him upon that recommendation. There was for that year an encouraging increase in the number of members in the two Circuits which occupied the territory formerly occupied by the one. In white and colored members there was an increase of over two hundred and fifty.

The form of the Circuits continued as they were the preceding

year, though there was a change in the preachers. The Rev. Jesse Ellis located and became a local preacher in the Circuit, and the Rev. William Rhodes was the preacher in charge of the Jacksonville Circuit for 1840; and the Rev. Theophilus Moody was the preacher in charge of the Talladega Circuit for that year.

There were some adverse events and damaging sensations in that part of the vineyard during the year 1840. In the first place, the Rev. James L. Wright, who had been connected with the cause there from the beginning, and who had caused some trouble at the first by his irregularities and by claiming prerogatives without properly accredited credentials, became disaffected and in the year 1840 he openly inveighed against the Discipline and polity of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and when advised by the presiding elder in charge of affairs that for such conduct a prosecution was inevitable he withdrew and attached himself to the Methodist Protestant Church. Sensation and friction ensued, and the cause was injured. He occupied some little position among his new allies, but his influence was circumscribed. The Methodist Protestant Church took off quite a number, first and last, of the local preachers who were once connected with the Methodist Episcopal Church in that section of the country. The Rev. James M. Hutchinson, one of the men elected a steward at that Quarterly Conference held at Bethel Meeting House, for Talladega Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church, May 25, 1833, finally joined the Methodist Protestant Church, and preached with them. The Rev. James S. Stockdale, after long connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church, and after repeated trials and expulsions from the Church and suspensions from the ministry, finally joined the Methodist Protestant Church. Such acquisitions were not calculated to do any Church much good.

In the next place, the Rev. Josiah H. Hill, who was present as a local preacher, at the Quarterly Conference held for Talladega Circuit at Cedar Creek, September 27, 1834, who had been somewhat punctual and prominent through the succeeding years, at last, in 1840, fell into trouble and came to grief. His case was connected with one of the most singularly managed Quarterly Conferences ever held in the connection. There is nothing like it in the history of ecclesiastical affairs. He was tried by a Quarterly Conference, which, though in the nature

of the case not endowed with ubiquity and eternity, was held at two different points, in two different Counties, more than twenty miles apart, and at different times, times separated by forty intervening days. That Quarterly Conference met and proceeded to business at White Plains Camp-ground, in Benton County, September 19, 1840. The first thing, after the devotional exercises and the preliminary matters of organization, in that Conference was to lodge complaints against the moral character of the Rev. Josiah H. Hill. Then two small items of business were transacted, and the Conference arraigned Mr. Hill upon a bill of charges involving falsehood and slander. These charges had their origin in some financial transactions and some statements concerning the casting of ballots at an election for members of the Legislature. The Quarterly Conference rendered a verdict declaring Mr. Hill, the defendant, guilty as charged in the bill of indictment, and affixed a penalty; by formal enactment declined to renew his license, and authorized a reproof administered to him by the presiding elder. Wonderful penalty, indeed, for such offenses! "The Conference then adjourned to meet again to transact the further business of this Conference, on the Saturday preceding the first Sabbath in November next, at Owens Spring Camp-ground." The Journal says: "Conference met according to adjournment on October 31, 1840." The first thing on record after the enrollment of the names of the members present, is: "Resolved by this Conference that the case of J. H. Hill be reconsidered, on this being done it was resolved that J. H. Hill be expelled from our Church." That was a wonderful Quarterly Conference. Thomas Lynch was the presiding elder, and Thomas H. P. Scales was the Secretary of that Conference. Owens Spring Camp-ground, at which Mr. Hill's case was reconsidered, was in Talladega County. Mr. Hill may have been guilty, but the so-called Quarterly Conference by which he was expelled was beyond all doubt an illegal body. A Quarterly Conference may adjourn from hour to hour, and from day to day, to finish business pending, but may not adjourn to a distant day and place, and after the lapse of weeks review and undo its own work. Great sensation followed that long pending, and suspended, and itinerating Quarterly Conference. It discredited



its own work, annulled its own authority, and scandalized the common cause of religion.

By that illegal Quarterly Conference held at Owens Spring, October 31, 1840, the Rev. Nicholas P. Scales, then not twenty-three years of age, was duly recommended to the Annual Conference to be a traveling preacher, and on that recommendation the Alabama Conference at the session beginning December 30, 1840, admitted him on trial, and sent him as junior preacher to the Jacksonville Circuit. He died a member of the Alabama Conference, in February, 1861, though no account is taken of his death in the proceedings of the Annual Conference. He held a superannuated relation in the Conference from January, 1848, till his death. He was born in Tennessee, January 15, 1818, and moved to Talladega County, Alabama, in 1835. He was buried in the graveyard at the Town of Talladega.

The preacher on the Talladega Circuit for 1841 was Jesse Ellis, and on the Jacksonville Circuit for that year there were two preachers, James P. McGee, and Nicholas P. Scales. Henry Fullingham was licensed to preach at Alexandria Camp-ground in August of that year, and Edward McMeans and Willis Franklin were licensed to preach at Owens Spring, in October. During the third quarter of that year one hundred and seventeen persons were received on probation, and during the fourth quarter eighty-seven were received. All this on the Jacksonville Circuit. A house of worship somewhere in the neighborhood next to Alexandria was donated to the Methodists by Elijah Loyd, and was accepted and placed in the hands of Trustees. Debts which were annoying and damaging had been incurred in building houses of worship in the bounds of the Jacksonville Circuit, and during that year great efforts were made by special meetings and public collections to liquidate the debts.

The appointments for 1842 were: Talladega and Mardisville, Edward J. Hammill. Jacksonville, Theophilus Moody, George McClintock. This was a new arrangement of the work. Talladega and Mardisville were together and made the entire pastoral charge, and it seems that what had formerly been in the lower end of Talladega Circuit, such as Ashley's, Clear Creek, Syllacauga, Fayetteville, and Hatchett Creek Camp-ground, were now in the Harpersville and Coosa Circuits. Hatchett Creek

Camp-ground had possibly not been in the Talladega Circuit. It was on Hatchett Creek, in Talladega County, in Section twenty-eight, Township twenty-one, Range six, East; and it was deeded by Reuben Philips and his wife to Timothy Ford, Abraham Hester, John Evans, Sen., Uriah Evans, and Ezekiel Wilder, Trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church, September 29, 1843. It had been a Camp-ground previous to the time it was conveyed by deed to Trustees. That Camp-ground was established in the month of October, 1837, or some months earlier, and was established at the instance and by the efforts of the Rev. Reuben Philips.

For four years beginning with 1842 and closing with 1845 the towns of Talladega and Mardisville constituted a pastoral charge. Edward J. Hammill, Theophilus Moody, Varnum L. Hopkins, and Lewis G. Hicks served the work as preacher in charge each one year. At the end of 1844 Mardisville fell out of the charge and at the end of 1845 Talladega went back into the Circuit, and the name of the Circuit was changed from Jacksonville to Talladega. Thus early ended the effort of the two towns to maintain a pastoral charge. The Methodists in those towns at that early day were few in number and feeble in resources. At that time political strife and party spirit engrossed the country, and the Church did not grow much. In the town of Talladega at that time the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church were mostly women, and though they were noble women, and kept the cause alive, they were under great disabilities. Mrs. Elizabeth Dixon, Mrs. Ann M. Jones, Mrs. Mary Moore, Mrs. Shelley, and others were women of consecration and of piety; and the Sunday-school was carried on mostly by these women until 1842. Of course, the Sunday-school was feeble and was conducted imperfectly. In May, 1842, under the ministry of the Rev. E. J. Hammill, James G. L. Huey joined the Methodist Episcopal Church at Talladega, and the women above named laid hands on him and inducted him into the office of Sunday-school Superintendent. Even Mr. Huey carried on the Sunday-school for some while without any public prayer. The School was opened by reading a lesson out of the Scriptures and singing a song selected from such Hymn Books as they had. That method of conducting the introductory services of the School prevailed until Mrs.

Samuel F. Rice with her children entered the School. Mrs. Rice modestly informed the Superintendent that the order of the services was not satisfactory, and suggested the offering of a public prayer. The suggestion was accepted. Henceforth prayer was made in that School.

The number of members was not as large at the close of 1845 in that charge as it was at the close of its first year.

The preachers appointed to Jacksonville Circuit were, for 1843 Haman Bailey, and John Jones; for 1844 Haman Bailey, and Clayton C. Gillespie; for 1845 Acton Young, and Clayton C. Gillespie.

John L. Seay was licensed to preach as a local preacher in the Methodist Episcopal Church by the Quarterly Conference held for the Circuit at Owens Spring Camp-ground, September 16, 1843, having been recommended by the Society at Antioch, and, now, in 1891, Rev. John L. Seay still lives near the site of Antioch, a local preacher.

Alexander Douglass was licensed to preach as a local preacher by the fourth Quarterly Conference held for the Circuit for 1843; and by the same quarterly Conference "The License of a Colored Brother, an exhorter named Sam, the property of Brother Kerr, was renewed."

Throughout the bounds of the Jacksonville Circuit during the year 1843 much distraction was endured and great detriment ensued. Preachers and members committed crimes of enormity, and entailed scandal on the Church. Members of some of the Societies were annoyed and irritated by charges and counter-charges against each other. There is one instance on record where a member of the Church charged a local preacher with crimes upon which the local preacher was tried by the Quarterly Conference, and acquitted; and the Quarterly Conference required the preacher in charge to cause the member who brought the charges against the local preacher to appear before a Committee to answer to the charge of Malicious Prosecution. The local preacher in the case was James S. Stockdale and the member was Massingale H. Porter.

The Rev. John Jones, the junior preacher on the Circuit, and who was on trial in the Annual Conference and consequently amenable to the Quarterly Conference of the Circuit for his life, was, for the crime of Falsehood, expelled from the Church

by the Quarterly Conference held for the Circuit at Alexandria, November 19, 1843. That was a sad ending of a man who had been sent to the people with the message of gospel truth. It was alleged that he perpetrated the falsehood by making conflicting statements concerning a note given to Herndon and Kelley. Reproach was entailed upon the Christian cause, and that reproach was felt throughout that Circuit and beyond, and outlasted the year in which it originated.

The Quarterly Conferences held for the Jacksonville Circuit for 1844 licensed W. Posey, William Gore, and J. B. Seay to preach, and during that year there were numerous Church trials, arbitrations, and appeals. Of these there were enough for all purposes of fume and fermentation, disturbance and disquiet. If the purification attained was equal to the putrefaction disclosed, the work should have been satisfactory.

Upon the motion of Haman Bailey, the preacher in charge of the Circuit, the third Quarterly Conference for the year appointed a Committee of five to draft a preamble and resolution expressing the sense of that Conference on the subject of the division of the Church north and south as provided for by the Acts of the General Conference of that year. The Committee reported a paper on that subject which was adopted and ordered published in certain secular and religious Newspapers named.

The Conference year for 1844 went into the calendar of 1845, the session of the Annual Conference beginning February 26, 1845, and extending into the days of March. The fourth Quarterly Conference for the Jacksonville Circuit for the current year 1844 was held January 18, 1845. On the previous Saturday, January 11, the preacher in charge of the Circuit, the Rev. Haman Bailey, died. The Record of that Quarterly Conference, held just one week after his death, says: "Owing to the death of our much Beloved Brother, H. Bailey, (Circuit Preacher) it was thought prudent that this Conference do something for the comfort of his bereaved and dependent family, and Brothers Taylor, Patton, and Groce were appointed to make some arrangement for their comfort." The Parsonage for the Jacksonville Circuit, which was secured and made ready for the preacher and his family the beginning of 1844, was near the Academy, at Marble Spring, on Chockolocko Creek, near Owens Spring Camp-ground, and about nine miles north-east



of the Town of Talladega. There on January 11, 1845, the Rev. Haman Bailey died, and in the neighborhood near there, in the Jemison Grave-yard, he was buried. He was not a man of finished education, but he was a faithful, useful, and an acceptable minister of the gospel. He preached the doctrine of the Bible, and lived a life of sanctity.

Close to where the Chinnabee Valley and the outlying hills join, there was left and there lingered a savage by the name of Coffee who was attached to his wigwam in his native land, and who had escaped the imperative order of the United States officer who gathered together and sent thence across the Mississippi River the last remnant of the Creek tribe of Indians who roamed among the beautiful streams of Alabama. An incident in the life of that savage, and one of no small import, may be here narrated. At Chinnabee, and not a great way from the hut of that denizen of the forest, the Methodists established a Camp-ground as early as 1839; and that year, or the next, Coffee attended a Camp-meeting held at that place, and, savage though he was, the Lord commanded the blessing of eternal life upon him. Just a little way from the outer part of the Shed under which the congregation assembled for divine worship there was a log which had been left in clearing off the grounds. On that log Coffee, with, perhaps, some members of his family, seated himself while divine service went on, and there the Spirit reached him. Henry, a colored man who was about twenty-five years old, and who had himself been converted in 1836, and who was, for many years, under the law, the property of John L. Seay, and who was in the days of slavery an exhorter, and exercised his gifts as a preacher, and who, after the manumission of the slaves of the country, was one of the foremost preachers in the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, and always, from the day of his regeneration till his death, in 1884, one of the most pious men of any Church, discovered the fact that Coffee was under conviction, and made it known to the preachers in charge of the services. The preachers and other Christians gathered about him, and treated him as a mourner. They conversed with him and prayed for him. He understood only the Indian language. The Rev. Leonard Tarrant led the prayer offered in the interest of Coffee, and John L. Seay, who was a member

of the Church, and who understood the Indian and the English languages, acted as interpreter, and interpreted the prayers offered for him and the instructions given him. Through Tarrant and Seay he was instructed in the gospel, and led in supplication at the throne of grace, and from God through Jesus Christ he obtained salvation. The White man, the Black man, and the Red man all joined in the work of salvation, and together participated in the joy which ensued. The language of Coffee as a penitent and as a convert was strikingly different. When he was a penitent under conviction he expressed his feelings by saying, speaking in the Indian language, "Heart sick heap." When he attained regeneration he said, "Heart no longer sick. Master of breath is good; I am stingy of him." By the last remark he meant to express his high appreciation of God, and his intense love for him. The intense language spoken by that Creek Indian at Chinnabee Camp-ground, in Talladega County, Alabama, in America, in the first half of the nineteenth century, reminds one of the intense language spoken by Jesus on the Mount in Palestine, Asia, in the first half of the first century. The citizens of the kingdom of Christ, whether they come from among the savage or civilized, the rude or cultured, speak a uniform and pure language, and for the reason that the feelings and impulses imparted to the heart by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit are the same in all cases.

At the close of one dozen years from the introduction of Methodism into Talladega and Benton Counties, there were in the bounds of the territory first occupied by the Talladega Circuit more than twenty Methodist Societies of established worth, the membership of which aggregated more than twelve hundred, and from which a number of efficient men had been sent into the ministry.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### THE FURTHER ENLARGEMENT AND ADVANCEMENT OF THE WORK OF METHODISM IN ALABAMA.

THAT large portion of the territory acquired from the Creek Indians by the Treaty of March 24, 1832, and which was not traversed by the Talladega Circuit, was presented to the notice of the Alabama Conference at the session thereof at Montgomery, Alabama, December 11, 1833. October 1, 1833, the Rev. E. G. Richards, a local preacher of the Methodist Episcopal Church, entered permanent abode at the place since then known as La Fayette, in Chambers County, Alabama. He immediately heard of a few Methodists at and about Hurst's Store, where the town of Fredonia now stands, and he went out and preached to them. He at once formed the purpose of securing a Missionary for that section of the country. To that end, he gathered all the Methodists who could be assembled at Hurst's Store, thirteen in number, as a nucleus for a Mission. He went to the session of the Alabama Conference at Montgomery, Alabama, December 11, 1833, and represented to the Conference the necessities of the unoccupied field, and the demands of the sheep without a shepherd. At Hurst's Store, in the primeval forest where still roamed the Indian in his savage state and habits, there was a Class already formed of thirteen Methodists who, though they were not furnished with a house of worship ornamented with vessels of gold and silver and hangings of fine twined linen and of royal colors, and had to worship under the boughs of the trees or the open heavens, or at most in a very rude hut, needed a spiritual guide and a divinely commissioned teacher. At other points there were scattered settlers in need of spiritual oversight. The Conference put down in its list of appointments one which hitherto had not existed: Chattahoochee Mission: to that Mission was sent for 1834, Sidney Squires, and Hugh M. Finley.

The Chattahoochee Mission for 1834 occupied all the newly acquired territory south of Talladega and Benton Counties, and

consisted of the then Chambers, Coosa, Macon, Randolph, Russell, and Tallapoosa Counties, and that part of the new cession included in Barbour County. It was a large field with few white inhabitants in it and many savages. All was rude and rough. The two Missionaries traveled through the field preaching wherever inhabitants could be found and organizing Societies wherever Methodists enough to make a Society could be gathered. But few of the places where Societies were organized that year are now known. There were at least four Societies formed in Chambers County by the close of that year; one near Caraway's Mill, six miles above where Fredonia now is, of which Bonner, Rutland, and others were members; one at Kidd's Store, now Oak Bowery, of which Webb Kidd was a leading member; one at the place now known as La Fayette, of which there were only three members, the Rev. E. G. Richards, Mrs. Sarah Dudley, and Mrs. Kitty Driver; and one at Hurst's Store, now Fredonia, and which was the largest Society in the bounds of the Mission. Mrs. S. M. Hurst was one of the charter members at that place, and Mr. J. A. Hurst, the man who established the Store at that place, was a Methodist and a local preacher there for many years.

The Rev. Hugh M. Finley was in his second year on trial in the Conference, and he died that year at Hurst's and was buried on the lot on which the house of worship was afterward built by the Methodists at Fredonia. At the end of the year on the Chattahoochee Mission the Rev. Sidney Squires transferred to the Mississippi Conference, and on the organization of the Arkansas Conference he became a member thereof, and he located at the close of 1839.

The country embraced in the Chattahoochee Mission for 1834 was at the close of that year and for 1835 assigned to five different appointments as follows: Clayton Mission, Uchee Mission, Line Creek Mission, Chambersville Mission, and Tallapoosa.

The Clayton Mission was partly in Barbour and partly in Macon Counties, and was within the newly ceded territory, except Clayton, which was outside and two miles south-west of the line. Clayton and Irwinton (now Eufaula) were the most prominent preaching places on the Mission, with others of less note within the intervening points between these places and



the Uchee Mission. The preacher assigned to the Clayton Mission for the first year of its existence was Zaccheus Dowling. At the close of the year there were one hundred and twelve white and forty-eight colored members.

The Uchee Mission was named after the Uchee Creeks which traverse the County of Russell, the name indicating the section of country in which the Mission was situated. The preacher on that Mission for its first year was the Rev. Daniel C. McIntyre. At the close of the year there were in that Mission one hundred and twenty-four white and fifty-three colored members.

Line Creek, for which Line Creek Mission was named, was, at that point, the line of the newly ceded territory, and was also the line between Montgomery and Macon Counties. That Mission was left to be supplied for 1835, and there was no return made from it for the year, and it disappeared from the list of appointments for the time being.

Chambersville, for which Chambersville Mission was named, was the county town of Chambers County, and was afterward changed from that name to La Fayette. Chambersville Mission embraced anywhere in Chambers and Randolph Counties and about the edges of the adjoining Counties not embraced in other appointments. The preacher for that Mission for that first year was the Rev. Paul F. Stearns, and one to be supplied, and at the end of the year the report showed four hundred and fifty-nine white and eighty-four colored members in the bounds of that charge.

The Tallapoosa Charge was in Tallapoosa and Coosa Counties, and the preacher on it the first year of its existence, the Rev. Richard N. Crowson, had hard work and small success. Only thirty-four white members, and none of any other sort, were gathered in the whole length and breadth of the work.

For 1836 that region of country was divided between Clayton, Uchee, La Fayette, and Tallapoosa Mission, with the Rev. William B. Neal at Clayton, the Rev. Alexander R. Dickson at Uchee, the Rev. George W. Cotton and the Rev. John W. Broxson at La Fayette, and the Rev. John Poe at Tallapoosa. The Lower Creek Indians conceived the idea of retaining their lands and remaining in their native country, the Treaty of cession and stipulations of removal to the contrary

notwithstanding, and by the first of May, 1836, they were committing depredations upon and were in open hostilities against the new settlers in the newly acquired territory. Russell County was about the center of the hostile demonstrations, and the places where most of the depredations were committed were in that county, but the agitation was wide spread, and extended over the newly acquired territory, and beyond; and the work of the ministry was interrupted, and for the time suspended in all the pastoral charges here mentioned. For that year Uchee and La Fayette charges had no increase in members, Clayton had an increase of only forty-six members, and Tallapoosa had an increase of seventy-eight members.

The preachers for 1837 were: Clayton, the Rev. John Boswell; Uchee, the Rev. J. Davis, the Rev. Charles Strider; La Fayette, the Rev. John Hunter; Tallapoosa, the Rev. Benjamin L. West; and Randolph Mission, a new appointment, was to be supplied.

The preachers in that territory for 1838, with Line Creek Mission again added to the appointments, were: the Rev. James Shanks at Clayton; the Rev. John Hunter at Uchee; the Rev. William C. Robinson at La Fayette; the Rev. John Boswell at Line Creek; the Rev. Benjamin L. West at Tallapoosa; Randolph Mission, to be supplied.

The work in that territory increased rapidly at that date, and a number of new appointments were made for 1839. Irwinton, Tuskegee, Coosa, and Terrapin Creek Mission were all added for that year, and Uchee disappeared. The Rev. John W. Starr was appointed to Irwinton; the Rev. Thomas H. Capers, and the Rev. John W. Talley, Jr., to Tuskegee; the Rev. John Hunter to Tallapoosa; the Rev. James P. McGhee to Coosa; the Rev. William Spann to Terrapin Creek; the Rev. John T. Roper to Randolph; the Rev. James Shanks returned to Clayton; the Rev. John Boswell to Line Creek; the Rev. William C. Robinson to La Fayette.

For 1840 the charges in that territory remained the same, except Terrapin Creek disappeared. The Rev. John W. Starr returned to Irwinton; the Rev. John Hunter to Tallapoosa; the Rev. John W. Talley, Jr., was appointed to Clayton; the Rev. L. B. McDonald to Line Creek; the Rev. William C. Robinson, and the Rev. Jefferson Bond to Tuskegee; the Rev. E. W. Sto-

ry to La Fayette; the Rev. James P. McGhee to Randolph; and Coosa was to be supplied.

For 1841 the charges in that territory were increased by the addition of Glennville, Russell, and Chattahoochee Mission. The Rev. Elias W. Story returned to La Fayette, and the Rev. James Peeler was appointed with him; the Rev. L. B. McDonald returned to Line Creek; the Rev. Charles B. Eastman went to Irwinton; the Rev. William C. Robinson to Glennville; the Rev. John Hunter, and the Rev. J. Laney to Tuskegee; the Rev. Henry T. Jones to Russell; the Rev. John T. Roper to Tallapoosa; the Rev. Thomas J. Williamson to Chattahoochee; the Rev. George R. W. Smith to Coosa; the Rev. Abel Pearce to Randolph.

The charges in that territory for 1842 were: Irwinton Station, the Rev. Stephen F. Pilley; Glennville, the Rev. Benjamin L. West, the Rev. William C. Robinson, Sup.; Line Creek to be supplied; Tuskegee, the Rev. Samuel Armstrong, the Rev. Joshua Starr; Russell, the Rev. Elias W. Story; La Fayette, the Rev. Thomas J. Williamson; Dadeville, the Rev. Nicholson P. Scales; Chattahoochee Mission to people of color, the Rev. Alexander McBride; Coosa, the Rev. Jesse Ellis, the Rev. Edward W. Barr; Randolph, the Rev. John Hunter.

The charges in the same territory for 1843 were: Irwinton and Glennville, the Rev. Stephen F. Pilley; Glennville Circuit, the Rev. John Hunter; Line Creek, the Rev. Abraham B. Elliott; Tuskegee, the Rev. Samuel Armstrong, the Rev. Robert R. Dickinson; La Fayette, the Rev. Thomas J. Williamson, the Rev. James H. Laney; Russell, the Rev. Elias W. Story, the Rev. J. R. Locke; Dadeville, the Rev. Joshua Starr; Chattahoochee Mission, the Rev. A. McBride, the Rev. Leonard Rush; Randolph, the Rev. J. Kuykendall; Coosa, the Rev. Jesse Ellis.

The charges for 1844 were: Eufaula and Glennville, the Rev. Thomas H. P. Scales; Aberfoil, the Rev. James Peeler, the Rev. Alexander McBride; Glennville Mission to people of color, the Rev. William K. Norton; Line Creek, the Rev. John R. Locke; Tuskegee, the Rev. E. W. Story, the Rev. James A. Heard; La Fayette, the Rev. John Hunter, the Rev. O. R. Blue; Dadeville, the Rev. E. J. Hammill; Russell, the Rev. John C. Carter, the Rev. Joshua Starr; Randolph, the Rev. James M. Wells; Coosa, the Rev. Theophilus Moody, the Rev. John W. Ellis.

The charges for 1845 were: Eufaula and Glennville, the Rev. Samuel Armstrong; Enon, the Rev. James Peeler; Glennville Colored Mission, the Rev. William K. Norton; La Fayette, the Rev. J. W. Starr, the Rev. Thomas J. Campbell; Dadeville, to be supplied; Crawford, one to be supplied, the Rev. William H. Carlisle; Chattahoochee Colored Mission, the Rev. Leonard Rush, the Rev. J. B. F. Hill; Tuskegee, the Rev. John C. Carter, the Rev. James A. Clement; Line Creek and Woodley Bridge Colored Mission, the Rev. A. S. Harris; Killabee Colored Mission, the Rev. E. W. Story; Hillabee Mission, the Rev. Jesse Ellis; Coosa, the Rev. John Hunter, the Rev. William Ira Powers; Randolph, the Rev. Wiley White; Muscadine, to be supplied.

At the close of 1844 there were in the bounds of that last ceded territory of the Creek Indians, and where the savage tribe had so recently waged hostilities, and committed depredations, and scalped the white man, more than five thousand white members and more than two thousand colored members. Surely it was better to have that country inhabited by that many Christians than by savages, whether many or few.

The Town of Irwinton is mentioned in an Act of the General Assembly of Alabama, approved January 16, 1834; and again in an Act approved January 8, 1836, incorporating the Trustees of the Irwinton Academy; and again in an Act approved January 9, 1836, amending an act incorporating the Town of Irwinton. The General Assembly of Alabama passed and approved an Act January 2, 1843, to alter the name of the Town of Irwinton to that of Eufaula. The Methodists commenced preaching at Irwinton at the beginning of the place, and have maintained a good organization there all the time since. The statement that the Rev. Morgan C. Turrentine organized a Methodist Society at the Town of Irwinton, Barbour County, Alabama, is founded upon pure fiction. From the close of 1829 to the close of 1849 the Rev. Morgan C. Turrentine was a member of the South Carolina Conference, all that time filling appointments in South Carolina and in North Carolina, with all the State of Georgia between him and Alabama. Squires, Finley, Dowling, and Neal were the only preachers having charge of the territory in which Irwinton was located from the beginning there at the close of 1833 to the close of 1836. It has been stated, by those claiming



to know, that the Methodists erected a house of worship at Irwinton in 1835, and it was the first erected at that place by any denomination. Irwinton was set off from the Clayton charge at the close of 1837, and was put down as a Station at the close of 1842, though it had Glennville with it during 1843, 1844, 1845. At the close of 1845 there were in the Society at Eufaula about one hundred white and sixty colored members.

In the county of Barbour, fifteen miles from Eufaula, a preaching place was established and a Society was organized, and the place was known as Norton's School-house, though the official name of the church was Providence. That church began with and flourished through the fostering care of the Rev. John W. Norton, a local elder of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who fixed his permanent home at that place in 1835, and who died there March 15, 1862. He was born January 22, 1794, and was received on trial in the South Carolina Conference in December, 1814, and finally located in January, 1826. His sons and grandsons have made efficient traveling preachers. He was dignified, genial, generous, conservative, and wise; he wrought constantly for the promotion of Society and the Church.

The Rev. James Elizabeth Glenn, a native of Franklin County, North Carolina, and who attained justification and regeneration, in his nineteenth year, at a Camp-meeting at Goose Creek Camp-ground, in his native State, and who was licensed to preach at Plank Chapel, in his native county, and who was two years, beginning in February, 1806, in the traveling connection in the Virginia Conference, and for six years, closing in January, 1814, a member of the South Carolina Conference, and who was a citizen of Abbeville District, South Carolina, from 1814 till 1832, and who had a temporary home in Randolph County, Georgia, for three years, settled himself, while yet the savages roamed the forest thereabout, in 1835, on the eastern line of Township thirteen, and Range twenty-eight, in Barbour County, Alabama. Soon the place assumed the proportions of a village, and was called Glennville, in honor of the noted settler. From 1836 preaching has been kept up at Glennville, and since 1838 a flourishing Methodist organization has been maintained at that place.

The headwaters of Cowikee, Upintolocco, and Big Uchee Creeks are close together, and thereabout is a most beautiful

region of country. A settlement was attempted there by adventurous white men, while yet the savage roamed and hunted in that region. The very year of the savage outbreak, the year 1836, John McTyeire, of Barnwell District, South Carolina, sought him out a possession in that lonely land, and by the year 1838 he, with his household, was domiciled beside his own deadening and clearing. Others were there as soon, and a community at once existed. A preaching place was established by the Methodists and a Methodist Society was organized there at the beginning, and, in the on-going of things, Uchee Chapel was built; and there a Methodist Church has flourished since. John McTyeire, the father of Bishop Holland N. McTyeire, John B. Tate, Joel Hurt, Henry Hurt, William Threadgill, and their families, and others constituted that flourishing Methodist Society. The little village of Uchee is one of the loveliest spots in the original County of Russell. There, in the early spring of 1857, at the house of one Dr. Green, the author of these pages drank his last cup of coffee.

Sixteen miles west of the Chattahoochee River, on an air line, in the County of Russell, in the year 1837, Daniel Bullard built, of split logs and boards, a house of worship, twenty-four by twenty-two feet, at a cost of two hundred and twenty dollars, and the place was called Lebanon; it was in a mile or two of the present town of Opelika; and the Society there at that time consisted of twenty-two members. That church was kept up in a flourishing condition till the close of 1857, when the membership moved to the town of Opelika. The church at Lebanon was girded with strength and adorned with grace. In 1839 there was a permanent revival there, and a substantial ingathering.

In 1838 a Society was organized, and a house of worship, in keeping with the times and state of the country, was erected in Township eighteen, Range twenty-nine, and named Mount Zion. In 1844 a new house of worship was erected, which stands to this day. That Mount Zion is on an elevated plot of ground near the Railroad, seven or eight miles north-west of Columbus, Georgia. The church at Mount Zion has ever been one of worth and influence, noted for intelligence, liberality, and piety.

By 1841 the Russell Circuit was formed and in full working order, and consisted of the following Societies: Crawford, Glenn Chapel, five miles from the present town of Seale, Girard, Leb-

anon, Mount Zion, Salem, Shady Grove, south of Opelika ten or twelve miles, Soule Chapel, six miles from Columbus, Georgia, Uchee Chapel, Wacoochee, Watoola, (Capps,) White's, Wesley Chapel, between Big Uchee and the town of Crawford, and Union, between Lebanon and the town of Auburn. Among the prominent and faithful men who labored at these several Societies in the early day may be mentioned: Rev. John C. Ardis, Rev. Charles A. Brown, Rev. John Crowell, Rev. James W. Capps, Rev. Isaac Faulkenberry, Rev. Luke T. Mizell, local preachers, Daniel Bullard, William Barnett, H. M. Crowder, S. R. Boykin, W. Dunlap, James Allen, John W. Allen, Washington Burt, Young Edwards, Daniel Johnson, R. P. Laney, F. Morton, R. S. Hardaway, Joel Hurt, Benjamin Borum, W. J. Gibson, John McTyeire, Mark McCutchen, Theophilus White, and John B. Tate. In 1843 the Russell Circuit suffered a great loss in the death of Hartwell Bass, a man of strength, piety, and influence.

While yet the Indian, in contemplation of his final exodus from his own country, in dejected solitude, tread his native soil and listened to the plaintive dirges sung by the gentle winds amid the tree-tops of his native land, a number of Methodists, who were afterward distinguished for zeal and piety, as if they came just in time to introduce innovations upon the long-established customs of the savage, moved into Macon County. That immigration created a demand for ministerial services in that region. That demand was met as best it could be under the disabilities of the limited supply of preachers and the rude condition of the country.

It is said by those esteemed good authority that a Society of Methodists was organized at Tuskegee in 1835, consisting of Joseph Cameron and his wife, and Mrs. James Dent, and Mrs. Thomas S. Woodward. Cameron was a mechanic, illiterate, and poor; as a member of the Church he was, for a while, punctual, pious, and profitable, but he finally died a drunkard. The court-house, a little log building with a dirt floor, was used by that Society as a preaching place. About 1836 a School-house was built, and was used as a place for preaching by all who came that way and engaged in that kind of services. The first house of worship for the Methodists at Tuskegee was completed in 1841. The membership of that Society during the time worship

was held in the School-house, in addition to the members already named, consisted of the Rev. Robert Adams, once a member of the South Carolina Conference, the Rev. John Chappell, Charles George Rush, James Nicholson, Alfred Hardy, Samuel P. Bascomb, Dr. R. H. Howard, George Menifee, William H. Standford, and some of the members of the families of some of these mentioned here. John B. Bilbro became a citizen of Tuskegee and a member of the Society at that place in 1841. He joined the Church in 1833 at Columbus, Georgia.

Tradition says that the Rev. John Boswell, he then being presiding elder of the Chattahoochee District, organized a Society, in 1834, in the house of James Howard, at Cross Keys, about sixteen miles west of Tuskegee, and that a log house was built soon after the organization of that Society for a place of worship. James Howard and his wife, Tabitha, and his daughter, Sarah, and Joseph H. Howard and his wife and his daughter, and others were members at Cross Keys at the first.

In 1835 a Society was organized six miles west of Tuskegee, and was known as Clanton's. Its members at the organization were Nathaniel H. Clanton, John A. Green, Anson Davis, Benjamin Motley, and others. The house of worship at that place was a log cabin. That log cabin was superseded in 1842 by McKendree Chapel, which was built one half mile nearer Tuskegee. In after years all the little Societies in that region were united in Union Church, which was eight miles west of Tuskegee.

Tuskegee Camp-ground, four miles west of Tuskegee, was established in 1838, and the tenters there at that date were Col. Nathaniel H. Clanton, James Nicholson, Charles G. Rush, Lewis Hoffman, Jacob Hoffman, Alfred Hardy, A. Chappell, the Rev. John Chappell, the Rev. Robert Adams, and James Howard. The Rev. John Chappell was once a member of the Georgia Conference. He was good natured and true.

As early as 1837 there was a large Society at Auburn with Thomas H. Harper as class leader. The Harper family was large, and many of them belonged to the Society at the town of Auburn.

The Methodist preachers went into that newly settled region unencumbered with assumptions of sacerdotal dignities, and functions, and paraphernalia, and entirely removed from the distractions engendered of conflicting edicts issued by opposing



councils and rival pontiffs, and they applied themselves with diligence to the one work of gathering the population into the fold of the great Shepherd, and by 1839 they had a well organized Circuit, which bore the name of Tuskegee, and which lay round about from that place, and extended over much of the County of Macon. In the Societies which constituted that Circuit were men and women, not a few, of personal piety and power.

There was one who apprehended that for which he was apprehended by Christ Jesus, and who, having his name in the book of life, attained unto distinction among his fellows, who may be properly noticed here. So far as his person and position were to be implicated there was to him no meaning in the claim of the jurisdiction of the pontiff. He was simply a layman, and he was Charles George Rush. He came from South Carolina to Alabama in 1818, and from then till his death in 1858, a period of forty years, he allied himself with the Methodism of Alabama. He lived a dozen years at Washington, Autauga County, Alabama, and was there when the innovators created a revolt against and led a secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church. While Mr. Rush, in common with all good men, deplored the ecclesiastical discord created by the innovators he could not be neutral in the contest, and, adhering through all the controversy to the Methodist Episcopal Church, he led an active campaign in defense of the established usages of Methodism, and he exerted a strong influence in impeding the progress and in suppressing the work of the secessionists.

He was of German descent, and was of sturdy mold of character. In literary attainments he was limited, but in habits of industry he was thoroughly trained, having been brought up at a trade, that of a blacksmith. When he had nearly reached his majority he hired himself, or was hired by his father, to a neighbor to superintend a distillery through the brandy making season: and while he was engaged in that business he was convicted and regenerated, and confirmed in the Lutheran Church, the Church of his ancestors, and he continued in the business of distillation until his contract expired. He never for a moment considered the business derogatory to Christian character, or destructive to moral integrity.

For a time he resided in Montgomery County. While resid-

ing in that County he held his membership at the city of Montgomery. That noted event, the Falling of the Stars, which occurred on the morning of Wednesday, November 13, 1833, marked the beginning of an exalted state of religious experience in the case of Brother Rush. He was asleep at his home. In the midst of the phenomenon he was awakened by the screams of frightened persons, white and black, whose fears had been aroused, and who, in the dreadful extremity of the hour, were exclaiming that the day of Judgment had come. He dressed in haste, and, with much foreboding, looked out upon the display in the heavens above. When he saw the multitude of shooting stars and falling meteors his anticipations of dreadful catastrophe were confirmed, and he accepted it as a fact that the day of Judgment had really come. Whereupon he committed himself and his cause to God who was to be on the throne of that day. He was, at once, in a state of confidence and calmness. In the infallible judgment of God he reposed, and he awaited in peace the opening of the books, the revelation of the accounts, and the final award. When the day dawned, the sun arose, and the stars quit falling, he was greatly disappointed, and did truly regret that the phenomenon had terminated without the anticipated Judgment. Though his faith in Christ was tested on a false issue, it was nevertheless really tested. From that day forth he was not afraid of the issues of death. The mythology of the ancients treats much of astronomy, and many of the superstitions of mankind are associated with the stars. The stars have been conspicuous in the records of human events. "The astrologers, the star-gazers, and the monthly prognosticators" have ever been associates. The holy Scriptures make constant allusion to "the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof." The author of the book of Job swelled the profound strains and added to the sublime imagery of his inimitable poetry by allusions to "Arcturus, Orion, and the Pleiades," and by allusions to the ancient time when in the survey of the foundations of the earth "the morning stars sang together." In their lofty song of praise to the Lord God of Israel, a song rich in poetic measure, Deborah and Barak make reference to the fact that "the stars in their courses fought against" the oppressors of Israel. With the imagery of "wandering stars" have been described apostates from the Christian faith. The Star seen in

the East by the wise men guided to the babe born at Bethlehem, who was Christ, the Lord. It is true, therefore, that Brother Rush was not the only one whose Christian life has had to do with the fancies and freaks of astronomy, and has been affected by the stars and their appearances.

About 1836 Mr. Rush moved to Macon County, and established his home two and a half miles south of Tuskegee. He was of even temper, truthful, honest, dignified, serious, cheerful, proper, of steady habits, industrious, attentive to affairs, economical, possessing sound judgment, and great wisdom. Though he eschewed politics, he was a useful citizen and a benefactor. His influence in the Church to which he belonged and the circle in which he moved was unbounded. He made money rapidly, and he used it profusely in benevolence. He helped to build School-houses, churches, and Colleges, and to support preachers, missionaries, orphans, paupers, and strangers. He responded promptly to every benevolent claim brought to his attention, and he usually responded in the amount solicited. He was not only wise in counsel, abundant in alms and benevolence, but he was a man of prayer and of piety. He had his times and places for secret devotion. He furnished himself with a Bible, the Life, Sermons, and Writings of Wesley, the Lives of Benson, Clark, Carvarso, and others of the Wesleyan Methodists, the *Southern Christian Advocate*, and the Secular Papers of his section of the country. These furnished the staple of what he read. As regularly as he had his meals, night and morning, he had worship with the family. With unsurpassed punctuality and regularity he filled his place at the house of God. It is said that the horse which he used in going to and from the church became so accustomed to going that of his own accord he would leave the street at the right place to reach the hitching post, and on reaching the post would turn the buggy wheel to the proper position to make it easy to dismount from the buggy, and he would stand at the post, without hitching, until his master returned to the buggy after the close of divine service. Brother Rush was at church, day and night, whenever there was religious service in any form. In his second wife, Sarah, as in his first wife, Elizabeth, he had proper encouragement and efficient help in every good word and work. She was a woman of meek and quiet spirit, and of great benevolence.

She kept a regular outfit of bedding in her house for the use of poor wanderers who might come that way. Often did she, with tears in her eyes, as she would bid the preacher farewell on the threshold, put into the hands of the departing man of God five, ten, or more dollars. Often did she furnish the preacher's family clothing, and more than once did she turn over her own bed and servant to the use of the preacher's wife. With the sincerity and fidelity of plighted promise, with fealty as sacred as an oath, with the ambition peculiar to a mother, with supplications, which catalogued items which may not be recorded in this connection, and with a faith as sublime as that of Hannah, of old, she, from before his birth, consecrated to the Christian ministry her son, John Wesley Rush. Through all his infancy, childhood, youth, and profligacy her faith never wavered. The God of Israel granted her the petition that she had asked of him, and she lived to see the desire of her heart, and the confirmation of her faith. She lived to see her son initiated into the Christian ministry, and to hear his voice as from the walls of Zion he repeated the divine amnesty to a rebellious race.

But the record of Charles George Rush is not yet complete. For a half century, including the period from the time of his majority to the time of his death, he was the owner of slaves. Shall he be anathematized, for this? Shall it be said of him, because he owned slaves, that his hands, his bed, his furniture, his house, and his lands were stained with blood? and that he was more savage than lions and bears? First of all he erected a Chapel on his plantation for the use and benefit of the Negroes. There they were preached to and there the negro children were catechised and instructed regularly. The great majority of the Negroes on the plantation were religious, and cases of adultery, lying, and stealing among them were rare. Under the ministry of the Methodist preachers appointed from time to time to serve them the Negroes engaged in prayer and praise and reached a high state of enjoyment. In the government of his slaves Mr. Rush was controlled by the same sense of justice and mercy which controlled him in the government of the other persons under his authority. He considered himself responsible to God, who made all men, for the well-being, in this and the life to come, of the slaves under his control. He, therefore, discouraged every form of cruelty and of vice on the part of



those who managed his slaves, and on the part of the slaves themselves. He enforced morality upon all concerned for the reasons that vicious acts were injurious to character and offensive to God. In the contracts made with his Overseers he stipulated that said Overseers should abstain from intoxicants and from profane and obscene language, and that they should, with their Sunday clothes on, attend preaching with the Negroes at the plantation Chapel, and that they should require the Negroes to have on their Sunday clothes. He also stipulated that in the correction of the slaves cruel punishment should not be indulged. On his tombstone are engraved these words: "The Orphan's Friend." After serving his generation by the will of God, Charles George Rush fell on sleep, and was laid to rest in the family burying ground, near Tuskegee, Alabama.

In 1835 there came and settled near the place now called Salem, in Russell County, Alabama, one who, at the Crawford Camp-ground, in the State of Georgia, in 1830, and about the time he had reached his majority, had experienced that remarkable change which made him a new creature in Christ Jesus, and gave him the Spirit of adoption. He afterwards lived near the town of Auburn, in the county of Macon, Alabama. That one was Isaac Hill, than whom a more unselfish man never came to Alabama. He was a plain man, without genius, without brilliancy of intellect, without great learning, but possessed of Christian sentiments, steady purposes, generous impulses, meekness, and humility. He was an humble layman, who found in that position ample verge for the employment and use of all his gifts and graces, and who never had anything to lavish on splendor, pomp, and folly, but who expended much in benevolence and charity, and, in many ways, rendered solid service to mankind. His alms, like streams from living fountains, flowed steadily and constantly. He gave alms and contributed to benevolent objects as he prayed, without ceasing. He did large things in building churches, in supporting Camp-meetings, and in educating the indigent. Many visitors at the Camp-meetings were lodged and fed at his hospitable tent. He gave liberal sums to the College built at Auburn by the Methodists. He filled efficiently the offices of class leader and steward. He honored his Church, and was honored by her. In all things requisite or necessary to salvation the Bible was his guide, and

the book of Discipline was his ecclesiastical code. He fell on sleep at Notasulga, Alabama, April 23, 1886, and his body was committed to the ground with Christian ceremonies at Auburn, Alabama.

By 1837 the La Fayette Circuit, extending over a large scope of country, was thoroughly organized. The largest official gathering on that Circuit for that year was at the Third Quarterly Conference and the record of that Quarterly Conference contains the names of the appointments on the Circuit at that date. That Quarterly Conference was held at Oak Bowery Camp-ground, September 25, 1837, Ebenezer Hearn, presiding elder of the Irwinton District, in the chair. The Rev. John Hunter, preacher in charge of the Circuit, was present, and also the following official members: John B. Chappell, local elder, Evan G. Richards, local deacon, William Menifee, John R. Starr, and Jonathan Morris, local preachers, Robert Boren, John R. Gilbert, and William Waldrop, exhorters, David Boren, Nathaniel Grady, George Menifee, stewards, John Trammell, Gideon Rix, Jesse Garrett, William W. Harper, Lemuel Jackson, John R. Page, Elijah C. Hunter, and William R. Miller, class leaders. Nathaniel Grady was Secretary of the Quarterly Conference and also Recording Steward. The appointments on the Circuit that day were: Oak Bowery, La Fayette, Kemp's, McGill's, Clement's, Piney Grove, Allen's, Pisgah, Bonner's, Fredonia, Mount Zion, Grear's, Tallasee, Mount Jefferson, Cusseta, Eady's, Webb's, Day's Camp-ground.

According to *data* in hand McGill's Church, located in Randolph County, near, and on the west side of, the Tallapoosa River, a little north of Hutton's Ford, now Louina, was organized, by the Rev. John Hunter, on a week day, in the summer of 1837. The principal members who constituted that Society were the Hardys, Harrises, McGills, and Smiths. Spencer Smith, who had just settled a home at the place where Daviston has recently sprung up, was appointed class leader at McGill's Society upon its organization. The house built there for worship was made of split logs, and was eighteen by twenty feet, covered with rough boards, held on with what was called weight-poles, and had a dirt floor covered with pine-straw, and seats, without backs, made of puncheons. Spencer Smith, in after years, became a local preacher, and was useful in that country.

He died at Rockford, Coosa County, Alabama, in 1883, at the advanced age of one hundred years, his wife, who was one of the charter members at McGill's, having preceded him to the Better Land a few months. In 1838 two men, who held membership at McGill's, were licensed to exhort, who were afterward licensed to preach. Mr. Harris, the elder of the two, made a useful local preacher. The other, George R. W. Smith, the son of the class leader, was adopted into the heavenly family when twelve years old, was at a Quarterly Conference held for La Fayette Circuit at Day's Camp-ground, October 15, 1838, as an exhorter, was licensed to preach in 1839, being then nineteen years of age, and was received on trial in the Alabama Conference in January, 1840, and appointed for that year junior preacher on the Tombecbee Circuit; for 1841 was in charge of the Coosa Circuit; for 1842 he was at Pensacola, Florida; and for 1843 he was appointed in charge of Apalachicola, Florida. He died, in the midst of an effort to build a house of worship, at Apalachicola, Florida, April 16, 1843. He was useful in life, and the peace of God sustained him in death. He was small in stature, and was but a youth when he died, but he was grave, and solemn, and had the weight and influence of a messenger from God. Endowed with talents of high order, he had the prospect of attaining distinction in the ministry. He rose above the disadvantages of adverse environments. Having a thirst and capacity for knowledge, he attained it, notwithstanding School facilities were lacking in the wilderness where was cast his lot in his youth.

Day's Camp-ground was near the line between Tallapoosa and Chambers Counties, and just east of the present town of Dudleyville. It is of record, as named, as early as September 25, 1837. At a Camp-meeting held there the middle of October, 1838, at which Ebenezer Hearn, presiding elder, William C. Robinson, preacher in charge of the Circuit, and Thomas H. Capers, McCarter Oliver, Samuel C. Daily, J. R. Starr, Green Cousins, J. R. Gilbert, and William Meniffee, local preachers then belonging to the Circuit, and eight exhorters, and sixteen class leaders were present. Ethelbert S. Smith, the brother of George R. W. Smith, then a boy ten years old, while pressing his way to the altar, and McCarter Oliver putting his hand on his head, and saying: "God bless this little boy," was instantly

renewed in nature and plenteously endued with divine grace. For many years Ethelbert S. Smith has been an itinerant preacher. At this time, 1892, he is a member of one of the Conferences in Texas.

A Camp-ground was established as early as 1837 at Oak Bowery, as early as 1838 at Fredonia, as early as 1843 at Bethlehem, and all these Camp-grounds named were kept up for a number of years.

A house of worship was built at La Fayette in 1837. The Deed to the lot on which the Church was built bears date June 3, 1837, and the Trustees named in the Deed were: Alsee Holifield, John Trammell, Beverly Walker, Elliotte H. Muse, Samuel B. Turner, Evan G. Richards, and Bartholomew B. Moore.

The blunders, foibles, and atrocities of mankind are very great, even under the administrations of religion. Many things are done even in the Councils of the Church which lack completeness, and never attain thereto. The demonstration of the truth of these assertions is found in the history of the men who sought induction into the offices of the ministry through the Quarterly Conferences of the La Fayette Circuit, and of the several transactions of the Quarterly Conferences of that Circuit entered from time to time. The feats accomplished in the enactments and the administrations of the Quarterly Conferences of that Circuit at that early day were not often surpassed. They indicated instability and indifference to the principles of justice and the standards of moral rectitude. There was variety and there was conflict of action. The work was done and undone with facility. Men were inducted into the ministry and deposed therefrom with a facility indicative of anything other than adherence to sound doctrine. No doubt the members of the Quarterly Conferences of that Circuit made fallibility a virtue, and acknowledged adherence to the saying of Pope, "To err is human."

James R. Starr was, by the Quarterly Conference of the Circuit, licensed to preach April 22, 1837, and on September 25, following, there being proof that he had been engaged in some fraudulent transactions, the Quarterly Conference decided that he be deprived of his official standing in the Church; and then at the Quarterly Conference March 31, 1838, he applied for a license to preach, which, after examination, was granted. Less



than one year was consumed in said transactions. Other Church trials, involving men of prominence, grew out of that case; unrest, and great excitement ensued, and yet, as though nothing was ever to be settled, a vacillating administration was adhered to. At the Quarterly Conference held at Day's Camp-ground, October 15, 1838, James R. Starr was recommended to the Alabama Conference as a suitable person to be admitted on trial. The Annual Conference did not admit him.

At that same Quarterly Conference held at Day's Camp-ground, October 15, 1838, Thomas P. C. Shelman, formerly an elder in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and having withdrawn from said Church, applied to be re-admitted as a local preacher of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and, after thorough examination of the whole matter, he was unanimously received; and it was Resolved that the Quarterly Conference unanimously recommend to the Georgia Annual Conference the restoration of Brother T. P. C. Shelman's credentials as a deacon and elder. Thomas P. C. Shelman, recommended from the Augusta District, was admitted on trial by the South Carolina Conference, at Columbia, Tuesday evening, February 2, 1830; and in the Journal of the Georgia Conference for January 14, 1835, it is recorded: "Thomas P. C. Shelman was next called, and on motion, It was resolved that it be entered on the Minutes that he has withdrawn from the Church." In the Journal of that Conference for December 15, 1838, is this entry: "The Bishop presented a communication from Brother Ebenezer Hearn, a presiding elder in the Alabama Conference, on the subject of restoring the credentials of Thomas P. C. Shelman, late a traveling preacher in this Conference who withdrew from the Church; said communication was accompanied by certificates, and on motion, It was ordered that his Parchments be restored, and the Secretary was directed to send a certificate of the proceedings of the Conference to Brother Hearn, of the Alabama Conference." T. P. C. Shelman was recommended to the Alabama Annual Conference for an appointment by the Quarterly Conference held at Fredonia Camp-ground, August 14, 1841, but he did not get the appointment. In 1846 Shelman was admitted on trial in the Alabama Conference, and located at the close of 1851. Some men are uncertain.

The Quarterly Conference held at Fredonia, November 15,

1842, licensed Toliver Spann to preach, and the Quarterly Conference held at Bethlehem Camp-ground, September 16, 1843, a period of time less than a year, expelled him from the Church because he had run away and defrauded his creditors.

At the same Quarterly Conference at which Toliver Spann was expelled from the Church Mark Westmoreland was licensed to preach. He was a man with a history. Mark Westmoreland was recommended by the Athens District Conference, December 4, 1821, and was admitted on trial by the South Carolina Conference at Augusta, Georgia, February 26, 1822. The record made at Wilmington, North Carolina, for February 19, 1825, says: "Mark Westmoreland was not present. The following motion was submitted and carried. Moved, That whereas M. Westmoreland has been neglectful of his appointments on his Circuit the past year, and prematurely made efforts to marry, that a letter of reproof be written to him by the Secretary, after which his character passed." The record made at Milledgeville, Georgia, for Friday morning, January 13, 1826, says: "Mark Westmoreland was examined and there appearing to have been imprudences in his conduct he was not elected to elder's office." The record for January 20, 1826, says: "Mark Westmoreland, through Brother Hodges, requested a location, which was granted." In December, 1829, Mark Westmoreland was re-admitted into the traveling connection by the Mississippi Conference, and in January, 1837, he again, and for the last time, located. By a process, not now known, he lost his place in the ministry, and in 1843 he is licensed to preach *de novo* by the Quarterly Conference of the La Fayette Circuit. He was present as a local preacher in the Quarterly Conference held for La Fayette Circuit at Emory Chapel, December 21, 1844. There charges were brought against him by John Hunter. The charge was seeming discrepancy in written statements which he had made. A Committee investigated the charge, and acquitted Westmoreland. He disappeared from Methodist records. He joined the Baptists. He was a man of intellect, but unstable and unwise; he was destitute of caution and prudence; he was selfish and inert.

James H. Laney was admitted on trial in the Alabama Conference, and for 1843 appointed junior preacher on the La Fayette Circuit, and at the close of the year he was discontinued by

the Conference, and became a local preacher on the La Fayette Circuit. He was charged with discrepancy, a mild way of stating the case, in three specifications: 1. In regard to having borrowed a cloak from Brother Joel Hurt. 2. In regard to boot in swapping horses with Brother Joel Hurt. 3. In regard to entering into business with J. A. Hurst. The Quarterly Conference held at La Fayette, June 8, 1844, found him guilty of the three specifications herein set forth, and expelled him from the Church.

The low estimate placed upon the sacred work of the Christian ministry by the leaders of the La Fayette Circuit is indicated by the facility with which the Quarterly Conferences of that Circuit recommended preachers as suitable persons to be admitted to the traveling connection. Within the short space of six years, beginning in 1839, the Quarterly Conferences of that Circuit had recommended, more than once, five different preachers to the Alabama Conference for the high calling of the itinerant ministry which the Annual Conference rejected. These preachers so repeatedly recommended and so uniformly rejected were James R. Starr, William B. Barnett, Harris Stearns, William A. Smith, and Nathaniel C. Barber. Some of these men were doubtless true Christians, but their environments disqualified them for the intricate work of the itinerant ministry.

Henry Starr, Joel D. Trammell, William W. Waldrop, Samuel G. Jones, and Basil E. Lucas were severally licensed to preach by the Quarterly Conferences of the La Fayette Circuit held in 1839. Hilliard J. Hunter was licensed to preach by the Quarterly Conference held for La Fayette Circuit at Mount Jefferson, April 3, 1841; and Urban C. Tigner, Alexander McBride, and John M. Tatum were each licensed to preach by the Quarterly Conference for that Circuit at Oak Bowery, November 13, 1841. At a Quarterly Conference for the Circuit at Oak Bowery, in 1844, John S. Sappington was licensed to preach, and at a Quarterly Conference held for La Fayette Circuit at Harmony Church, December 6, 1845, Daniel Duncan, John C. L. Aikin, and Humphrey Gilmore were each licensed to preach. Hunter, McBride, and Duncan made successful itinerant preachers. Aikin was on trial in the Alabama Conference two years.

McCarter Oliver and Green Cousins were for many years lo-

cal preachers on the La Fayette Circuit. They were local preachers before they moved into the bounds of that work. To say that they were true Christian men, representative and useful, is saying much to their praise, and just as little as should be said of them. Lemuel Jackson was for long years a member of the Church in the bounds of that Circuit, filling the office of class leader. No better man ever lived in any country, or belonged to any Church. He was without guile.

Nathaniel Grady was a member of the Quarterly Conference of the La Fayette Circuit for more than twenty years, death terminating his membership therewith. He was a class leader, and Secretary of most of the Quarterly Conferences held through all the years he was connected with the work, and a steward most of the time. He died Friday morning, November 27, 1846. He was well known and highly esteemed. He was a worthy citizen, a faithful steward, and a pious Christian.

This closes the notice of La Fayette Circuit for the present. It was a noted Circuit at that date at which it has now passed under review.

Emuckfau Creek became historic through a desperate battle fought on or near it between the forces under General Andrew Jackson and the Creek warriors, January 23, 1814. On or near that creek, and near the line of Randolph and Tallapoosa Counties, the Methodists established Emuckfau Camp-ground, as early, perhaps, as 1842, and for many long years Camp-meetings were held at that place which were attended with supreme delight and with divine results.

In 1836 Glover McCain, a local preacher in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and Seaborn McCain, his brother, moving from Tennessee, settled west of where the present town of Lineville is situate, and soon a Society was organized at Morton's School-house, which was between the sites of the present towns of Lineville and Ashland. By the close of the next two years Joseph D. McCann and James G. McCain had pitched their tents in the same vicinity. Barr, Kilpatrick, and others were there about the same time, adding numbers and strength to the Methodist forces. In the course of time a Church was built and named Smyrna, and Morton's School-house abandoned. Joseph D. McCann and Glover McCain were leaders in hospitality and in the financial support of the Society at Smyrna. Edward W.



Bar, who joined the Alabama Conference on trial at its session beginning December 30, 1840, and who broke down and died in about two years, and John W. McCann, who was received on trial by the Alabama Conference in the first part of 1846, and who continued a member of that Conference for more than forty years, were members of the Church at Smyrna when and before they commenced their ministry.

A Quarterly Conference for Randolph Mission, Montgomery District, Alabama Annual Conference, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was held at Cahulga Camp-ground, October 30, 1837, Greenberry Garrett, presiding elder, in the chair. John Howell applied to that Quarterly Conference for liberty to preach as a local preacher in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and, after due inquiry concerning his gifts, grace, and usefulness, he was judged to be a suitable person to be endowed with the liberty sought, and he was authorized to preach, and a license certifying to the fact was given him. He died in 1854. His descendants still live, and many of them are Methodists, some of them are Methodist preachers. Cahulga Camp-ground was in Township sixteen, Range twenty-four, east, and in about one mile of the present town of Heflin, in the present County of Cleburne, Alabama. Cahulga has been a preaching place from the time of that Quarterly Conference in 1837 till now, 1892. There is a house of worship there now, though dilapidated and neglected.

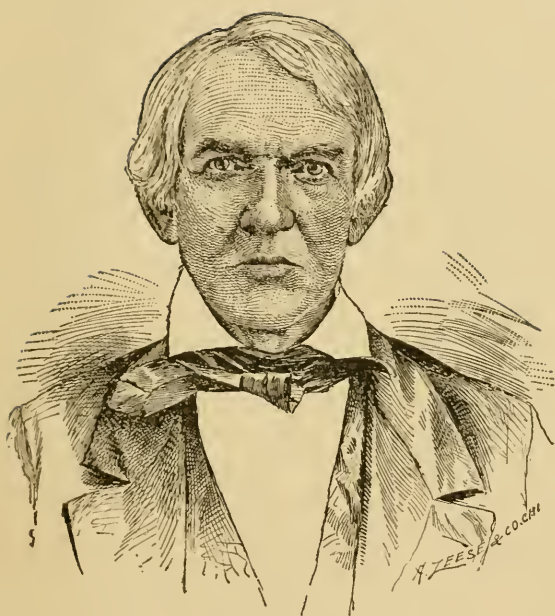
In 1844 in Randolph Circuit there was a sweeping religious influence. There were near four hundred converts, and between three and four hundred were added to the Methodist Episcopal Church.

In Township fourteen and Range twenty-six, and in what was once the south-east corner of Macon County, are outlying sandy ridges and gently rising hills and intervening depressions. From out the sides of these ridges and hills issue springs of water, and adown these depressions, in various directions, run limpid streams. At an early day the Rev. James E. Glenn visited that region, and, charmed with the gushing fountains and lucid streams, and reminded by the same of the statement that John baptized in Enon, near to Salim, because there were many springs and rivulets there, he named the place Enon. It was rightly named, and that has been the name thereof.

Tradition says that in the early Spring-time of 1840, the Rev.

Thompson Glenn, a local preacher, preached a sermon at Enon. That was the first sermon ever delivered at the place. The sermon was preached in the woods, under the boughs of the majestic trees, for at that time "no temple stood, or altar smoked" in that region. Soon after that first sermon was preached the Rev. John W. Talley, Jr., organized a Society there. Talley was then the preacher in charge of the Clayton Circuit. It is reported upon reliable authority that Granville White, William Pitts, John Cleckley, Samuel Harwell, Howell Peebles, Wesley McGehee, W. E. Dubose, Jasper Banks, and Jabez Banks were among the first members at Enon. That Society, organized in the woods where so many beautiful rivulets run among the hills, did not build a temple of worship adorned with "Doric pillars overlaid with golden architrave," and lighted with "starry lamps and blazing cressets, fed with naphtha and asphaltus." Granville White had opened a shop, in which he worked as a blacksmith, just a few months previous to the formation of that Society, and that shop was used as a preaching place, and the anvil therein served as a pulpit on which the Bible and Hymn Book, used by the preacher, lay. There was naught to inspire pride, and at the same time, as it was the best which could be done, there was naught repulsive in the surroundings. About the time the Methodists organized at Enon two local preachers, the Rev. Thomas Lancaster and the Rev. Appleton Haygood, took up abode there. In the latter half of 1840 a log School-house was built, which was used for a time as a preaching place by both Methodists and Baptists. In the latter part of 1841 the Methodists built for themselves a Church out of logs, in which they worshiped till 1845. The house of worship there now, 1892, was built in 1845. The Rev. John J. Groves, a local preacher, and a teacher, became a citizen of Enon in 1843. He taught in the week and preached on Sunday. He was industrious, and pious, and a preacher of good ability.

In the autumn of 1843 James J. Banks left his habitation at Cullodenville, Georgia, and established his home at Enon, Alabama. Not a spirit more noble ever came to that place of springs and rivulets. He was truly an acquisition, would have been to any place. He was a lovely character in whom combined dignity, grace, composure, and sweetness. He was gifted and pious; his conceptions were large, his aims high, his



JAMES J. BANKS.





deeds generous and noble. To truth and honesty he held tenaciously, ever abhorring that which was false and hollow. No attractions whatever could induce him to deviate from the right line. He accepted the sacred teachings, the divine behest obeyed, and was himself a factor in society. To religion and ecclesiastical affairs he gave constant attention. The welfare of society he apprehended, and he projected and executed in behalf of the same. On taking up his abode at Enon he instituted plans and devised ways for building a new house of worship at that place, one suited to the necessities of a growing and prosperous community; and, as a result, in 1845, a new house was dedicated to divine service. James J. Banks was the friend of the preacher. His own personal supervision he gave to the interests of the preacher's family. He took care that meal and meat, wood and water were not lacking at the preacher's home. His children have been Methodists, and have been an honor to him. They have supported Methodism by their morals and their means, and Methodism has honored them.

When organized, the Society at Enon was under the preacher on the Clayton Circuit; for the next three years Enon was one of the appointments in the Glennville Circuit; then for one year it was in the Aberfoil Circuit; for a number of years then there was an Enon Circuit; then Enon and Chunnenugee were together.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### THE FURTHER ENLARGEMENT AND ADVANCEMENT OF THE WORK OF METHODISM IN ALABAMA.

BY a Treaty made December 29, 1835, the Cherokee Indians ceded to the United States the last of their lands east of the Mississippi River. That part of the Territory in Alabama owned by the Cherokees and ceded by the stipulations of that Treaty was embraced within the following lines: The Tennessee River from where the north line of Alabama crossed it down to Chickasaw Island, a line from Chickasaw Island a due south course to the top of the dividing ridge between the waters of the Tennessee and Tombigbee Rivers, thence eastwardly along said ridge leaving the head waters of the Black Warrior to the right hand, to the western Bank of Wills Creek, thence down the said bank of said creek to its junction with the Coosa River, thence a line in a south-east course to the east line of Alabama about one mile above the north line of Township fourteen, thence the east line of Alabama to the north-east corner of the State, thence the north line of the State to the Tennessee River at the beginning point. The Cherokee Indians, like the Creek Tribe, resisted to the last expulsion from the land of their fathers and the place of their nativity. From 1828 there was made persistent effort to extinguish the title of the Cherokees to all lands east of the Mississippi River, and there was constant expectation that the consummation so devoutly wished would be reached immediately. For seven long years the Cherokees baffled those who would supplant them and defeated all efforts to dispossess them by negotiations. They opposed all Treaties for ceding their lands, and they were the last of the Indian tribes to leave their long-cherished country. By September, 1838, fourteen thousand and the last of them were on the march for the lands allotted them west of the Mississippi River. The constant expectation of a Treaty of cession and the departure of the last of the tribe to the distant West induced the white people to pour into the country long before the Treaty stipulations and

removal were effected, and the Methodist Episcopal Church took steps to preach to the new settlers in that region of Alabama at least a year before the Treaty ceding the country was made.

The Alabama Conference at its session at Greensborough, Alabama, December, 1834, put in its list of appointments Wills Creek Mission, and assigned to it, for 1835, the Rev. Jesse Ellis. At the close of that first year there were reported on the work one hundred and eighteen white and four colored members. For the next year the appointment was put down as Wills Valley Mission, and two preachers, the Rev. Zaccheus Dowling and the Rev. Edward Graves, were sent to it. At the end of that year there were, in connection with the Mission, four hundred and ten white, twenty-four colored, and one hundred and sixty Indian members. No doubt the Indian members were, some of them at least, those who had been brought into the Church during the Mission work, by the Tennessee Conference, among the Cherokee Indians. The Tennessee Conference had a Missionary to the Cherokees there up to that time. That appointment was continued as Wills Valley until the close of 1846, when it was changed to the name of Lebanon. The preachers on Wills Valley were: for 1837, the Rev. John Foust and the Rev. James W. Brown; for 1838, the Rev. John Foust; for 1839, the Rev. Jeremiah Williams, who was a twin brother of the Rev. Uriah Williams; for 1840, the Rev. H. Bailey; for 1841, the Rev. Thomas D. Barr; for 1842, the Rev. William Rhodes; for 1843, the Rev. William Rhodes; for 1844, the Rev. James P. McGebee; for 1845, the Rev. William Rhodes.

The leading men in the Wills Valley charge in the early years of its existence were: Warwick Bristow, Thomas F. Lamar, Jesse Wellborn, Benjamin Peyton, Nathan Lamar, David Sibert, Samuel B. Watts, Thomas J. Rogers, Jacob Gillespie, William R. Nicholson, L. W. Nicholson, Jeremiah Cox, Israel Cox, Andrew Igou, W. H. Holloman, S. Chasteen, Sampson Clayton, Gilbert Simms, Hezekiah Austin, B. Wright, Joseph Davenport, Richard Roberts, Morris Castell, William Pankey, Samuel D. Warren, George W. Hayes, Jesse Samples, T. K. B. McSpadden, and S. C. Smith.

The Rev. Warwick Bristow, a local preacher, came to Alabama some time previous to the spring of 1818, and settled in a

cove which has since borne his name, Bristow's Cove. In 1834 he moved into the bounds of the Cherokee country, and settled in Wills Valley. There he retained his home till he died in 1854, giving twenty years of his useful life to that section. While he was more noted for his piety than his talents, he possessed great power as a preacher. He was a great revivalist, so-called, possessing great faith, and giving himself much to prayer. He ever maintained a Christian character. The last week of his earthly pilgrimage he attended a series of religious meetings at one of the Churches of the Circuit. At the last service of the meetings, "in age and feebleness extreme" though he was, he gave to persons present an opportunity to join the Church. He said: "During my ministry of about sixty years I have received many into the Church. I have received the white man, the red man, and the black man. I come once more, my last time before quitting the field, as a recruiting officer, to enlist soldiers under the banner of Him who has established his throne by his cross." More than a dozen persons went forward and united with the Church. He then, standing before the audience with trembling limbs and whitened locks, a patriarch on the verge of the grave, and on the verge of heaven, made his farewell talk. He said: "This is the last time I will ever meet you at Church, I have very few more days to live, my work is done, my sufferings are over. I shall go to my home, and I shall die without a pain or a struggle." At the close of his talk nearly every person in the congregation advanced to the altar, shook his hand, and received his benediction. The scene was most affecting. That was on Tuesday. Wednesday he visited a house, talked and prayed with the inmates, some of whom were sick. Thursday he went home. Friday, "without a pain or a struggle," he died. On the occasion of his funeral a sermon was preached by Dr. J. C. Stewart, from the Text: "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." At the Church, near his home where he had held his membership, were his remains buried to await the day when Christ shall conduct the armies of the righteous to the land of glory.

William R. Nicholson, who was born in South Carolina, July 10, 1800, moved into the bounds of the Cherokee Nation and settled in Wills Valley, Alabama, as early as 1834, where he re-



maintained until his death, June 25, 1869. He was a worthy member of the Methodist Episcopal Church a decade and a half before he immigrated to Alabama, and he was in Wills Valley before the beginning of the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church there among the white population. He had fifteen children born to him, all of whom lived to mature years, and made useful members of the Church and Methodists. Five of the sons entered the ministry, and made efficient preachers. Propagation and ecclesiastical aggressions for the growth of the Church are at agreement. Both conduce to the ends desired. Brother Nicholson was prudent in conversation, just in business transactions, liberal, as liberality was accounted in his section of the Church, in his contributions and public benefactions. He was beneficent to the extent of his ability. He lived a good life. The blessing of God was in his house. He died well. His memory is a benediction.

In 1834, the Rev. Edmund Pearson, then the Superintendent of the Cherokee Mission under the appointment of the Tennessee Conference, organized a Society in the house of William R. Nicholson, at the foot of Sand Mountain, in Wills Valley. The mention of this incident leads to the further remark that in the obituary of the Rev. Edmund Pearson published in the General Minutes, there are two or more statements which are incorrect, and which, by suppression, deny some important facts in his life. The statements here alluded to set out that Pearson was for a number of years a member of the Holston Conference, and for three years a presiding elder therein, and that he was for a time a local preacher in Talladega County, Alabama. Whereas, he was never a presiding elder in the Holston Conference, and he was never a local preacher in Talladega County. From the end of 1821 to the end of 1825 he was connected with the Mississippi Conference as a traveling preacher. He was for one year, the year 1829, a member of the Holston Conference. From the latter part of 1832 to the latter part of 1837 he was a member of the Tennessee Conference, and for the years 1833 and 1834 he was Superintendent of the Cherokee Mission, in the latter year of which he organized that Society in the house of Nicholson. For about four years, or from 1838 to the close of 1841, he was a local preacher in the Wills Valley Circuit, and did more to improve and elevate the style of work and the sentiment of the Church

in that Circuit than any man in the bounds thereof. As an illustration of his apprehension of the things which pertained to the work, and his activity in setting forward the same, it may be stated that at a Quarterly Conference held for Wills Valley Circuit, at Bethel Meeting House, April 13, 1839, of which he was a member as a local preacher, on his motion, and through his good offices in behalf thereof, there was passed a Resolution that some efficient means be adopted by the Quarterly Conference for the erection of good and comfortable Houses of worship for the various Societies constituting that pastoral charge. At the end of 1841 he was re-admitted into the traveling connection in the Alabama Conference, and he was for the next four years presiding elder of the Talladega District, with Wills Valley Circuit as one of the appointments belonging to it. For the three years next succeeding his term on the Talladega District he was appointed presiding elder of the Tuskaloosa District, and he died September 23, 1848, being about fifty years old.

The Methodist Episcopal Church began among the white population of Wills Valley with the organization of that Society in the house of Nicholson. Some time before 1839 a Meeting House was built, and the place was called Bethel, which means the house of God, and Bethel continues till this day, 1892. The membership at Bethel in its infancy were William R. Nicholson and his wife, William Landers and his wife and children, Thomas F. Lamar, Robert Gains, Thomas Capehart, and their wives, and others whose names are not at hand. More than fifteen men have gone into the ministry from the membership of that Church; among them, Warren D. Nicholson, Charles D. Nicholson, Evan Nicholson, Rufus Nicholson, and Priestly E. Nicholson. These five brothers, the sons of William R. and Jane Nicholson, have been itinerant preachers.

The preaching places on the Wills Valley Circuit, which were established in the beginning of the work in that section, and at which Churches continued to thrive, were, in addition to Bethel already named, Bristow's, Camden, Sulphur Spring, Salem, Shiloh, Muddy Pond, Mount Zion, Union Meeting House, and Lebanon. Eden Camp-ground and Harmony Camp-ground were popular places there in the very beginning.

Bristow's, in Big Wills Valley, was established in 1835. The

Rev. Warwick Bristow and his family, and David Sibert and his family were the leading members there at the first.

Muddy Pond was near what is now called Brandon's Station, and was organized as early as 1836. Sampson Clayton, Solomon Clayton and their wives, Anna Clayton, Samuel D. Warren, and his family, and Richard Roberts were members at that place.

Camden was about two miles west of what is now Portersville, and in Big Wills Valley.

Sulphur Spring was near Nathan Lamar's, near Holloman's, and down the Valley about six miles from Valley Head.

Union Meeting House was in Lookout Valley, above Valley Head.

In that section of country occupied by Wills Valley Circuit the rustic style was marked and prevalent. The crude and the rude prevailed in the architecture, customs, and manners of the people. That there is nothing to do but to save souls was a fascinating and popular sentiment in that Circuit, and in that work, as popularly understood, the members of the Church thereabout were earnest, active, and zealous, but liberal enterprises were not instituted, and generous financial expenditures were not made. The sums contributed for the support of the Christian ministry and Christian agencies were meager, indeed.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### THE GROWTH OF METHODISM THROUGHOUT ALABAMA.

DURING the period included in the years from 1832 to 1845 the Methodists in that part of Alabama included in the Tennessee Conference were generally zealous in behalf of Christianity under the auspices of the Church to which they belonged, and during those years there was progress made in most places. During that period there was a gain of about twenty-five hundred members, including white and colored. At Tuscumbia, Florence, and La Grange there was vacillation during all the period now under consideration. Tuscumbia, which was put in the list of Stations at the close of 1827, had accessions and depletions, the depletions occurring more frequently than the accessions, and finally, at the close of 1840, the place was relegated to the Circuit. Florence did not succeed so well as Tuscumbia. Florence would rally and as quickly decline, would attempt to be a Station, and then would fall back into the adjoining Circuit. At the close of 1844 Florence and Tuscumbia together, then trying to sustain a pastoral charge, had one hundred and thirty-three white and one hundred and five colored members. At that same time La Grange had sixty-three white members, and having tried to be a Station one year, dropped back into a Circuit which offered aid and comfort. Decatur was first made a Station in October, 1841, with the Rev. Joshua Boucher as the preacher, and at the close of the first year there were reported sixty white and seven colored members belonging thereto. The Church there advanced and retrograded by turns, and was only uniform in being feeble, but never went back into a Circuit until after the war between the States, and then only for a year or two.

The Rev. Joshua Boucher, the Rev. Thomas Madden, the Rev. Ambrose F. Driskill, the Rev. Justinian Williams, the Rev. Dawson Phelps, the Rev. R. L. Andrews, the Rev. Elias Tidwell, the Rev. Frederick G. Ferguson, the Rev. Pleasant B. Robinson, the Rev. A. T. Scruggs, the Rev. J. M. Holland, and the Rev.



Gilbert D. Taylor were among the principal preachers who dispensed the gospel and administered ecclesiastical affairs in that part of the State included in the Tennessee Conference during the period now under review. The Rev. James McFerrin, the Rev. William M. McFerrin, and the Rev. John B. McFerrin had each his last appointment in Alabama during that period.

The Rev. John B. McFerrin, who attained to great eminence, and whose life has been written, and who was licensed to preach in Alabama, and whose first Circuits were in Alabama, did his last work in Alabama, in the capacity of presiding elder of the Florence District, and in the year 1837. He was a man of great personal power. He was rough and rugged, sturdy and strong, strategic and stable. He was an honor to the State where he commenced preaching, and to the Church of which he was so long a member. He was long an Editor of a Church organ, and at the head of the Missionary Society of his Church, and in charge of the Publishing House under the auspices of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. His preaching was plain, simple, direct, and attended by divine power. He died at his home near Nashville, Tennessee, May 10, 1887, lacking only one short month and five days of being eighty years old. A great concourse attended his funeral, which was conducted with the simplicity so congenial to him.

The year 1833 closed the ministry in Alabama of the Rev. William M. McFerrin. He was recommended to the District Conference as a suitable person to obtain license to preach and also to be recommended to the Annual Conference as a suitable person for the itinerancy by the Quarterly Conference held for Franklin Circuit, at Spring Creek Camp-ground, October 25, 1828. There were twenty-six members present in that Quarterly Conference. William M. McFerrin was himself a member of that Quarterly Conference, being at the time a class leader. His father, the Rev. James McFerrin, was the preacher in charge of the Circuit, and the Rev. William McMahon was the presiding elder. The District Conference which was held a short while after the Quarterly Conference making the recommendations licensed him to preach, and recommended him to the Annual Conference, and at the session of the Tennessee Conference which convened at Murfreesborough, December 4, 1828, he was admitted on trial in the Conference. He had not yet

reached his majority. After long and laborious service, in various places and in different positions, sometimes on Circuits, sometimes on Missions, sometimes on Districts, in Alabama and Tennessee, he, at last, on September 29, 1886, fell to rest and went to his last reward. He was a model man. Useful and happy to the last. He was hardly twenty-five years old when he did his last work in Alabama.

The Rev. James McFerrin, who was in all that makes a man, a Christian, and a preacher, the equal of his sons, commenced his itinerant ministry in Alabama, where he was living, in the end of 1823, and closed his ministerial work in the State in the capacity of presiding elder in the end of 1833. His last appointment as an itinerant was the Wesley Circuit in West Tennessee. He was a local preacher at the time of his death. He died September 4, 1840. He did great work in Alabama in revivals and in accessions to the Church. He had the martial fire and the military spirit.

The Rev. Gilbert D. Taylor, a man of good literary attainments, and of high rank, and of deep piety, did valuable work in Alabama. He was Missionary to the people of color, and presiding elder on Districts. On August 6, 1870, in his seventy-ninth year, from his residence in Pulaski, Tennessee, he took his exit to the Better Land.

The Rev. Justinian Williams entered the itinerant ministry in the Missouri Conference, but closed his life and his work in the Tennessee Conference. He did efficient work in Alabama; one year on Franklin Circuit, two years at Tuscumbia and Florence, and one year at Decatur. He was a man of great energy, and a preacher of fine ability. He maintained mercy, justice, and humility. He died in February, 1859, having passed his three score and ten. On his death bed he sang lines which were suggested by anticipations of home and treasure in the city of the skies.

The Rev. Joshua Boucher was licensed to preach in Madison County, Alabama, as early as 1811, and more than twenty years of his ministry were given to that part of Alabama watered by the streams flowing into the Tennessee River. Than he a more indefatigable and impressive worker was never in that part of the State. He was appointed to Circuits, Stations, and Districts, and he preached to vast audiences all through that sec-

tion. While he was not acquainted with the subtleties of the schools, nor deep-versed in *belles-lettres*, he was an original thinker and an animated and entertaining speaker. When he was an infant his father was killed by Indians, and he was brought up under the disabilities of orphanage. He was a native of Virginia, but grew to manhood in Kentucky. He was a pious man and a diligent preacher. He was generous and harmless. Just there was his weakness. His generous and inoffensive nature so dominated him that his administration was not as vigorous as it should have been, as was especially disclosed in his household. His children were not worthy to be numbered with the honorable. No doubt the characteristic qualities transmitted by descent instigated the untoward course which fixed an unenviable reputation, but an inefficient home government had much to do in the matter. He was presiding elder of the Huntsville District at the time of his death. He died at Athens, Alabama, August 23, 1845. His end was peace and assurance. His body was deposited in the cemetery at Athens.

There were laymen, including local preachers, in that period who maintained good works for necessary uses, and were fruitful in the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ, who were then worthy of salutation, and are now worthy of mention; and there were events which marked progress, and may not be left out of history.

The Rev. John M. Cherry, a man of meekness, integrity, and piety, was a local preacher in Limestone County for twenty years. He died in that County in 1839. During those years he preached, as opportunity offered, at the various Societies in the County, and he was a great help at the Camp-meetings. He preached often to the Negroes, and he had many fast friends among them. He sang sweetly, prayed eloquently, and preached efficiently. He was without reproach. After he was gone to his home in the great beyond, his children shared the sympathy and received the benevolence of those who knew him, and, no doubt, for his sake as much as for their own. His sons became ministers of the gospel. Two, the Rev. W. D. Cherry and the Rev. S. M. Cherry, who have wrought well in the itinerant ministry, are here named.

In 1818, the Rev. John Moore, a native of North Carolina, then about sixty years old, moved to Limestone County, Alaba-

ma, where he lived thirty-four years, dying April 28, 1852. He was for seventy-eight years a Methodist and for sixty-eight a Methodist preacher. He was ordained to the offices of the ministry by Bishop Asbury. He was a holy man and a useful preacher and admirable in all the relations of life. He was liberal and hospitable. His home gave shelter and entertainment to weary itinerant preachers. In his will he gave Fifty dollars to Foreign Missions, Fifty to the American Bible Society, and Nine hundred to the Preachers' Relief Fund of the Tennessee Conference.

Previous to 1836 the Methodists of the town of Athens, in Limestone County, worshiped in the School-house of the town and in the basement room connected with the Masonic Hall. That year the Rev. Joshua Boucher being presiding elder and the Rev. F. G. Ferguson preacher in charge of the Station, a house of worship was built for the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Trustees named in the Deed to the Lot on which the Church was erected were: Samuel Dewoody, J. W. Lane, Daniel Coleman, Thomas C. Malone, and W. Keyes. That house is still in use.

Honorable Daniel Coleman, one of the Trustees named in that Deed, moved to Limestone County, Alabama, in 1819, and upward of thirty-five years afterward died at Athens. He was made Judge of the County Court by the Legislature of Alabama when he was only nineteen years old, and was finally appointed Judge of the Supreme Court of the State. He espoused the cause of Christianity, and was ardently attached to the doctrines and usages of Methodism. He admired and enjoyed the lovefeasts and class-meetings, and was a superior Sunday-school teacher. He filled efficiently the office of President of the Trustees of the Female Institute of the Tennessee Conference at Athens, Alabama, from the founding of that School till his death, a period of nearly fifteen years. He was tall and slender in person, and in complexion fair. He was grave, even when a boy, in bearing he was austere. He was a man of parts, position, and piety, and his influence was wide and wholesome. He was a factor in the Church as well as in the country. His life and labors gave character to the Church of his choice. Justice and piety were well defined in his character. Dr. R. H. Rivers, who knew him well, says: "One of the most affecting



scenes I ever witnessed was when his slaves came in from the plantation to bid him farewell before he should go hence. He made them a loving, tender talk, and bid them his last farewell. In a few days he was gone to his eternal reward." A letter written with his own hand in prospect of immediate death, a last testament to his loved ones, is given here, copied from the document itself:

"ATHENS, August 8, 1856.

*"My Dear Wife and Children:* I am about to die, and it will probably be a long time before I will see you all again. I want to tell you how very much I love you, and how much I shall desire to meet you again. I trust to meet you in Heaven. You must try and practice all I have told you about being good and pious, truthful and loving. The children must be obedient to their Mother, and loving and kind to their brothers and sisters, kind to the servants, and just to everybody. Give your hearts to Jesus, and pray to him to help you to live, as I have told you, and we will meet in Heaven, where parting will be no more. I expect my older children, by their example and instruction, to endeavor to train the younger children to become what I trust by God's help I have endeavored to make them. Early in life I adopted the maxim: 'Be just, and fear not,' but I could not live up to the maxim without the aid of the religion of Jesus. I rely alone on the atonement made by the Saviour. 'For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth, and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.' My heart is very full, and I have much more to say to you, but my strength fails, and I must close. May Almighty God bless you, and save you, and bring us all, without the loss of one, to meet in Heaven, is my prayer."

Mrs. Elizabeth Peterson Coleman, the wife of Judge Daniel Coleman, was born in North Carolina, May 22, 1811, was married to Judge Coleman when she was sixteen, in the blush of her youth and in the bloom of her beauty, and died at Athens, Alabama, February 15, 1885. Some time before 1835 she joined the Methodist Episcopal Church, and for more than a half century she adhered to her Church and religion, and contributed her measure of service to the great cause. She was a brilliant

woman, stood in the high ranks of society, and maintained her position in the house of her honored husband with propriety and satisfaction.

The children of these noble parents have maintained a good position, a number of them are religious, and one of the sons has long been an active and pious minister of the gospel in connection with Methodism. The Rev. James L. Coleman graduated at La Grange College, and has honored his natural ancestry and his Alma Mater.

Thomas C. Malone, George Malone, Stith Malone, and John N. Malone were all closely related by blood, and were all prominent and useful Methodists in Limestone County during the period now under notice. Thomas C. Malone, mentioned as one of the Trustees of the house of worship at Athens, was the father of Stith Malone, and George Malone was the father of John N. Malone. Stith Malone was an M.D., and eminent in his profession. Honorable John N. Malone filled many public Stations in the State of Alabama with credit to himself and profit to the public. These men all did much for Methodism.

The Rev. Simpson Shepherd was a local preacher living at Athens, a part of the time at least, during the period from 1835 to 1845. He was a power in the land. Being a man of commanding presence, of fine native talents, and superior literary attainments, there were few who surpassed him. He was born and brought up in the Emerald Isle, and was both witty and eloquent. Though only a local preacher, except for two years, he preached extensively through the country. He also delivered lectures on various subjects. He delivered addresses on Temperance and Literary themes. He had two excellent daughters, Martha and Mary, who were intelligent, and were devoted Methodists; and, assisted by these two daughters, he taught a Female School at Athens, prior to the founding of the Institute of the Tennessee Conference at that place. He left Athens and, with his daughters, went to Louisiana. He died suddenly about 1850. He made a brief journey of about forty miles on horseback to visit one of his daughters, and on reaching her premises he dismounted and proceeded to the residence, but died before he reached the door.

Samuel Dewoody, one of the Trustees of the Church, was

sound in doctrine, and always zealous in life, and earnest in an effort at saving others.

William Richardson, an attorney of distinction, a man of rigid morals, was a Methodist at Athens, and served his generation with great fidelity and usefulness.

Thomas Bass was there in that day, than whom there was not a better man anywhere. He was loved by all who knew him.

Dr. Jonathan McDonald, a successful physician and farmer, who amassed a large fortune for his time, was a Methodist who contributed liberally to the support of the Church and her institutions.

Ira Ellis Hobbs, a native of Virginia, and named for a noted Methodist preacher of his father's day, was a model Christian and class leader. He gave his time, labor, and means to the Church and the support of her enterprises.

Dr. B. W. Maclin, the son of Thomas Maclin, a native of Virginia, was for about half a century one of the pillars of the Church at Athens, and made larger contributions to the institutions of the Church thereabout than, perhaps, any one else.

Of women at Athens in that day who attained the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and sustained the righteousness which is by the law of faith, may be mentioned Mrs. Polly Malone and her daughters, Mrs. McDonald and Mrs. Reese. They were holy women and trusted in God. They did much to keep the fires burning on the altars of the Church. In instructing and assisting penitents in the great struggle for justification they were not a whit behind the foremost. They were active, not only in the works of piety, but in benevolence and sympathy. They ministered to the poor, the sick, and the griefful. Their works praise them.

Mrs. Rebecca Hobbs, a native of Virginia, daughter of Thomas Maclin, wife of Ira Ellis Hobbs, and a Methodist, lived more than half a century in Limestone County, Alabama, being at least fourscore years old at the time of her death. She was one of the active agents and liberal contributors in erecting the house of worship for the Methodists at Athens in 1836. She was distinguished among the refined, intelligent, and noble citizens of the lovely town of Athens. She was richly endowed and was cultured, refined, and elegant. She was chaste and

holy, and walked the flowery paths of peace. She pursued that course which guarantees purer joys than sordid elements can give. She was a woman of deeds and piety, and did not seek distinction in dress and drollery. She adorned herself in modest apparel, tasty, neat, and nice. Her constant language was:

“Jesus, thy blood and righteousness  
My beauty are, my glorious dress:  
'Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,  
With joy shall I lift up my head.”

She was educated, and she devoted her energies to teaching. She taught at Athens many years before the Institute of the Tennessee Conference was established at that place, and afterward she taught in that School. She taught the poor for nothing, and devoted much of her earnings to Church interests.

In the year 1844 there was in the town of Athens a work of grace in which there were marvelous effects and wonderful results. The Rev. Ethelbert H. Hatcher, then in the twenty-seventh year of his age, a man of extraordinary endowments, and of liberal culture, and of exemplary life, a Poet and an Orator, was in charge of the Church at Athens, and the Rev. R. H. Rivers and the Rev. F. G. Ferguson, men of gifts and grace, were connected with the Female Institute of the Tennessee Conference at that place. These preachers, with the Rev. W. D. F. Sawrie, then Agent of the La Grange College, did the preaching on that grand occasion. That special manifestation of saving power commenced in the Female Institute. The first day there was a pentecostal day on which more than a dozen girls professed the attainment of saving grace, and before the work culminated in the community at least one hundred persons made the same profession. The anointings of the Holy Ghost were upon the people. One man fifty years old, Robert C. David, was regenerated, and one little girl, Sallie B. Richardson, was renewed by grace divine. On one day more than half a hundred received baptism, and a larger number formally assumed membership in the Church. Old feuds were settled, enmities were reconciled, and neighbors long estranged cherished each the other with affection. The children of God were filled with ecstasies, raptures akin to the bliss of angels. The man regenerated at fifty years



of age and the child renewed at eight lived upright and beautiful lives till they were transported to the paradise of God.

During the period now under consideration James K. March, William S. Kittrell, Samuel T. Crenshaw, and John Fraser were official members in the Athens Station, and were men of note and worth. John Fraser was not a whit behind the foremost of his brethren.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### THE FURTHER ENLARGEMENT AND ADVANCEMENT OF THE WORK OF METHODISM IN ALABAMA.

THE Town of Marion, in Perry County, never appeared in name in the list of appointments until the close of 1832, at which time Greenesborough and Marion were named together, and the Rev. Robert L. Kennon appointed thereto. For the next year Marion and Selma were named together as an appointment, apparently merely nominal, and the Rev. T. S. Abernathy, a supernumerary, put in charge. At the end of that year Marion and Selma disappeared, both places falling back into adjacent Circuits bearing other names. Not till the close of 1838 did Marion again appear; then it was named in the list of appointments, being the name of the Circuit to which it belonged, and the Rev. James M. Boatwright and the Rev. Norman McLeod were appointed to serve the same for the year 1839. It was the Marion Circuit again for 1840, with the Rev. Walter H. McDaniel preacher in charge. At the end of that year Marion was taken out of the Circuit and made a Station, and the Rev. Moses Morris was appointed to superintend its interests. At the end of its first year as an independent Station its entire membership numbered thirty-seven white persons. The preacher who had served it for the year located at that time. That was a small membership and a feeble Station. For 1842 it was served by the Rev. Wiley W. Thomas, and the membership increased to eighty-nine white and thirteen colored persons. The preachers for Marion in the succeeding years were: 1843, the Rev. William Moores; for 1844, the Rev. Jesse P. Parham; 1845, 1846, the Rev. Thomas H. P. Scales. At the close of 1845 there were in that Station one hundred and fifteen white and seventy-two colored members.

The Methodists built a house of worship there in connection with the Hall of the Masonic Lodge. That house served them for many long years. Elisha F. King, one of the old citizens of Perry County, and a wealthy farmer four or five miles south of

Marion, was a Methodist at the town of Marion, but it is not now known how early he was a member there.

John Patrick gave up his native land, and emigrated to the United States of North America, and about the last part of 1836, or the very first of 1837, took up abode at Marion, Perry County, Alabama, where he resided for thirty years, and where he died the first part of 1867. He was born in 1809, or the very first part of 1810, at a place which had been the home of his ancestors for seven generations, five miles from Londonderry, in the County of Tyrone, Ireland. For generations his ancestors were Presbyterians, and he was trained in the faith of his fathers, but, in his native land he formed the acquaintance of the Methodists, attended their meetings, and attached himself to a Methodist Society. Through a period of thirty years at his adopted home he was a steadfast member of his adopted Church, much of the time a steward, class leader, and Sunday-school superintendent therein, and to all intents and purposes a pillar thereof through all these years. He was inestimable. He was rather under medium size, and of feeble body, with florid complexion, blue eyes, brown hair and whiskers, and good Irish features. He was a saddler by trade, possessed good means, and never married. His life was without blemish and his character without spot. Though at times but few stood with him and Zion languished, he never failed in the distinct utterance of his faith and the regular performance of his Christian work. He wrought well, and everywhere made a good impression. The good loved him, the scoffers, who walked after their own lusts, respected him, the poor, the widow, and the orphan shared and rejoiced in his benefaction, and mourned his loss when dead. His good name and his good deeds live after him.

At Mount Zion, eight miles from Marion, a place mentioned in a former chapter, there was, in 1837, an extraordinary meeting of twelve days' continuance under the oversight of the Rev. William B. Neal and the Rev. Richard M. Crowson, assisted by the Rev. Edward H. Moore. It was an occasion of great joy to the members of the Church, and there were about one hundred and fifty professed to be justified, and nearly as many were received into the Methodist Episcopal Church under the system of probation. At the close of the sermon at the last service of the occasion, a prominent citizen by the name of Boyd, who had

been attending regularly through all the meeting, but who had given no other sign of special interest, upon an invitation to join the Church being given, arose from his seat, and fell to the floor, and was instantly transformed in nature, and adopted into the divine family. He arose in his ecstasy, and joined the Church as a probationer. All through his after life he was an active member, and a pious Christian. He died in the faith, and went to the land of glory.

August 15, 1831, George Phillips, William R. King, and Caleb Tate, Agents and Commissioners of the Selma Town Company, conveyed to the town Council of Selma, a Lot of land in Selma, "for the promotion of Christianity," "to have and to hold the said Lot of land to the said Town Council of Selma, their assigns and successors forever, and for the uses and trusts following: that is to say, for the erection of a Methodist Episcopal Church, to be under the government, management, and control of the Methodist denomination of Christians, and such rules and regulations as the Methodist or the Church to be established may prescribe; and it is understood that the same is to remain a Church Lot for the uses aforesaid forever."

From that document it would appear that by the foresight of a Town Company, organized for trade and traffic in lands, provision was made for the introduction and perpetuation of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the town of Selma, Alabama. At the time that Deed was made there were no Methodists at Selma to constitute a Board of Trustees, and the Lot was deeded to the Town Council, and it was held for the use of the Methodists by said Council until March, 1878, when the City conveyed it to a Board of Trustees, named in the conveyance, as a place of worship for the use of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. That last Deed was made at the instance of Chancellor John, himself a Methodist, to remove all question as to the perfection of title.

The town of Selma did not grow rapidly. Twenty years after it was incorporated it had only four hundred and thirty-one white population and six hundred and twenty-two Negroes. Jockey Clubs were better supported than Churches, and more appreciated than religion. Many years elapsed before the Methodist Episcopal Church was recognized at the place. It is probable that different Methodist preachers had occasional ap-



pointments there before any Society was organized at the place. In 1827 the Rev. Joseph Walker, a local preacher, and an innovator of extreme temper, had at least one appointment to preach at Selma. For 1834 the Rev. T. S. Abenathy, a supernumerary preacher, was appointed to Marion and Selma, an appointment merely nominal, and at which nothing was accomplished. The appointment was discontinued at the end of the year. It is said, but it is by no means certain, that in the first part of 1835 J. L. Claughton erected a wooden building on the lot given by the Town Company already recited, and that in the next year, 1836, the Rev. Daniel H. Norwood organized a Society in that building, and that Norwood preached there regularly until the Annual Conference put a preacher in charge of the affairs of the Society. It is clearly indicated that the first Methodist Society at the town of Selma was organized in 1837. The first Society consisted of eleven members, among whom are recollected the following: J. L. Claughton, Mrs. Sarah Maples, Josiah Hinds and wife, James Adams and wife, Mrs. Nolly, and Miss Eliza Nolly. For 1838 Selma and Valley Creek were made an appointment, and the Rev. William A. Smith put in charge of it. For 1839 the appointment was continued, and the Rev. Asbury H. Shanks served it. During that year William J. Norris, and his brother, James A. Norris, and Thomas W. Street, and others, were added to the Society at Selma. It is said that for many years William J. and James A. Norris constituted about the strength of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Selma. The Sunday-school of the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized in Selma in 1837. Selma was made a Station at the beginning of 1840, and at the end of that year the Annual Conference was held there, and after all that, there were only fifty-five white and sixty-seven colored members at the place. In a sort of heroic effort, the place was continued as a Station for 1841, and at the end of the year there had been a decline of ten white and fifty colored members. Then the place was relegated to a Circuit, where it remained for three years, and was then again set off as a Station, though it was left to be supplied, because the pay had to be supplemented. At the end of 1845, after supplying and supplementing, there were forty white and one hundred colored members. Through the years here enumerated such men as the Rev. William Moores, the Rev. Wiley

W. Thomas, the Rev. William W. Bell, and the Rev. James Young dispensed the gospel to that people. For many years the Brothers Norris, above mentioned, bore the financial burden of the Church at Selma. There was a struggle there against general feebleness, against fluctuations, backslidings, and apostasies. In 1845, on account of the feeble state of affairs, the presiding elder of the District in which the charge was situated, the Rev. Greenberry Garrett, supplied the Selma Station.

While the progress of Methodism at some points in Dallas County, Alabama, was not as rapid as could have been desired, yet the adherents thereof wrought in all parts of the County, and the Societies organized therein at an early date, under the commendable efforts of the members constituting them, attained a measure of success; and other Societies were organized in the County as time went on, and the several Societies built for themselves houses of worship suited to their circumstances and necessities.

Some of the work which was done during the period now under review, the particular locality of the several Societies, and who were some of the leading Methodists in different sections of the County may be learned from the statements herein immediately following.

August 4, 1835, James Brown made a Deed to a Lot, four miles west of Selma, in Section thirty-two, Township seventeen, Range ten, on which to erect a house of worship for the use of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Trustees named in that Deed were John Merideth, Malachi Scarborough, Noah Williams, Andrew Yost, and James Russum.

Edward Murphy, on December 7, 1836, made a Deed to a Lot for the Church known as County Line Church, four miles north of Valley Creek, in Section two, Township eighteen, Range ten. The Trustees named were Isaac Rich, David Cumming, Andrew Wood, and James McGaugh.

September 16, 1839, William P. Molett made a Deed to a Lot at the town of Warrenton, for the use and benefit of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Trustees were Abner M. Coleman, Abner T. Howell, Samuel Mays, Edward Dudley, and A. C. Ramsey.

November 1, 1842, Thomas B. Goldsby, for the use and benefit of the Methodist Episcopal Church, made a Deed to a Lot,

three or four miles west of what is now known as Marion Junction, in Section seventeen, Township seventeen, Range eight. The Trustees were Richard Spencer, William B. McHenry, Elijah J. Boothe, William M. Boothe, William Smith, George W. Thach, and Thomas E. B. Piques.

October 23, 1844, a contract was made to build Valley Creek Church. Thomas B. Goldsby, John Paulling, George A. B. Walker, A. H. Mitchell, and Greenberry Garrett, were the members of the Building Committee. The last member here named did most of the work of the Committee. The builders were Samuel H. Wallace and Amos White. The house was to be sixty-one feet and four inches in length, and forty-one feet in width, and was to cost thirty-five hundred dollars, and it was built according to contract. The Deed thereto was made July 10, 1845, and the Trustees were George Childers, Noel Pitts, John Paulling, and David Mims. The house was dedicated to divine service, Sunday, October 5, 1845, in connection with a Quarterly Conference occasion. Valley Creek is Summerfield.

Dallas and Wilcox Counties join, and as has been related in another place, the Cedar Creek Circuit took in, back in the time now under consideration, a part of both Counties, as well as a part of other Counties. In 1834, two houses of worship, which may be mentioned here, were built, in Wilcox County, which were in use a great many years. One was in Black's Bend, near Black's Bluff, and called Tait's Chapel. The other was six miles north-east from Camden, and called Society Hill.

Before Tait's Chapel was built the Methodists held their services and had their preaching in the residence of a Mr. McPherson near where the Chapel was erected. The year Tait's Chapel was built there was a Camp-meeting held there which was attended with wonderful manifestations and great results. There were forty-five added to the Church. Among those justified at that meeting were Theophilus Williams and his charming wife. They were the very salt of the earth, and through many years they were the pillars of the Church where they lived in Monroe County. The Rev. Richard Pipkin did his last preaching at that Camp-meeting. From thence he returned home, sickened and died, and was buried at Oak Hill, near Alenton. James Tait, Walter Ross, A. K. Smith, Abram Godbold, Reuben Muldrow, Josiah Garlington, Peter McArthur,

John P. Davis, Henry Spencer, the wives of these men, Mrs. Ann McCants, and others, were members at Tait's Chapel in that time. A noble band they were, fit "to hold communion with the heavens above."

The Society at Society Hill was organized through the influence of the Rev. James Thompson, who established himself a home in that neighborhood, and the house of worship there was built, in great part, by his labor, and the interests of that Church were fostered with watchful care and unremitting toil by him through the remaining years of his life. The McNiels and the Campbells were also strong members at that place, and did much in support of the good cause.

The Rev. James Thompson was never an itinerant preacher, but he preached through a wide region of country round about from Society Hill, reaching out in Butler, Conecuh, Clarke, Dallas, Lowndes, Monroe, and Wilcox Counties, and within the ample range of his ministry he exerted a commanding influence. He was sedate and dignified, a righteous man and an honest seer. He exercised good judgment in the selection of subjects for the pulpit, and he succeeded in admirable degree in the preparation and delivery of sermons. Unction, pathos, and mellow voice were his, and he put his thoughts in logical form, and his audiences were often entranced, melted to tears, and moved to action. He was solid in character and sound in doctrine. Philosophical investigations were, perhaps, good enough for those inclined to them, but he took the Scriptures as of divine origin, and the truth of God, which he accepted upon simple faith, illumined all about him, and gave him immunity from the uncertain and the visionary. That the Holy Ghost implants in the human heart a virtuous impulse, and imparts life to dead faculties, and that faith is the power which overcomes the evil one he accepted as wholesome and comforting doctrines. Pantheistic dogmas, and extramundane deities he scouted as unworthy of confidence. He believed in a God separate from all things, and yet omnipresent, and ever present with his saints. To him Christ was not merely an ideal man in whom pure morality was realized, but he was the Lord and Ruler of all things, and the administrator of grace, a real Saviour, entitled to confidence, honor, and worship. With him religion was *sine qua non*. He never gave credence to the heretical idea that he needed re-



ligion only for a time, and then only as a bolster, and that he would eventually outgrow it, rise above it, and be independent of it. He regarded the Sabbath with strictest observance, and kept up an altar of prayer in his house.

He was twice married. His first wife, the mother of all his children, six in number, and a good woman and true, died in 1835, and was buried at Society Hill. In 1836 he married a Mrs. Mason, one of the best women who ever lived anywhere, in any age. She was not a strong-minded woman, she was not endowed with the talents of statesmanship, or the gifts of oratory. She was not thorough in the classics of antiquity, she knew, perhaps, nothing of the hexameters of Homer and Virgil, but she had the power of a steady purpose, and the inspiration of Christian obligation and integrity. She was neat, and lady-like, perfectly free from all arrogance, overweening, and overbearing. She was gentle, meek, and kind. She had fair complexion, and blue eyes, and her face beamed with kindness and sweetness. She sought neither fame nor wealth, and in the generous impulses of her nature she dispensed hospitality and charity in no mean degree. She confided in God with the simplicity of a little child, and if she was not perfectly innocent it was because it is impossible so to be in this present state. She outlived her husband a number of years. The Rev. James Thompson and most of his children rest in the grave-yard at Society Hill. Dr. Benjamin D. Thompson, one of the sons, was a strong pillar of the Church in his day. Miss Margaret Jane Thompson, one of the daughters, joined the Church at Society Hill in 1837, was married to the Rev. Alexander McBride, a member of the Alabama Conference, August 20, 1846, and died in Autauga County, Alabama, March 31, 1848, and she was interred at her request at Society Hill, beside her mother. All the daughters died in young womanhood, and, all joining the Church when girls, were model Christians.

The Rev. Frederic P. Norsworthy, a man of rare gifts, commanding powers, and noted personality, touched the Church in a prominent manner in the Cedar Creek Circuit. He attained a place among the itinerant preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church in January, 1826. By some channel not now known he had attained deacon's orders prior to his entering the itinerant work. He was admitted to the South Carolina Conference,

and ordained elder in that Conference, and he became a member of the Georgia Conference at its organization. He had good appointments, and for about six years did well, but at last fell into evil and brought a burden upon the Church. At a session of the Georgia Conference held at La Grange, Georgia, his case was referred to a Committee for investigation, and the Committee made a report of the case to the Conference on January 7, 1833. The finding of the Committee was that three charges were suggested against him. 1. Adultery committed or attempted. 2. Imprudence with females. 3. Slander in a charge made and not proved against a female. The Committee further reported that on a careful examination of all the testimony and statements which go to prove the first charge they find him *not Guilty*. On the second charge compelled to believe him *Guilty*. On the third charge are of opinion that there were injudicious and improper expressions used by Brother Norsworthy, are not prepared to pronounce him *guilty* of willful slander. The Committee presented with the above the following resolution for adoption: "Resolved: That in consequence of the imprudence of which Brother Norsworthy is found guilty that he be suspended from all official services in the Church for one year." On the next day the report of the Committee was called up, and the following action had: "The motion for adopting the report of the Committee on the first charge was put and carried. Their decision on the second charge in the report, was also on motion adopted. On the third charge the report of the Committee was set aside. It was resolved that the accused be found guilty of slander by a vote of twenty-nine to twenty-eight. The Resolution closing the report of the Committee was read, and on motion it was so amended as to read: Resolved, That in consequence of the imprudence of which Brother Norsworthy is found guilty, and especially under the solemn admonition given him on a former occasion, that he be divested of his ministerial character." The next day Ignatius A. Few, one of the members of the Conference, entered the following protest:

"I protest against the decision of this Conference in finding F. P. Norsworthy guilty of slander, 1. Because he never has been either before this Conference or a Committee acting under its direction put on his trial for slander, he never has been ac-

cused of speaking 'false words injurious to the character of another, and invited and allowed to prove his innocence, and the decision of the Conference, he was guilty of slander, was upon a gratuitous supposition in which he was neither invited nor allowed to defend himself. 2. I protest against the decision of the Conference in this case because having found him guilty of slander, they have refused to expel him from the Church without any confession of his guilt or avowal of penitence or promise of amendment affording the dangerous example of retaining a member convicted of a crime which excludes him from the kingdom of grace and glory without penitence, confession, or promise of reformation. I. A. FEW."

"La Grange, Georgia, January 9, 1833."

After that expulsion from the ministry Mr. Norsworthy made his home at or near Pleasant Hill, Dallas County, Alabama, in the bounds of the Cedar Creek Circuit. In the year 1837, under the ministry of the Rev. A. C. Ramsey and the Rev. S. F. Pilley, Norsworthy professed to be reclaimed from his base declension, and at the last Quarterly Conference for the Circuit for that year he applied for a license to preach, but the Quarterly Conference, controlled by such local preachers as Peavy, Stearnes, and Thompson, declined to grant him a license. He, however, had the gift of perseverance, and at a Quarterly Conference held the next year for the Circuit at Pleasant Hill, where he held his membership, he renewed his application for license to preach, and that Quarterly Conference gave him the authority he asked. He then went forth in the capacity of a local preacher in the Circuits adjacent to him, and he stirred the Church and the country as no other preacher in that section was able to do. The very elements of his nature which made him erratic and unreliable were the elements in which inhered the passion and pathos, fire and fervor, by which he controlled and moved an audience.

In 1839, through the instrumentality of the Rev. A. C. Ramsey, a supernumerary preacher on the Circuit for the year, a Camp-ground was established at Ebenezer, called Oak Hill, in Wilcox County, at which a Camp-meeting was held that year, and at which Camp-meetings were held in subsequent years. Frederic P. Norsworthy, then a local preacher, attended that Camp-meeting in 1839. Ramsey was a tenter and helped to en-

tain the people. The Rev. Asbury H. Shanks, who then had charge of Selma and Valley Creek, and who was a member of the Georgia Conference at the time Norsworthy was deposed from the ministry, and was transferred to the Alabama Conference at the very session of the Georgia Conference at which Norsworthy was deposed, was at the Camp-meeting at Ebenezer in 1839, as were also a number of men and women from Selma. The life and official death of Norsworthy was well known. The Rev. L. B. McDonald was in charge of the meeting, but for some reason he had relegated to the Rev. James King, a local preacher, the duty of appointing the preachers to occupy the pulpit at the different hours of service. On the part of the masses on the Campus there was a great clamor for Norsworthy to preach, but on the part of some, there was a stubborn opposition to his preaching. Those from Selma declared they would not hear him. Father King heard the clamor for Norsworthy and the opposition to him, and was in a dilemma. Finally, after consultation, King decided to have Norsworthy preach at the afternoon service on Sunday, and the appointment was announced. Many were delighted, some were displeased. The hour came, the congregation assembled. The Rev. Mr. Shanks took his seat in the altar just in front of the preacher. The people from Selma declined to take seats with the congregation, but seated themselves about the tents in sufficient proximity to hear distinctly what was said. The issues of the hour were contingent, and what they would be was of deepest concern. Norsworthy felt that the vindication of himself and the cause of God depended upon his effort at that hour, and he proceeded with the services determined to acquit himself well. His opening prayer was full of meekness and dependence, and there was in it the glow of piety and the language of faith. In profound utterance he invoked the divine aid in the adventure of the hour. There were deep prejudices which he had to meet. He announced his text, an appropriate text, one full of warning, sympathy, and consolation; one indicating the mission of the disciples of Christ in the world, their danger and their aid. "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." (John xvii. 15.) In the exposition of the text he portrayed the evil which is in the world, and which is encountered by Christians. He en-



larged upon the different phases thereof. As he moved out from point to point he caught the tenderness, pathos, and consolation which are in the text, and he threw all the emotion of his nature into his arguments. His theme opened out to him sublimely, and he became grandly eloquent. He seemed borne "on wings of holy ardor strong," and he appeared in holy rapture, as though he "stood on the mount of God." His very gestures seemed under the control of the divine Spirit, and his utterances were as sublime as inspiration. The Rev. Asbury H. Shanks could not suppress his emotions, and while the preacher discussed the great theme in hand Shanks responded audibly. Those who refused to join the congregation, and seated themselves about the tents where they could hear, began to move toward the congregation when the eloquence of the preacher began to peal afar, and before he closed they were in the crowd, and as near to him as they could get. When Norsworthy closed his sermon the congregation was participating in one general shout, and many penitents were at the altar, a large number of whom found the peace of God before the evening was gone. Such an excitement had not been witnessed at any time during the meeting before. Such excitement was not often had anywhere. The good sisters who had persistently refused to consent to his being permitted to preach changed their minds, and said: "He certainly must be a good man, he certainly is persecuted; and whether he be a sinner or not, he can preach." He moved from Dallas County to Tallapoosa County, Alabama, where he died. It was said that he gave evidence in his last sickness, and on his dying bed, that God was with him in forgiving mercy, and that he was prepared to go hence. The foibles of his life terminated.

The Hayneville Circuit was first made for 1835, and it about continued in *statu quo*, averaging about two hundred white members, and larger colored membership. A prosperous year on that Circuit was 1843, eighty-four white and sixty-five colored members joining the Methodist Episcopal Church; Hayneville having protracted services, and Lowndesborough Ridge, four miles from Hayneville, having a Camp-meeting with good results. At the end of that year Hayneville and Lowndesborough were united in an appointment and constituted a pastoral charge.

The Cahawba Circuit made in 1818, and which extended more

than the length of the Cahawba River, was, at the close of 1833, re-arranged, and the name disappeared, the upper part of it being in the Ashville Circuit, which then for the first time appeared in the Minutes.

The Marengo Circuit was named at the close of 1825, and continued on the list of appointments until January, 1840, when it disappeared. The Cahawba, Linden, and Gaston Circuits were made at that time, the Linden Circuit embracing, no doubt, the majority of the appointments which had been in the Marengo Circuit.

The new Cahawba Circuit made at the time the Marengo Circuit disappeared was kept up by that name for at least ten years, and had in it most of that time the town of Cahawba, and extended over a large region of country, and had a large membership. At the town of Cahawba there was scarcely anything distinctively religious for many years. Though it was one of the oldest towns in Alabama, and was once the Capital of the State, no denomination was strong enough to build a house of worship there until after 1848. About the time that last Cahawba Circuit was made a house for the use of all denominations was built by the citizens of the town, and the Methodists, Presbyterians, and Episcopalians used it as opportunity offered.

Woodville, the same as Uniontown, in Perry County, was for many years one of the appointments of the Cahawba Circuit, though as late as 1843 there was no organized body of Christians at that place, except an exceedingly small and feeble class of Methodists, served by a passing preacher once a month. The citizens of Woodville, before there was any religious Society of any sort organized at the place, built a house for the use of all denominations. The Methodists had a grand ingathering there of members in 1843, though they had no house of worship of their own at that place till 1849. They had at the ingathering here alluded to about one hundred accessions. That gave religion an impetus, and from that time several of the denominations made good progress.

Two preachers, the Rev. Peter Hasskew and the Rev. Alonzo J. Kean, were appointed to the Linden Circuit for 1842. Kean had just been admitted on trial in the Conference, and early in the year he proved himself deficient in virtue and integrity, and left to religion a reproach and to the Circuit a vacancy.

John Christian Keener had just come to Alabama on a mission romantic and religious. He came in pursuance of plighted faith to consummate vows of matrimony. He entered matrimony and the ministry. He was licensed to preach in the first half of the year by a Quarterly Conference held for the Linden Circuit at Rehobeth, Wilcox County, Alabama. He was immediately put in the place vacated by the downfall of Kean, and filled out the year as junior preacher on that Circuit. The Circuit had then only twenty-four appointments. Dayton, Demopolis, Linden, Spring Hill, and Rehoboth were of the number. Demopolis had been for two years associated with Livingston, but that year it was in the Linden Circuit.

The newly married and newly licensed preacher was full of zeal and ecstasy, and he moved around and through the Linden Circuit as a divine messenger, and, at most of the centers of operation, he had good success in the evangelizing work in which he was engaged. He held his first meeting at Dayton, at which he witnessed sixty or seventy conversions. His compensation was in doing the work and in gaining adherents to Christ. On commercial account, in commodities and bills of exchange, he received next to nothing. It is altogether possible that that very Linden Circuit on which he commenced his ministry, and on which he was initiated into the mysteries of itinerant life, was the original from which was drawn that graphic representation given in that unique book, "Post-Oak Circuit." The Linden Circuit was, no doubt, a good Circuit for its day. "Post-Oak Circuit," as a book, is inimitable. In every element of merit it surpasses "The Georgia Scenes," and "Simon Suggs."

At the session of the Annual Conference which convened December 28, 1842, the Spring Hill Circuit was made, and the Rev. Jesse P. Perham was appointed to serve it the ensuing year. He was then nearly twenty-seven years old, and had been married about one year, having married Mrs. Jeannette A. McAlpine, and had just been received into full connection in the Conference and ordained a deacon. He was a native of New Hampshire, was by trade an engineer and a machinist. He was a citizen of Livingston, Alabama, when, in the latter part of 1839, he joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. At the town of Demopolis, July 4, 1840, he was licensed to preach. He located at the close of 1845.

Notwithstanding Demopolis was one of the oldest towns in Alabama, and there was much wealth about the place, there had not been built a house of worship of any sort there up to 1843, nor had a religious Society of any name existed at that place up to that time. The Methodists had made repeated efforts to establish themselves there, but without success. The Rev. Andrew Jackson Crawford, once a member of the Tennessee Conference, and who at the time now under review was a local preacher, and was in charge of the United States Land Office at Demopolis, and was afterward a member of the Alabama Conference, began a house of worship at Demopolis for the Methodist Episcopal Church about the beginning of 1840, but it was many years before it was finished. Without seats, without plastering, and only partly weather-boarded, that structure stood a constant declaration and public reminder that the people of the place were irreligious. For 1840 and 1841, Demopolis was attached to Livingston, and various efforts made to establish a Christian Society at the place, even a Quarterly Conference was held there, but no success was attained. There were two women, Mrs. Glover and Mrs. Taliaferro, living at the place, who were Methodists, but they had their membership at some other point. Demopolis was a side appointment on the Linden Circuit for 1842, and was given an occasional night service. At the end of that year it was recognized in the Spring Hill Circuit, entitled to the same measure of service which it had been receiving. The Spring Hill Circuit, for 1843, was in the Mobile District, the Rev. Jesse Boring, presiding elder. At the first Quarterly Conference of that year for the Spring Hill Circuit there were more than one hundred persons who attained justification, and at least one hundred probationers were added to the Church. At that Quarterly Conference the presiding elder proposed to hold the next Quarterly Conference at Demopolis. The members of the Quarterly Conference knew Demopolis. They had an experience in connection with the place, and, perhaps, also a prejudice against it. They opposed holding the Quarterly Conference at that place. They ridiculed the idea of such a course. They said the people of Demopolis would not extend to the official members the usual hospitality of such occasions. The place, as a field for religious operation, was unpromising. The people were wholly irreligious.



However, the presiding elder, in the face of all the forbidding features of the case, insisted on going to Demopolis, and his wish in the premises prevailed, and in due course the Quarterly Conference met at Demopolis. It was held in the leaf-crowned month of June. The presiding elder, the Rev. Jesse Boring, went to Demopolis, and carried with him the Rev. John Christian Keener, then in his first year on trial in the Alabama Conference, and junior preacher with the Rev. Lovick Pierce, at Franklin Street and West Ward, Mobile. These two, with the preacher on the Circuit, went to work with the earnestness born of true faith.

On beginning the meeting a Society was organized, composed of the following persons: Mrs. Allen Glover, Mrs. Benjamin Taliaferro, and her daughter, Miss Martha Taliaferro, Mrs. W. D. Lyon, Mrs. Gleason, Thomas Y. Ramsey, and Lewis B. McCarty.

In a few brief days after the meeting commenced the Rev. Thomas W. Dorman, the Rev. Joshua T. Heard, and the Rev. Nehemiah A. Cravens joined the forces concentrated at the town designated the city of the people. The six preachers now massed at the place so long noted for its wickedness and obduracy were a power within themselves. Boring was sensitive and eloquent. Perham was gushing and enthusiastic. Keener was sturdy and persistent in revival work. He never despaired of the salvation of an awakened sinner who sought the Lord. Few have excelled him in the work at the altar. Dorman was prompt, systematic, and sympathetic. Heard was strong, and in prayer he was gifted. Cravens was gifted in the work of religious awakenings. At the time of that meeting at Demopolis he was only a local preacher. He had been under disabilities. A number of years previous to that time he had been expelled from the ministry and the Church by the Kentucky Conference. He was licensed again in Alabama a little more than a year previous to that meeting now under consideration, and he was afterward received again into the itinerant ministry by the Alabama Conference, and had a long and useful career. He did some of the most successful work of any man in Alabama.

The preachers were patient and courageous, and toiled hard in the meeting, but for the space of a whole week there was not the slightest interest manifested on the part of the masses of

the people. Finally, redemption's power was wonderfully displayed in the audience, and the little band of Christians present, consisting, principally, of the preachers and the newly organized Society of seven, sat on the mount of vision encircled with the divine effulgence. The influence was irresistible; the meeting went on for a month from the time of its beginning, and at the close it was estimated that over one hundred persons had experienced a change of heart. At once three Churches bounded forth with life and zeal, and in a short while three houses of worship were finished in the place; one by the Methodists, one by the Presbyterians, and one by the Episcopalians. At the close of the meeting, the presiding elder took the Rev. John Christian Keener from Mobile, and put him in charge of Demopolis for the remainder of the year. Keener was also the preacher on that Station for the next year. From that time till the present the Methodists have had a preacher stationed at Demopolis. The first statistics shown for the place were reported at the close of 1844, when there were sixty-eight white and one hundred and fifteen colored members.

Two of the preachers who served the Demopolis Station, the Rev. John Christian Keener and the Rev. Holland Nimmons McTyeire, were afterward inducted into the Episcopal office.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### THE FURTHER ENLARGEMENT AND ADVANCEMENT OF THE WORK OF METHODISM IN ALABAMA.

THE first item of Methodist history in Walker County, Alabama, which the Records have preserved is that a Quarterly Conference for the Blount Circuit convened at the house of John Keys, in that county, June 14, 1833. The Rev. Anthony S. Dickinson, the preacher in charge of the Circuit, presided. Theophilus Moody, junior preacher on the Circuit, John Turner, E. G. Musgrove, I. G. Deskin, Robert Williams, local preachers, Alfred Lane, John Gurganus, exhorters, Jesse Harbin, Joseph Richey, James M. Patton, and David Blanton, class leaders, were present as members of that body. E. G. Musgrove was the Secretary. The amount of money reported to that Quarterly Conference received from the Circuit for the Quarter for the support of the ministry was thirty-four dollars and eighty-seven and one-half cents.

At the time now under review Walker County was a very large county, including within its limits what was afterward constituted and named Hancock County, subsequently changed in name to Winston.

At the Annual Conference in December, 1833, Walker Mission was made and put in the list of appointments, and was continued under that classification and title until the close of 1835, when the name was changed to that of Jasper. By the name of Jasper it was called till the close of 1842, when the name was changed to New Lexington, after which the name of Jasper did not appear for ten years. To fully understand the arrangement of the work it is necessary to state that through the years, beginning with 1838, in which the charge first called Jasper and then New Lexington existed, there was also a Walker Mission, which occupied a part of Walker County. The Walker Mission at that time occupied the eastern half of Walker County, and was sometimes associated with Blount Circuit. The pastoral charge called Jasper and then called New Lexington lay along and on

either side of Bylers Road, and extended from North Port on the Warrior River to the northern boundary of Walker County. Parts of Fayette, Marion, Tuskaloosa, and Walker were included in that charge. No doubt some of the preaching places on that work had previously belonged to other Circuits. The preaching places mentioned in that Circuit in 1842 were: Bethel, Bethlehem, Blanton's, Cole's, Jasper, New Lexington, North Port, Pleasant Hill, Pryor's, Rock Spring, Shiloh, Zion, Snow's, Tubbs's, Turner's, Williams's, Yellow Creek. The Whitsons, Freemans, and Coles had their membership at Zion, in the south-eastern part of Fayette County.

By a Quarterly Conference held at Shiloh, April 3, 1837, one of the local preachers was tried for intemperance in the use of ardent spirits, and for vending ardent spirits, and was convicted, and expelled from the Church. To that same Quarterly Conference it was reported that Jesse Harbin, formerly a member of that body, had withdrawn from the Church under charges which, if true, would have expelled him from the connection.

As late as 1838 all the preaching houses occupied by the Methodists in the bounds of the Jasper charge were on land still owned by the United States. Lands which had not been purchased from the Government. It was also held that in consequence of the unsettled state of affairs nothing could be done in the premises. Here is a clear indication of the style and standard in that region at that time.

In 1837 there was one Sunday-school in the bounds of the Jasper charge. The next year there were two, one at Pleasant Hill Meeting House, and one at McConnel's School-house. That was about the strength of Sunday-schools for years in that work.

In March, 1838, a Missionary Society auxiliary to the Missionary Society of the Alabama Annual Conference was organized with a suitable Constitution by the Quarterly Conference, and G. J. Isabel was appointed the Treasurer.

At a Quarterly Conference for Jasper charge held at Gold Mine Camp-ground, about five or six miles from the line of Walker, and in the County of Marion, September 8, 1838, the Rev. John R. Gamble, a local preacher, recently removed from Shelby County, Alabama, to Walker County, made application for membership in that Quarterly Conference, and was received,



and his license was renewed. From that time till his death in 1863 he resided and worked in Walker County. His descendants have been worthy Methodists. Two sons, Hon. Francis Asbury Gamble and Dr. John W. Gamble, are preachers in the local ranks. Two daughters, Mrs. Foust, of Blount Springs, and Mrs. Wilson, of Leeds, are devout Christians. The grandchildren are devoted Methodists.

At the Quarterly Conference held for Jasper Circuit, at New Lexington, August 3, 1839, Julius Nicholson Glover, who was an itinerant preacher in Alabama from the beginning of 1855 till his death in 1888, was licensed to preach.

There were a number of men in the bounds of the Jasper charge, who from the beginning there and for many years gave much time in active and zealous service to the Church under the auspices of Methodism. They were generally men of limited means and meager attainments. In addition to those already mentioned may be named Thomas Whitson, William Cole, and James H. Freeman, who were local preachers there previous to 1837. The Rev. James H. Freeman lived and worked in that country a long while, and was one of the very best Christians. There were a number who filled the offices of class leader and steward who were men of good influence in that region. There were a number of exhorters who did good in the divine cause. William Crump, Benjamin Jones, Jonathan Sherly, Jesse Freeman were all worthy of mention. Ashley Aldridge and Robert Davis, men of but little education, were long in that section. The Rev. Thomas Whitson was ordained deacon at Tuscaloosa, Alabama, December 17, 1826, by Bishop R. R. Roberts, and elder at the same place, December 23, 1835, by Bishop Joshua Soule.

The first statistical report on record for Walker Mission shows three hundred and fourteen white and sixteen colored members. At the beginning of 1845 the two charges which embraced Walker County, and which, as stated elsewhere, included some territory outside of Walker, claimed seven hundred and eleven white and one hundred and eighteen colored members.

The Greene Circuit, occupying the country between the Tombigbee and Warrior Rivers, continued to extend to the headwaters of Hubbub Creek in Pickens County until the close of 1834,

when the Pickens Circuit was made. Then a few of the appointments went from the Greene Circuit to the Pickens Circuit. Hargrove's, which has already been mentioned, on or near Hubbub Creek, was one of these. The Quarterly Conference held for Greene Circuit, at Pleasant Grove, September 20, 1834, upon a recommendation from the Society at Hargrove's, licensed J. A. Shockley to preach the gospel. Hargrove's Church has had, through all the years, even until now, a noted career. As early as 1835 a Camp-ground was established there, at which, for twenty-five years, large and intelligent audiences gathered annually for divine worship. Scores of souls have been born to God there, and there hundreds have been edified. The Rev. Richard Shockley, the Rev. Hiram M. Glass, the Rev. Seth Byars, the Rev. John Cameron, and Daniel J. Hargrove, class leader and steward, were great men there, and useful. It is estimated that seventeen preachers, among them Bishop R. K. Hargrove, have gone out from that Society. Daniel J. Hargrove moved there in 1821, and died there June 17, 1869.

The Quarterly Conference held for Greene Circuit at Ray's, May 20, 1836, licensed Robert S. Finley to preach, and the Quarterly Conference held for the same Circuit at Pleasant Grove Camp-ground, October 1, 1836, recommended him to the Annual Conference to be admitted on trial in the Conference. The Alabama Conference admitted him, and he traveled about eight years, and located. The Quarterly Conference for Greene Circuit at Gordon's, July 29, 1837, licensed Robert J. Gill to preach, and the Quarterly Conference for the same Circuit held at Salem or Sadler's, October 7, 1837, licensed Benjamin R. Thompson to preach, and recommended him and Gill and R. G. Hammill as suitable persons to be admitted on trial in the traveling connection. Thompson and Gill were admitted upon that recommendation by the Alabama Conference.

The Quarterly Conference held for Greene Circuit at De Graffenried's, October 27, 1838, gave to Wilson Moore, a native of South Carolina, then about twenty-three years old, and just regenerated in that very month, a license to preach the gospel, and also recommended him to the Annual Conference as a suitable person to be admitted on trial in the Annual Conference. He was admitted into the Alabama Conference, and was in

charge of the Marianna Station, Florida, when he died in September, 1841.

Ferdinand Sealey, a man who lived a long while in that country, was licensed to preach by a Quarterly Conference held for Greene Circuit at Pleasant Grove, September 7, 1839. Jesse Daniel was licensed to preach by a Quarterly Conference for the same Circuit at Everett's, November 23, 1839, and Isaac Gregory was recommended by the same Quarterly Conference to the Annual Conference for admission on trial. He was admitted, but remained on trial only one year.

John A. Spence, who appeared in 1836 as a class leader, and a year later as an exhorter, was licensed to preach by a Quarterly Conference for Greene Circuit at Gordon's, October 31, 1840, and was recommended by the same body to the Annual Conference as a proper person for the traveling connection. Upon that recommendation he was admitted into the Alabama Conference, and remained in the itinerant work in Alabama in connection with Episcopal Methodism until 1874, when he withdrew from the Alabama Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and united with the Methodist Protestant Church. He proved to be a man of good ability and of more than ordinary attainments, but a man of sour temper, always dissatisfied, always complaining, always engaged in adverse criticism.

William O. Williams and William J. Ledford were licensed to preach and recommended for admission to the traveling connection by the Quarterly Conferences of the Greene Circuit, one in 1843 and the other in 1844, and both were admitted by the Alabama Conference. Williams traveled one year, and Ledford three years.

As late as 1838 the Church property in Greene Circuit was, for want of Trustees, held with uncertain tenure when an effort was made to supply the lack and remedy the evil. That same year an effort was made to establish in the bounds of that Circuit a Circuit School, but the enterprise failed.

At the Quarterly Conference held at Ebenezer, July 6, 1839, "on motion of Rev. J. R. Lambuth, seconded by R. J. Gill, Brothers James Kirkpatrick, C. C. Jordan, and Allen Moore were elected Building Committee for building a new Church at Ebenezer." Ebenezer was one of the leading places on the

Circuit, and the Rev. J. R. Lambuth, who lived there and had held his membership there for many years, and who has been mentioned on former pages as once a member of the Alabama Conference, was an active local preacher in the Greene Circuit, and exerted an extensive influence.

A Quarterly Conference held for Greene Circuit at Ray's Meeting House, May 20, 1836, appointed Trustees, consisting of Henry Cleveland, J. N. Thompson, W. Daniel, William Scarbinow, and Young Kirksy, to build a Methodist Church at or near Mesopotamia. In April, 1838, Mesopotamia appears on the record with a contribution of seven dollars and a half for the support of the ministry, and again in October of that same year with a contribution of five dollars for the same benevolence. That is all that ever appears on record concerning Mesopotamia. Mesopotamia was a straggling settlement in sight of what is now the town of Eutaw, and about three miles west of the Warrior River. The presumption is well sustained that the house contemplated at or near Mesopotamia was never built until another provision was made. On May 30, 1840, a Quarterly Conference held for Greene Circuit, at New Hope, appointed William Murphy, James Snedecor, and William Daniel a Committee to superintend the building of a Church at Eutaw. That is the first mention of Eutaw in Methodist records. At that time Eutaw presented a contribution of nine dollars for the support of the ministry, and the next Quarterly Conference for Greene Circuit was held at that place, August 15, 1840, and four dollars were contributed for the ministry. The members present in that first Quarterly Conference ever held in Eutaw were: Elisha Calloway, P. E., R. H. Herbert, P. C., F. D. Poyas, L. E., A. Harris, L. D., R. J. Gill, L. P., F. Sealy, L. P., and B. Williams and B. Crawford, Stewards.

Eutaw and Ebenezer were taken from the Greene Circuit and made an appointment for 1842, and the Rev. Jesse P. Perham put in charge thereof. At the end of that year Ebenezer and Trinity, one of the Societies of the Greene Circuit, were put together as an appointment, and left to be supplied, but, for some reason no separate supply was furnished, and the two places went on for the year as part of the Greene Circuit; while for that year and the year following Eutaw was by itself, and the Rev Joshua T. Heard was in charge of it. When first reported



by itself Eutaw had eighty-seven white and one hundred and fourteen colored members. For 1845 Pine Grove was detached from the Greene Circuit and attached to Eutaw, and the Rev. N. P. Seales was appointed to the charge thereof. Pine Grove and Eutaw remained together for three years, and then separated, and Springfield was attached to Eutaw. For a number of years there was fluctuation in the membership at Eutaw. Decrease and increase alternately.

The proceedings of the Quarterly Conference for the Greenesborough Station for the first three years of its existence were mislaid and never recovered. It is a matter of record, however, that for 1833 Greenesborough and Marion were together, and the Rev. R. L. Kennon was the preacher in charge; that Robert Dickens and Franklin Shaw were stewards; that Greenesborough contributed for the liquidation of the expenses of the year four hundred and thirty-four dollars and fifty cents, and Marion contributed forty-seven dollars and thirty-one cents.

Ascending to the sublime height of Christian duty as it was seen and provided for in that day, Greenesborough in 1835 paid the Rev. S. B. Sawyer his quarterage and traveling expenses in full, and paid the Rev. E. V. LeVert his quarterage and family expenses in full. That was the whole sum of three hundred and forty dollars. Joshua, the Sexton, was paid for his services twenty-five dollars, and twenty-five dollars were expended in Sunday-school Books. Under the impulses of a tender regard for superannuated preachers, widows and orphans, forty-five dollars were generously contributed to the Conference collection. A lively Sunday-school, composed of sixty-three scholars and teachers, and having one hundred and seventy-five volumes in Library, was kept in existence.

At the first Quarterly Conference for 1836 Robert Dickens, Henry J. Garrett, Andrew Walker, John M. Bates, Green D. Williams, and Joseph B. Markham were elected stewards. Fifty-six dollars and thirteen cents were contributed, in a public collection, for defraying the expenses of the Delegates to the General Conference which convened in May of that year.

An effort was made in 1837, the Rev. Claiborne Pirtle in charge of the Station, to secure a Parsonage and build a new Church, but neither enterprise succeeded. The preacher was

absent on account of sickness from August till the close of the year. He was never able to work any more, and he located at the close of 1840. Calamities came thick and fast. In 1838 the Rev. E. V. LeVert was put in charge of Greensborough in a supernumerary relation, and the Rev. Francis H. Jones was the presiding elder. Jones fell into sin, and was not at Greensborough Station after May of that year, and he was expelled from the connection at the session of the Alabama Conference following the date of his crime.

Annoyances to the Church at Greensborough and impediments to the divine work there were constantly recurring. Earth has not recently seen a state where mingles no evil. If there be those who are in virtue complete and in good confirmed they are such a select band as to be conspicuous only by their fewness. Religion is often scandalized at her own altars, and wounded by her own adherents. There are many things everywhere to mar the peace, and disturb the equilibrium of Christians, and hinder the divine cause in spite of the best intentions and the best efforts. Human language to be adequate to the state of things here below must be replete with words which express censure.

The Rev. Alexander Winbourn was transferred from the Tennessee Conference, and stationed at Greensborough for 1839. The stewards at his new field of labor immediately after the session of the Alabama Conference collected and advanced to him forty-five dollars for quarterage and part of his expenses from Tennessee to Tuskaloosa. He entered upon his work promptly, and was at the first Quarterly Conference, held March 16, 1839, as preacher in charge of the Station. That terminated his ministry at Greensborough. Nevermore does he appear on the records at that place. For some reason and through some process not now known, he was relieved of the pastoral oversight of that charge between the time of the first and the second Quarterly Conferences. In the absence of all knowledge on the subject it is useless to indulge conjecture. At the end of the year the Alabama Conference placed him on the superannuated list, and after that his name disappears from the roll, and it is not known how.

The Rev. James M. Boatwright, with another preacher, was appointed to Marion Circuit for 1839. When Winbourn was

relieved of the Station at Greensborough, Boatwright was put in charge. At the second and all subsequent Quarterly Conferences for Greensborough Station for that year the Rev. James M. Boatwright was present as the preacher in charge, and he received quarterage, and paid board as the preacher of that flock.

Soon after taking charge of the Church at Greensborough the Rev. James M. Boatwright, it is said, gave great offense to the Methodists and the people of the place generally. It was after this wise: He took board and lodging in the house of Robert Dickens, who was, at that time, the leading steward of the Church and the largest contributor to the financial support of the charge. Mr. Dickens, assisted by his overseer, on what he supposed a proper occasion, took in hand to correct and punish one of his slaves, a Negro man of great strength. The Negro resisted the correction tendered him, and made some demonstrations of violence upon the master and overseer. Mr. Boatwright was in his room and in sufficient proximity to the scene of contest to have knowledge of the situation and to assist in the suppression of the insubordinate slave. Mr. Boatwright did not rush to the scene of action. At this distance of time and place it is safe to say and proper to assert that Mr. Boatwright acted wisely, discreetly, and righteously in leaving Mr. Dickens and his overseer to guide their own affairs, dispose of their domestics, and suppress those whose duty it was to be in subordination to their authority. But the members of the Church and the people generally had an opportunity to make a case against the preacher, and the opportunity was not allowed to pass. He was condemned and denounced. "Muttering sounds of sullen wrath" were heard all around. Members of the Church refused to attend his ministry, and the congregation was depleted, the place of worship was almost forsaken. The excitement was intense enough. The presiding elder, the Rev. E. V. LeVert, advised Mr. Boatwright to retire from the charge; but the preacher, conscious of the correctness of his course, declined to voluntarily retire. The presiding elder did not exercise his authority and remove him. He stood to his post, and faithfully discharged his duties. In spite of all the persecutions he endured he had a good year. According to the records thirty persons were inducted into the Church that year.

In 1839 the Quarterly Conference appointed another Committee to build a new Church, and that time a measure of success ensued, and by the first part of April, 1840, the new building was sufficiently advanced for the congregation to occupy it, and at that time, and in that unfinished state it was dedicated to divine worship, by the Rev. E. V. LeVert, the presiding elder. Trouble ensued also. In building the house a debt was incurred, or for building it a claim was set up in the prosecution of which damage was entailed upon the Society. The last time the once strong supporter of the Greensborough Station, Robert Dickens, is mentioned in the records of the Quarterly Conference of that Station is March 18, 1843. In the proceedings of that day it is recorded: "Brother R. Dickens appeared before the Conference, and stated that the Trustees were in debt to him for the building of the Church; whereupon, the following Resolution was passed: Resolved, That the Quarterly Conference do hereby recommend to the Trustees on the one part and R. Dickens on the other to refer the disputed matters between them on the subject of the debt due him to some persons selected by themselves in the usual form of arbitration, and that they meet on next Saturday, March 25, and report the result to the next Leaders' Meeting." The evil which has fallen upon the Church through debts made, and then loosely managed, is untold. There is not room to relate what evils have been entailed upon Christianity, in connection with Church-debts, through reposed confidence, broken promises, partial payments, not exacting receipts, and last, but not least, forcing men, who have been liberal to the cause, to accept the settlement of the debt in place of its payment. These things have lost to the Church, in many instances, her best friends, and most pious members.

In those days some strange ecclesiastical proceedings were had in connection with the Quarterly Conferences of Greensborough, and some strange proceedings without Quarterly Conferences. In 1839 a man was licensed to preach by a body called together at a different time to that of any of the four Quarterly Conferences of the year. The first Quarterly Conference was held March 16, 1839, and the second Quarterly Conference July 6, 1839, and the other two at subsequent dates; and the record contains the following: "At a call of the officary



members of the Church June 2, 1839, A. P. Merrell was licensed to preach. E. V. LeVert, P. E.; J. D. Moore, Secretary." That is given *verbatim*.

In the proceedings of the Quarterly Conference held June 8, 1844, is found the following:

"Any References? Yes. Isaac Thurmond, colored man, for adultery acquitted by Committee, and referred by preacher in charge; the decision reversed, and Isaac expelled." Strange and illegal proceeding this. Here was a private member of the Church expelled who was never convicted before the Society, or a Committee of the Society, of which he was a member. Here was a private member convicted and expelled from the Church who had been absolutely acquitted by the only body to which he was amenable for his conduct. The Quarterly Conference had no authority in that case to convict and expel. The Quarterly Conference had authority to confirm or reverse the verdict in the case referred thereto by the preacher in charge, but inasmuch as it was a verdict of acquittal which was reversed, the Quarterly Conference only had authority to remand or refer the case to the Society for a new trial. That Quarterly Conference which did that strange work was presided over by the Rev. Charles McLeod, presiding elder; the preacher in charge, who referred the case, was the Rev. Thomas H. Capers; and the other members of the body present and taking part were John Dubois, L. E., J. W. Houck, Exh., Dr. P. W. Kittrell, Dr. W. T. Webb, R. S. Hunt, Thomas W. Johnston, stewards, and Jesse Gibson, C. L. These were men of intelligence and fidelity. If such administration prevailed in the intelligent centers, what was done in the remote districts and less favored sections?

Robert Dickens, Thomas W. Johnston, stewards, the Rev. John Dubois, a local preacher, and Joseph W. Houck, an exhorter, were, indeed, pillars in the Church at Greensborough. They were prompt, punctual, and liberal. They gave their time, energies, and means to the interests of Christianity. Dubois was a working member of the Church in Alabama for sixty years or more. He died January 31, 1884, in his eighty-seventh year.

From 1832 to 1845, the period now under review, Campgrounds were established and kept up by the Methodists in

various places in all sections of Alabama, and at most of these places Camp-meetings were held annually. At a few places in a few instances two meetings were held in a year. Camp-grounds and Camp-meetings in that time were everywhere much after the same order, though they differed in the style and extent of outfit according to the condition and tastes of the people in the different sections where they were established and held. The shed, the stand, the altar with its straw, and the group of tents were common to every Camp-ground, though in many places these were made of raw materials, and rough-cast. In some instances the shed was built of the brush and boughs of the forest; in other instances boards were used, and in some cases planks were furnished. Different materials were utilized in the construction of tents, such as coarse cloth, rough boards, and good planks. In some instances wagons were utilized for sleeping apartments. In the wealthy and more advanced sections commodious tents were erected, and convenience and comfort arranged for. Preaching, exhorting, praying, singing, and assembling penitents in the altar for prayer and instruction were common to all Camp-meetings. A Camp-meeting meant preaching four times a day. In the time now under consideration Camp-meetings were popular and profitable. They were the grand and absorbing occasions in the sections in which they were held. There was one other thing common to all Camp-meetings of that time: the entertainment was free. The tent-holders entertained without charge all who attended. Great good was often accomplished at those meetings. People and preachers gathered from all directions and from great distances. The preaching was usually edifying, the exhortations eloquent and rousing, the prayers earnest and fervent, and the singing inspiring. Much was usually anticipated in the preaching of the occasions. The expectation was that the preaching would be of a high order.

An account of one single Camp-meeting in this connection may suffice. On or near the highway leading from the town of Marion in the County of Perry to the town of Greensborough in the then County of Greene, and not far from an equal distance from these towns was a Camp-ground known as DeYampert's. The well-built shed with its grand stand and spacious altar, and the commodious tents tastefully grouped about the

beautiful grounds gave an air of neatness, and indicated expenditure and aggregation. A mile or more away from that encampment in the midst of beautiful groves and fertile lands stood the stately mansion of L. Q. C. DeYampert. DeYampert was a local preacher, a man of wealth, and a very prince in Israel. He had once been a member of the South Carolina Conference. He was surrounded with many worthy associates. At that magnificent Camp-ground, in the lovely autumn of 1843, was held a Camp-meeting which made an impression on the surrounding country. The occasion was magnified. There was much outlay and much display. Many of the preachers in charge of affairs in the surrounding country were engaged to attend the meeting. The great event of the meeting was to be the presence of the Rev. Lovick Pierce, then stationed in Mobile, and considered a star of the first magnitude in the ecclesiastical firmament. His proposed coming had been heralded far and near. The sensation was complete, the excitement was intense, all expectant were the people. The great preacher reached the Camp-ground according to engagement, but, alas! he was sick, and continued sick for many days, and could not preach.

The Rev. Charles McLeod, the presiding elder, was in charge of the meeting. The Rev. T. W. Dorman and the preachers of the work in the midst of which the Camp-ground was located, and others were present. There was another preacher there, a stranger, one who came unheralded. The Rev. Thomas O. Summers was the man. He was then from the Republic of Texas. He was making a tour of Alabama and other States soliciting funds to pay debts incurred in the erection of houses of worship for the use of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Galveston and Houston, Texas. He was a native of England, at the time herein mentioned he was about thirty-one years old, had been in the United States about thirteen years, had been preaching nine years, and was unmarried, and was in search of a good wife. In his manners in the social circle he was brusque, in the pulpit he was stormy and fidgety. He exhibited at that Camp-meeting at DeYampert's Camp-ground some horned frogs in alcohol preserved, which he had brought with him from Texas. It is quite easy to imagine the impression which he made on the minds of the Camp-meeting folks of Alabama

concerning himself by the exhibition of his frogs, and the interest which he created thereby in the peculiar product of the then neighboring Republic of Texas. Tradition says that about the second day of that Camp-meeting the Rev. Mr. Summers was put up to preach, and that the effort of that hour was unacceptable to the congregation, and to Brother DeYampert it was quite offensive. He was offended by the matter of the sermon and the manner of the preacher. The other preachers filled the pulpit at the different hours from that on, leaving Summers to himself, his horned frogs, and his Agency for funds for erecting Churches in the land from which he had brought his exhibits. Summers, true to his business, solicited a contribution from DeYampert to assist his Churches in Texas. DeYampert gruffly refused to make a contribution. The meeting went on, Sunday approached, Dr. Pierce continued sick. Hopes were entertained, so tradition says, that Dr. Pierce, the great preacher, would recover sufficiently by Sunday to preach on that day; but on the arrival of Saturday evening the physician who had charge of the sick man pronounced against his preaching. There was an emergency. The presiding elder called a Council, constituted of the home preachers. The business of the Council was to improvise and provide for the services of Sunday, the great day. The Council met in the capacious tent of DeYampert. The perplexing question was: Who shall preach at 11 o'clock A.M. Sunday? It was first suggested that, of course, the presiding elder was the preacher for that hour, but he humbly declined in favor of any one who could and would meet the emergency. The home preachers were suggested, one after another, until all had declined. Not one was willing to attempt to preach at that hour in the face of the expectation created by the trumpeted fame of Dr. Pierce. At last one in the Council moved that the Rev. Thomas O. Summers be appointed to preach at 11 o'clock A.M. Sunday. That proposition stirred the indignation of Brother DeYampert, who railed out, "He cannot preach the gospel! The poorest preacher here can preach better." The council adjourned and dispersed without making any appointment for the great hour, and the presiding elder had the responsibility and the prospect of occupying the hour himself. While the preachers were engaged in the consultation about the appointments for Sunday the Rev. Mr. Sum-



mers, who was being entertained at Brother DeYampert's tent, was in his room in the tent adjoining the one in which the preachers were assembled, and in such proximity that he could not avoid hearing what was said.

The morning ushered a beautiful day. It was Sunday. The people poured into the encampment by hundreds. They came from far and near. They came in style and without style. They came by all modes of travel. Many came in rich attire, attended by grand equipage. They came to hear the great preacher. Even the outskirts of the encampment were thronged. One who never saw the equipage of a wealthy family and the equipage of a poor family in Alabama in the days concerning which this narrative is being made, and who never saw the multitude assemble on a great Camp-meeting day, cannot have any clear idea of the peculiar mingle and parade of such an occasion. The carriage of a wealthy family in Alabama in the days of slavery was of special model. It was a four-wheeled vehicle fitted to double harness and the use of a pair of horses. The body of that carriage was of rather massive proportions. It was delicately lined and trimmed within with linen, silk, and satin, and furnished with two double seats softly cushioned. On the outside it was ornamented with finely polished materials, and in front was a high-mounted double seat. The body was hung on mammoth springs. That carriage was usually drawn by a pair of horses which matched in color, size, and form, and in it usually went the mother and daughters of the family. On the high seat in front sat the driver, who was a well-dressed Negro man, who was trusted with the reins, and with him sat the waiting-maid, who was a Negro, well-dressed, neat, and clean. The driver and the waiting-maid seated on the high front seat of the elegant carriage were the badge of the large wealth and superior elegance of the family to which the outfit belonged. The Negro who drove the family carriage in Alabama in that time had a sacred trust and a distinguished position, and of which he was sufficiently proud. A Negro in Congress to-day is not more important. The Negro driver of that day was well-dressed. If any one thinks that Negroes in Alabama in the days of slavery did not have umbrellas, linen, and broadcloth, he is simply mistaken.

In Alabama in that day a wealthy family, consisting of the

usual numbers in a household, including father, mother, sons, daughters, and servants in attendance, starting out on a beautiful Sunday morning to a great Camp-meeting presented, to say the least of it, a flattering view of life. The group move out; the family carriage, already described, containing mother, daughters, driver, and waiting-maid, in the front; a fine buggy, drawn by a superb gelding, with the head of the family and his Negro attendant seated in it, follows close after the carriage; two elegant saddle-horses, each trapped with saddle, bridle, and martingale, and mounted by one of the sons of the household, follow next the buggy; and last, but not least, two mules, each wearing an old saddle and an inferior bridle, and one carrying Peter, the oldest Negro man belonging to the place, and the other carrying Jane, the oldest Negro woman on the premises, who had a cloth as white as snow tied about her head, follow in the rear, and complete the group.

In that day in Alabama a poor family starting out on a beautiful Sunday morning to a great Camp-meeting presented, if not a flattering view of life, a significant exhibition. Many of the poor had no outfit of any kind; some had only the ox and cart by which the grist was conveyed to and from the mill; others had only the horse which pulled the plow which turned the glebe; several horses and several saddles in the possession of a family was the most extensive outfit and best equipage to which the poor aspired with any hope of success. The poor were at the Camp-meetings. With or without outfits they were there. They would pour in from the hills and woods. Men, women, and children would go. They would go by all modes of travel: on foot, on ox-carts, on ox-wagons, on horse-back, some in the saddle, some in the lap, some behind; in that day a horse which would not carry double and thribble was not by any means a choice animal. It took all these, the rich and the poor, to make a Camp-meeting in the forties of this century.

All these were at that Camp-meeting at De Yampert's Camp-ground in that beautiful autumn of 1843, at which the frogs from the Republic of Texas were exhibited. The gathering of that multitude was impressive. As the dusty crowds from the hills and woods swelled the throng, and as the numerous groups of the rich, with the roar and clatter of wheels and hoofs, the glare and glitter of trappings and fixtures, ap-

proached the outskirts and rolled through the encampment the interest became intense. The scene was really impressive.

The presiding elder looked upon the vast throng, and beheld the array of wealth and elegance, and at the very last moment his courage failed, and instead of preaching himself, as till that very moment he had really expected to do, he, upon his own responsibility, and at the risk of incurring the lasting displeasure of Brother DeYambert, led the Rev. Thomas O. Summers on the stand, and informed him that he must preach. Mr. Summers knew the situation, but he was not in the least abashed. He at once proceeded with the services. He read a hymn after the manner peculiar to himself, and then prayed. The prayer was seldom equaled. It was characterized by devotion, unction, propriety of utterance, variety of petition, and heartiness of thanksgiving. To use one of Mr. Summers's own phrases it was "good to the use of edifying." When through with the introductory part of the services, and ready to proceed with his sermon, Mr. Summers took his position at the book-board, and looking Brother DeYampert, who was near the stand, and in full view, squarely in the face, said: "I heard it declared last night I could not preach the gospel. May the Holy Ghost enable me to preach this day to this dying people, 'not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.'" He then read his text: "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." The text contained a theme and swept a field suited to the order of mind peculiar to Mr. Summers, and he was that day at his best, and he drew, the Holy Spirit assisting, the audience to the theme, and before he was through with the exposition of the text the assembly gave demonstrations of great enthusiasm. At the close of the sermon the spacious altar was crowded with penitent sinners. The meeting went on for some days longer with intense interest and with glorious results, the Rev. Mr. Summers working efficiently, and working till the conclusion of the last doxology. Brother DeYampert changed his mind, reversed his verdict, gave Mr. Summers a liberal contribution for his Churches in Texas, and he became one of Mr. Summers's greatest admirers and warmest friends.

In the month of September, 1843, and on the tour in which he attended the Camp-meeting at DeYampert's, Mr. Summers visited Tuskaloosa, Alabama, and had Miss Marsilla Sexton, of that place, recommended to him, by adequate judges, as a suitable lady for an itinerant preacher's wife. He wooed and won the lady thus recommended; by what process he carried on his courtship is not known. He returned to Texas, he had not yet married, attended the Texas Conference in December, was transferred to the Alabama Conference, and stationed at Tuskaloosa for 1844; wound up his affairs in the Republic of Texas; left Galveston in January, 1844; reached Tuskaloosa, Alabama, in one week, and on the last day of that month he was married to Miss Marsilla Sexton, the woman of his choice. From the time he transferred to the Alabama Conference till his death in 1882 he had his membership as a preacher in Alabama. He attained distinction as a preacher and author. The degrees of D.D. and LL.D. were conferred upon him. He was long in the editorial work of the Church. He did much work for the Church. He was a member of the General Conferences from time to time. He was one of the Professors of the Biblical Department of the Vanderbilt University at the time of his death. He was buried on the Vandebilt Campus, but when his widow died his son had his remains removed to the cemetery for the city of Nashville, Tennessee. In Alabama he filled appointments at Tuskaloosa, Livingston, and Mobile.

The mention of Tuskaloosa in connection with the Rev. Thomas O. Summers brings that place again in review. There was much fluctuation in the membership at Tuskaloosa, Alabama, during the period from 1832 to 1845. The Rev. Robert L. Walker closed his ministry at Tuskaloosa with 1832, and left one hundred and ninety-five white and two hundred and twenty-nine colored members. The Rev. Seymour B. Sawyer was in charge of Tuskaloosa Station after Mr. Walker, and left at the close of the one year there two hundred and fifteen white and three hundred and eight colored members. The Rev. J. E. Jones was in Tuskaloosa after Sawyer one year, and failed to report the numbers in the Station at the close of his year. For two years in succession, the years 1835 and 1836, the Rev. William Murrah was in charge of the flock at Tuskaloosa, and at the end of his first year he reported



one hundred and sixty-two white and one hundred and sixty-four colored members, and at the close of his second year one hundred and forty-four white and one hundred and thirty-five colored members. For 1837 the Rev. Robert L. Kennon was the Stationed preacher at Tuskaloosa, and with that year and with that people closed his life work, and left in that charge two hundred and one white and one hundred and forty-two colored members. For 1838 Tuskaloosa was supplied by the Rev. Charles Hardy, who had been a member of the Georgia Conference, and had just located. He was a supply, and did not reach Tuskaloosa till about the middle of March. At the close of the year he left one hundred and ninety-eight white and one hundred and sixty-nine colored members. For about two months, and until the Rev. Mr. Hardy reached Tuskaloosa, the Rev. Basil Manly, a Baptist preacher, and who had just been installed President of the University of Alabama, preached for the Methodists at the morning service on Sunday. The congregation thought him devotedly pious and of great simplicity, and an interesting and practical preacher. He attained distinction. For 1839 the Rev. Thomas Lynch was in charge of Tuskaloosa, and there were at the close of his service in the Church there one hundred and eighty-one white and one hundred and seventy-seven colored members. For 1840 the Rev. William Murrah was again put in charge of Tuskaloosa, and at the close of the year there were only one hundred and twenty-seven white and one hundred and thirty-five colored members in the Church there. For 1841 and 1842 the Rev. Jefferson Hamilton was the preacher at Tuskaloosa, and he reported at the close of his first year one hundred and fifty-four white and one hundred and seventy-five colored members, and at the close of his second year one hundred and eighty white and two hundred and thirty colored members. The Rev. Thomas H. Capers was the preacher there for 1843, and at the close of the year there had been a gain of five white and of thirty-four colored members in the charge. During the following year, under the ministry of the Rev. Thomas O. Summers, there was a decrease of forty-seven white and an increase of twenty-three colored members. For all the years at Tuskaloosa the year 1845 was the one of grandest results. That year the Rev. John Christian Keener had the charge at Tuskaloosa, and a meeting was

held there in September of that year which continued more than two weeks, and in which more than one hundred and forty persons professed to find the peace which passes understanding, and more than one hundred joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. Before the meeting closed the Rev. Mr. Keener was so exhausted he could not preach and was unable to participate in any active service. The Rev. Nehemiah A. Cravens, then a local preacher, joined in the work during the last week, and labored until his great strength was exhausted. There was a moral revolution. At the end of the year there was in that Station the largest membership ever reported at that place. There were two hundred and thirty-six white and three hundred and sixty-two colored members. There is not much permanency in such work. The next year the Rev. John C. Keener was in charge there, and, with all the advantages of his relation to the work, he reported at the close of the year a decrease of thirty-six white and twelve colored members. The net full has many fish which have to be thrown away because bad.

The Hon. Marmaduke Williams was born in North Carolina in 1772, and was forty years a citizen of Alabama, and more than thirty years a citizen of Tuskaloosa. He filled many positions of honor and usefulness. He was Judge of Probate, a member of the House of Representatives of his adopted State, and a member of the Congress of the United States from his native State. He joined the Methodist Episcopal Church at Tuskaloosa, Alabama, in May, 1833, when he was sixty-one years old, and he continued a member at the same place until his death, in the latter part of 1850.

George Purcell, who lived to old age, and at last died in Mississippi, and maintained his allegiance to religion and Methodism to the end of his pilgrimage, joined the Methodist Episcopal Church in the first part of 1836, at Tuskaloosa, Alabama.

Mary A. Kennon and Julia Kennon, daughters of the Rev. Robert L. Kennon, joined the Methodist Episcopal Church at Tuskaloosa, in April, 1838, a few brief months after their father's death. They have been women of worth. Their mother, the widow of Dr. Kennon, died in 1876, in her eighty-first year. She was a worthy Christian. She was a woman of great endurance and of great kindness.

December 10, 1836, Edward B. Vaughan and Mrs. Mariah

Vaughan, his wife, natives of Virginia, though then but recently come from Greene County, Alabama, to the town of Tuskalooosa, Alabama, were received by certificate into the Methodist Episcopal Church at Tuskaloosa. In financial affairs and business occupations Mr. Vaughan was cautious, wise, far-seeing, and successful. He had much wealth and extensive influence. He never sought place or power, never made a parade of military titles and burnished steel, but he was patriotic, and a conservator of the public peace. He was a man of broad views and generous deeds. The law of love was in his heart, and he gave himself and his means to Christian benevolence. He was active in Church work, and liberal in the support of Christian enterprises. He was of those who were ever glad when it was said: "Let us go into the house of the Lord." He attended the preaching of the word, the Prayer Meeting, the Class Meeting, the Lovefeast, the Sacrament, and the Sunday-school. He searched for those needing aid, and bestowed his alms unasked. He dried orphan's tears, and soothed aching hearts. He was a man of integrity, and of piety, and he ever trusted in him "Who guides the circuit of the endless years." He died at Tuskaloosa, Alabama, February 8, 1868, being just seventy years old. A vast concourse of mourners attended his funeral.

Hon. John James Ormond and his wife, Minerva Ormond, joined the Methodist Episcopal Church on probation at Tuskalooosa, Alabama, in July, 1840, and were received into full connection there in January, 1841. Before marriage Mrs. Ormond was Miss Minerva Banks, and resided in the Tennessee Valley. Judge Ormond was a native of England, born during the last decade of the eighteenth century, and was brought to America the next year after his birth. He was brought up in orphanage. Notwithstanding his opportunities were quite limited, he attained great learning. He studied law in Virginia, and became a citizen of the Tennessee Valley, Alabama, a short while after Alabama became a State. Judge Ormond was at one time a member of the General Assembly of Alabama from the County of Lawrence, and he was for a number of years, and until he voluntarily resigned the position, one of the Judges of the Supreme Court of the State. He was modest and retiring, and incapacitated for and disinclined to demagogism. Of ancestral line and hereditary fame he never boasted, nor ever made pa-

rade of his natural talents and acquired attainments. It is not known that he ever sighed "for wealth, or fame, or power." It is certain he was no suppliant, no sycophant. He never fawned. He ascended to and retained position upon his intrinsic merit and by efficiency and fidelity. While he was not insensible "to the approbation of the enlightened and virtuous," he discharged his duties and devoted his services to the State not for pension and praise, but for the vindication of right, the maintenance of justice, and the advancement of the general welfare. Integrity characterized all his acts, both private and public, personal and official. His judicial papers were model productions, both in matter and style, both as to the legal lore and classic taste evinced. He was logical and chaste. His writings will be searched in vain for expletives. In his personal association and bearing he was what would be called aristocratic and lordly. He was exclusive and seclusive. He never associated with the rabble, and with those of his own circle he had none of that familiarity which breeds contempt and engenders suspicion. He was never known to unbend, nor his dignity intermit. Never for a moment did he forget the proprieties of the man and the Judge. He never made any concessions. To the level of common men and vulgar things he never descended. No one ever attempted to play pranks on Judge Ormond. In manners he was eminently graceful, and he always conformed to the exact rules of propriety and the nice requisitions of etiquette. In his person he was clean, and in his character he was pure, in his life he was upright, and in his judicial administration he was without reproach, though he did not always escape censure from those who were adversely involved in his judicial decisions. Physically he was of slender mold and delicate form, and of thin features, and his visage was graced with intellectuality. In politics he was an adherent of the Whig party. In religion he adhered to Methodism, and was an active worker in his Church, and he contributed liberally of his large means in the support of the enterprises of Christianity. He maintained his religion to the end of his pilgrimage. He died at Tuscaloosa, Alabama, March 4, 1866.

The Tombecbee Circuit from 1832 to 1845 had a membership ranging from two hundred to five hundred white persons and from one hundred to two hundred colored persons. The follow-



ing preaching places were in the bounds of the Tombecbee Circuit for 1843, though Societies were not established at all of them: Suggsville, Union, Coffeerville, Clarksville, Smith's, Spinks's, Macon, Gilmore's, Dixon's School-house, Flat-top, McIntyre's, Moore's School-house, Horse Creek, Wilson's School-house, Bear Creek, Lower Peach Tree, and Lewis's School-house. Throughout the region embraced by these appointments there were from the first a number of active members, though, of course, matters were in a feeble and scattered condition, or it would not have taken so large a country or so numerous appointments as late as the date given here to make a pastoral charge. In addition to the persons elsewhere mentioned may be named as active members in the early day Joshua Wilson, an exhorter, and the Rev. John Scarborough, a local preacher, and in the little later time, Mrs. Martha T. Kimbell and Mrs. Finch, subsequently Mrs. Henderson.

Suggsville, named for a Mr. Suggs, was a village at an early day, and from the first of its existence a Methodist center. Camp-meetings were held there possibly as early as 1817. Bishop Enoch George was there exercising his Episcopal prerogatives as early as 1819. Ira Portis, who died in 1825, and who was the father of Solomon W. Portis and John W. Portis, settled there in 1818. A Sunday-school banner at Suggsville bears date 1823. It is not, however, certain that it was, strictly or in any sense, a Methodist Sunday-school.

A very noted meeting was held at Suggsville in 1838. It was the purpose to make of it a grand occasion. It was to begin as a Quarterly Meeting and then be protracted as occasion might justify. A number of preachers, in addition to those who would be officially connected with it and be charged with its administration, were invited to attend. It commenced, according to previous appointment, on Friday, the fast-day. The Rev. Elisha Calloway, the presiding elder, was present during his allotted time. On the afternoon of Saturday, the Rev. A. C. Ramsey, the Rev. James King, the Rev. James Thompson, the Rev. William McCracken, and the Rev. Thomas Burpo, the preachers who had been engaged to attend the meeting, arrived. Ramsey at that time was a member of the Alabama Conference, and on the Cedar Creek Circuit, and King, Thompson, and McCracken were local preachers in that Circuit, and Burpo was a

local preacher on the Bellville Circuit, and lived near the Alabama River on the opposite side from Suggsville. Brother Burpo carried his family with him to that meeting. Burpo and his family, conveyed in the family carriage, were attended by the family nurse, a Negro girl, mounted on a horse. On arriving at the Church, which stood in the edge of the village, the Negro girl dismounted and tied the horse to a hitching-post, and when she was ordered to go to the house at which the preacher and family were to be guests she, not being charged with taking care of the horse, left him where she tied him. The preachers and the family here mentioned all spent the night at Brother John Chapman's, all comfortable and happy; all were oblivious of the fact that Brother Burpo's horse on which his servant had ridden was unstalled and unfed. Sunday morning, the morning for the Lovefeast, dawned, and about the time of the rising of the sun, Brother Burpo sauntered out to the lot and cast around to see what was the condition of his horses. He discovered that the horse devoted to the use of the servant-girl was missing. The girl was called up and interrogated on the subject, and she divulged the fact that she, not knowing anything of the provision for taking care of the horse, had left him where she tied him at the Church. Search was made for the horse at the post where he was left the preceding afternoon, but he was not there. Upon further search, however, the horse was found where he had been carried by parties who were evidently not moved by the omnipotence of grace. *He was found in the Church*, standing facing the pulpit, and tied securely to it, and a pair of spectacles made of pine-bark fitted to his eyes and securely fastened on, and the Bible spread open just in front of him. The altar railings and fixtures, which were new, and some new pews which were just about the altar had been torn away and thrown out of the Church. No doubt those who cast out altar railings and pews, and adjusted horse, pulpit, Bible, and mock spectacles flattered themselves that there were pastime and smartness in the performance, but there were rather trespass, damage, indignity, and sacrilege. The horse was taken out of the house of worship, put in his proper place, and fed. A Council was called, and a decision reached in the case. The decision was that the preachers should not make allusion to the matter either in private or public. Till near the end of

the meeting the decision was scrupulously adhered to. The Rev. John French, a local preacher who lived a few miles from Suggsville, concluded that as the meeting was reaching its terminus silence on the subject was no longer a virtue or a necessity. Two young men in the community were suspected as the perpetrators of the outrage, and they were in the congregation when Mr. French delivered his opinion, and they received a public castigation, and just such a castigation as an incensed Irishman could inflict. He said much which cannot and need not be reproduced and put on record, but a part of his speech shall be given: "We know who did that mischief. There you sit now. Poor, contemptible fellows, that you are, I do not know where you can go to get clear of the disgrace which you have brought upon yourselves, and which disgrace will follow you. You cannot stay here, this community will not tolerate you, and you cannot go to Texas, for I have just had a letter from there in which it is stated that house-breakers and burglars who go there from the States are summarily hanged. Poor fellows, you will have to run somewhere, if the good Lord does not kill you soon." According to tradition one of the young men supposed to be guilty of the great folly did actually die in a short time, and the other did really run away. Their names may pass to oblivion. It is a fact that from the time of the beginning of Methodism in Alabama down to the middle of this century in many parts of the State it was a common thing for lewd fellows of the baser sort to annoy and damage church-goers by, under the cover of the night while religious service was going on, cutting bridles and saddles and harness, and disfiguring horses by shaving their manes and tails, and taking off and hiding buggy wheels. Notwithstanding the damage, inconvenience, annoyance, and humiliation experienced from that sacrilegious performance of putting a dumb brute in the sacred place, the meeting went on with success, divine power and unction attended those who conducted the services and good results were attained. Perhaps Suggsville never had a better meeting in its history.

In October, 1843, Ramsey, Thompson, King, and Curry held another protracted meeting at Suggsville which was good in results.

The Rev. Joel Rivers, a local preacher and a native of England, but from his youth a citizen of the now United States,

moved from the town of Fayetteville, North Carolina, to Fort Claiborne, Alabama, accompanied by his children, all then grown, and purchased land, and, on it, at his own expense, in 1816, the lot being at Claiborne, erected a house of worship for the Methodist Episcopal Church. The first Society at Claiborne, organized just prior to the erection of the house of worship there, consisted of the Rev. Joel Rivers, Rhoda Rivers, his wife, and a number of their children. If there were any others it is not now known. In the after time and at an early day, the Rev. James Thompson and his wife, Benjamin Lucus and Mrs. Nancy Lucus, Mrs. Jane Blue, Andrew Tarlton and his wife, William Woolworth and his wife, and Stephen Steele were members of that Society. Stephen Steele, in 1821, married Elizabeth Rivers, the daughter of the Rev. Joel Rivers, and was a Methodist at the town of Claiborne from 1825 till his death in 1868, and was through all the years the chief supporter of the Church at that place. When the first house of worship erected there became inadequate to the purposes for which it was built, it was superseded by a new and more commodious house which was built by subscription, but was at last paid for by Stephen Steele out of his own funds. The new house was built on the lot on which stood the first one, and Brother Steele had in his possession the deed thereto until the Federal troops destroyed it, with other valuable papers, during the war between the States. The home of Stephen Steele was the home of Methodist preachers. Too much could not be said in praise of Stephen Steele, the silversmith of Claiborne, Alabama. He was the servant of the Church to which he belonged, and he was the servant of the Master. He was a native of Vermont, and died in his eighty-seventh year. His wife, who was a strong character, survived him two years. They can never be forgotten while the history of the town of Claiborne is remembered.

At the close of 1840 the members at Claiborne flattered themselves that they were able to take care of a preacher by themselves, and the place was made a Station, and the Rev. Francis Asbury McShan was appointed to serve the charge for 1841, and at the end of the year there were eighty-eight white and seventy-five colored members in the Society. For 1842 and 1843 the Rev. John D. Lofton was in charge of Claiborne Station, and at the end of the two years reported one hundred



and ten white and two hundred and fifty colored members belonging thereto. For 1844 Monroeville was joined with Claiborne, and Louis B. Hicks appointed thereto, and at the end of the year there were at the two places one hundred and fifty-seven white and two hundred and sixty-five colored members. For 1845 Claiborne was again by itself with the Rev. James A. Heard as preacher, and at the end of the year there were one hundred and ten white and two hundred and twenty-one colored members; and although the place was continued as a Station for another year, that is the last time that Claiborne ever appeared in the reports or the appointments. Since 1846 Claiborne has been one of the appointments in a Circuit.

There was no Methodist Church at Gosport prior to 1839, and no regular preaching there for twenty years after that. Somewhere about 1839, two men, John Mackay and George Cheny, who were Methodists, assisted by Samuel Forward, who was not then a member of any Church, built, of rough logs, a house for a place of worship, and in it they occasionally had preaching. That house stood for twenty years. The Rev. Joseph T. Curry, who was the junior preacher on the Tombigbee Circuit for 1843, preached at Gosport once that year. In his Journal for that year he makes the following significant entry: "Sunday, August 13, preached at Gosport, text Joshua xxiv. 15, to a large congregation, but not very attentive among the young; the want of Religious Education unfits man for the company of a Christian community." In February, 1847, Samuel Forward, of Gosport, joined the Methodist Episcopal Church, under the administration of the Rev. James L. Cotton, and continued therein.

The town of Jackson, situate between Tombigbee River and Bassett's Creek in Clarke County, was incorporated by Legislative enactment in 1816, and had a rapid growth, and attained population and business which it could not retain, and decline ensued. The social state and taste of that community did not conduce to the introduction of Christianity under the auspices of Methodism. The establishment of a Methodist Church at that town was an innovation long delayed. It was 1842 when a Methodist Society was organized and a place of worship was improvised at that place. In that year Mrs. A. C. Taylor, the wife of Walter Taylor, joined the Methodist Episcopal

Church, and she immediately had a dwelling-house moved to a suitable lot, and such changes made in the building as was necessary to adapt it to public worship, and furnished it with pulpit and seats. She then induced the nearest itinerant preacher she could find to take the place into his Circuit. On Monday, once a month, the Circuit Rider, as he was then called, preached in that house so promptly improvised by that zealous Christian woman. So soon as the preacher opened an appointment at that place he organized a Society of three members, and in a few weeks a good man and his wife moved to Jackson and joined the Society, making the number five. The growth was slow, but the increase was perceptible. In the Journal of the Rev. Joseph T. Curry for 1843 is found the following statement concerning Jackson: "Saturday, September 9: Two days Meeting at Jackson. Preached from Isaiah iii. 10, 11. Considerable feeling in the congregation. In the evening Brother Calhoun preached. God poured out his Spirit. Eight persons joined the Church. Sunday 10. Preached again from Isaiah v. 4. Good feeling and attention. Evening Brother Calhoun preached. Two other persons joined the Church. God, in mercy, is visiting this place which has been so famous for wickedness. May God help those who have started. Amen!"

Mrs. Taylor, the first avowed friend and active benefactor of Methodism at the town of Jackson, Alabama, lived many years, and rendered great service to the cause espoused; and through all the years of her Christian pilgrimage she entertained pious sentiments, cherished the sweets of religious experience, and cherished the blissful anticipation that when the solitudes of life were all passed, she would enter into the Palace of the King Eternal.

Some time after Mrs. A. C. Taylor joined the Church, her husband, Mr. Walter Taylor, attached himself to the same Church, and was liberal in his support of the institutions thereof. He was born at Jackson, Alabama, in 1817, and in 1835 he was graduated with distinction from the Augusta College, Kentucky, which College was under the auspices of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He died in 1886. Mr. Walter and Mrs. A. C. Taylor had eight children who grew to maturity and became Methodists, and noted for piety and usefulness. The family has been noted for intelligence, refinement, and use-

fulness. From David Taylor, who settled at what is now Jackson as early as 1812, there sprang a numerous tribe; and many of these descendants of that man have been and are Methodists. At this date they are scattered abroad; some of them are in Louisiana, and others of them are in Florida.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### THE FURTHER ENLARGEMENT AND ADVANCEMENT OF THE WORK OF METHODISM IN ALABAMA.

A T Mobile there was, under the auspices of the Methodist Episcopal Church, but one pastoral charge up to the close of 1840. During 1833 and 1834 there was, in addition to the Mobile pastoral charge, which was served those two years by the Rev. Robert L. Walker, a Mobile Mission, but it appears that that Mission was outside of Mobile and in the country. In that period things in Mobile were neither sublime, majestic nor assuring. The membership was comparatively small in 1833, and in that time the Sunday-school received damage even from its supposed friends. Brother Walker, then the preacher in charge of the Church, writing to Brother John H. Vincent, of Tuskaloosa, Alabama, a letter bearing date Mobile, January 28, 1833, says: "Our Sabbath School here is small, and has recently received a deadly stab through the treacherous and hypocritical conduct of William P. Hill, of whom you have heard. He was President and Secretary of the Sabbath School, and had made considerable collections to purchase books for the School. He had the money in hand (he was also in possession of Missionary money of which I do not wish you to speak), was considerably in debt, borrowed money, and went to New Orleans about the last of December, and has strangely disappeared, and the common opinion is now that he has run away, and recent disclosures rather confirm the suspicion. This is dreadful, as it destroys public confidence, or at least creates suspicion, etc." At the close of 1833 there were reported eighty white and three hundred and fifty colored members. At the close of the succeeding year and the end of Brother Walker's term of service no statistical report was made from the Alabama Conference for the General Minttes.

In 1833 the Rev. Robert L. Walker married Miss Glorvina Kennedy, a woman of great worth and solid piety.

The Rev. Robert L. Walker was well qualified for and ad-



mirably adapted to the work of the Christian ministry. He was by nature possessed of some of the qualities necessary for the work of an overseer of the flock, but in that work, which is higher than and separate from all secular occupations, it was impossible to retain him. A few brief months after he had married, and long before his second year of the ministerial term as then fixed by the law of the Church was out at Mobile he had determined to locate and engage in secular pursuits, and had made declaration of his purpose and had perfected his plans for the same. His friends who esteemed him and who appreciated his worth in the ministry endeavored to dissuade him from such course, but he deliberately and pertinaciously adhered to his purpose. His warm and firmly attached friend, John H. Vincent, then an active official member of the Church at Tuscaloosa, Alabama, wrote him a kind and affectionate letter strongly and earnestly advising him not to leave the pastoral work for secular pursuits. He replied in a long letter to Brother Vincent, in which he attempted to vindicate his course in the premises. He was restive under the admonitions of his friends, and somewhat tart in his answers to them. He rested the defense of his course upon the ground that in the Alabama Conference provision was not made for the ample support of a preacher's family. In reply to Brother Vincent he said: "I speak with reverence to God and charity to my brethren and the world, but my conviction is, that so long as God is dependent for the support of his ministers, upon such stewards as we generally have, *they* will defeat his designs, and deprive the Church of an experienced and well-disciplined ministry; in which case, *they* and *not* the *preachers* will be answerable in the great day." "I had rather meet savage life, in its wildest and most loathsome forms with equality, than to live in the midst of polished Society, with such disparity of circumstances, and indifference to necessity as we sometimes see in our Church." "The servant (or slave as Bishop Emory has it) who labors for a Christian congregation has a *right* to expect that his and his family's reasonable wants will be supplied. *This is not done!* No, not in our Conference." At the close of 1834 he located, and entered fully into business, independent of stewards and a priest's stipends, and in the space of a dozen brief years he drove to financial distress, not to say more. To have exchanged

that financial heritage for a pastoral charge and a preacher's allowance would have been a positive relief. He whom God calls to preach would better abide the heavenly calling, and make full proof his ministry.

The Rev. Robert L. Kennon succeeded the Rev. Robert L. Walker, at Mobile, and remained two years, and he was succeeded by the Rev. William Murrah, who remained two years, and he was followed by the Rev. Jefferson Hamilton, who remained two years, and that brought the close of 1840, at which time there were in the charge two hundred and eighty-five white and four hundred and fifty-nine colored members. The following extract from a letter written by Dr. Kennon to Brother Vincent, the letter bearing date Mobile, May 8, 1835, will show the condition of things there at that time: "Few men need the forgiveness of friends more than myself. I should have written before this, but I have had my hands and heart full. When I arrived here I found serious difficulties amongst the members of the Church. They have after much perplexity been adjusted by the expulsion of two members, but the effects remain in jealousies, and heart-burnings, etc. The case was of a scandalous character—a man and wife parting—and the members had been split into parties. Notwithstanding, we have some gracious times—congregations crowded, much weeping, many penitents, and every week some convert—and yet, alas! how many are inactive, and how vast the crowd pressing to eternal death. The Presbyterians here are taking the lead of us in zeal and effort. They have had a protracted meeting which has been abundantly blessed. Their minister is a man of great power of elocution, zealous, and pious."

For 1841 there were three charges in Mobile, named as follows:

First charge, Thomas H. Capers.

Second charge, Seymour B. Sawyer.

Seaman's Mission, to be supplied.

At the close of the year First charge had three hundred and fifty white and five hundred and ninety colored members, and the Second charge had one hundred and fifteen white members. The Seaman's Mission did not yield anything for that year. The next year the appointments were:

Franklin Street, Thomas H. Capers.

Jackson Street, Jesse Boring.

For 1843 the appointments were:

Franklin Street and West Ward, L. Pierce, J. C. Keener.

Saint Francis Street, Jefferson Hamilton.

African Church, to be supplied.

The next year the appointments were:

Franklin Street, Giles P. Sparks.

Saint Francis Street, Jefferson Hamilton.

West Ward, John D. Lofton.

African Church, to be supplied.

For 1845 the appointments were:

Saint Michael Street and Saint Michael Street colored charge,  
J. T. Heard, O. R. Blue.

Saint Francis Street, T. W. Dorman.

West Ward, T. Y. Ramsey.

German Mission, George Rottenstien.

In February, 1843, revival influence fell upon Mobile, and about one hundred and fifty souls were converted and added to the Church there.

Under the ministry of Dr. R. L. Kennon the Franklin Street house of worship was enlarged and improved; lecture-room and class-rooms were added.

In 1841 was organized what has been known as Saint Francis Street Church. At first it worshiped in a house belonging to another denomination. The membership was at first small, but continued to grow. Its first class was constituted of members from Franklin Street Church. West Ward commenced in a Sunday-school inaugurated in that part of the city.

There was a "Female Missionary Society of Mobile," and subsequently a "Children's Missionary Society" was organized. Some time not earlier than 1833 a squad of Choctaw Indians tarried for the time near Gainesville on the Tombigbee River in Alabama. A white woman going up town on that errand peculiar to women, shopping, came up with a number of Indian boys, and she engaged them for a short while in conversation. She said to one boy who attracted her attention that she would return that way in a short while, and that if he would go and live with her she would teach him to read and write. She went her way, made her purchases, and returned to her home along the route she passed to town, and she found the boy waiting for

her, and eager to be taught the customs of the paleface nation. She took him to her home. The boy's name was Dixon W. Lewis. How he got his name cannot be deposed to in this place, and now. He was immediately put under tuition. His body was washed and clothed, and his hair trimmed and combed. A child of the forest, he had, first of all, to be taught, and had to learn, how to wear clothes, sit on chairs, sleep in beds, and eat with knives and forks, etc. When it was demonstrated that he was going to remain and conform to civil habits he was put to the study of letters. He learned rapidly, and was sent to the village School. In the course of events the family of which he had become a member moved to Mobile, Alabama. The mother of the family was a Methodist. She united with the Franklin Street Church, and put her children and the Indian boy, who was then about nineteen years old, in the Sunday-school. Of course, the Indian attracted attention. With facility he acquired a knowledge of the Catechism. The Missionary Societies already named took him under tuition, and resolved to educate him and qualify him to be a Missionary to his own people. His education was completed and he was licensed to preach, and at the session of the Alabama Conference held at Mobile, beginning February 28, 1846, he was admitted into the Conference on trial. For that year he was in the very land of his nativity on the Lauderdale Circuit in the Gainesville District. At the end of 1846 he was transferred from the Alabama Conference to the Indian Mission Conference, and went from the land of his birth and the home of his youth to the country assigned his people west of the Mississippi River. In November, 1847, having been two ecclesiastical years on trial in the traveling connection, one year in the Alabama Conference and one year in the Indian Mission Conference, he was received into full connection in the Indian Mission Conference, and ordained deacon. In due course and upon opportunity he was ordained elder. To his own nation in their land beyond the Mississippi River he preached the everlasting gospel. He continued a member of the Indian Mission Conference and in the effective work of the ministry till his end came. He died of pneumonia in 1857. He was calm and peaceful in his death. He was a man of ability. For 1854 he was left without a regular pastoral charge in view of his making certain translations into Choctaw. He was



an able preacher, a wise counselor, and a man of influence in the adjustment of the affairs of his people.

During the fourth decade of this century Mobile more than thribbled its population, and during the period from 1832 to 1845 the Methodist Episcopal Church in that place was increased in its numbers and improved in its general resources by immigration. In 1835 Mrs. Emily S. Dubose, a woman of kind disposition, consecrated life, and who gave much alms to the poor, moved to Mobile, and, carrying with her a certificate of her membership, became a member of the Society there. She continued a member in Mobile till 1848, when she was transferred to that city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

About the time or a little after the coming of Mrs. Dubose to Mobile, three noted members from Augusta, Georgia, by authority of their certificates of membership, attached themselves to the Methodist Episcopal Church in Mobile. They were Major Franklin C. Heard, his wife, Mrs. Ann M. Heard, and Mrs. Emily W. Woolsey. Mrs. Heard lived but a short time after moving to Mobile. Major Heard had membership there more than a dozen years. He died in Mobile about the middle of this century. All the time he was in Mobile he filled official position in the Church; most of the time he was class leader, an office for which, by his steady faith, strong emotions, and holy impulses, he was eminently fitted. In his case the work of conviction, repentance, and regeneration was of rapid process and short duration. While Dr. Lovick Pierce preached on the text: "And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire," Major Heard, with hat in hand, stood in the aisle of the church, near the door, and listened with marked attention. When penitents were called he went forward in great haste, and fell down on his knees at the altar, and cried aloud, and in a few minutes he experienced the peace incident upon justification and regeneration. His wife, who was a penitent at his side, was renewed at the same hour. All this occurred at Greensborough, Georgia, in 1827. At that time Major Heard lived at Augusta, Georgia, but he with his family was on a visit to old friends at Greensborough, where formerly he had lived. The Sunday after he had received a change of heart

he with his wife and three children was baptized, and he and his wife were received into the Church. That was literally the beginning of a new life in that family. Previous to that time Major Heard had been a man of the world, and had delighted in and participated in the prevailing sports of that time and country.

The life of one of the individuals here named in the consummation of its aggregated incidents, its real events, involves all the phases of sentiment, and contains material which would adorn and enrich a book of romance. To endow a man with prescience would be to him a positive evil. The capacity to prognosticate one's own future would be a positive disqualification for life's duties. A pre-exhibition of one's own life and destiny would be overwhelming and repulsive. One would repudiate his own best conduct could he see in advance its final result. Mrs. Emily W. Woolsey, *née* Sims, is the member of the Church whose life was so romantic. At one time there lived in Augusta, Georgia, the Rev. James O. Andrew, then preacher in charge of the Methodist Episcopal Church there, and his wife, Mrs. Anne Amelia Andrew, Mr. A. B. Woolsey and his wife, Mrs. Emily W. Woolsey, Major Franklin C. Heard and his wife, Mrs. Ann M. Heard. These at that time were neighbors and friends, and all, except Mr. Woolsey, were members of the same Church. These women here named, each presiding at the time in her own household, were warm and intimate friends. About the same time and after these persons all lived in Augusta, Georgia, Mr. George Childers and his wife, Betsy Childers, were zealous members of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Childers's Chapel, near what was afterward called Summerfield, Alabama. Soon after moving to Mobile, Alabama, Mrs. Heard died, and in a short while Mr. Woolsey died. In the on-going of time Major Heard and Mrs. Woolsey married. In the lapse of years Major Heard died, and Mrs. Betsy Childers died also. Mrs. Emily W. Heard after the death of Major Heard moved to Summerfield, Alabama, and in the events of passing years Mr. George Childers and she married. Some time after this marriage Mr. and Mrs. Childers were on a visit to Mobile, and Mr. Childers died there. In the succession of days Mrs. Anne Amelia Andrew died in in the springtime of 1842; and Mrs. Leonoro Andrew, the woman whom Bishop Andrew married in the early part 1844, died about the first of June, 1854. About six months after the death

of the second Mrs. Andrew, the Bishop and Mrs. Childers, with due consideration and genuine sentiment, became man and wife, taking each the other for better for worse. They had experience and were not afraid of a leap in the dark. They took no risk. They endangered no one's happiness. Bishop Andrew died March 1, 1871, and last of all the woman, Mrs. Emily W. Andrew, died also, having had, in perfect accord with the law and the gospel, four worthy husbands, all four of whom died in Mobile, Alabama, and two of whom had been the husbands of two of her dearest friends. This woman so well and repeatedly married was a woman of great energy, of sound judgment, of good manners, of elegant bearing, of deep piety, and of rich experience in divine things.

There was considerable prosperity in the Methodist Episcopal Church in the city of Montgomery, Alabama, during the year 1833, when the Rev. W. R. H. Mosley had charge of the Station. The congregation was enlarged and the membership increased, and that called for larger room and more extensive outlays. There were at the close of that year one hundred and seventy white and one hundred and thirty-two colored members. At the beginning of the next year, when the Rev. Seymour B. Sawyer was again in charge of the Station, a larger house of worship was imperatively demanded for the use of the congregation, and the erection of such house was undertaken. The work was inaugurated in the presence of overwhelming difficulties. The members of that Society were poor, and in the city there was a money stringency seldom equaled. There was obtained in money and materials a subscription which aggregated eight hundred dollars. One thousand dollars were borrowed from J. B. Leavens, of Mobile, Alabama, and with that limited provision for the entire work, in the month of March of that year, a contract was consummated for the erection of a house of worship adequate to the demands of the congregation. In about one year from the time the contract was made the house stipulated for was completed, and formally dedicated to divine worship. Alas! there was a debt incurred, and not provided for, which nearly destroyed the Society. From the time the enterprise was inaugurated till the debt was finally disposed of, the Society declined. Whereas, there were at the incipency of the work of building one hundred and seventy

white and one hundred and thirty-two colored members, at the close of 1838 there were forty-nine white and eighty-four colored members belonging to the Society. After about five years of burden and menace, Mr. Neil Blue, in his own person and by his own means, at great inconvenience to himself and at great hazard to his financial affairs, relieved the Church of the debt. That house was built on the site where stood that notorious Union house, and on the lot where yet stands the Court Street Church. That house was of wood, and was sixty feet long and forty-five feet wide and had an extensive gallery, which gallery was generally occupied by the Negroes. In 1839, after that debt was assumed by Brother Blue, glorious things were wrought in that house, and the Highest himself established the work. The Rev. Wiley W. Thomas was that year in charge of the Station, and there was a grand ingathering, though the number had at the beginning of the work for the erection of the new Church was not reached. The increase that year went from forty-nine white members to one hundred and thirty-four white members, and from eighty-four colored members to one hundred and twelve colored members. In that revival in October of that year, Oliver Rufus Blue, the son of the man who had disposed of the debt, was, to use his own words, "born again." He afterward preached in that house, and administered the affairs of that Society. He was licensed to preach there October 12, 1843. From 1839 to the close of 1845, there was, except about two years, a steady increase in the number of members, though not until the latter part of 1845 was the number of members equal to the number had at the beginning of the work of erecting the new Church. Then the membership reached the number of two hundred and twelve white and three hundred and twenty-five colored members. During 1845, under the ministry of the Rev. Jefferson Hamilton, D.D., and the Rev. William B. Neal, the former in charge of the Station and the latter in charge of the District, there was a most remarkable work of divine grace in the city of Montgomery. On July 19, of that year, began, in the house of worship of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the city of Montgomery, the Second Quarterly Meeting for that ecclesiastical year. The environment was propitious, the correlation of forces was conducive to the success of the divine cause. The preachers



proclaimed the word of God, asserted the truth of the gospel, and testified to the power thereof, the Holy Ghost attended with unction and power, Christians were filled with radiance, sinners were attracted and convicted, the interest in the subject of religion became intense, and the meeting went on and the work continued for three months or more without intermission or cessation. About two hundred and thirty persons professed the attainment of divine renewal, and the Churches of all denominations in the city received accessions therefrom. One hundred and ten were added to the Methodist Episcopal Church. The influence of that meeting swept out over all the region round about. Wetumpka received the influence and felt the power.

T. L. Brothers and R. Jones were official members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Montgomery during the time now in consideration. Mrs. Nancy Gilmer, *née* Marks, a native of North Carolina, after living in Virginia and Georgia, and joining the Church in Georgia, moved to Montgomery, Alabama, in 1829, and resided there till her death in May, 1845. Through all the time she resided there she was a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church. She was never carried about with visionary things, but was a steady, prayerful, devout, and active Christian. She was equal to almost any emergency, and she surmounted the most formidable difficulties. She was fond of the institutions of Methodism, and in Class-meetings constantly testified of the saving power of Jesus and the glorious grace of God. Her husband was brought to God in the glorious revival in Montgomery, in 1839, and some of her children were made partakers of the divine grace in the great revival of 1845. In the transition to the great beyond she was tranquil and triumphant. Mrs. Rosana Flowers was a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Montgomery from 1832 to 1845. She died in the last named year. She was strongly attached to the doctrines and discipline of the Church with which she was affiliated. She at last entered upon ineffable joys and infinite delights.

Wetumpka was for many years one of the appointments on the Alabama Circuit, but at the session of the Alabama Conference in January, 1837, it was set off to itself as a Station, and a preacher appointed to it for that year. Since that time We-

tumpka has been a Station. The Rev. Ward Bullard was the first preacher appointed to Wetumpka Station. He had just been admitted on trial in the Conference, and at the end of the year there was a deficiency of one hundred and fifteen dollars on his annual allowance, which was paid to him from the fund which was provided to make up the deficiencies of those who did not obtain their regular allowance on the pastoral charges, and he discontinued. One year sufficed for his trial of the itinerant ministry. He was from the north. The first statistical report made for Wetumpka gave it fifty-five white and fifteen colored members. The house of worship was on the west side of the Coosa River, and in the northern suburbs of the town, and was a little frame building. Somewhere about 1843 that building was abandoned and a wooden building was erected near where has since stood a brick Church, which in its turn superseded all the others. As late as 1841 the Church at Wetumpka was considered too poor to give an adequate support to a preacher; and the preacher stationed there that year and his wife had to teach for a livelihood, and had to rent the house in which they lived, and do all the domestic work of the house in order to meet the necessities of the case. In the absence of records it is impossible to ascertain who were the members in the first years of Wetumpka as a Station. It seems that David C. Neal, a brother of the Rev. William B. Neal, who joined the Church, perhaps in Georgia, moved to Wetumpka just in advance of the making it a Station, and his wife, Martha A. Neal, joined there in 1842 or 1843.

The preachers who served the Wetumpka Station from the beginning of 1838 to the close of 1845 were: the Rev. Andrew P. Harris, the Rev. Zaccheus Dowling, the Rev. Jeremiah Williams, the Rev. Abram B. Elliott, each one year, the Rev. Seymour B. Sawyer, two years in succession, the Rev. Samuel Armstrong, the Rev. J. P. Perham, and all in the order here named. At the close of 1845 the Church at Wetumpka numbered one hundred and forty-five white and one hundred and twenty-four colored members, and the congregation worshiped in a new Church, an ordinary wooden building.

Several of the preachers of the Alabama Conference located at the close of 1835, among whom were the Rev. Newitt Drew and the Rev. Hazlewood B. Farish. They had both married

within the last two or three years. The plea of providing for the household was the plea made by both these men for locating.

The Rev. Newitt Drew married the daughter of Brother Alexander Henderson, who lived near Mount Pleasant, Monroe County, and for whom Henderson's Church was named. Drew bought him a place near his father-in-law, and engaged in farming, but did no big things at it. He was a man of shabby style, and penurious in his investments. In a penurious way he accumulated some property. He was a man of moderate talents, and limited attainments, a fair preacher, and a fervent exhorter. He had some trouble with a School Teacher, who killed him. For reasons he took his children from School, and some hot words passed between him and the teacher. The next day after that occurrence Drew, with others, went to the Church to set things in order for an approaching Quarterly Meeting. The aforesaid teacher approached him where he was at work, and struck him with a piece of wood on the head. Drew never spoke after he was hit with the piece of wood, and in about seven hours he died. That was August 21, 1849. He held the relation of a local elder at the time of his death. There were eight children in the house, one being born a few hours after his death.

The Rev. Hazlewood B. Farish married the daughter of one Brother Williams, and after his location he went to merchandising with his father-in-law at Allenton, Wilcox County, and soon bankrupted, and he and his father-in-law were ever after insolvent. After his failure in merchandising he took up the practice of medicine, following the Thomsonian School. For many years he lived where he died, near Gravely Creek and not far from Black's Bluff, in Wilcox County. By constant application to the administration of medicine, and by horse-swapping he managed to maintain a large family. There were somewhere about a dozen children in the family. One of the daughters married the Rev. Daniel T. Mellard, who was once a member of the Alabama Conference, and who was the son of the Rev. James H. Mellard. Another daughter married the Rev. Neil Gillis, also a member of the Alabama Conference. The Rev. H. B. Farish was a man of extraordinary talents. He had fine gifts as a preacher. He was a ready speaker, fluent, and ornate.

Had he continued in the itinerant ministry it would have been well for him and the Church. As it was, he buried his talents, neglected his gifts, and achieved but little. He was a local elder to the day of his death, but for many years he preached but seldom, and only on special occasions, such as funerals. The congregations were always delighted to have him preach. The only complaint made about his preaching was that he did not preach enough.

The Alabama Conference at its session at Tuskaloosa, in January, 1840, granted the Rev. A. C. Ramsey a location, and held memorial services for the Rev. R. G. Christopher, M.D., who had died the preceding October.

The Rev. Abiezer Clarke Ramsey was admitted on trial in the Alabama Conference at the time of its organization, and now after seven years' work he is granted a location at the same place at which he was received. From that day forth he was a local elder. He was of slender mold, and had been all his life afflicted with asthma. He was the picture of feebleness, and all who knew his constant conflict with asthma supposed that in a brief while he would be beyond the grave, but contrary to all appearance and all expectation he lived more than half a century after he located. Most of those years he spent in Wilcox County, Alabama, although quite a while he resided at Gadsden, Alabama. For forty or more years he filled the responsible office of steward in the Church as well as that of local elder. He did much service both as a preacher and a steward. He kept open house for many, many years. He engaged his strength and gave his means to the Church. He was twice married. First, he married Mrs. Elizabeth Amanda Bonham; second time he married Miss Jane Hearn, the daughter of the Rev. Ebenezer Hearn. His last wife preceded him to the grave a few years. His first wife died in 1854. He died himself at the house of his son-in-law, Mr. Joseph Benson, at Forest Home, Butler County, Alabama, January 23, 1891.

Near Boyd's Ferry, on Dan River, in Halifax County, Virginia, there lived in profound obscurity and in extreme poverty a man and his wife bearing the name of Christopher. On October 10, 1787, there was born at that place to that man and his wife a son to whom was given the name of Ralph Griffin. Some ten or a dozen years after the advent of that son the family moved



to Rutherford County, North Carolina, where, in a brief time, the wife of the man and the mother of the child died. In a short while after that, to the family, sad event, those of them left, moved to Abbeville Distriet, South Carolina. The father of that household was an adherent of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and against the Methodists he entertained inveterate prejudice, and while he gave his ehildren but little training and searcely any instruction in anything, he did suceeed in imparting to them his prejudice against the Methodists. Ralph Griffin Christopher knew nothing of the Methodists, except his detestation of them, but some time during the two years, the years 1805 and 1806, the Rev. Britton Capel was the presiding elder of the Seleuda Distriet, South Carolina Conference, he visited a Camp-meeting on Corwaxwee Creek where he heard the Rev. Britton Capel preach and was convicted, but he withstood the influence and wore out the impression. The next year after his attendance at that Camp-meeting he moved to Greene County, Georgia. He was still wicked. In 1808, though he did not know anything about praying in secret, he, for the first time in his life, kneeled to pray, and in that eondition he went to an altar to be prayed for. At a meeting at Burke's Camp-ground, in Greene County, Georgia, he went to the altar as a mourner, and at midnight of the Sunday of the Camp-meeting he was renewed, and shouted for joy. He had present a friend, one William Lumpkins, who helped him and rejoiced with him. He had now reached his majority, and in 1809, under the ministry of the Rev. Hilliard Judge, and in the bounds of Greene County, Georgia, and in the bounds of the Appalachee Circuit, South Carolina Conference, he joined the Methodist Episeopal Church. In 1810 he was licensed to preach. At the time of his conversion he did not know his alphabet. A few days after regenerating power had attuned his heart to the melody of religion and the love of God he felt that a eommission to proclaim the gospel to mankind was given to him, and this notwithstanding he knew not a letter in any human language. He was as ignorant as it was possible for one to be at twenty years of age in a eivilized land, but he greatly desired to be able to read and write. About the close of 1810 and the beginning of 1811 he went to school two months to a Methodist preacher. That was the number of his school days, and the sum of his literary training. His

further attainments be made by his own exertions. Though under the disabilities of poverty, obscurity, and ignorance, on a July day in 1811 he left home and secular affairs and joined and traveled with the Rev. Samuel M. Meek on the Appalachee Circuit. He had only one advantage. He had no wealth to forsake nor fame to forego. He was already inured to hardship and want. At the session of the South Carolina Conference held at Camden, South Carolina, December 21-27, 1811, that rude and untutored young man was received on trial in the itinerancy, and appointed for the next year to the Great Pee Dee Circuit as the third preacher. Strange as it may seem, he advanced to the offices of the ministry in the time prescribed by the Discipline, and the third year was stationed at Fayetteville, North Carolina, and for the fifth year at Charleston, South Carolina. Having been for nine years or more in the laborious work of the regular ministry, in January, 1821, he located. In November, 1830, he was re-admitted to the Alabama Conference and remained a member thereof till his death October 13, 1839. Three years of the time he was presiding elder. Poverty and affliction were his heritage to the end, but he attained prominence and usefulness in the ministry. He was free from ambition and avarice, and he did not engage in the ignoble strife of being accounted the greatest among his fellows, nor heaping a little shining dust, which might be called wealth, but he engaged in laudable efforts to do good and be useful, and while he entered the arena and went into the battle of life under great disabilities, he was supported in the train of his efforts, and as he went on the field of his operations expanded as his intelligence increased, and from his history may be learned how much can be achieved, even under disadvantages, by application, energy, industry, and piety. His posterity still honor Methodism.

During 1841 four preachers, members of the Alabama Conference, the Rev. Daniel Monaghan, the Rev. James M. Boatwright, the Rev. Noah Laney, and the Rev. Wilson Moore, went hence to their reward.

The Rev. Daniel Monaghan was a veteran in the service, and about twenty-two years of his ministry were spent in Alabama, and whether he was in the local or the itinerant ranks he was always active and efficient. He attained in his heart and maintained in his life Christian perfection. His personal char-

acteristics were prominent. He was an original preacher, an impassioned speaker, and though quaint, he was felicitous in his utterances and illustrations. On March 20, 1841, death seized his mortal frame, and his spirit took up abode in the goodly bowers which be along the banks of the river of life.

The Rev. James M. Boatwright did a little less than three years' work in Alabama, coming to the State from the North Carolina Conference in the first part of 1839, and dying July 5, 1841. It seems that he died at Gainesville, Alabama. He commenced his ministry in the Virginia Conference. He was of sweet spirit, pleasant manners, unpretentious bearing, and was pious and zealous. When the hour of dissolution came it brought no terror and he died in calm assurance of going to his Father's Kingdom.

The Rev. Noah Laney was a native of North Carolina and was born the first year of this century. He did but little work in Alabama. He was a member of the South Carolina Conference and then of the Georgia Conference. For 1840 he, in the capacity of a local preacher, supplied the Circuit contiguous to his home, and for 1841, having been re-admitted to the traveling connection in the Alabama Conference, he was made presiding elder of the Irwinton District, and on July 10, of that year, he died. He died with the assurance: "Christ is the rock of my salvation."

Marianna Station lost both the presiding elder and the preacher in charge by death in 1841. Laney, the presiding elder, died, as above stated, and the Rev. Wilson Moore, the preacher at Marianna, Florida, for that year, died of congestive fever in the month of September, of that year, being about twenty-six years old. He was a young man of power and promise. He attained regeneration and joined the Methodist Episcopal Church at Gainesville, Alabama, in October, 1838. He was admitted into the Alabama Conference on trial in January, 1839. His career was brief, and his end triumphant. In the conflict with death the Rev. Wilson Moore shouted: "The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge."

The Rev. Abram B. Elliott located in December, 1843. That terminated his itinerant ministry. He was admitted on trial in the Georgia Conference, at Macon, Georgia, January 7, 1831, with A. H. Mitchell, William C. Crawford, Willis D. Matthews,

all of whom have worked in Alabama. Brother Elliott died at Leeds, Alabama. He was a local preacher till the end came. He was a man of good ability. He was an enormous eater and a great sleeper. He could sit down in Church and go to sleep before the preacher could reach the announcement of his text. He was a tall man, with black eyes and an intellectual face.

At the session of the Alabama Conference at Wetumpka, Alabama, February 26, March 5, 1845, the Rev. James O. Williams located, and the Rev. Seymour B. Sawyer and others were reported as having died during the then closing ecclesiastical year.

The Rev. James O. Williams was of obscure origin. The home where resided the family of which he was a member and from whence he departed when he entered upon the work of an itinerant preacher was near Somerville, Morgan County, Alabama. It has been said he "was born near the town of Somerville, Morgan County," but if that statement be true he must have been born among the Indians, and in a land where still prevailed savage laws and barbarous customs, for, evidently, he was born before the territory embraced in Morgan County was ceded to the United States by the Cherokee tribe of Indians. He was admitted on trial in the Tennessee Conference in November, 1831; at the end of two years he was admitted into full connection, ordained deacon, and located. Upon locating he entered La Grange College as a student, and graduated from that College in 1836, and in the latter part of that year he was re-admitted into the Tennessee Conference. In the latter part of 1839 he was transferred to the Alabama Conference. For 1840 he was junior preacher at Livingston and Demopolis, and the next year he was in charge of that appointment. For 1842 he was at Gainesville and Jamestown, and for the next year he was at Sumterville, and the next year to that, and which was the last with him, he was at Brush Creek.

The Rev. R. H. Rivers, D.D., who knew him well, gives the following description of him: "He was five feet eight or nine inches in height. His neck was slightly awry, so that in walking he seemed to be looking in one direction and going in a different one. His eyes were set deep in his head, and were utterly inexplicable in their expression. They were overarched by a pair of thick, heavy eyebrows, unbroken by any interval in



the center. His hair was coarse and rough, and stood up like bristles. His forehead was high but narrow, and seemed to converge nearly to a point at the top of his head. His complexion was sallow and his countenance bloodless."

The friends of his youth considered James O. Williams a youth of superior intellectual faculties, and thought him possessed of extraordinary gifts of oratory. The beginning of his ministry was thought prophetic of future eminence and usefulness. Alas! the expectations created at the incipency of his ministry were never realized.

In form and feature he was abnormal, in soul he was erratic, as a whole he was anomalous. In the very mold and elements of his being he was fitted to devious paths, and by the very laws of his constitution he was incapable of any but a devious course. Dr. Rivers says: "His education was never symmetrical or thorough. It was like himself, irregular and indescribable." He made improper alliances, subjected himself to suspicions, fell into serious troubles, and fell under grave charges, annoyed the Church, retired under a cloud, and is remembered for his eccentricities, and the stigmas which were sought to be fastened upon him. He was tried in the Church for numerous offenses, offenses of all grades from imprudent conduct to gross immoralities. He was tried in the courts of the Church, vigorously prosecuted, and ably defended. He was acquitted of every charge brought in due form against him before the tribunals of the Church, except, perhaps, the charge of "carrying concealed weapons," and in that he justified himself on the plea of self-defense.

A fatal mistake was made in the case of James O. Williams which he himself did not make. The authorities who had in charge the interests of the Church before whom his case was brought for a license to preach made the blunder out of which came all the blunders which followed in the case. The authorities should have exercised the gift of discernment, and should have been guided by the Scriptures and by the wisdom of a divine administration, and if they had thus exercised themselves and been thus guided in the affair they would have sent the man to the plow and not to the pulpit. The Scriptures clearly teach, see Leviticus xxi. 17-27, that to put forward a man to administer the offerings of the sanctuary who is disabled by de-

formities, or superfluities, or blemishes, is to profane the Sanctuary which the Lord intends to be sanctified and kept holy. That man Williams was put into a position for which, by the very construction of his being, he was wholly disqualified, and the Church, at last, paid the penalty of the folly committed. It did not require anything more than sound judgment and common discernment to see that he would, if put into the ministry, drive to folly and end in shame. Dr. Rivers says: "Possibly, if he had never gone to College, it would have been better." It would have been infinitely better for him and the Church had he never been put into the ministry. After he located he studied law, and about six years after his location he died of yellow fever, on a Steamer, which at the time was lying at Tuscahoma on the Tombigbee River, and near that place he was buried.

The Rev. Seymour B. Sawyer, a native of North Carolina, was born December 8, 1808. The family emigrated to Indiana, where, when he was between twelve and thirteen years old, Seymour B. was renewed by divine grace. He joined the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and when he was between eighteen and nineteen years of age he was licensed to preach in that Church, but, dissenting from some of the doctrines of that denomination, he subsequently returned the license which he had received in that communion. He joined the Methodist Episcopal Church, and in the State of Mississippi, when he was between twenty-one and twenty-two years of age, he was licensed to preach in the Methodist Episcopal Church. In due course he was inducted into all the offices of the ministry, and maintained an honorable distinction throughout his remaining days on earth. He was a gentle, sweet spirited man, a diligent pastor, and an earnest preacher. In his person and in his family he had affliction. He was qualified by experience to sympathize with all who were, on any account, in distress. His wife, a good woman, became an invalid, which imposed on him great care and deep anxiety. To seek a change of climate which it was trusted might serve to restore health he left Wetumpka, Alabama, with his wife, and started to his mother's home in Indiana, but he never reached said home. He reached Nashville, Tennessee, and there the invalid died, and there he buried her mortal remains. He then retraced his way back to Wetump-

ka, Alabama, burying one of his children on the way. He ended that sad journey at Wetumpka, and was immediately attacked with pneumonia, and from that he lingered for eleven months, and then, on September 23, 1844, he took his exit for worlds on high. He died at Wetumpka, Alabama, surrounded by those who loved him. On his death-bed he wrote a number of stanzas which possessed considerable merit, and which as a song was known as "Sawyer's Exit." He died in confidence of an immediate entrance into heaven. He was the Secretary of the Alabama Conference from its organization till his death.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### THE WORK OF METHODISM AMONG THE COLORED PEOPLE IN ALABAMA.

THE Rev. Matthew P. Sturdevant, the first Methodist preacher ever appointed to preach in the bounds of Alabama, commenced his work in the State the month of the very year, January, one thousand eight hundred and eight, in which expired the Constitutional provision against prohibiting the importation of slaves into the several original States of the Union. The very first list of members reported as belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church in the bounds of what is now Alabama contained the names of fifteen colored members. From that day there have been Methodists of the African race in Alabama. At times in many places of the State the colored members outnumbered the white members. Not, however, till November, 1831, was there made a separate appointment to the colored people in the State. In the list of the appointments of the Tennessee Conference made November, 1831, and made then for the next year, is found the following:

“Thomas M. King, Missionary to the people of color in Madison and Limestone Counties, North Alabama.

Gilbert D. Taylor, Missionary to the people of color in Franklin and Lawrence Counties, North Alabama.”

These are the first appointments of the kind ever made in Alabama, and the Rev. Gilbert D. Taylor, one of the two men appointed to one of these first appointments ever made in the State to the people of color, was the same man who in October, 1819, was rejected by the Tennessee Conference upon a recommendation for admission as a preacher on trial because he owned slaves. It is a little remarkable that the preacher who at one time was not considered a suitable person to be trusted with the care of souls and the interests of the Church of God because he owned slaves should at another time be selected as the man to do the delicate work of preaching to the slaves of



North Alabama, and for the reason that he did own slaves. That is the history. At the time the two Missionaries were appointed to preach in North Alabama to the colored people there were in round numbers about three thousand colored members in the State of Alabama. In twenty-four years there was a growth from nothing to three thousand. That was commendable and encouraging.

Both the Missions to the people of color in North Alabama, and no others were then in the State, were discontinued at the end of one year, and there was not a separate pastoral charge of that order organized in the State for four years. The environment was not favorable to the organization of separate charges for the Negroes in Alabama, and progress in that line and on that plan was slow. The plan of having the whites and the Negroes in the same pastoral charge was the plan to which all were accustomed, and many of the preachers, and many of the members of both races preferred that order of things, and there was much to commend it. It was the cheaper plan, for the same preacher and the same house of worship would serve both classes. Under that plan there would be no classes of preachers. None would be under the disparagement of being the preacher of the slaves. The Negroes generally preferred the preacher who served the white folks to the preacher who was appointed specially to their race. Great difficulties were experienced in inaugurating and maintaining a separate pastorate for the Negroes. At the first, suitable places of worship were not provided, and it was difficult to secure funds to pay the salaries of the preachers who served the Negroes. It is correct to say that at the time it was attempted to inaugurate that work the great body of the slave owners in Alabama were unwilling to provide places of worship and money for salaries. Large numbers were opposed to preaching to the Negroes in separate congregations. Many of the slave owners held and avowed the belief that preaching to the slaves would foster insubordination, encourage abolition sentiments, complicate civil affairs, and hasten emancipation.

The manumission of the slaves in the United States was, at that time, pressed upon the public attention with great zeal and unremitting diligence by the abolitionists of the country. The position taken by the Methodists upon the subject of slavery

and emancipation and held from the time of the introduction of Methodism in the United States to the time now under review was not acceptable to slave-holders. The South Carolina Conference in session at Sparta, Georgia, on the morning of December 29, 1806, interrogated the preachers presented that day to be admitted into full connection in the Conference with respect to traveling and slavery, and said preachers professed their intention to travel as long as they were able, and that they "abhorred slavery." At Liberty Chapel, Georgia, December 26, 1808, the preachers present that day to be admitted into full connection in the South Carolina Conference "were examined on the subject of slavery, and the Conference were satisfied with their sentiments." Some of these preachers who "abhorred slavery" and whose "sentiments" on the subject, therefore, "satisfied" "the Conference" became very prominent as preachers in South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama. Such transactions on the part of Annual Conferences, and such declarations on the part of itinerant preachers were not calculated to give the slave-holders in Alabama much expectation of, to them, a desirable result from the association, as guides and teachers, of these preachers with their slaves, and consequently access to the slaves was granted to the preachers with some hesitancy and misgiving. Slave-holders in Alabama were apprehensive of insubordination and insurrection, and laws were enacted to suppress or rather prevent these. The statutes of the State prohibited a Negro going off the premises of the owner without a pass from the owner or overseer giving permission to go and return. Laws organizing patrol companies were enacted by the State, and were enforced with considerable vigilance and severity. A Negro was not allowed under the law to own a gun, or even carry one without written permission from the owner or one in authority over the Negro. A Negro could not preach to or exhort a congregation of his own color without the presence of a number of white persons. The preacher appointed to serve the Negroes in the ministerial calling had a most delicate position, and he had to be circumspect in all things. There was not that alienation between the slave-holders and the slaves indicated by the prevalence of the fear of insubordination and insurrection, and indicated by the enactment of rigorous laws against the Negroes gadding from place to

place without authority, and against mischievous assemblies among themselves, and against their possessing themselves of the instruments of war and butchery. There was in a sense a community of interests between the races, and there was a measure of kind feeling for each other. While there were excessive penalties attached to offenses, police regulations were necessary for the safety of the people and the peace of the country; and while excessive penalties cannot be vindicated, it is a truth that there was as little crime under the administration of the code of Alabama in the days of slavery as could be found anywhere else among the same number of inhabitants. The patrol laws made for the government of the slaves in Alabama were as effective as any laws ever enacted and enforced.

The slaves in Alabama felt a profound interest in the welfare of their owners, and they had a laudable pride in the prosperity thereof. While the Negroes on a plantation would combine together to appropriate to their own use the chicken, pig, and calf belonging to the premises, they would go any length to protect the property and guard the interests of their masters against the depredations attempted by any one else. The slaves in Alabama had their prejudices and their preferences, and they possessed the instinct of economy and thrift, the faculty of discrimination and invention, and they were adepts at concealment and detection. An occurrence, *bona fide*, bearing illustration upon these points may be related.

Near the town of Crawford, then the seat of justice of Russell County, Alabama, and one of the appointments of the Crawford Circuit of the Alabama Conference, there lived a Mrs. H., a widow lady, and a Methodist. She had an elegant home and an accomplished family. She possessed a good property, consisting mostly of valuable lands and numerous slaves. Her hospitality was most bounteous, and, apparently, freely bestowed. At her elegant home she kept servants, some to cook and wait in the house, and others to do the work about the yard, lot, and garden. Those kept to do the outdoor work were a blind Negro man and a small Negro boy. The boy, who was about ten or twelve years of age, acted as guide to the blind man. Mrs. H., being a zealous Methodist, offered the young preacher who was on the Circuit for the year a home at her house without compensation. The young preacher accepted the offer, and, when in

that part of the large Circuit, he made that his home, frequently staying there from two to four days at a time. The horse which the preacher rode was a well-made and well-kept one, and in color a deep, rich sorrel. The horse-lot on the premises of Mrs. H. was large, and about a couple of hundred yards from the residence. In the middle of the lot was a long open shed with a large trough in the center of it, running through from end to end, where usually a number of horses were fed and ate together. The young preacher always everywhere looked after the comfort and well-being of his horse. One morning, while spending two or three days at that elegant and hospitable place, just as the sun was showing his unclouded face a little above the horizon, the preacher entered the lot, and took a view of the situation. The blind Negro man was standing near one end of the long trough under the shed. The small Negro boy, who acted as guide to the blind man, was standing near the trough, and about equal distance from each end of it. Two or three horses were standing up to the trough, eating. The preacher's horse was standing under the edge of the open shed, a little way from the long trough, stretching out his neck, and poking out his head, all indicating that he longed to be at the trough, eating, but dare not approach any nearer the provender. Without saying a word, the preacher walked quietly up to his horse, took him by the fore-top, and led him up to a vacant place at the trough, and put him in a position to eat. The blind Negro did not know that the preacher was anywhere about the lot. So soon as he heard the preacher's horse bite the ears of corn he said, in a low, and significant tone, to the little Negro, who was his guide and helper: "*Drive that red horse away.*" The Negro boy, in a quiet way, but in a tone suited to the impartation of information said: "*Mr. — (calling the preacher's name) put him there.*" That was a revelation to the blind man. Immediately, as quick as thought, the blind Negro threw up his arms and sawed his hands through the air, and in a most expressive tone, said: "*Hie! hie! hie! Drive these cows away from here. There are so many cows here a body can't feed a horse!*" There was not a cow in fifty yards of the shed, nor any appearance of one intending to go in that direction. The preacher said not a word, but after standing a short time, and after watching his horse eat a little, he returned to the



house, and tried to conjecture why that Negro did not wish the "*red horse*," as he called him, to eat; and he also meditated upon the Negro's quickness, ingenuity, invention and general exploit in trying to hide, when he found he was discovered, his intention and effort to keep the "*red horse*" from eating. That performance of that blind Negro showed a streak of human nature, and of human ingenuity hardly excelled in the history of mankind. What stratagem could surpass that? That Negro was taking care of the provender of his owner.

At the time of the formation of the Constitution of the United States of America anti-slavery sentiments were strong throughout the domain thereof, notwithstanding there was secured, through manipulations, Constitutional provision for the perpetuation of slavery. The sentiment and the slavery continued, and "an irrepressible conflict." It is equally true that between slave-holders and slaves there were mutual attachments, and that state of things, the prevalence of "an irrepressible conflict" and of mutual attachment between slave-holders and slaves, continued until emancipation went into effect. There is not the slightest disposition to discuss at this point the merits of slavery or the merits of emancipation; the purpose is simply to note the state of things under which the work of Methodism was prosecuted among the people of color in Alabama.

The work having been begun, though, under the sentiments and environments of the hour, it was suspended for four years, was not to be abandoned, and the Alabama Conference had in its list of appointments for 1837 the "Mission to colored people in Mobile, to be supplied." It turned out at last, however, that the "Mission to colored people in Mobile" was supplied and served by the preacher in charge of the white congregation in the city, and at the end of the year it was, as a separate work, abandoned. For 1838 there was only one separate appointment to the Negroes in the State, and that was indefinite and nominal. It read: "Mission to colored people, L. Massengale." For 1839 there were three charges to the people of color: the Madison, and Courtland Valley, and Bigbee Mission. For 1840 there were five Missions to people of color: the Huntsville, Courtland Valley, Wilcox, Tombigbee, and Greene. For 1841 there were two of these Missions: Huntsville and Courtland Valley. For 1842 there were eight Missions to the colored

people: Huntsville, Courtland Valley, Cypress, Mount Pleasant, Chattahoochee, Woody Bridge, Autauga, and Canebrake. For 1843 Madison, Franklin, Lawrence, Mobile, Woody Bridge, and Chattahoochee were provided for. These six, and two new ones, Glennville and Tallawassee, existed the next year. Through the years from 1832 to 1844, there was, in that field, fluctuation no little. It was enough to discourage any ordinary faith and to dampen any ordinary zeal. For 1845 there were fourteen charges to the people of color in the State, five of them in the Tennessee Valley, and the others in South Alabama.

The men herein named served one or more of these Missions the number of years herein stated: The Rev. W. Jared, one year; the Rev. Reuben Ellis, two years; the Rev. H. Williamson, one year; the Rev. Alexander McDonald, one year; the Rev. Anthony S. Dickinson, one year; the Rev. Alexander McBride, two years; the Rev. John Boswell, three years; the Rev. Harris Stearnes, two years; the Rev. Leonard Rush, two years; the Rev. Elisha Carr, three years; the Rev. L. Richardson, one year; the Rev. Henry P. Turner, two years; the Rev. William H. Johnson, one year; the Rev. William K. Norton, two years; the Rev. A. J. B. Foster, one year; the Rev. Turner P. Holman, one year; the Rev. James Gaines, one year; the Rev. J. B. F. Hill, one year; and the Rev. Peleg R. McCrary, one year.

At its organization the Chattahoochee Mission embraced Russell County and that part of Barbour County along the Cowikee Creeks. In the early spring of 1842, which was about the time the work was beginning to formulate, the Missionary discerned, to his delight, that the masters of the slaves and the managers of the Mission were apparently pleased with the experiment of administering Christian instruction to the people, and that the blacks received the word of life most thankfully, and that many of them professedly gave up their bad habits. However, at the same time it was true that some of the owners of the slaves were avowedly opposed to the Mission, and they maintained that if they granted to their servants the privilege of Christian instruction after the fashion pursued by the Missionaries more might be required of them in the future. They held that there was no good in increasing privileges, as it increased responsibility.

In the latter part of April of that year, 1842, the Rev. John W. Starr, the presiding elder, made a journey through the Mission, and, within five days, he preached at the plantations of Sister Barnes, Mr. Mitchell, Brother Chambers, Mr. Whitaker, Brother John Crowell, and Brother Flewellen. These places here mentioned were in the section of Oswitchee Bend in Russell County. The overseer and his wife at Mitchell's place were members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and at that place on the occasion here mentioned the presiding elder baptized seventeen children, and eleven adults; ten of the adults were baptized by pouring and one by immersion. The place of Brother Chambers was two and a half miles from Mr. Mitchell's place, and there the presiding elder found a good Society, and there he baptized thirty-two children. At Whitaker's, three miles from Chambers, there was at that time no Society, but a good prospect for one. At Brother Flewellen's on that occasion they had a grand meeting, and a royal time. "It would have done your heart good to have been there and have heard the shouts of those poor Negroes." In 1843 there were on that Mission twenty-eight appointments, and between four hundred and fifty and five hundred members. The preaching places were nearly all on the plantations.

The Woody Bridge Mission, which was mostly in Montgomery and Pike Counties, was enlarged in 1843, and the Missionary preached or lectured from three to four times on Sundays, and in the week about once a day. It was claimed that many made rapid improvement. There was great need of training, and much room for improvement in knowledge as well as in conduct. The Catechisms of the Church were introduced and used on that Mission that year, and the old and the young were catechised together. On one occasion, after reading the Decalogue to a large class, the Missionary asked: "What is the meaning of thou shalt not commit adultery?" The answer given was: "To serve our heavenly Father, and our earthly master, obey our overseer, and not steal anything." On another occasion the question was propounded: "What did God make you for?" It was promptly answered: "To make a crop." Those Negroes were not utterly blank, but there was certainly need of perseverance in disseminating light and in attaining knowledge.

For 1844 Tallawassee Mission had twenty-one appointments,

six other plantations having been tendered to the Missionary for his supervision which, for the lack of time and strength, he had to decline, and the Mission could have been sufficiently enlarged to employ three Missionaries, each with a thousand colored persons under his ministry; and there were already in its bounds two hundred and seventy-five members.

For that same year, the Glennville Mission, which lay on the Chattahoochee River and the Cowikee Creeks, had thirteen appointments, with four hundred and forty members, and seven hundred Negroes regularly preached to, and during the year one hundred and three children and fifty adults were baptized.

At the close of 1845 there were on the soil of Alabama twelve thousand six hundred and eighty-five Negroes who belonged to the Methodist Episcopal Church; nine thousand six hundred and fifteen of these were connected with the pastoral charges of the white people, and three thousand and seventy were connected with the Missions to the people of color. There were not quite half as many colored as white members in the State.

The ideal standard of religious affairs was seldom reached among the slaves in Alabama. Bondage, even under the most favorable circumstances, is not a desirable state, and every one "being a servant" would rather "be made free." The Negroes in Alabama in the days of slavery "sighed by reason of the bondage" under which they were held, and this statement is made without any intention of affirming or denying that they were subject to evil treatment and personal cruelty. Being circumscribed in their education and deprived of property rights, they were limited in their apprehensions and in their benevolent contributions, and circumscribed in their activities. In the matter of religion they had to be in some measure coerced. Compulsion had to be resorted to in some instances. Slaves that they were, they had to be treated as dependents, and in some instances they had to be made to change their apparel and attend divine service. Coercive measures may seem out of place in religious matters and in questions of conscience, nevertheless the owners of the slaves claimed the right to require that clean clothes should be donned on Sunday and that divine service should be attended on the occasion of the preaching by the man employed to minister to the Negroes in divine things. While none could be forced to accept religion



or become a communicant in the Church, it was, nevertheless, perfectly legitimate to adopt and enforce a rule that all slaves on the premises should attend the preaching furnished them free of cost to the dependents. But a majority of the Negroes were glad of the opportunity to attend the services provided for them, even many who would not affiliate with the Church and would not partake of the Sacraments would attend upon the preaching of the divine word. The channels of association to which the slaves were limited induced an appreciation of appointments for divine service. Saturday-night frolics, annual huskings, occasional holidays, and occasional barbecues constituted the principal entertainments and pastimes allotted the Negroes, and the occasion for preaching and worship gave them an opportunity for association and entertainment in which they delighted, even though they cared but little for the theme of salvation.

The Negroes were impulsive and demonstrative, and were easily moved. A certain sort of ecclesiastical oratory put them in a glow and set them in motion. Swinging and intoning were popular parts of their worship. There was a peculiar swinging of the body and there was a peculiar voicing of sounds the inhibition of which cooled their ardor and marred their happiness. The preacher who would be acceptable to the Negroes in the days of slavery had to understand their desire to toss and intone during divine service, and grant them liberty and indulgence therein. There was among them in their worship a mixture of sighs, moans, and groans which made a peculiar sound, and which was peculiar to them and which it is impossible to embody in words. While they were not cultured in music, they were gifted in singing. Some of them were able in prayer and in exhortation. They were fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.

The work went on with purpose, the men who served the Missions to the people of color were mostly faithful, self-sacrificing men and able ministers of the New Testament, and results followed. There were as pure specimens of Christian character among the slaves in Alabama as were ever found anywhere. It is true that among the thousands who joined the Church there were impostors and apostates, but such have been found in all the centuries among all classes and nationalities.

There were hundreds who were examples of integrity, patience, humility, meekness, devotion, and piety; men and women who lived in the hope and died in the faith of the gospel of the Son of God, and went home to heaven. The slaves gathered from the Mission fields of Alabama will make a considerable part of that triumphant host who, at the last day, shall enter in through the gates of the city of the great King, and who shall ascribe endless praises unto him who loved them, and washed them from their sins in his own blood.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### CENTENARY INSTITUTE.

ONE thousand eight hundred and thirty-nine was the centenary year of Methodism, and was celebrated as such by the Methodists of Europe and America. It was celebrated with thanksgiving to God for achievements made and prosperity attained, and with contributions for the work still to be enterprised under the auspices of Methodism. Devotional services were held in numerous places, and large sums of money were contributed for the various objects of Christian benevolence. That centenary celebration deepened the piety and enlarged the liberality of the people called Methodists, and gave to their cause a new impetus.

A meeting was appointed and provided for by official action of the Alabama Conference upon the subject of the celebration of the centenary of Methodism. The meeting, clothed with conventional powers, was held, and by said meeting the enterprise of establishing in the State of Alabama an Institution of learning of high grade for both sexes was inaugurated; and the centenary year, as auspicious, was made the time for gathering the funds necessary to build and equip the School designed. With gratitude to God for his beneficent providence, abundant grace, and expanded kingdom, and with deep concern for posterity the Methodists of Alabama entered upon the celebration of the one hundredth year of Methodism. They entered upon the celebration with plan and purpose, with heart and hope. The plan in providing a School for higher education was to collect the money from the Methodists at large, and the preachers on the different charges in the Conference were the appointed canvassers and collectors, and subscriptions were to be sought in every city, town, and hamlet; in every Station, and Circuit; in every place where a Methodist could be found.

The twenty-fifth day of October of that centenary year was the appointed time for assembling the hosts of Methodism at

the chosen places of worship for the special services of the grand celebration. On that specific day sermons and addresses suited to the occasion were delivered, and thank-offerings were made. That day was observed throughout Europe and America.

The Quarterly Conference held for Franklin Circuit at Russellville, September 7, 1839, Resolved to celebrate the centenary of Methodism on the twenty-fifth day of October following in concert with the friends of Methodism in Europe and America; and further Resolved that the said celebration be held at the three places, Russellville, La Grange, and Ebenezer. Provision was made for arranging for the services, and for taking subscriptions for centenary purposes, and for appropriating the funds in accordance with the recommendation of the next Tennessee Annual Conference.

The Quarterly Conference held for the Circuit July 6, 1839, selected Ebenezer Church as the place on Greene Circuit for the general celebration of the centenary of Methodism, and appointed the Rev. John R. Lambuth and the Rev. F. D. Poyas to preach on the occasion.

The Quarterly Conference held for Greenesborough Station, September 7, 1839, appointed the Rev. James M. Boatwright and the Rev. John Du Bois to deliver addresses on the centenary of Methodism.

The Quarterly Conference of Wills Valley Circuit was held at Eden Meeting House, on September 21, 1839, and, "The Presiding Elder read the recommendation of the Convention for the centenary celebration on the twenty-fifth of October ensuing; when it was moved and carried that the general celebration of centenary for Wills Valley Circuit be held at Shiloh Camp-ground, commencing on the 24th of October. Brothers Pearson, Williams, and Clayton were appointed to deliver the centenary sermons on that occasion; and a Committee consisting of Brothers Clayton, Rogers, and Holloman appointed to take up collections for said centenary purposes; when it was resolved that sums of \$30 be raised in subscription to be paid in annual installments in equal sums of \$10."

The Quarterly Conference held for Jacksonville Circuit September 28, 1839, adopted the following resolution: "Resolved, by this Conference that there be held two centenary meetings on this Circuit, on the twenty-fifth day of October next, the one



at Owens Spring Camp-ground and the other at Jacksonville; Brothers Ellis and Taylor are appointed to deliver addresses on that day at Jacksonville, and Brothers Patton and Scales to deliver addresses on the same day at Owens Spring Camp-ground."

These are specimens of the action had at different places and in different Quarterly Conferences on the subject of the celebration of the centenary of Methodism, and indicate the interest felt and the plans operated on that great occasion.

The greatest tangible result of the centenary celebration in Alabama was the establishment of the Centenary Institute. In the title of the School the word Centenary was used because the School was projected and much of the money used in its establishment was collected in the centenary year. In the title the word Institute was intended to indicate the grade of the School and the extent of the curriculum.

The neighborhood of Valley Creek in Dallas County was selected as the location for the School. According to the sentiments of that day that was an admirable community for a School. It was sparsely populated, and was remote from thoroughfares and commercial enterprises. It is said, however, that the location was settled by a money consideration. The Commission charged with the duty of locating the School proposed to locate it at the place which contributed the largest sum of money to the enterprise. Whoever made such a proposition committed folly in Israel. In response to the proposition the Valley Creek community, so it is said, contributed nine thousand dollars, the largest sum given by any place, and that settled the question.

The Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Alabama in General Assembly convened, by an act passed, and on January 2, 1841, approved, declared "That Eugene V. Le Vert, Ebenezer Hearn, William Murrah, Asbury H. Shanks, Seymour B. Sawyer, Alfred Battle, Daniel H. Norwood, Daniel Pratt, Aaron Ready, Elisha F. King, Franklin C. Shaw, Benjamin I. Harrison, Noel Pitts, Shadrach Mims, and their associates and successors in office are hereby constituted a body corporate and politic, in deed and in law, by the name and style of the Trustees of the Centenary Institute of the Alabama Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church."

By an act passed by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Alabama, and approved January 15, 1829, Valley Creek Academy, in Dallas County, was incorporated, and, in due course, that School, as a private enterprise, for the use and benefit of that community, went into operation, and was doing its work, in some measure, when Centenary Institute was projected and ready for patronage. It took some while after Centenary Institute was enterprised to get it equipped for work. With the nine thousand dollars donated by the Valley Creek community one of the buildings of Centenary Institute was erected, and in the latter part of 1843 the buildings of the Institute consisted of a fine residence for the occupancy of the President; and a two-storied wooden building, containing five good recitation and study rooms, (each with a fire-place) for the male department; and an excellent brick edifice, two stories high, and containing on the first floor one large study room and two smaller rooms for the use and accommodation of the pupils; and on the second floor six commodious rooms, two for the department of music, two designed for the Library and apparatus, and two as Lecture and Recitation rooms, for the female department. The buildings for the male and female departments were at a distance from each other, with a deep and beautiful valley intervening. The Valley Creek Academy had to adjust itself to the new order of things, and by proper negotiations its lands and buildings were conveyed to the Trustees of the Centenary Institute. The last of the property of the Valley Creek Academy was conveyed to the Trustees of Centenary Institute June 25, 1846, and consisted of a part of the west half of the south-east quarter of Section twenty-three, Township eighteen, Range ten. The Valley Creek Academy was thus, by due process, absorbed by or incorporated into the Centenary Institute, and utilized as best it could be.

In the spring of 1842 some sort of opening was made of Centenary Institute, but the session was attended with more or less friction, and but little was accomplished. In the summer of 1843 the Trustees elected the Rev. A. H. Mitchell, who had been connected with Emory College, Georgia, President of Centenary Institute, and on the sixteenth of October of that year he opened the session of the Institute with encouraging prospects. There were between sixty and seventy pupils, including both

sexes, present at the beginning of the term. Both the male and female departments, at that time, were under the supervision of the Rev. A. H. Mitchell. The session contained ten months, and consequently there was but one session per annum. The terms of tuition were twenty-five, thirty, and forty dollars per session, according to studies, and it was advertised that board could be had in any family in the neighborhood for ten dollars per month, including fuel, lights, and washing. The President of the Institute was assisted during that session in the male department by Mr. Holcombe, and in the female department by Miss Dutton and Miss Casswell, and the music was taught by Mrs. Walker. That session closed Thursday, July 25, 1844.

The next session opened Monday, October 7, 1844, and during that term, and in the month of April, 1845, there was a sweeping religious influence at Valley Creek, and the Church there, the School sharing largely in the religious influence, received about fifty members. About one hundred and thirty pupils matriculated that session, and at the close of the session on Friday, the eleventh of July, 1845, five graduates, Miss J. M. Hawkins, Miss C. Bradley, Miss M. Paulding, Miss M. H. Norwood, and Miss C. Coleman, were sent forth from the Halls of that Institution of learning. At that time Mr. W. A. Simmons, and Mrs. Walker resigned their positions as teachers.

In the summer of 1845 the name of the place was changed from Valley Creek to that of Summerfield. It was thought that the name of Valley Creek would give the idea that the place was in a valley on a sluggish creek, and that those abroad getting that idea would be afraid of the place as sickly, and so they changed. Summerfield would have a more pleasant association, and make a better impression upon foreigners who had never seen the place. It is said that the then Mrs. A. H. Mitchell and Mrs. Greenberry Garrett suggested the name of Summerfield in honor of the noted John Summerfield, the great preacher. At the time the name Summerfield was given to the place the citizens thereabout entertained the idea, that as the place was near the center of the State and had other advantages, that the capital of the State might finally be located at Summerfield.

The Teachers connected with the School during the session which opened Monday, October 6, 1845, were, in addition to the

Rev. A. H. Mitchell, who somewhere about that time had the degree of Doctor of Divinity conferred on him by the University of Alabama, Mr. A. R. Holcombe, A.M., Professor of English Language; Mr. D. S. T. Douglass, A.M., Professor of English Literature; in the female department Miss M. D. Casswell and Mrs. R. A. E. Jordan, Teachers in Literary and Scientific departments; and Mrs. Cann and Mrs. Frances Davenport, Teachers in Music. During that session there were one hundred and sixty-five pupils in attendance upon all departments.

The Rev. Ebenezer Hearn and the Rev. William B. Barnett were Agents for Centenary Institute for 1841, and for 1842 they were Agents for that Institution and also for La Grange College. For 1843 and 1844 the Rev. Ebenezer Hearn was Agent for these two Institutions of learning. The Rev. Jesse Boring was Agent for Centenary Institute for 1845. At this stage of things it is impossible to ascertain what was accomplished for the enterprise by the agency of Brother Barnett, and there is no official statement at command to indicate what pecuniary aid was secured by Brother Hearn. There is on record a personal statement, made by Hearn, how reliable it is cannot be known, in which he says he collected certain amounts each year for Centenary Institute, and the amounts given in the four years aggregate twenty thousand and seventy-seven dollars and fifty-nine cents. In an official report still extant there is a statement asserting that the Rev. Jesse Boring, during the year of his agency, "booked some three thousand dollars new subscriptions, and collected some three thousand dollars on old subscriptions."

In the selection of the fourteen Trustees as corporators of the projected School, named Centenary Institute, there was brought into requisition eminent talents and extensive influence. Of the preachers named as corporators all, except the Rev. E. V. Le Vert and the Rev. William Murrah, have been sketched in this History on other pages and in other connections, and while these two men here excepted were not distinguished as specialists in institutions of learning, yet what is to be said about them may as well be said here and now.

The Rev. Eugene V. Le Vert was in his forty-fifth year when he was named as a Trustee of the Centenary Institute. He was a native of Virginia. His father was a native of France. This native of Virginia was endowed with superior intellectual pow-



ers, but for some reason he grew to manhood without education. His tuition at a regular School did not exceed three months. Under the instruction of his father he received some training in the French language. September 13, 1819, he was renewed by divine grace, and July 20, 1821, he was licensed to preach, and immediately thereafter was employed by the presiding elder for the remaining months of the Conference year on the Tuskaloosa Circuit. There was no Jones's Valley Circuit at that time. Jones's Valley was then a part of the Tuskaloosa Circuit. At the end of the year he was received on trial in the Mississippi Conference, and appointed for the next year junior preacher on the Tuskaloosa Circuit. In due course he was advanced to the orders of the ministry. He served to the full measure of his strength in the Christian ministry for more than half a century, and he served well. He not only performed much labor, but he endured many hardships. He devoted much time to the defense of the doctrines of Christianity in the public assemblies. He met antagonists fearlessly, and brought into requisition logic, satire, pathos, and eloquence as occasion required. In the pulpit he was deliberate, earnest, graceful, eloquent, and attractive. Through his ministry, so it is said, hundreds were brought to Christ.

At this juncture may very properly be narrated an incident in his ministry which led to a case of religious renewal and Christian usefulness. During the year 1822 he fell into a state of despondency, being then, perhaps, less than a year old as a preacher. In the hour of his gloom he rashly determined to abandon the ministry. To the Rev. James Tarrant, an aged local preacher in Jones's Valley, he revealed his purpose to renounce his call and abandon the Christian ministry. Brother Tarrant understood his case, and with great sagacity and with much painstaking analyzed it for him, and showing him the possibility of eventually overcoming his impediments and of being successful in the work to which he was persuaded he had been called, he relieved his gloom, turned his mind, and induced him to continue in the high calling upon which he had entered.

In 1842, just twenty years after that eventful interview, the Rev. E. V. Le Vert, as presiding elder of the Selma District, held a Quarterly Conference for Jones's Valley Circuit at Smith's Chapel, about twelve miles from the town of Elyton.

Benjamin Tarrant, one of the sons of the Rev. James Tarrant, was in attendance on that Quarterly Conference. He was then near fifty years of age, and was a politician, a drunkard, and a gambler, and had, all his life, to use his own words, "served the devil faithfully." In his public ministrations at that Quarterly Conference the Rev. Mr. Le Vert took occasion to refer to his early ministry in that country, and especially to the incident of his life when he received the counsel of the Rev. James Tarrant which settled the issues of his cause. He told in pathetic terms and with poetic beauty of his lack of education, and of his lack of experience, and of his inability to sing, and of the deep gloom which came over him; and how he described to Brother Tarrant, the patriarch, his deficiencies, difficulties, and despondency; and how by the tender sympathy and wise counsel of the aged man of God he had been induced to change his mind and prosecute the divine work. In glowing terms and earnest spirit he pronounced a tribute to the memory of his benefactor, and in conclusion announced that were there of the posterity of the Rev. James Tarrant in that congregation still strangers to God and his grace, it would afford him supreme delight for them to turn to God, repent of their sins, and obtain justification through their father's Saviour. That reference, narrative, and appeal arrested Benjamin Tarrant, and led to his conviction and his salvation. He at once set about seeking the renewing grace of God, and in a short while came into a happy Christian experience. His character and life were entirely changed, and in a few brief months he was licensed to preach in the Methodist Episcopal Church. During the remaining part of his life he was an accredited minister of the gospel, and while he was never anything but a local preacher he was in labors abundant, and was unsurpassed by any in his section in efficiency and usefulness. He spent months of each year, and without pecuniary compensation, in protracted meetings. He was generally the first to reach the place of a protracted meeting and the last to leave it. He preached everywhere in Jefferson County and much in other Counties. He claimed near the end of his pilgrimage that he had, with his own hands, received into the Church twelve hundred persons, in a ministry of thirty years, which was an average of forty a year. He was a man of much prayer, and of great faith, and as, what is called, an evangelist

he had but few if any equals in all the country where he labored. He led thousands to the triumphs of faith in Jesus Christ. He died at the age of eighty-one, February 14, 1874, and was buried in a grave-yard about five miles north of Birmingham, Alabama.

The Rev. E. V. Le Vert was twice married, and his first wife was the mother of fifteen children. His last ministerial act was the administration of the Lord's Supper, which occurred the Sunday before his death. He died surrounded by his children and many friends, April 16, 1875, and his body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Marion, Alabama.

The Rev. William Murrah was born in Georgia, in 1807; educated at Franklin College, Athens, Georgia; admitted on trial into the South Carolina Conference in the first part of 1829; transferred to the Alabama Conference in the first part of 1835; transferred to the North Mississippi Conference in 1874; died at his home in Pickens County, Alabama, October 9, 1887; and was buried at Columbus, Mississippi. He filled many important and leading charges in Alabama, and was a delegate to several General Conferences. He represented Pickens County, Alabama, in the Legislature of the State in the days of reconstruction. There was much political corruption in that time, and, alas! some in high places became degenerate children. For 1879 his appointment read: West Point and Tibbee, William Murrah. That was his last pastoral charge. At the end of that year he went on the superannuated list, where he remained till he went hence to his reward.

The Hon. Daniel H. Norwood was a devout Methodist, possessed of mental endowments, literary attainments, and an opulent estate. He was eminently qualified to fill the position of a Trustee of an institution of learning. He was a Trustee of Centenary Institute for a term less than three years. He died previous to February, 1845.

The Hon. Daniel Pratt had been in Alabama about three years, and was little more than forty years old, when he was appointed Trustee and incorporator of Centenary Institute. He was a tall man and straight, had large hands and feet, a Roman nose, and eyes the color of the sky. Not only did his countenance beam with benevolence, but his entire person indicated benevolence. He was the embodiment of energy, integrity, and philanthropy.

He was Master of Mechanical and Useful Arts. By his industry and skill he accumulated large wealth, and did much for the common country and the general good. He was without guile and malice. He was a Methodist, and bore good will to all Christians, and to every people. He served his generation.

Benjamin Inabnit Harrison, a native of South Carolina, a man of many excellencies, and who was made Trustee of Centenary Institute when in the twenty-seventh year of his age, moved to Valley Creek, Alabama, where Centenary Institute was finally located, in 1832. He was an educated man, and during much of his time followed the profession of teaching. He lived many years at Valley Creek (Summerfield), but finally moved away and died at the University of Alabama, in 1872. He married in 1834 Miss Martha I. Childers. She died in 1843. In 1845 he married Miss Adaline H. Simmons, the daughter of the Rev. John Simmons, and a native of Henry County, Georgia. At a Camp-meeting held near Valley Creek in 1835 Mr. Harrison was convicted, and firmly resolved to forsake the world, seek the Saviour, and from thenceforth pursue the path of life, and, though not then renewed, he immediately joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. From that hour salvation was first in the thought of his mind and supreme in the desire of his heart, and he prayed earnestly and without ceasing. Though for twelve months his soul lingered in darkness, finally, one day, as he went on horseback, in company with two godless men, to the town of Selma, in the interest of some secular affairs, he, while the two companions in travel talked of worldly things, fell into deep meditation and secret prayer, and though he was surrounded by circumstances which were trying and distracting, the last clouds of doubt drifted away, and his soul was bathed in the light of the divine Spirit.

His wives were both excellent women and of noble families. His first wife was cut down in early womanhood. His last wife still lives, 1892. She was born in 1825, and is the sister of the Rev. J. C. Simmons, who has worked so long in California. She joined the Methodist Episcopal Church when less than eleven years of age, and at that time obtained a sense of divine acceptance not before realized by her. Through all the years she maintained a lovely Christian character. Her children honor her.

In a deed made in 1845 conveying certain property to Cente-



nary Institute Robert A. Baker is named as one of the Trustees. He was elected to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Norwood, and from that time until his death, or for more than twenty years, he was connected with that Institution of learning, and was one of its most zealous friends and liberal benefactors. Than Robert A. Baker a more efficient layman never wrought in Alabama. He was born during the first half of the first decade of this century; it is said he began his Christian labors in a Sunday-school, and it is possible that he began said labors about the time he was converted in 1826. His name first appears upon the official Records of the Church for the Franklin Circuit in 1829. His name is registered in the Quarterly Conference Records for that Circuit as a class leader. He was steward on the Franklin Circuit in North Alabama from October, 1830, till June, 1841. At the close of 1841 he moved out of the bounds of the Franklin Circuit and made his home in Sumter County, Alabama, till about 1848, when he moved to Summerfield, Alabama. From the time of his joining the Methodist Episcopal Church till his death, a period of about forty years, he was an active Christian. Wherever he was he worked for the divine cause, and while he never entered the ministry, he filled all the offices common to laymen, and participated actively in the public services of the public assemblies. For months together he would attend and work in the protracted meetings and Camp-meetings which were held from year to year for promoting the interests of the Church and securing the salvation of men. Robert A. Baker was brought up in poverty and in orphanage, but these circumstances and accidents could not keep him in obscurity nor detain him from usefulness. He attained place and influence in the Church and in the State as well. He was a member of the General Assembly of Alabama from Franklin County for a number of sessions, and attained to the position of Speaker of the House of Representatives. He exerted a good influence as a member of the General Assembly of the State, and did good work in guiding legislation. He was calm, considerate, and conservative, and was noted for industry and integrity. Had he been ambitious, he might have filled higher offices in the State. He prosecuted large business and controlled large funds. The ample means at his command were used for every benevolent purpose. He made large contributions to the various enterprises of the Church, inaugurated

and sustained enterprises. He gave by hundreds and into thousands. He knew the meaning of a widow's sorrows and of an orphan's woes, and he responded with liberal alms for the relief of the helpless and the destitute. He was fervent in his prayers and in his piety, and he was generous in his sympathies and his alms. His prayers and his alms are allied in his memorial. Whether or not he was a man of undue sentiment, it is certain he was a man of large charity, of numerous alms-deeds, and of nobility of character. With his mind and money he instituted and supported public enterprises and Christian benevolence. He did liberal things himself, but he did more; he infused into the communities of the Commonwealth wherever he touched them a spirit of enterprise and benevolence, and he led those with whom he came in contact to high purposes and to noble deeds. He was not that dispicable character who, under the sanctimonious assumption of being a peace-maker, strolls through a community prying into secrets, rehearsing vituperation, and complicating difficulties, but he was that character whose very presence is a benediction, and who promotes good will and establishes peace among men. He was as good and great in the private circle of home as in the public affairs of men. In his home he found sublime felicity, and to all the members of his household, including the domestics or slaves, he dispensed blessings with beneficence. He was gentle and generous in the administration of the affairs of home. On his wife and children he bestowed warm affections and on his servants just consideration. His mind was adorned with truth, his heart was gemmed with righteousness, and his soul was illumined with love. The divine instincts were vital in him, he was rich in the consciousness that God was formed in him the hope of glory, and his passions and desires were subordinated to the divine will. Charmed by the beautiful, refined by the good, and filled with the fellowship of the saints and the communion of God, he maintained consistency and efficiency, and was great in faith, love, and deeds. He died suddenly in the last part of December, 1865, and was buried at Summerfield, Alabama. He died across the Bay from the city of Mobile. He served his generation according to the will of God, and fell on sleep. One of his sons entered the ministry, and was a member of the Alabama Conference at the time of his death. Another of his sons is an efficient

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member of the Church in the city of Mobile, Alabama. One of his daughters married the Rev. Henry Clay Stone, who was in the itinerant ministry in Alabama. Another daughter married the Rev. Thomas C. Weir, long in the regular ministry. "God is in the generation of the righteous." There is nothing better than that a man should teach his children the divine ordinances, and command his household after him, for the mercy of God is upon them that love him and keep his commandments, even to a thousand generations.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### FURTHER HISTORY OF LA GRANGE COLLEGE.

THE beginning of the work of education in Alabama under the auspices of Methodism has been sketched in a preceding chapter. The narrative is here resumed in a further account of La Grange College. About the close of 1832 the Rev. Edward D. Sims resigned his position as Professor in La Grange College, and at the same time the Rev. William H. Ellison was transferred from the South Carolina to the Alabama Conference and appointed Professor in La Grange College. From that time till the close of 1836 Professor Ellison filled the chair of Mathematics. For 1835 and 1836 the Rev. John N. Maffitt had a position in the College as Professor of Elocution. From the beginning of 1836 to the close of 1839 the Rev. Collins D. Elliott was Professor in one of the chairs of the College, and the Rev. R. H. Rivers also filled a chair from the beginning of 1836 to the beginning of 1843, when he resigned his position to take charge of the Tennessee Conference Female Institute at Athens, Alabama. In 1835 Henry Masson and Thomas Barbour were elected Professors in the College, one of Languages and the other of Chemistry. Henry Tutwiler filled the chair of Mathematics, beginning his work in January, 1840. Dr. Carlos G. Smith filled the chair which the Rev. R. H. Rivers resigned in 1843. In the thirties Richard Shepherd and R. J. Muncham, each in turn, had charge of the Preparatory Department connected with the College.

An encouraging number of students matriculated in the College during every session held through the thirties, and a number graduated during that period. The degree of M.A. was conferred on one at the commencement in July, 1832, on five in 1833, on seven in 1834, and on seven in 1835. The Hon. James E. Saunders is authority for the statement concerning these numbers.

It is said that in 1839 there was a special religious work in



the College which lasted three months, and that at the close of it there were but few students who stood aloof from the Church.

In 1842 there was an increase in the number of students in the College, and said students maintained good order and morality, and pursued their studies with becoming diligence. The usual annual examination was held that year beginning May twenty-seven and closing June first, and the Commencement exercises took place July fourth, following, when degrees were conferred. On that day the next session began. The session was opened on and continued from that day, so it was asserted, because it was conducive to health to remain on the mountain of La Grange during the summer and fall. Those who remained on the mountain through the summer and fall months escaped bilious fever, which was quite prevalent in other sections of the country. The College at that time owed but little, the tuition fees paid the salaries of the officers, and while funds were needed to liquidate the small indebtedness, every one was hopeful and anticipated continued success.

In the latter part of 1843 the affairs of the College were in a healthy condition. The literary department was flourishing. About that time God poured out his Spirit upon the inmates of the College, and quite a number of the students joined the Church. In the spring time of 1845 the internal interests were in a flourishing condition upon the whole, though in the second session of that year there was a small decline in the number of students in attendance. While the internal affairs were in a flattering state, its financial concerns were greatly embarrassed. The session which opened in January, 1846, promised to be a fair average in point of numbers, and very favorable in literary results. At that time none but students in the College were received, and all were doing well in their studies, and there were fourteen candidates who were striving to complete an extensive course in the various branches of a collegiate education, and for graduation at the end of the session. The external affairs of the College were in an unpromising condition. Money was greatly needed, but the resources of the Church seemed to be exhausted. The Agency for the College of the Alabama Conference for the past year had yielded but little, and the Agency of the Memphis Conference had brought the College in debt. Therefore, at that time the Alabama Confer-

ence did not appoint an Agent for it, but recommended that the outstanding accounts of the Institution be placed in the hands of the presiding elders, to be distributed to the preachers for immediate collection.

There were only sixty pupils in attendance at the College during 1848, and the Board of instruction at the close of that year was not full. The indebtedness of the Institution at that time was about five thousand dollars, the greater part of which was due the Instructors. To relieve the embarrassment of the hour an effort was being made to endow a Soule and Paine Professorship with fifteen thousand dollars each. At its session in January, 1849, the Alabama Conference adopted the following: "Resolved, That this Conference will heartily co-operate with the Memphis and Tennessee Conferences in raising its proportion of the Preacher's Fund for endowment of Soule and Paine Professorships upon the plan of Tennessee and Memphis Conferences." By September of that year between twenty-six and twenty-seven thousand dollars had been raised on the endowment of the chairs, and the College was paying expenses. At that time it was said: "La Grange College has ample buildings, an increasing endowment, pure air, beautiful scenery, healthful associations, orderly, attentive students, a full faculty, a good Library, good apparatus, with the patronage, substantial aid, and fresh, hearty good will of several of the Annual Conferences of the Southern Church." The session of the College which closed near this time closed in good condition.

The forty-first session of the College began January 21, 1850. At that time there was a Grammar School connected with the College under the supervision of the Faculty. The entire expenses of a student in the College at that time, which varied according to the advancement of the student, was from sixty to eighty dollars per session of five months. That covered tuition fees, board, washing, fuel, lights, and servant hire. That was certainly a model of cheapness for college education. The session which opened on January 21, 1850, was interrupted, and in less than one month from the time of opening, the exercises of the Institution, under the pressure of a panic, had to be suspended. Small-pox broke out at La Grange, a panic ensued, and the Faculty immediately suspended the exercises of the

College. It is not now known how many persons were affected with the disease, but there were several. They were removed to a distance of several miles from La Grange, and provided with nurses, and all other communication with them prohibited. G. E. Cumpe, M.D., was at that time the resident physician at La Grange. The Small-pox there at that time is said to have been altogether accidental, no case having been known there in thirty years preceding. The exercises of the College were suspended about one month. On the twelfth of March, of that year, a circular was sent out allaying all fear of danger, and the exercises of the College were resumed. There were eighty pupils in attendance when the exercises of the Institution suspended; whether they were all in place on the resumption of work is not now known. The session went on to the close without further interruption, and on Thursday, July 4, 1850, Commencement day, the College admitted to the degree of Bachelor of Arts the following students: Nathan M. Gregg, Jacob W. Swoop, Columbus Sykes, John C. Stevenson, Edward McAlexander, and Edward H. King. On that same day the La Grange College conferred the honorary degree of Master of Arts upon the Rev. Edward C. Slater, of the Tennessee Conference, and that of Doctor of Laws upon Bishop Jeshua Soule.

In January, 1851, the debt against La Grange College was five thousand dollars, and the only plan by which to liquidate it was selling Scholarships for eight years at one hundred and twenty-five dollars per scholarship. The College had at that time an endowment of thirty thousand dollars. The number of students in the College for the session closing in June, 1851, was one hundred and thirty, and there were at that time nine graduates. The College at that Commencement conferred the honorary degree of A.M. upon Dr. Francis E. H. Steger, and the degree of D.D. upon the Rev. John B. McFerrin and the Rev. Richard H. Rivers. At that Commencement the preachers and orators who preached and orated were the Rev. John B. McFerrin, the Rev. P. P. Neely, and W. W. Garth. Garth had formerly graduated at that College.

The next session opened the first Wednesday in August; and in January, 1852, there was still a debt of five thousand dollars against the College, and the buildings of the Institution needed

repairs to the amount of two thousand dollars. The liberality of the Church had been exhausted. A perpetual solicitation of College funds had dulled the ear and deadened the conscience of the Church. The debt increased faster than the funds accumulated. There was great complaint about the inaccessibility of La Grange to South Alabama. Up to that time East Alabama had not done anything for the College, either in pupils or financial aid.

In the report of the College to the Alabama Conference at its session in December, 1853, it was stated that one hundred and fifty-three students had matriculated during the then College session, and at that time there were only ninety-five present. The fact that so large a number of the pupils who had matriculated had left the College halls was discouraging to the friends of the Institution. There had been a gracious religious influence in the College during that session. That was gratifying to the ministers of the gospel and the friends of Christianity.

Upon consultation for the relief of their embarrassments, the Trustees of the College deemed it essential that some plan be adopted to endow the Institution permanently, and at a meeting held in March, 1854, they resolved to sell one thousand Scholarships at one hundred dollars each, said Scholarships to commence whenever seven hundred and fifty had been sold, and the Scholarships, when the proper papers had been executed for them, to run twenty years.

The Faculty of the College in January, 1850, was composed of: Edward Wadsworth, Professor of Mental and Moral Science; James W. Hardy, Professor of Natural Philosophy and Chemistry; Oscar F. Casey, Professor of Latin and Greek Languages; Thomas G. Rice, Professor of Pure Mathematics; Thomas C. Wier, Principal of the Grammar School and assistant teacher in the Department of Languages.

In 1853 Mr. Hatch was secured for the chair of Chemistry and Geology. The Rev. Bennett B. Ross was a Professor in the College in 1853, 1854, and 1855.

The La Grange College called into its service an army of Agents who canvassed the country and asked alms in its behalf. These revenue collectors were appointed officially from time to time as occasion offered, by the Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, and Memphis Conferences, which were sometimes in the



relation of patronizing Conferences. For 1833 the Tennessee Conference had three preachers as Agents for the College in the field, and at the same time the Mississippi Conference had one. Those from the Tennessee Conference were the Revs. Greenville T. Henderson, Alexander W. Littlejohn, and John B. McFerrin, and the one from the Mississippi Conference was Francis A. Owen. In 1837 four of the preachers of the Tennessee Conference were Agents of the College, and in 1842 the Alabama Conference had two Agents for it. This gives an insight into the manipulations of the subject through the operations of official Agents. The Agents for 1834 were the Revs. Littleton Fowler, John N. Maffitt, and one to be supplied; for 1835 the Rev. Littleton Fowler; for 1836 the Rev. Littleton Fowler; for 1837 the Revs. Littleton Fowler, John M. Holland, Phineas T. Scruggs, and John W. Hanner; for 1838 the Revs. John W. Hanner and Simpson Shepherd; for 1839 the Rev. Simpson Shepherd; for 1840 the Rev. Finch P. Scruggs; for 1841 the Rev. F. G. Ferguson; and of the Memphis Conference, the Rev. Lorenzo D. Mullins; for 1842, of the Alabama Conference, the Revs. Ebenezer Hearn and William B. Barnett; for 1843, of the Alabama Conference, the Rev. Ebenezer Hearn; for 1844, of the Tennessee Conference, the Rev. W. D. F. Sawrie; and for the Memphis Conference the Rev. J. T. Baskerville, and of the Alabama Conference the Rev. Ebenezer Hearn; for 1845, of the Memphis Conference, the Rev. John T. Baskerville; for 1846, of the Tennessee Conference, the Rev. E. Carr, of the Memphis Conference the Rev. John T. Baskerville; for 1847, of the Memphis Conference, the Rev. John T. Baskerville; for 1848, of the Tennessee Conference, the Rev. William G. Gould, for 1850, of the Tennessee Conference, the Rev. Joseph B. West; for 1851, for the Memphis Conference, the Rev. William N. Morgan.

The Rev. Robert Paine was at the head of La Grange College from its opening until his election to the Episcopacy in May, 1846. For three years he bore the title of Superintendent of the College and for one year the title of Principal. Out of simple modesty he, for four years, declined the title of President. Through the long period in which he presided over the College he was its strength and stay. He guided its affairs with wisdom and efficiency, and gave it power and influence.

The Rev. Edward Wadsworth succeeded to the Presidency of

La Grange College, and assumed the duties of the office in the autumn of 1846, about the same time that the Rev. B. H. McCown assumed the duties of the chair of Languages, which chair had just been vacated by Carlos G. Smith. The Rev. Edward Wadsworth, as President of the College, conducted its affairs till October, 1852, when he resigned his position and duties. Upon the resignation of Mr. Wadsworth the Rev. James Ward Hardy, a native of Georgia, a graduate of Randolph-Macon College, and then nearly thirty-eight years of age, was elected President of the College, the duties of which office he performed until he was summoned to a higher sphere, August 14, 1853. He was licensed to preach the same year he was elected President of La Grange College. He was a refined gentleman, a man of generous nature. He was a zealous Christian, and a mature scholar.

The Trustees of La Grange College, at the earliest possible moment after the death of Mr. Hardy, elected the Rev. Richard H. Rivers President of the Institution. Dr. Rivers, an alumnus of that College, and a man of great simplicity and transparency of character, entered upon the duties of the office of President of his *alma mater*, March 6, 1854. He found an able and efficient faculty, and all else unpropitious. The body of students was small, the college buildings were dilapidated, and a long standing debt was hanging over the Institution. Little more than six and a half months had intervened from the death of the lamented Hardy, and everything had assumed a gloomy hue. If the buildings could be repaired, the debt liquidated, the endowment enlarged, and the patronage extended, the College might be perpetuated and advanced to greater usefulness, otherwise the days of its glory were already ended. At that stage of affairs a proposition was made to move the College from La Grange to Florence, Alabama. The people of Florence offered, as an inducement, to furnish better buildings than had ever been at La Grange, and a more ample endowment than had ever before been secured for the Institution, and a larger local patronage than the entire patronage which La Grange had at that time, and also to pay all the indebtedness then hanging over the College. The subject was referred by the Trustees to the Alabama, Memphis, and Tennessee Conferences, then the patronizing Conferences of the Institution, for determina-

tion, and the said Conferences by official action authorized the removal. It is said Florence gave twenty thousand dollars on endowment.

In January, 1855, just a quarter of a century exactly from the time the La Grange College matriculated its first class on La Grange mountain, the janitor closed the doors of the College halls on that sublime and consecrated spot forever. In that month of January, 1855, the faculty and the students who had gathered there for that session departed from the town of La Grange, on the mountain, for the town of Florence, Alabama. There at that place and time they claimed to open anew, and proposed to continue the work of La Grange College. It has been stated that there were one hundred and fifty pupils in attendance at the opening in the new quarters. From that day forth La Grange College at the town of La Grange on the mountain stood empty and closed until the buildings, during the war between the States, were consumed by fire.

The attempt to go on at Florence under the old name of La Grange College was bitterly opposed and was abandoned. At the session of the Tennessee Conference held in October, 1855, R. H. Rivers was put down in the minutes as "President of La Grange College, at Florence." That was the last time. The General Assembly of Alabama, for some reason, and under some influence, refused to recognize the College at Florence as the La Grange College, and a new charter had to be secured for the Institution at Florence under a new name. There was a division of sentiment and active opposition in securing the new charter, or a charter for the new College. The act of the General Assembly of Alabama incorporating the Institution at Florence was vetoed by Governor Winston, but on February 14, 1855, the General Assembly, by the constitutional majority, passed the act of incorporation over the Governor's veto. The act passed by the General Assembly, and which became law, clothed certain Trustees, thirty-eight in number, with corporate authority under the style and title of "The President and Trustees of the Florence Wesleyan University." The Florence Wesleyan University was fostered for awhile.

La Grange College had a career of just a quarter of a century, and it did a great work for the generations which it touched. Many of those graduated from its halls made useful men, and

some of them attained conspicuous station; among whom may be named: the Revs. R. H. Rivers, Joseph E. Douglass, and William R. Nicholson, and the Hons. Jeremiah Clemens, William B. Byrd, William B. Wood, A. E. O'Neal, David P. Lewis, and H. C. Jones, and Drs. J. W. Towler, and Thomas Maddin. Lewis and O'Neal were called to the high office of Governor of the State of Alabama by the suffrages of the people.



## CHAPTER XXX.

### THE FEMALE INSTITUTE OF THE TENNESSEE ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, AT ATHENS, ALABAMA.

THE Tennessee Conference at its session at Athens, Alabama, in October, 1842, projected a School for girls, and the General Assembly of Alabama in January, 1843, passed an act incorporating the Female Institute of the Tennessee Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, at Athens, Alabama. The Trustees named in the act of incorporation were: A. L. P. Green, Thomas Maddin, A. F. Driskill, Joshua Boucher, F. G. Ferguson, Daniel Coleman, Ira E. Hobbs, B. W. Maclin, Thomas Bass, J. F. Sowell, Thomas S. Malone, James C. Malone, William Richardson, George S. Houston, R. W. Vasser, Jonathan McDonald, and James Craig.

In the autumn of that year, 1843, the Tennessee Conference Female Institute at Athens, as it was designated in the Minutes, was opened, in a frame building in the rear of where a brick edifice for the School was afterward erected, with the Rev. R. H. Rivers as President, and the Rev. F. G. Ferguson as Professor, and Mrs. Ferguson, and one other person possibly, taught the music of the Institute, and one lady presided in the hall as a teacher. There was a good patronage at the beginning.

In due course was erected the excellent house which has so long stood in the service of the School. The original purpose of the projectors of the School was to lodge the pupils from a distance with the families and in the homes at and about the town, and not in the building of the Institute, hence large boarding accommodations were not provided for in the construction of the Institute building. The Rev. A. L. P. Greene was the active advocate of the plan of boarding the girls in the homes of the people of the place. The plan has merit in it, whatever may be said about the impracticability of such arrangement. It is in harmony with the divine ordinance

to recognize and support the home. After some experience it was deemed unwise to leave the premises for two days of the week unprotected, and so the President, Dr. Rivers, fitted up in the Institute building sufficient accommodations for a family and a small number of boarders, and occupied it. What the building cost is not now known. Mr. Benjamin W. Maclin, probably, contributed a larger sum to the enterprise than any one else.

Dr. Rivers was President of the Institute for a half dozen years, and the Rev. F. G. Ferguson was Professor there for two years, and his accomplished wife was one of the music Teachers in the Institute for two or more years. Mrs. Rebecca Hobbs, the wife of Mr. Ira E. Hobbs, taught in the School for a time. When Professor Ferguson resigned his position the Rev. Benjamin H. Hubbard was elected Professor of Mathematics, and he held a Professor's chair so long as Dr. Rivers was President. When Dr. Rivers resigned the Presidency of the School Dr. Hubbard succeeded to that position, and was at the head of the School till the close of 1852, when he transferred to the Memphis Conference, and was appointed to Jackson Station, as preacher in charge, and Professor in Jackson Female Institute. He died at Jackson, Tennessee, May 2, 1853. He was a fair scholar, a good teacher, a fine preacher, and a lovely Christian, a man of faith.

The Rev. Smith W. Moore succeeded Dr. Hubbard in the Presidency of the Tennessee Conference Female Institute, at Athens. He held that position only one year, though he had held the position of Professor in the Institute for three years previous to his Presidency. He left Athens for La Grange, Alabama, and in about one year transferred to the Memphis Conference, where he worked till his death, September 2, 1880. He spent a good many years in teaching. He was a native of North Carolina, a pupil at Randolph-Macon College, was brought into the kingdom of God at Raleigh, in his native State, and died at Brownsboro, Tennessee, and was buried there in Oakwood Cemetery. He was licensed to preach in 1840. Dr. Moore was a scholar, teacher, preacher, and author. He was gifted, pious, and useful. He died happy, and his memory is precious.

Upon the resignation of Dr. Moore the Rev. Isham R. Fin-

ley was elected President of the Tennessee Conference Female Institute. He filled the position for two years. The Rev. Isham R. Finley was succeeded by Professor George E. Naff, who continued in the Presidency until about the beginning of the war in 1861. Mrs. J. H. Childs took charge of the School after Naff resigned, and she directed its destinies for some years. She was a woman of great force of character, of intelligence, and of worth. She was greatly devoted to the Church. The Institute did well under her supervision. She was a woman of fine personal appearance. She died in Huntsville, Alabama, and was buried in the cemetery at that place.

The method of collecting funds for the Institute is not very well known. It is known that during the year 1845, the Rev. Fielding H. Harris acted as Agent for the Conference Institute at Athens, Alabama. What success he had is not known.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

### THE METHODISTS OF ALABAMA IN THE CRISIS OF 1844.

THE Methodists found their way into the Colonies of North America, and entered upon the sacred work to which they were evidently called. They at once obtained access alike to the slave owners and to the slaves. Both the slave owners and the slaves attained the grace of God, and united with that peculiar people. Very soon that guileless class of leaders who have less wisdom than sensitiveness of conscience began an agitation for the extirpation of the evil of slavery. The preachers in Conference assembled at Baltimore, April 24, 1780, made the following deliverance: "This Conference ought to require those traveling preachers who hold slaves to give promises to set them free." That was the first official action on the subject, and was the beginning of strife, strife which outlasted the institution of slavery in North America. The Conference in session in the spring time of 1784 enacted the following rule: "Our friends who buy slaves with no other design than to hold them as slaves, and have been previously warned, shall be expelled, and permitted to sell on no consideration." At the Conferences held for the year 1785 the following action was had: "It is recommended to all our brethren to suspend the execution of the minute on slavery till the deliberations of a future Conference; and that an equal space of time be allowed all our members for consideration, when the minute shall be put in force." Here is the law on the subject of slavery suspended in the very beginning. Through all the history of ecclesiastical legislation on the subject, the statutes of the Church concerning slavery were inoperative. The very provisions of said statutes demonstrated that it was impossible to enforce them, and that they were absolutely null and void. Even Dr. Thomas Coke, who was so very conscientious in bearing testimony against slaveholding, could desist when he crossed State lines. He said: "I have now done with my testimony against



slavery for a time, being got into North Carolina, the laws of this State forbidding any to emancipate their Negroes." Instead of leaving the civil affairs of the country to the civil authorities, and the domestic matters to adjust themselves in the on-going of time and things, and addressing themselves to the legitimate work of their heavenly calling and keeping themselves in sympathy with all classes and conditions of Society in the broad field before them those very conscientious preachers rushed in where angels would not have ventured, and inaugurated a useless agitation and a destructive war. The wise and conservative had to expend their energies and lay under contribution their best wits in improvising plans and measures to keep from driving to shipwreck and ruin. They had to manipulate compromises to hold the Church in sympathy with public sentiment, and retain a hearing of the people. In order that the Methodist Episcopal Church might maintain an existence in the slaveholding States it became absolutely necessary, from time to time, to make concessions and to recede from the positions assumed on the subject of slavery.

Memorable in the history of Methodism and of the country was the session of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church which was held in the city of New York, beginning May 1 and closing June 10, 1844. The question of slavery, associated with the Rev. Francis A. Harding, of the Baltimore Conference, and Bishop James O. Andrew, agitated that ecclesiastical body through the entire session of six weeks. On May 20 the Committee on Episcopacy was instructed to ascertain the facts concerning the connection of Bishop James O. Andrew with slavery, and report the result of the investigation to the General Conference the next day. The Committee complied with instructions, and gave to the Conference Bishop Andrew's own written statement of the facts in the case. That report and statement, it seems, put the case in official form before the Conference, and the case was set for hearing and disposition the day following. On the order of the day the case was taken up in due form May 22. From that day till June 1 the case was discussed, and that under the pressure of the most intense ecclesiastical and political excitement. The country was agitated from center to circumference. A number of preambles and resolutions were presented and a number of propo-

sitions were made on the subject. Finally, on June 1, the case was disposed of by the adoption of the following preamble and resolution: "Whereas the Discipline of our Church forbids the doing of anything calculated to destroy our itinerant general superintendency, and whereas Bishop Andrew has become connected with slavery by marriage and otherwise, and this act having drawn after it circumstances which, in the estimation of the General Conference, will greatly embarrass the exercise of his office as an itinerant general superintendent, if not in some places entirely prevent it; Therefore, Resolved, That it is the sense of this General Conference that he desist from the exercise of this office so long as this impediment remains."

That document was adopted by one hundred and eleven votes for it, and sixty-nine against it. There were about twelve men belonging to the Conferences in the non-slaveholding States who voted against the measure. The Baltimore Conference was divided in the vote, and one man from the Republic of Texas voted yea.

It certainly required a genius for interpreting constitutions and a gift for associating remote things to find in the constitutional restriction against legislation which would tend to "destroy the plan of our itinerant general superintendency" the basis of a preamble for implicating a man in the charge of violating the provisions of the Discipline who had accidentally become connected with slavery.

The anti-slavery men held that a Bishop under the regulations of the Methodist Episcopal Church was merely an officer of the General Conference, and as such was liable to be deposed at will by a simple majority of the body without the forms of a trial, and that no obligation existed even to assign cause wherefore he was deposed. Dr. Hamline and others argued that the General Conference had constitutional authority to depose a Bishop summarily, and by simple resolution. Dr. Hamline asserted that it was fitting, and expedient that Bishop Andrew be deposed. He said the General Conference had the authority to depose him, and that it would be treason not to do so, and that notwithstanding he and his associates against the Bishop, admitted that Bishop Andrew was "morally innocent." They all pronounced Bishop Andrew without moral turpitude, and without official delinquency.

Those who defended Bishop Andrew rejected all the positions advocated in the case by the anti-slavery men. Bishop Soule held that the constitution, laws and regulations of the Church, the vows of ordination imposed upon and the parchments granted to Bishops defined the relations, protected the prerogatives, and prescribed the duties of Bishops. He held that the Bishops were Bishops of the Church, and not of the General Conference or of the Annual Conference, and that they could not be deposed without formal arraignment, and opportunity of defense, and a verdict arrived at by law and upon testimony. Not by resolution, but by formal investigation, by legal procedure, under forms of trial, can a Bishop be deposed from his ecclesiastical functions.

Bishop Soule entreated the General Conference to defer action on the case. He said: "Now it is the solemn conviction of my mind that the safest course you can pursue in the premises is to pass this subject without any implication of Bishop Andrew's character, and send out officially the plain and simple facts in the case to all your Societies—to all your Conferences. Let it be read everywhere, and then we may have a further expression of opinion, without any kind of agitation." His words, though wise, were not regarded; his entreaty, though earnest, was not heeded.

Time for its preparation having elapsed, a lengthy Protest against the action of the General Conference attempting to degrade and punish Bishop Andrew was presented to the General Conference and entered upon the Records thereof. That Protest was signed by sixty delegates. A Rejoinder to the Protest was made and entered upon the Journal of the General Conference. The making that Reply and putting it to record was a most singular proceeding.

Meanwhile, the crisis called forth various efforts to adjust matters for the successful on-going of the Church in the future. A paper, prepared by Dr. William Capers, was presented to the General Conference, and referred to a Committee of nine for consideration which proposed measures for keeping the Church united under the jurisdiction of two General Conferences, one to be held in the South, and one to be held in the North. No agreement could be reached for adjustment on that basis, and the Committee was released from further consideration of that

plan. A declaration signed by fifty-one delegates was presented to the General Conference representing that the work of the Christian Church could not be successfully prosecuted in the slaveholding States under the jurisdiction of the General Conference as then constituted. The paper embodying that declaration was referred to a Committee of nine, and that Committee reported a document which was adopted by the General Conference. That document provided for uniting the Societies and the Conferences in the slaveholding States in a distinct ecclesiastical connection, should the delegates from the Conferences in the slaveholding States find it necessary. That paper contained provisions with regard to the sixth restrictive rule, the property of the Book Concern, and the property in meeting-houses, school-houses, colleges, and cemeteries which need not be detailed in this connection.

The day after the General Conference adjourned *sine die*, the delegates from the thirteen Conferences then in the slaveholding States and Territories assembled in the Lecture room of Green Street Church, in New York, and formulated an Address to their constituents, and also a plan of procedure to be observed by them in the disposition of the matters involved. The Address contained an intelligent review of the action of the General Conference just adjourned on the various points so vitally affecting the interests of the Methodists in the slaveholding section of the country, and was published, as was also the plan of procedure, for the instruction and guidance of those immediately concerned. The Address set forth the fact that the action of the General Conference touching slavery and abolition had placed the Methodists in the slaveholding States and Territories under proscription and disability; and also that the General Conference, having been advised that there might be an imperative necessity in the premises, had provided for formal and pacific separation, not schism, not secession, but separation; and that the Methodists of the slaveholding States and Territories were to be the sole judges of the necessity for separation. The authors of the Address did not disguise the fact that, though they had "clung to the cherished unity of the Church with a firmness of purpose and force of feeling which nothing but invincible necessity could subdue," they regarded separation in the near future as inevitable. The Address re-



ferred the whole question to the dispassionate consideration of the ministers and members of the Church in the slaveholding States and Territories. The plan of procedure adopted by the delegates recommended that no mass meetings be held, and that no measures be instituted of a radical or revolutionary nature, and that the Societies and congregations make their views known through the Quarterly Conference, and through the Quarterly Conferences reach the Annual Conferences.

The Methodists in the slaveholding States were under the alternative of separating from the men who had deposed Bishop Andrew because he was connected with slavery, or of arraying the whole population of the South against them. They had to separate from the abolitionists or give up the field in which they were at work. A Church whose legislation was so radical on domestic relations and social institutions as to create dissension and distrust could not have access to either slaves or masters. A Church whose legislation was in conflict with the legislation of the State could never hope to be received with general favor and prosper where the conflicting legislation touched the population. The action of the General Conference was radical and reckless, and it was impossible to be indifferent in the midst of such reckless disregard of conservative views and compromise measures. The Methodists, as an ecclesiastical organization, should have abstained, from the first, and all the time, from all interference with institutions authorized and established by the civil laws of the country, and had they pursued that course, they would have escaped the distraction which they had among themselves on the subject of slavery, and the Church would not have suffered the fearful evil of disruption. The vessel was marred in the hands of the potter, marred by the very hands which would make it.

The Methodists of Alabama and the people of the State generally were greatly excited over the action of the General Conference on the subject of slavery, though so far as is now known there was not an injudicious action had nor a revolutionary measure instituted in the entire commonwealth during the whole time of the terrible ordeal. The members of the Church at different places, in meetings called for the purpose, and in Quarterly Conferences held in the order of regular business, passed preambles and resolutions expressive of their views on all the points

involved. There is still extant an account of a political meeting in the State in which action was had on that grave subject. The proceedings of that political meeting and the proceedings of a meeting of the official members of the Greensborough Station, Alabama Conference, will be put to record here in this connection, and are selected and given as indicating the feelings and views entertained by the people throughout the State. These are samples of many papers adopted in different parts of the commonwealth, and for which there is not room in the pages of this History.

"A public meeting of the citizens of Russell County, Alabama, was held at Crawford, on June 8. This meeting was convened for political purposes, and passed a preamble and resolutions in accordance with those purposes. The following resolutions, adopted, among the rest, without a dissenting voice, will interest the readers of this paper:

Be it further Resolved, That this meeting has witnessed with intense interest, and painful anxiety, the agitation of the slave question in the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, now convened in the City of New York. They have seen that a topic, which hitherto has excited the bad passions of of man only in the orgies of fanaticism, or in the strife of factions in their unprincipled struggle for political power, has been transferred to the foot of that throne which ought to be sacred to charity, peace, and good will among Brethren of the same Faith. They have beheld with unutterable indignation, the humiliating fact of a Bishop of the State of Georgia, eminent for his piety, learning, ability, and Christian virtues put in effect upon his trial as a culprit, for the alleged sin of marrying a lady possessed of slaves, by which it is insultingly affirmed, that a slaveholder is an unfit Teacher of the Word of God, and must submit, if tolerated as a member of the Church of Christ, to a subordinate station in the Ministry. A discrimination which finds no warrant in the sacred oracles of God, and which involves both insult and outrage to the people of an entire section of this Union.

Be it further Resolved, that if Bishop Andrew should be deposed from his Episcopal functions, we earnestly invoke the clergy of the Methodist Episcopal Church at the South, to take immediate measures for their secession from a Conference which

has placed so gross a stigma not only on themselves but on their respective Flocks. An insult which can admit of but one remedy, in the application of which they may be assured of the warm sympathy and unalterable support of the religious congregations of the whole Southern States of every sect and denomination." (*Southern Christian Advocate.*)

"At a meeting of the official members of the Greensborough Station, Alabama Conference, held July 1, 1844, the following preamble and resolutions were offered by Dr. Pleasant W. Kittrell, and unanimously adopted:

Believing that the time has arrived, in the history of the Methodist Episcopal Church, when it becomes absolutely necessary that the Southern portion of said Church should take a bold, independent, and decisive stand, in defense of its rights, and speak out a language that shall be heard, and felt, from one extremity of our union to the other—from Texas to the farthest shore of New England—therefore, We, the official members of the Greensborough Station, Alabama Conference, in order that our opinions may be distinctly avowed, known, and properly understood, touching the subject of the recent action of the General Conference, in the case of the Rev. James O. Andrew, one of the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, do beg leave to set forth our views in the following resolutions:

Resolved, That we regard the present as an awfully fearful crisis in the history of our Church; one which threatens the whole Church with evils of the most alarming character; which, while it calls for a powerful exercise of Christian forbearance, and charity, on our part, yet justifies us in preparing to meet it in its worst form, both as it becomes Christians, and freemen.

Resolved, That we deem the action of the General Conference, in the case of Bishop Andrew, as unconstitutional, uncalled for, and disorganizing and revolutionary in its tendency, inasmuch as no charge of immorality, or neglect of duty, was alleged against him.

Resolved, That while we are disposed to accord to our brethren of the North honesty of motive and intention, in their late action, yet, we can but sincerely and heartily deprecate that spirit of mistaken and misguided zeal, and false philanthropy, which prompted their movements; that we view it as an unnecessary interference with our rights; at war with the true interests

of the Church, and in violation of that spirit and temper that should govern the conduct of Christ's people.

Resolved, That we heartily approve the course of Bishop Andrew, in refusing to resign, under the circumstances; for had he done so, he would have closed the door (now open) for preaching the gospel to the slaves of the South.

Resolved, That the majority of the General Conference, in refusing to regard the request of the Bishops, in reference to the final decision of Bishop Andrew's case, manifested a deadly hostility to the institutions of the South, and a contempt for the usages of the Church, on all subjects of great moment.

Resolved, That Bishop Andrew could have been profitably and usefully employed, in the Southern portion of our Church, for the next four years, without any violation of the rule governing the work of a Bishop; as evidence—Bishop Hedding has been confined to one portion of the work, not having visited the South but once since his election.

Resolved, That we believe it to be for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, that the Church peaceably divide; for we feel assured that we shall never be able to reconcile our brethren of the North to the institutions of the South.

Resolved, That Bishop Andrew has our entire confidence, as a Christian and Christian minister; that we reverence him for his intelligence and virtues as a man, for his zeal and industry as a superintendent of the Church; in short, for all those noble and dignified qualities of head and heart which have marked his course and characterized him through life, in the various stations which he has filled.

Resolved, That we tender him our Christian sympathies, under the unjust and cruel treatment which he has received from his brethren of the North, and we pledge ourselves to sustain him in his office, and pray that he may long live to bless the Church by his godly example and pious precepts.

Resolved, That Bishop Soule is eminently entitled to the thanks of the Southern portion of our Church, for the noble, dignified, and disinterested stand which he maintained during the business of the General Conference, pending the trial of Bishop Andrew's case, and for the respect which he evinced for southern rights and institutions.

Resolved, That a copy of the above resolutions be signed by



the pastor and Secretary and transmitted to the *Southern Christian Advocate* for publication, with the request that our Church papers will copy them, and that another copy be sent to Bishop Andrew.

THOMAS H. CAPERS, Pastor."

R. S. HUNT, Secretary.

That political meeting in Russell County was held before the adjournment of the General Conference and before the delegates from the South had formulated their plans of operation, and the spirit of that meeting was according to the impulses of the hour, and according to the impulses born of the convictions which the Southern people had on the subject. The meeting at Greensborough was held after time for more mature deliberation, and the spirit there was in accord with the mature judgment of the Methodist people throughout the commonwealth.

The Quarterly Conference for Tuskaloosa Station, Alabama Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, held June 15, 1844, the Rev. Charles McLeod, P. E., the Rev. Thomas O. Summers, P. C., and David Scott, Secretary, adopted a well conceived document, a document written by the Rev. Thomas O. Summers, in which was expressed the judgment of that body on the matters involved by the several actions of the General Conference just four days previously adjourned. That Quarterly Conference said in that elegant document: "Peaceable secession is greatly to be preferred to ceaseless denunciation, distrust, and strife."

The Methodists of Mobile, Alabama, were greatly agitated over the transactions which imperiled their prerogatives and usefulness, and in a meeting of the male members of the several Charges of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the city, a meeting presided over by F. C. Heard, and in which Jones Fuller acted as Secretary, a strongly worded paper was adopted in which the measures carried by the majority of the General Conference were pronounced illegal, oppressive, and unkind; and the abolitionists were respectfully requested not to obtrude their ministerial labors in any of the Churches in the city of Mobile.

At a Quarterly Conference for Russell Circuit, Alabama Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, held at Salem, Alabama, July 13, 1844, a Committee, consisting of five local

preachers, the Rev. John Crowell, the Rev. William C. Robinson, the Rev. Charles A. Brown, the Rev. John Ardis, and the Rev. James W. Capps, and of two laymen who were not preachers, William Balliew and John R. Page, presented preamble and resolutions which were adopted. That paper so enthusiastically supported by that Quarterly Conference declared that an ecclesiastical assembly had no right to interfere with slavery or any civil relations, that the settlement of such questions and relations belonged exclusively to the civil assemblies of the country. That document also declared that the time had come when the maintenance of their rights both civil and religious demanded that the Methodists in the South should separate from the Methodists in the North, and maintain an independent jurisdiction.

A Quarterly Conference held for Greenville Circuit, Alabama Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in July, 1844, adopted an elegant paper which approved of the plan to hold a delegated convention for the purpose of organizing a separate and distinct body for the control of its own ecclesiastical matters. The Rev. G. Garrett was the presiding elder who presided in that Quarterly Conference, and James McFarland was the Secretary.

The male members of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Woodville, Alabama, (now called Uniontown) held a meeting July 15, 1844, presided over by the Rev. Thomas J. Williamson, with J. R. John, Esq., acting as Secretary, in which they expressed their feelings and views on the proceedings of the General Conference relating to slavery. Their views on the subject were expressed by the adoption of a paper prepared and presented by G. N. Ware, R. H. Hudson, and James White. One resolution adopted is the following: "Resolved, That a division of the Methodist Episcopal Church is indispensably necessary and that under existing circumstances we cannot be satisfied without it, and do hereby recommend that the separation take place as soon as practicable, and that the plan of separation proposed by the Committee for this purpose, and adopted by the General Conference, is equitable, and should therefore be carried out."

The Quarterly Conference for La Fayette Circuit, Alabama Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, held at Oak



J. R. JOHN.





Bowery, Alabama, August 10, 1844, with forty-five members present, and the Rev. John W. Starr, P. E., in the chair, and Nathaniel Grady, acting Secretary, adopted preamble and resolutions which for exactness and comprehensiveness were not often excelled. That Quarterly Conference passed the following:

"Resolved, That we recognize obedience to the laws of the land as a high moral duty binding upon every good citizen, and that any act of an ecclesiastical judicature, bringing the Church into a position antagonistical to the State, is arrogant and revolutionary, and fit only to be repudiated and denounced by all good Christians." That Quarterly Conference also declared their cordial approval of the plan to call a convention of ministers to adopt a constitution and arrange for the organization of a Church in the Southern States.

The male members of Asbury Church in Autauga County, Alabama, held a meeting August 17, 1844, in which Samuel Stodenmier, H. D. Holmes, the Rev. Acton Young, S. Mims, J. B. Wilkinson, and Gasper Gholson took a leading part, and in which deep convictions and intelligent views were expressed on the extraordinary events of the hour. In that meeting held in the noble old Asbury Church it was declared: "That under existing circumstances nothing short of a separation will suit the feelings and views of the South, as her rights have been recklessly trampled on by the majority; and the union of the Methodist Episcopal Church has been broken by the late General Conference, by its action in the cases of Bishop Andrew and the Rev. F. A. Harding."

At a meeting of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the town of Auburn, Alabama, held after divine service, Sunday, July 28, 1844, strong resolutions were passed, under the leadership of Judge John J. Harper, J. A. Pelot, N. J. Scott, Simeon Perry, M. Turner, and E. Wilbanks, denouncing the action of the General Conference on the subject of slavery, and recommending separation and a distinct jurisdiction.

The Quarterly Conference for Marion Station, Alabama Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, took action upon the exciting theme, and approved the purpose to separate the Church in the South from the Church in the North.

The Quarterly Conference held for Greene Circuit, at Ebene-

zer, August 17, 19, 1844, adopted a very expressive paper on the momentous subject, as did the members of Society at Ebenezer at the same time. In that paper it was declared that an outrage had been committed, by the General Conference, on the discipline and usage of the Church. The plan to call a Convention to complete a distinct ecclesiastical organization was strongly approved. The Rev. L. B. McDonald, W. H. McCurdy, R. T. Shelton, and H. L. Kennon were active in the measures of that occasion.

The Quarterly Conference held for Oak Grove Circuit at McGinney's Camp-ground, near Lowndesboro, Alabama, August 24, 1844, John W. Starr, P. E., in the chair, and Barton Stone, Secretary, adopted a very exhaustive paper on this great sensation. In that excellent paper the preachers of the Alabama Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church were highly commended for their disinterested Christian work in the Missions to the Negroes, and in it was denounced, with severe sarcasm, "the supererogation of tender sympathy manifested by our Northern brethren for the physical and temporal condition of the slaves," while they had "effected so little for the spiritual welfare of the same race among themselves." The members of that Quarterly Conference, in that superb paper, asserted, "that the unmolested enjoyment of our rights, nay, our very existence as a Church, in any condition to be desired or tolerated, depends upon separation." The fond hope was indulged that in separation there would accrue lasting good. By separation the Methodists in the South would escape distrust and suspicion, and open the way to prosecute the work of evangelizing the slaves of the South.

A Quarterly Conference for Demopolis Station, Alabama Conference, held at Demopolis, Alabama, Jesse Boring, P. E., and R. A. Smith, Secretary, adopted resolutions, clear and concise, disapproving the action of the General Conference in deposing Bishop Andrew on account of his connection with slavery, and accepting the plan of a separate jurisdiction. The Resolutions were prepared and presented by the Rev. John C. Keener, the preacher in charge of the Station. Keener was then a young man, but he was pronounced on the subjects involved. The Society at Demopolis adopted the resolutions which the Quarterly Conference had adopted.

At the Quarterly Conference held for Montgomery Station, Alabama Conference, September 28, 1844, resolutions expressive of the feelings of the membership of the Methodist Episcopal Church, connected with said Station, upon the action of the General Conference upon the case of Bishop Andrew were unanimously adopted. The Committee who drafted the resolutions were Neil Blue, T. L. Brothers, and the Rev. S. F. Pilley. It was declared: "That the constituted authorities of the civil government have the entire control of legislative action upon slavery in the United States; and the action of the majority of the General Conference in attempting to interfere with civil regulations for the purpose of making them the test of ecclesiastical qualifications is contrary to the teaching of the New Testament and the standard of doctrines adopted by the Methodist Episcopal Church."

The Quarterly Conference for Eufaula Station, Alabama Conference, adopted a long and very ably written report on the subject of the division of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in which it was declared that division was inevitable. On December 2, 1844, the members of the Society at Eufaula, Alabama, adopted that same report, with one member dissenting. At the meeting of the members at Eufaula, Dr. A. P. Crawford presided, and E. B. Young acted as Secretary.

The Quarterly Conference for Jacksonville Circuit, Alabama Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in session at Alexandria Camp-ground, Benton County, Alabama, appointed a Committee, consisting of Harris Taylor, Haman Baily, Edward Patton, Clayton C. Gillispie, and James F. Grant, to draft preamble and resolutions expressing the sense of that Conference on the subject of the division of the Church North and South. At 7 P.M. Monday, July 15, 1844, the Quarterly Conference in session, the Report of that Committee was received and adopted.

Numbers of other Quarterly Conferences and numbers of other Societies in the State took official and public action on the very perplexing subject. There was great unanimity on the matters involved throughout the commonwealth. There was one dissenting voice upon the action of the Society at Eufaula, and in one Circuit in the Alabama Conference, the *Centerville Circuit*, there was decided opposition to the division

of the Church. Only a comparatively small fraction of the members of that Circuit were in favor of the action of the majority of the General Conference on the subject of slavery, and opposed to the plan of separation recommended by that body. Regret over the situation was everywhere expressed, and reluctance in taking the step for separation was everywhere manifested, but in view of the insuperable difficulties in prosecuting the work in the South under the jurisdiction of a people avowedly enlisted against the civil institutions of that section the Methodists of Alabama with almost unanimous voice said separation is inevitable, is absolutely necessary. Preachers and laymen took an active part in the agitation, and they wrote some valuable articles on the subject. The Rev. Thomas O. Summers, who was at Tuscaloosa, Alabama, when the crusade opened, wrote extensively during the agitation. He was a leader in advocating and vindicating the rights of the South. He preferred separation to schism. He pronounced the course pursued with Bishop Andrew as at once puerile and illegal.

The session of the Alabama Conference was held at Wetumpka, Alabama, beginning February 26, and closing March 5, 1845. At that time and place the question of a separate jurisdiction of the Annual Conferences in the South presented itself for settlement, and the Conference formulated and adopted the following deliverance:

“The Committee appointed by the Conference to take into consideration the subject of a separate jurisdiction for the Southern Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church beg leave to report, That they have meditated with prayerful solicitude on this important matter, and have solemnly concluded on the necessity of the measure. They suppose it to be superfluous to review formally all the proceedings which constitute the unhappy controversy between the Northern and Southern portions of our Church, inasmuch as their sentiments can be expressed in one sentence,—They endorse the unanswerable Protest of the Minority in the late General Conference. They believe that the doctrines of that imperishable Document cannot be successfully assailed. They are firm in the conviction that the action of the Majority in the case of Bishop Andrew was unconstitutional. Being but a delegated body, the General Conference has no legitimate right to tamper with the office of a



General Superintendent, his amenableness to that body and liability to expulsion by it, having exclusive reference to maladministration, ceasing to travel, and immoral conduct. They are of opinion that Bishop Andrew's connection with slavery can come under none of these heads. If the entire eldership of the Church, in a conventional capacity, were to constitute non-slaveholding or even abolitionism a tenure by which the Episcopal office should be held, or if they were to abolish the office, they doubtless could plead the abstract right thus to modify or revolutionize the Church in its supreme executive administration. But before the General Conference can justly plead this right, it must show when and where such plenary power was delegated to it by the *only fountain of authority, the entire Pastorate of the Church*. Your Committee are therefore of opinion, that the General Conference has no more power over a Bishop, except in the specified cases of maladministration, ceasing to travel, and immorality, than over the Episcopacy, as an integral part of our excellent ecclesiastical polity. It can no more depose a Bishop for slaveholding than it can create a new Church.

Your Committee deeply regret that these 'conservative' sentiments did not occur to the majority in the late General Conference, and that the apologists of that body, since its session, have given them no place in their ecclesiastical creed, but on the contrary have given fearful evidence that proceedings in the case of Bishop Andrew are but the incipency of a course, which, when finished, will leave not a solitary slaveholder in the communion which be unfortunately under their control. The foregoing sentiments and opinions embody the general views expressed most unequivocally throughout the Conference district since the late General Conference, by the large body of the membership, both in *primary meetings* and Quarterly Conferences.

The Committee, therefore, offer to the calm consideration and mature action of the Alabama Annual Conference the following series of Resolutions:

1. Resolved, That this Conference deeply deplores the action of the late General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the case of our venerated Superintendent, Bishop Andrew, believing it to be unconstitutional, being as totally

destitute of warrant from the Discipline as from the Word of God.

2. Resolved, That the almost unanimous agreement of Northern Methodists with the majority and Southern Methodists with the minority of the late General Conference, shows the wisdom of that body in suggesting a duality of jurisdiction to meet the present emergency.

3. Resolved, That this Conference agrees to the proposition for the alteration of the sixth restrictive rule of the Discipline.

4. Resolved, That this Conference approves of the projected Convention at Louisville in May next, and appoints the following brethren as a Delegation to the same:—

5. Resolved, That this Conference most respectfully invites all the Bishops to attend the proposed Convention at Louisville.

6. Resolved, That this Conference is decided in its attachment to Methodism as it exists in the Book of Discipline, and hopes that the Louisville Convention will not make the slightest alteration, except so far as may be absolutely necessary for the formation of a separate jurisdiction.

7. Resolved, That every preacher of this Conference shall take up a collection in his Station or Circuit, as soon as practicable, to defray the expenses of the Delegates to the Convention, and the proceeds of such collections shall be immediately paid over to the nearest Delegate or presiding elder; and the excess or deficit of the collection for the said expenses shall be reported to the next Conference, which shall take action on the same.

8. Resolved, That the Friday immediately preceding the session of the Convention shall be observed in all our Circuits and Stations as a day of fasting and prayer, for the blessing of God upon its deliberations.

9. Resolved, That while this Conference fully appreciates the commendable motives which induced the Holston Conference to suggest another expedient to compromise the differences existing between the Northern and Southern divisions of the Church, it nevertheless cannot concur in the proposition of that Conference concerning that matter.

10. Resolved, That this Conference fully recognizes the right of our excellent Superintendent, Bishop Soule, to invite Bishop Andrew to share with him the responsibilities of the Episcopal office, and while the Conference regrets the absence of the *for-*

mer, it rejoices in being favored with the efficient services of the latter—it respectfully tenders these ‘true yokefellows’ in the Superintendency the fullest approbation, the most fervent prayers, and the most cordial sympathies.

THOMAS O. SUMMERS,  
A. H. MITCHELL,  
E. V. LE VERT,  
J. HAMILTON,  
E. HEARN,  
W. MURRAH,  
J. BORING,  
G. SHAEFFER,  
C. MCLEOD.”

The members present and representing the Alabama Conference in the Convention at Louisville, Kentucky, beginning May 1, 1845, were Jefferson Hamilton, Jesse Boring, Thomas H. Capers, Eugene V. Le Vert, Elisha Calloway, Thomas O. Summers, Greenberry Garrett.

The appointments received at the Conference at Wetumpka, Alabama, March 5, 1845, were the last appointments made in the State under the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church. At that time there were in the State, in round numbers, thirty-two thousand white and fifteen thousand colored members. That embodied the interest which at that time had to be conserved in Alabama. Nearly one-third of the members were slaves, and the reason appears at once for the establishment of an ecclesiastical jurisdiction free from the interference of abolitionists. Sometimes a state of things is reached in which action is imperatively demanded, and the alternative is a choice between evils. In Alabama the organization of a separate jurisdiction was accepted almost unanimously, and with great enthusiasm, and the change was made in such manner as not to disturb the on-going of affairs. The change was almost imperceptible, though it is not to be denied that the agitation and sharp controversies created and persisted in by the abolitionists retarded the peaceful work of Methodism, and did great harm to the general cause of Christianity.

The Alabama Conference held a session in Mobile, Alabama, beginning February 25, 1846, in which the final action was had concerning the separate jurisdiction. A number of resolutions

bearing on the subject were adopted. One resolution declared that the Alabama Conference heartily approved the action of the Louisville Convention, and their adherence to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. It was also resolved to conform all the proceedings, journals, and records of the Conference to the name and style of the Church under the new jurisdiction. The Conference also elected delegates to represent them in the first General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to meet in Petersburg, Virginia, the first day of May, of that year. Said delegates were: Thomas H. Capers, Elisha Callo-way, Eugene V. LeVert, Jesse Boring, Jefferson Hamilton, Greenberry Garrett, Thomas O. Summers. At that time were made the first appointments in Alabama Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

The white and colored members increased in Alabama in about the same ratio from the time of the organization of the Southern jurisdiction until the time of the effort to establish a Confederacy of the slaveholding States and the time of the abolition of slavery by the proclamation of the President of the United States.



## CHAPTER XXXII.

### THE WORK OF METHODISM IN ALABAMA UNDER THE NEW ECCLESIASTICAL JURISDICTION.

FOR the series of years beginning with 1846, when the Southern jurisdiction went into operation, and running to the time of the civil war between the States, the Tennessee Conference had in the State of Alabama two entire Districts, the Huntsville and the Florence, the last sometimes called Tuscumbia. The membership in the two Districts, including both races, aggregated something over six thousand. There was from year to year some fluctuation in numbers, though the variation for all these years was not very great.

The leading preachers who occupied in the two Districts in the beautiful Tennessee Valley during a decade and a half of years were: The Revs. Samuel S. Moody, Thomas Maddin, W. G. Hensley, Henry P. Turner, Thomas W. Randle, James W. Allen, Justinian Williams, Adam S. Riggs, Finch P. Scruggs, W. D. F. Sawrie, W. R. J. Husbands, Moses M. Henkle, Anderson G. Copeland, A. F. Driskill, J. D. Barbee, Alexander R. Erwin, Pleasant B. Robinson, J. R. Plumer, Wellborn Mooney.

The Rev. S. S. Moody was born in Virginia, in 1810, and died May 5, 1863. His last work in Alabama was the Florence Station. A hard worker, calm and saintly, he was classed as one of "the brightest and the best" of the preachers of the Tennessee Conference.

The Rev. Thomas Maddin was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, February 13, 1796, and he died in Nashville, Tennessee, in 1874. His father was a Romanist, and trained him in that faith, but he was brought into a saving knowledge of the grace of God by the Methodists, whom he found in his native place, and he, in the midst of bitter opposition, cast his lot with that people. He was licensed to preach in 1818, and continued a preacher till his exit to the skies. Endowed with somewhat of the poetic gift, he was ever charmed with the beautiful and

grand in nature and the pure and sublime in the moral world. In speech and address he was both pleasing and winning. He was agreeable in spirit, devoted in life, and steadfast in faith. He did much good work in North Alabama.

Much good was wrought in the common cause, and many leading appointments were filled in North Alabama by the Rev. Finch P. Scruggs, who was a native of Virginia, and who died at Holly Springs, Mississippi, September 28, 1881, in the eighty-first year of his age.

Eleven years of the long ministerial life of the Rev. W. D. F. Sawrie were given to North Alabama, eight of them in the work of presiding elder. He was a man of intense zeal and of unfailing fidelity. He was a native of North Carolina, and died in the city of Nashville, Tennessee, November 27, 1884, in the seventy-third year of his age.

The Rev. Moses M. Henkle joined the Ohio Conference on trial at Cincinnati, in August, 1819, and located in September, 1822, being only a deacon. The next time he appears as an itinerant is at the session of the Tennessee Conference in October, 1855, when he was appointed to the Huntsville Station. He served that Station till October, 1856, and he was Agent for Endowment Fund of the Chair of Biblical Literature and Ecclesiastical History in Florence Wesleyan University from the close of his pastorate at Huntsville till October, 1858. He was a native of Virginia, and was eminent as a scholar, a theologian, and a preacher; and he was an author of no mean pretensions. "He died in Richmond, Virginia, in 1864, whither he had been sent from Baltimore, by the military authority of the Federal Government."

The Rev. Alexander R. Erwin followed Dr. Henkle in the Station at Huntsville. He filled that appointment for two years, and then for a year he was Agent of the Book and Tract Society and member of the Huntsville Station Quarterly Conference. In the latter part of 1859 he assumed the duties of President of the Huntsville Female College, but in a few brief months he resigned his charge. He died of consumption, January 10, 1860. He lacked two days of being forty years old when he died, and he had been a preacher about twenty years. He was a native of Louisiana, was of tall and slender stature, with blue eyes and cheerful countenance. Piety and power

characterized him as a Christian and a preacher. He was true in life and triumphant in death. Within a short while of his last expiring breath he said: "I see the pillars of the eternal city. I shall soon be in Abraham's bosom." He left the blessings of the triune God upon his children. His two boys entered the ministry, one of them in the Tennessee Conference and the other in the North Alabama. The children of the righteous are blessed.

Perhaps the Rev. Pleasant B. Robinson, M.D., did as much for Methodism in Huntsville, Alabama, as any other one man. He worked there in charge of the flocks devoted to one calling, and he worked there also as a local preacher, and administered medicine for many years, having an extended business, doing good to both the bodies and souls of men. In November, 1827, he was admitted on trial in the Tennessee Conference, and for ten years he devoted himself exclusively to the work of the ministry, and then located. He was re-admitted into the Tennessee Conference at its session in Huntsville, Alabama, in October, 1856, and was appointed to the Huntsville Colored Charge. During the year following he served West Huntsville Station, and then after that he served another year on the Huntsville African Mission. He was then one year Agent of Huntsville Female College, and at the end of that year he was given a supernumerary relation. He resigned his spirit to God who gave it at his home in Huntsville, Alabama, October 2, 1861. He was a vigorous, active man, possessing zeal, piety, and pathos. He was an able preacher, and he led the hosts in great revivals. To the afflicted, the poor, and the outcasts he was ever a friend. His Christian life encompassed the demonstration of divine adoption, an unmistakable call to the ministry, and an ecstatic departure to the realms of endless glory.

In 1843, about the time he was admitted to the profession of law, William Basil Wood, though not then a member of the Church, asked and obtained permission to organize a Sunday-school in the Meeting House owned and used by the Methodists of Florence, Alabama. The Sunday-school was organized, and in that commenced the active religious work of that capable young man. Some time after he opened that Sunday-school he joined the Church. His name was recorded on the Class Book of Florence Station for 1846, the oldest Class Book of that

Station now at hand. He was a leader and a pillar in that Society for four and a half decades. He was born October 29, 1821. Before he was a year old his father moved to Florence, Alabama. There he grew to manhood. To the religious worship and public service of the Church William B. Wood gave a large part of his time, and to the support of the enterprises and agencies of the Church he gave large portions of his worldly substance. Through every channel open to the furtherance of the kingdom of God accessible to him he distributed his worldly goods. Generous and genial, he dispensed a bounteous hospitality at home and at Camp-meetings for many years. He and Levi Cassity married sisters, and were attached to each other. For five years they were partners as tent-holders at Cypress Creek Camp-ground, and they had many religious enjoyments together at the Camp-meetings held there. On a Thursday of September, 1850, they packed and loaded preparatory to moving next morning following to Cypress Camp-ground. During the night of that Thursday a congestive chill seized Brother Cassity and annulled his purpose to tent on the sacred ground where so often he had met God and received his benediction. On the afternoon of the following Sunday he, without a cloud intervening, and without a doubt or a fear distracting, passed to "the undiscovered country, from whose bourn no traveler returns." Brother Cassity was a modest man, not ambitious of public station. He was loving, tender, and kind. He would not lead in public devotions, but he was a fine singer, and often, under deep emotion, in a quiet mood, shed tears freely in the time of holy worship. He was a steward for the Society at Florence, Alabama, for a great many years. In his parting words to Brother Wood he said: "We expected to be at the Camp-meeting to-day enjoying it as we have so often done, but we will never go there again together. You may be there with other friends next year and for many years; I am going to the great meeting above where we will never break up. I shall watch for you to come and join us. Take care of my family and bring them with you." By the death of Brother Cassity, as also by the death of one of his daughters, Miss Sarah Elizabeth Cassity, who died while a pupil at the Tennessee Conference Female Institute at Athens, Alabama, in 1851, Brother Wood was sorely bereaved and greatly afflicted. Miss Cassity, though only a school girl at her death,



was a radiant and happy Christian, in whose association her uncle found great pleasure and profit. In her dying message she spoke of the world of glory to which she was going to be happy for evermore.

W. B. Wood was a local preacher, active and efficient. He preached much and well. He was a man of fine personal presence. He was hopeful, and energetic, and successful. He filled places of honor and of trust. In politics he was a whig, and active in the service of his party. He filled the office of Judge of Probate of his County for a number of years, and was on the bench as Circuit Judge for quite awhile, being repeatedly chosen to that position. He was the Colonel of the sixteenth Alabama Regiment in the Confederate service. He was in a number of battles, and did valiantly, and won distinction and promotion. In one engagement he commanded the brigade to which he belonged. He was transferred from the colonelcy of his Regiment to the presidency of the military court of Longstreet's corps, in which position he continued until the court expired with the Confederacy. He bore the titles of Reverend, Judge, and Colonel, and honored them all. His wife, Mrs. Sarah B. Wood, was a worthy companion; in social worth, and in piety, and in benevolence fully his equal. He died, at his home at Florence, Alabama, April 3, 1891, having served his generation well.

Huntsville, Madison, Athens, Limestone, Tuscumbia, Chickasaw, Russellville, Franklin, Cypress, Florence, Trinity, Somerville, Decatur, and a few works to the colored people were the appointments which continued through the years. Larkinsville, West Huntsville, Courtland, Rogersville, and Driskill's came in as appointments later on. The addition of pastoral charges through twenty years was not very rapid.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### THE BASCOM FEMALE INSTITUTE AT HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA.

IN the closing year of the fifth decade of this nineteenth century the Methodist congregation at Huntsville, Alabama, was the most refined, intelligent, wealthy, and influential of any congregation of any denomination in all the Tennessee Valley. In that year the Rev. Edward C. Slater, than whom a more elegant, competent, and popular preacher was rarely found, had charge of the Huntsville Station. He, or some one else, at that time conceived the idea of establishing at Huntsville, Alabama, an Institution of high grade for the education of females. Dr. Slater led in the agitation of the enterprise, and general interest ensued. When formulating the plans of the proposed Institution it was decided to place it under the patronage and fostering care of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. It was an acknowledged fact that Huntsville needed greater facilities for the education of the girls of the place than were then accessible, and it was thought that the place had attractions which would commend it as an educational center; and it was supposed that under such stimulus the fund for the building and equipping the School could be easily secured. Voluntary contributions were expected in great numbers and large amounts, but when the effort to secure funds had been exhausted only about ten thousand dollars had been secured, and some of that in doubtful subscription. Thirty-five hundred dollars were paid out in the purchase of grounds for the School, and the plans adopted for buildings, furniture, instruments, apparatus provided for an outlay of about fifty thousand dollars. The friends of the adventure were surprised, embarrassed, and mortified. Absolute failure seemed inevitable. In the extremity Daniel B. Turner, Thomas S. McCalley, William H. Moore, and William J. McCalley proposed to take charge of the Institution and manage it for eighteen years, erect all necessary buildings, provide ornamentations, instruments, and everything necessary to the

on-going of the School, and keep all in repairs and order for the term of years, and educate free of charge eight pupils, and the Board of Trustees were to turn over to the said four gentlemen the uncollected subscription and pay to them by certain process four thousand dollars. That proposition was accepted by the Trustees and was carried out by the four men named and making it. The permanent College buildings were ready for occupancy by the opening of 1853. That contract between the Trustees and the men who built the house and managed the School was made in 1852.

The General Assembly of Alabama by an act approved January 27, 1852, incorporated the School as the Bascom Female Institute to be located in or near the town of Huntsville in the County of Madison. The Trustees named in the act of incorporation were: Pleasant B. Robinson, Thomas McCalley, William A. Thompson, William Sandford, Robert S. Brandon, William H. Moore, Benjamin S. Pope, Samuel B. Turner, W. D. F. Sawrie, Irvin Windham, Richard Angell, John B. Trotman, Archibald E. Mills, Robert A. Young, David P. Bibb, and William McDowell. By an act of the General Assembly of Alabama passed December 21, 1855, the name was changed to Huntsville Female College.

The School was opened in temporary quarters, with temporary provisions, and with inadequate outfit. Mrs. Jane H. Childs, who has been mentioned in another part of this History, and who had charge of a private School at the time in Huntsville, took charge of the Bascom Female Institute at its first opening in the fall season of 1851, her School making the nucleus of the Institute, and acted as Vice-President. When she had charge of the Institute the Rev. Robert A. Young was in fact the President. He was appointed to that position in the first part of November, 1851, at least he was announced for that position at that time as a preacher of the Tennessee Conference.

At the opening of the next session in the latter part of 1852, the Rev. Joseph Cross took charge of the Institute as President.

At the opening of the session of the Institute in the latter part of 1855, just a few months before the General Assembly of the State by enactment changed the name to Huntsville Female College, the Rev. George M. Everhart, a member of the Tennes-

see Annual Conference, assumed the duties of President. He continued in the discharge of the duties of that position till some time in 1859, when he withdrew from the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and joined the Protestant Episcopal Church. While President of the College he, through some means, became possessed of a financial claim, which, in after years, through the courts of the country, he secured, and which so embarrassed the College as to result in alienation from the Church.

The Rev. Alexander R. Erwin succeeded Everhart as President of the College, but lived only a few months. The Rev. John G. Wilson, an excellent scholar and a magnificent preacher, succeeded to the Presidency of the College upon the death of Dr. Erwin, and continued in that position till the College was suspended by the prevalence of the war between the States. After the war was over he re-opened the College, and continued in charge of it for quite awhile.

Through all the years from the time it was permanently opened to the time of the interruption by the civil war the College did good work, and prospered, and sent forth from its halls many daughters sufficiently polished to adorn palaces, and sufficiently cultured to be the companions of princes.



## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### THE WORK OF METHODISM IN ALABAMA UNDER THE NEW ECCLESIASTICAL JURISDICTION.

ON February 25, 1846, the Alabama Conference commenced a session in Mobile, Alabama, which lasted a week or more. Bishop James O. Andrew in descending the river by Steamboat to the seat of the Conference was detained and belated a couple of days. The Rev. Elisha Callaway was elected President of the Conference and presided over the deliberations of the body till the Bishop arrived. The business went on well, the Conference received a good class of recruits, and on Sunday the Bishop ordained twenty-three deacons and twelve elders.

The Church in the bounds of the Conference had done what was considered the handsome thing in Missionary work. The collections of the year aggregated over six thousand dollars. At Saint Francis Street Church on Monday evening, March 2, was celebrated the anniversary of the Conference Society. The Rev. Jesse Boring, D.D., presided over the meeting, and the Rev. William Murrah conducted the opening devotional exercises. The usual reports of the Board of Managers were presented and the usual business transacted. Addresses were delivered by the Rev. Thomas H. Capers and the Rev. A. H. Mitchell, D.D. The address of Dr. Mitchell was powerful and impressive, and under its influence enthusiasm ruled the hour. At the conclusion of the addresses, it was enthusiastically proposed to raise two hundred dollars to insure the establishment of a Mission in China. The sum proposed for the purpose was supposed to be commensurate with large benevolence and ample resources. The amount was contributed almost exclusively by the preachers, and was made up faster than the Secretary could write the names of the contributors. A woman in the audience asked that the women present be allowed to contribute one hundred dollars to the enterprise, and as soon as the Treasurer

could count the five-dollar bills which went flying from all parts of the house the amount was in hand. Then Dr. Jefferson Hamilton proposed that the amount for China be brought up to five hundred dollars, and immediately twenty persons contributed ten dollars each, making the amount proposed. One hundred and fifty dollars were added to that before the meeting adjourned. A few evenings previous at the anniversary of a Female Missionary Society in Saint Francis Street Church three hundred dollars were given, and at a similar meeting at Franklin Street Church two hundred dollars were given. That anniversary meeting of the Conference added a measure of zeal to the Church in Alabama, gave an impetus to the cause of Missions, and added a note to the song of the ever-increasing hosts of the redeemed.

The Rev. Jesse Boring was appointed presiding elder of the Mobile District, and three preachers were appointed to the city charges as follows: Saint Francis Street, Thomas O. Summers; Franklin Street, Thomas W. Dorman; West Ward, John W. Ellis, Jr.

The preachers who served the various charges in the city of Mobile, including the District, the Stations, and the Missions, from 1846 to 1864 were the following: The Rev. Charles McLeod, one year; the Rev. T. W. Dorman, ten years; the Rev. C. C. Gillespie, two years; the Rev. C. D. Oliver, one year; the Rev. O. R. Blue, one year; the Rev. Ebenezer Hearn, five years; the Rev. T. P. C. Shelman, one year; the Rev. Jefferson Hamilton, seven years; the Rev. W. H. Milburn, three years; the Rev. T. P. Crimes, one year; the Rev. J. J. Hutchinson, one year; the Rev. S. O. Capers, one year; the Rev. Greenberry Garrett, three years; the Rev. Jacob S. Hughes, a part of one year; the Rev. Augustus H. Powell, a part of one year; the Rev. John W. Starr, Jr., a part of one year; the Rev. P. P. Neely, two years; the Rev. James A. Peebles, three years; the Rev. William M. Lovelady, one year; the Rev. T. J. Koger, two years; the Rev. Matthias Maass, one year; the Rev. Edwin Baldwin, four years; the Rev. William M. Motley, one year; the Rev. Joshua T. Heard, four years; the Rev. A. McBride, three years; the Rev. T. C. Weir, two years; the Rev. G. R. Talley, one year; the Rev. Mark S. Andrews, two years; the Rev. Charles Quellmaltz, one year; the Rev. Allen S. Andrews, two years; the

Rev. Abram Adams, three years; the Rev. B. B. Ross, five years; the Rev. A. H. Mitchell, two years; the Rev. John B. Baldwin, two years; the Rev. William Spillman, three years; the Rev. J. G. Rush, one year; the Rev. S. H. Cox, four years; the Rev. T. Y. Ramsey, two years; the Rev. Robert B. Crawford, two years; the Rev. William Shapard, one year; the Rev. R. K. Hargrove, two years; the Rev. James W. Glenn, one year.

In Mobile, in 1853, there was solicitude and sadness, lamentation and death. The yellow fever prevailed there that year as an epidemic, and cut down the virtuous and the vicious together. In the month of September of that fatal year three of the Methodist preachers in the city, the Rev. Augustus H. Powell, the Rev. Jacob S. Hughes, and the Rev. John W. Starr, Jr., and in the order here named, fell before the dreadful destroyer.

The Rev. Augustus H. Powell, who was a native of Virginia, and who was educated at the Military Institute, in his native State, and who was admitted to the Alabama Conference on trial in January, 1847, and who was reputed studious and pious, competent and faithful, had just passed into his twenty-seventh year by a few weeks when he was released from earth's toils and hastened to the courts of God.

The Rev. Jacob S. Hughes was also a native of Virginia. He commenced preaching when about twenty-four years old, and was about thirty-seven years of age when he died. It was said of him that he was "a man of rare philanthropy and tenderness of heart, a useful and often eloquent preacher, and a most diligent and successful pastor." He had charge of Franklin Street Church when he was discharged from earthly service.

The Rev. John W. Starr, Jr., a native of Georgia, was on trial in the Alabama Conference, was in charge of Wesley Chapel, in Mobile, and was nearly twenty-three years old, when he died. He was amiable, pious, and educated. He accompanied the bodies of Powell and Hughes to their graves, and eight days after joined their glorified spirits on the other shore.

No preacher in his day was more securely enthroned in the affections of the Methodists of Mobile than the Rev. Dr. T. W. Dorman. He was kind in his associations and fervent in his attachments. Others may have excelled him in pulpit eloquence and in pulpit eminence, and in the achievement of far-

reaching results. His negative virtues rather than his constructive talents may have challenged admiration, and there may have been about him a measure of display in excess of his actual achievements, yet he secured and held most firmly the confidence and esteem of the people whom he served with such system, punctuality, and industry. He was born in Maryland, brought up in the District of Columbia, lived in Virginia, where he realized acceptance with God, and was licensed to preach, and afterward settled in Montgomery, Alabama. In January, 1840, he was admitted on trial into the Alabama Conference. He filled for years the leading appointments in the Alabama Conference. He was for years the Secretary of the Alabama Conference, and a most efficient one. He died in Mobile, Alabama, at the age of sixty-four, July 2, 1869. He surrendered to death in anticipation of eternal life and endless rest. His grave in the cemetery at Mobile is marked by a monument made of marble on which are engraved suitable mottoes. His children honor him.

The Rev. Jefferson Hamilton, D.D., was a factor in Mobile Methodism. He was a native of Massachusetts. He joined the New England Conference, at Springfield, Massachusetts, in May, 1831, then in his twenty-sixth year. In June, 1837, he was transferred to the Mississippi Conference, and was stationed at New Orleans for 1838. At the close of 1838 he was transferred to the Alabama Conference, and stationed for 1839 at Mobile. These dates are correct, all other statements to the contrary notwithstanding. He died at Opelika, Alabama, December 16, 1874. While delivering his dying messages to and for his friends and kindred he said: "I have never been a boastful Christian, have entertained humble views of myself, but I do profess to have a clear knowledge of the doctrine of salvation by faith, and a conscious experience that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. I believe that sanctification, or holiness is a doctrine taught in the Bible, as separate and distinct from justification, received and retained by faith; and trusting these truths, I die and go to God. Tell my children and my grandchildren never to bring a reflection upon the Methodist Church, for in the end it will be found to be an important portion of the true Church of God, and to have translated from earth to heaven a vast multitude of sanctified spirits."



In the period beginning with 1845 and extending to 1865 there was a decrease in the number of white members in Mobile of one hundred and forty-three, while for the same period there was an increase in the number of colored members in that city of fourteen hundred and fourteen. Being ignorant of the characteristics and incidents of the various administrations of that period, as well as of the delicate and complex combinations, and the conflicting and competing influences of that time, it is impossible to state here the causes of the decrease in the white membership, or the causes of the remarkable increase in the colored membership. No conjecture can divine the causes.

At the session of the Alabama Conference beginning January 26, and closing February 3, 1848, the Rev. Nehemiah A. Cravens and the Rev. Otis Sexton were appointed to the Cahawba Circuit. The town of Cahawba, at the confluence of the Alabama and Cahawba Rivers, was then one of the appointments of that Circuit, and there was then only one house of worship at the place, a house built by the contributions of the citizens, and occupied in common by all the denominations. At that date there were not a dozen Methodists at Cahawba, though the town had existed more than a quarter of a century. Mr. Jacob Hoot and Mrs. Catharine Hoot, husband and wife, Mr. John Gwin and Mrs. Jane Gwin, husband and wife, Mr. Joseph E. Luker and Mrs. Luker, husband and wife, Mr. Julius Snead, and Mrs. Leecy Wood, are all that can now be named as Methodists in that town at that time. That Mrs. Wood was the mother of Hon. P. G. Wood, an active member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and for some years Judge of Probate of Dallas County, Alabama.

On the night of September 4, 1848, there was closed at Cahawba a most intensely interesting meeting, which had continued eighteen days, and resulted in eighty-two professing the attainment of pardoning mercy, and seventy-three white and one hundred and one colored persons joining the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. On Sunday morning, September 3, of that meeting, a Lovefeast was held which was an occasion of great spiritual power. The young converts and the old Christians related personal experience, and spoke so promptly and so feelingly, and the time was so closely occupied, that there was neither opportunity nor occasion to sing a line. At the close

of the Lovefeast twenty-four persons were baptized by the usual mode, and at 5 o'clock in the afternoon nine persons, enamored of the idea of modes, were immersed in the Alabama River, in the presence of almost the entire town. On Monday evening following the Lord's Supper was administered, the young converts participating, and the entire audience were overwhelmed with the demonstrations of the divine presence. The preachers of the Circuit, Cravens and Sexton, were assisted in that meeting by the Revs. J. J. Hutchinson, J. A. Heard, W. W. Thomas, Stedman, and McDaniel. It is supposed that Stedman was John Stedman of the Methodist Protestant Church. That meeting gave Methodism a commanding influence in Cahawba. The Rev. Otis Sexton devoted his entire time to Cahawba from that meeting till the session of the Conference in the next January, and Cravens took care of the other appointments of the Circuit.

At the close of that ecclesiastical year Cahawba was set up as a Station, and the Rev. James L. Cotton was appointed to it for 1849; and at the end of the year there were in the Society there eighty-three white and one hundred and fifty colored members. The Rev. James L. Cotton was returned there for 1850, and that year there was a decrease in the membership of twenty-three white and two colored members.

On April 14, 1849, William Curtis and his wife, Ann L. Curtis, of Cahawba, Alabama, made a deed to a lot, fifty by seventy-five feet, on Mulberry Street, in the town of Cahawba, on which was to be erected a house of worship for the use of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The lot was given to the Church by the parties making the deed. Mr. Curtis at that time was not a member of the Church. Alanson Saltmarsh, Joseph Babcock, Enoch G. Ulmer, Abner Jones, William Gwin, Joseph L. Bassett, and Benjamin F. Saffold were the Trustees named in that deed. Immediately on the securing of that lot by deed a house of worship was erected. It was a substantial brick house, ample in its dimensions, convenient in its arrangements, and comfortable in its outfit. That house of worship stood in a good state of preservation and was occupied by the white congregation until Cahawba was abandoned after the war between the States.

June 4, 1850, a deed was made to another lot in the town of

Cahawba, by Joel E., George W., Thomas M., and Peter E. Matthews, and on that lot was erected a large frame building for the use of the colored members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The preacher who ministered to the white people also preached to the Negroes. On Sunday afternoon the Negroes had their services in such instances.

There were usually in the charge at Cahawba seventy odd white members, and one hundred and eighty odd colored members. The highest number ever reported of white members was eighty-three, and the highest number of colored members was three hundred and forty. At the close of 1849 and at the close of 1858 there were eighty-three white members, and at the close of 1863 there were three hundred and forty colored members. The lowest number of white members ever reported in connection with that charge was forty-six, and the lowest number of colored members was one hundred and thirty-five. At the close of 1859 there were one hundred and thirty-five colored members, and at the close of 1864 there were forty-six white members. The membership fluctuated according to the circumstances of the times and the administrations of the years.

During the period from first setting off Cahawba as a Station to 1865 the preachers in charge of it were: the Rev. J. L. Cotton four years; the Revs. J. A. Heard, W. M. Lovelady, D. Carmichael, W. W. Thomas, W. H. McDaniel, T. P. Crimes, and J. S. Moore, each one year; the Revs. B. S. Williams, R. S. Woodward, and J. Barker, each two years.

The house of worship built by the citizens of Cahawba for the common use of the various denominations was erected about 1840. Previous to that date public worship, when had, was held in the Courthouse. For a long while the only Methodists in the town of Cahawba were Jacob Hoot and the members of his family. Joseph Babcock and a number of the persons composing his family were baptized at the same hour, and he became noted for his piety, and was a pillar in the Church. Dr. Alanson Saltmarsh contributed in building the house of worship liberal sums, and afterward, at one time, gave fifteen hundred dollars to liquidate the debt on the house; and he was liberal in his contributions in meeting the current expenses of the pastoral charge. Hiram Francis and William Gwin were class leaders

of the Society. Mrs. Catherine Hoot, Mrs. Lethea, or Leecy Wood, the mother of Judge P. G. Wood, Mrs. Jane Gwin, Mrs. Luker, and Mrs. Bush were women of marked piety, and the extensive work of grace had in 1848 was traceable to a prayer-meeting held by those true and godly women.

The work of saving the souls of the people went on successfully in the year 1846 throughout Alabama. There was a profound religious awakening, divine power prevailed, and there was an extensive ecclesiastical ingathering. At Centenary Institute, in the month of May of that year, a meeting was held in which forty students claimed to experience the renewing of the Holy Ghost. In one meeting on the Tombecbee Circuit, held in July, twenty-one persons were regenerated, and twenty-five were inducted into the Church. At Warsaw, in Sumter County, there was a number of accessions to the Church. Thirty-one were received into the communion of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at Marion, Perry County. In July over thirty were added to the Church on Prairie Hill Circuit. At Eutaw, Greene County, was held a meeting of twenty days' duration, in which seventy converts were numbered. On Gaston Circuit over sixty were received into the membership of the Church in four weeks. In July sixty-six were inducted into the communion of the Church on the Autauga Circuit. There was a sweeping work on the Troy Circuit. In all there were admitted to the fellowship of Christians on that Circuit four hundred and sixty-five. At Jones's Society, on that Circuit, twenty-six joined, a large number of whom professed regeneration. At another place fifteen joined, and at Kennon's seventeen gave in their allegiance to the cause. In the Pike County Valley in that Circuit seventy-four found peace, and joined the Church. There was a sublime work at Blountsville that year, and over one hundred and thirty were gathered into the fold in the bounds of Blount Circuit. In August a meeting was held at Talladega in which twenty-five made profession, and twenty-one joined the Church. At Oak Bowery many found peace. At Monroeville and at Puryearville, in the Bellville Circuit, great revivals prevailed. Religious influence swept over the Harpersville Circuit. At Harpersville, Clear Creek, Weogufka, and Chapel were witnessed pentecostal times. At a Camp-meeting at Chapel there were upward of one hundred conversions, and



seventy-nine assumed the vows of the Church. In eight weeks on that Harpersville Circuit there were over two hundred added to the Church, and a much larger number than that converted.

The above are specimens of the work as it went on throughout the bounds of the State, and yet the actual gain in numbers for the year was only two hundred and thirty-one white and sixteen hundred and fifty-nine colored members.

A session of the Alabama Conference was held at Tuskaloosa, Alabama, beginning January 27, and closing February 4, 1847. The Rev. John C. Keener was then closing his second and last year at that place, and on him fell the duty of providing and assigning homes to the preachers. The Conference was then a mounted brigade, and the care of all the horses was no small charge. Bishop Joshua Soule was two days late in reaching the seat of the Conference, arriving there on Friday, or in time to preside over the Conference that day. During his absence the Rev. Elisha Calloway presided over the deliberations of the body. Bishop Soule's friends then lamented that the infirmities of age were coming fast upon him, and yet he lived more than twenty years after that.

At that session of the Conference the Rev. Giles P. Sparks was assigned to Tuskaloosa Station for that year, and at the next session held in Montgomery, Alabama, beginning January 26, and closing February 3, 1848, he was returned to Tuskaloosa for that year, but he was not able to do much work. He left Montgomery, the seat of the Conference, after the appointments were announced, for his home in Tuskaloosa, with a cold, which developed into pneumonia before he reached home, and during the remaining months of his life he was under physical disabilities. Feebleness and suffering prevented his doing more than preaching a few times during the months of that year. He died at Tuskaloosa, Alabama, September 26, 1848. The physicians and the people of Tuskaloosa attended him with assiduity and supported him with great cheerfulness and liberality during his afflictions, and attended his funeral as true mourners. He was a native of North Carolina, and was about thirty-three years old when he died. He was educated at Oxford and La Grange, Georgia. He was a local preacher a few years, and for some time taught in East Alabama. He was endowed with fine

mental powers, and a sensitive disposition, and he acquired studious habits. He was a popular preacher, chaste in diction, and graceful in manner. He left a wife and two sons. His wife, Mrs. Ann R. Sparks, the daughter of Richard Burt, of Georgia, died at Tuskaloosa, Alabama, August 2, 1853, in her thirty-second year. Her sons were nine and eleven when she died. She was a woman of great faith and deep piety; an example of holiness.

Tuskaloosa had another session of the Alabama Conference December 7-15, 1853. Bishop Robert Paine, who was to preside over that session of the Conference, was absent, being detained at home by affliction in his household. The Rev. Greenberry Garrett was elected President, and presided over the entire business of the occasion, and did the work well.

One of the noted events of that session of the Conference was the holding of a Memorial Service for the brethren who had fallen during the year. Nine of the preachers of the Conference had brushed the dews and passed the crossing on the dark river, and had joined the innumerable throng who encompass the throne on high, and look upon the face of God. These men who had fought the last battle and achieved the final victory, and had received their royal robes and fadeless crowns were: The Revs. John Boswell, William Weir, Thomas H. P. Scales, Jacob S. Hughes, Wesley R. Rounsaval, Augustus H. Powell, David W. Pollock, Thomas W. Manning, and John W. Starr, Jr. By appointment of the Conference on Sunday afternoon the Rev. E. V. LeVert preached a sermon in memory of these fallen and ascended heroes. It was a time of mingled sorrow and joy. It was a time of great weeping. Tears are associated with joys reached through sufferings. Crowns are won by crosses borne.

The Missionary Anniversary held on the evening of the fourth day of that session of the Conference was an event redolent of hope and of happiness. The Rev. Thomas O. Summers, filled with high aims, delivered an address, on the occasion, of thundering sound and learned length. Then Dr. Benjamin Jenkins, a member of the South Carolina Conference, and at that time a Missionary to China, delivered a lecture on the Celestial Empire. At the close of that Lecture, the Rev. James S. Belton, who had just been admitted, without the usual years of trial, into

full connection in the Alabama Conference, and elected to deacon's and elder's orders, not ordained because the Bishop was absent, and who was getting ready to leave as a Missionary for China, stated to the audience the considerations which induced him to devote himself to the China Mission. After listening to the sublime statement in which was presented the potent reasons which induced him to make direct effort to disenthral the heathen, the audience, by a donation, made him a life-member of the Parent Society, and subscribed over three hundred dollars to pay his passage to China. Dr. Jenkins also obtained a good sum to secure a press for the use of the Mission. A thousand dollars was raised at that meeting. Twenty-two thousand dollars was the amount of the collection for Missions for the year in the bounds of the Conference territory. The Methodists in Alabama at that time were beginning to realize what was involved in the work of Missions. The savage is despoiled and enthralled. Naught at his command can bate a jot the dire evils of his lot. The barbarous tribe dwells in a moral waste where the good is interdicted, where the fragrant is no sooner blown than blasted. Truth divine and power omnific only can bring release from such a fate. The deadly gloom and fearful grief of such a State should quicken the sympathies of all Christians, and the Church should speed on her rapid course to reclaim the lost, and to disseminate among them the joyous rays of the heavenly world.

One of the darling ideas of Dr. Summers was that by their baptism children are matriculated in the school of Christ, and that pastors of congregations should so recognize, and that the Church should take oversight of and care for the matriculates. At the Conference at Tuscaloosa, in December, 1853, he gave emphasis and prominence to his idea, and fair promises were made and strong resolutions were adopted pledging fidelity on this behalf in the future. There were in the bounds of the Alabama Conference at that time two hundred and thirty-seven Sunday-schools, all provided with Superintendents, eleven hundred and fifty-nine teachers, and eight thousand three hundred and ninety-four scholars.

A discussion was had before the Conference on the subject of Education, and Landon C. Garland, then Professor in the University of Alabama, and afterward for many years President of the

same Institution, and also for many years a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at Tuskaloosa, and in point of intellectuality and intelligence, principle and piety, was seldom surpassed, was called on for his views on the general subject, and, although he responded reluctantly, he delivered a masterly address full of philosophy and wisdom.

The preachers who administered the affairs of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at Tuskaloosa from the time of the decease of Brother Sparks till the close of 1865 were: The Revs. F. G. Ferguson, C. D. Oliver, J. J. Hutchinson, Samuel Armstrong, and John Matthews, each one year. The Revs. T. P. C. Shelman and J. B. Cottrell, each two years. The Rev. O. R. Blue four years, and the Rev. T. O. Summers, D.D., three years. Cottrell had some friction with members who were supposed to be gay, disorderly, and immoral, but possibly not more than was often had with others at other places. Blue left the pastoral charge before his second year of his second term was out. He left the charge at Tuskaloosa for some sort of position with the military forces of the Confederate States. His career in connection with the military service was as brief as it was brilliant. He found by actual personal experience that it was easier to advocate secession with ballots than to defend it with bullets. In a few months after his departure for the army he was back at the session of the Conference for an ecclesiastical appointment. Henceforth he stayed out of the military service. He has been a true preacher, able and efficient. He was popular at Tuskaloosa.

In 1865 the Society at Tuskaloosa had one hundred and seventy-seven white members, fifty-nine less than there were twenty years before and five hundred and three colored members, two hundred and forty-one more than there were twenty years before. A good increase of colored members, and a fearful decrease of white members that.

The Alabama Conference held its session at Montgomery, Alabama, beginning January 26, and closing February 3, 1848, Bishop Robert Paine presiding. The Rev. John Christian Keener at that time closed one year in charge of Montgomery Station, and severed his connection, under Episcopal prerogative, with the Alabama Conference. He had already displayed talents and worth which suggested him for larger cities, wider fields, and more important posts. He was too gifted to be sac-



rified out of consideration to those who would reject and crush one because "with feelings of mingled indignation, disgust, and pity" he had exposed "the meanness" of those who would command ministerial service without fee or other compensation, and who would rudely treat the minister of the gospel, and consign him to rude quarters and expose him to unnecessary fatigue for their own convenience and pleasure. He had already exhibited gifts as a writer. While in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, he wrote three Letters addressed to the author of a "Discourse on the Dangers and Advantages of Protracted Religious Efforts." Said Letters were published in the *Southern Christian Advocate*. They were in defense of special and protracted efforts for quickening the Church, and saving those who are under condemnation. At that session of the Conference, at the close of his one year in Montgomery, he was transferred to the Louisiana Conference, and Stationed in Poydras Street Church, New Orleans. There in that Conference, in various relations as a Methodist preacher, he worked until he was ordained a Bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

For that year 1848 Montgomery was left to be supplied, and it has been said that the Rev. W. F. Samford, a local preacher, was the one depended on to supply it, but that in fact the Rev. William H. Milburn filled the Station that year, and he was there beyond all doubt the next year.

After the Rev. W. H. Milburn, the Revs. Joshua T. Heard, C. D. Oliver, O. R. Blue, T. W. Dorman, A. H. Mitchell, James A. Heard, Edwin Baldwin were each in charge of Montgomery Station two years, and in the order in which they are here named. The Rev. Dr. H. N. McTyeire was in charge of that Station three years, or on the third year till he was consecrated a Bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

At the close of 1853 the colored people in Montgomery were separated from the white charge and for four years the Rev. James W. Brown served the colored charge, then the Revs. B. S. Williams and C. N. McLeod served it each one year, then it was supplied one year; then the Rev. R. B. Crawford served it one year: then for two years it was under the pastoral care of the preacher in charge of the white congregation; then it was separated from the white congregation in Montgomery, and served by J. W. Jordan.

There is on record a statement to the effect that Dr. Summers, on Sunday morning, December 18, 1853, had the pleasure of addressing the Sunday-school and also of preaching in the basement story of a mammoth Church then verging to completion in the city of Montgomery, Alabama. That mammoth Church was finally completed, and was dedicated March 3, 1856, Bishop George F. Pierce preaching the sermon on 1 Corinthians i. 23, 24, to a throng which crowded every available spot where standing and seeing could be had.

The membership at Montgomery in 1845 was two hundred and twelve white and three hundred and twenty-five colored members; and in 1865 was two hundred and fifty white members, and the colored members, including those at Stone's Chapel, were twelve hundred and forty-three. The increase in the white members during the twenty years was exceedingly small, while the increase of colored members during that period was very gratifying.

The revival influences were not as great in the bounds of the Alabama Conference during 1847, the statistics of which were reported at Montgomery at the session above noted, as they had been in other years. At some points, however, the arm of the Lord was gloriously revealed, and he bestowed on the Church according to the multitude of his loving-kindnesses, and the people were redeemed. At the village of Arbacoochee, near the line of Randolph and Benton Counties, thirty-six were added to the Church. At Mount Pleasant, in Monroe County, a dozen were converted and a larger number added to the Church. At Ebenezer, in Centerville Circuit, there were seventy-five conversions, and to the Societies at the different points in the Circuit more than one hundred were added. At Village Springs, on Jones's Valley Circuit, there were forty-eight conversions and forty-nine accessions, and at Pleasant Hill, on the same Circuit, there were between fifty and sixty conversions, and at other points on that Circuit there were added ninety-six white and forty-eight colored members. At Bethel, on Talladega Circuit, there were fifty-seven added to the Church, and at Cold Water, on the same Circuit, there were sixty conversions and forty-three accessions. In one quarter of the year one hundred and forty were added to the Church on the Blount Circuit. At the town of Tuskegee forty-five were converted and twenty-seven

added to the Church, and at Enon, in Macon County, fifty were added to the Church.

In that same year 1847 a new Camp-ground was established at Wesley Chapel, four miles from Socopato, in Coosa County, and in October of that year a Camp-meeting was held, under the superintendence of the Rev. Andrew S. Harris, which lasted eleven days, and resulted in forty-eight conversions. Camp-meetings were held there annually for seven years. Wesley Chapel Society was kept up till after the civil war between the States. It is said that Mrs. Ann Jordan gave the land on which that Camp-ground was built, and that she was one of the principal tenters while the meetings were continued. She died in 1888, at the age of ninety-two. The other principal tent-holders at that place were: Aaron Spiney, John Driskill, a local preacher and the father of the Rev. Ambrose F. Driskill, James Prather, Richard Plunkett, Robert Wood, William Norwood, Ephraim Spiney, and William Garrett. The hospitality of said tent-holders secured desirable results in the meetings at that place.

William Lowther, in the year 1847, obtained part in the inheritance of the saints, and united with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at Mount Zion in the Crawford Circuit, a Circuit long called by that name, though previously called Russell. Mount Zion is north-west of Columbus, Georgia, and not more than nine miles from that place. Mr. Lowther was a native of Georgia, and became a citizen of Alabama in 1841, and died, in the same community in Alabama in which he first took up abode in the State, June 30, 1889, at the age of seventy-three. Through all the years from 1847 to 1889 he was a member of the Society at Mount Zion. Ever free from malice and guile and hypocrisies and envies, he was a pillar in the Church of God. He was a faithful steward during the time of his connection with the Church, and was an active Sunday-school teacher and officer through a long period of service. Perhaps no man in that section of the State exerted a better influence and did a more faithful part than the sweet spirited and saintly William Lowther. He was affable without levity, and sedate without moroseness. He was contented and happy, and never sought public notoriety or applause. He was of sound judgment, just, and tolerant. He was attentive to the sick, kind to

the poor, and gentle toward all men. The delicacy with which he bestowed his alms made them doubly welcome and doubly valuable. He was well reported of for good works, and he laid up for himself a good foundation, and has laid hold on eternal life.

The Crawford Circuit was continued in its original boundary until the close of 1857, when it was divided into two Circuits, one still called Crawford, and the other Russell. During the years before that division that Circuit had from thirteen to fifteen appointments extending over the country from the neighborhood of Opelika to the neighborhood of Seale and from Wacoochee to Mount Olivet south-west of Uchee, and during the years previous to the division the white members within the bounds of the Circuit numbered from six to more than nine hundred. That Crawford Circuit, covering the area above mentioned, was the first Circuit to which the author of this History was appointed. There in the relation of junior preacher he commenced his itinerant work. It was in that Circuit, in 1857, he first knew the Allens, Bakers, Bankses, Barnetts, Bennetts, Borums, Boykins, Bullards, Byrds, Calhouns, Capps, Cherrys, Coles, Dunlaps, Edwardses, Faulkenberrys, Frazers, Greens, Gibsons, Harrises, Hayses, Himeses, Hurts, Johnsons, Keetings, Laney, Lockharts, Lowthers, McTyeires, Pages, Perrys, Prestons, Smiths, Tates, Threadgills, Trotters, and Williamses. Men and women of these names were pillars in the Church of God, and saints in the household of faith.

The Alabama Conference held its annual session at Greensborough, Alabama, January 17-24, 1849. Bishop Robert Paine was delayed by sickness and reached the seat of the Conference one day late. In his absence the Rev. Jefferson Hamilton was elected President. At the Missionary Anniversary, held on Monday evening of the Conference session, the Rev. A. H. Mitchell, D.D., and the Rev. W. H. Milburn, then lately come from Illinois, made addresses in the interest of the cause in hand.

Throughout the territory of the Conference during that ecclesiastical year then closed, the year 1848, the unction from on high rested on the Church, and large numbers of souls had a happy transition from nature to grace, and affiliated with the people of God. At Asbury, Hamilton, Mellard's, Rehoboth, and



other points on the Autauga Circuit there was a manifestation of living power, and over one hundred whites and a number of blacks joined the Church. At Bethlehem, on the Coosa Circuit, a fine class was received into the Church, and a number were happy in the experience of regeneration. On the Harpersville Circuit there were more than sixty accessions to the Church in six weeks. On the Cedar Bluff Circuit the work was extensive. Throughout the Talladega Circuit, which embraced Tallassee-hatchee, Chockolocko, and Talladega Valleys, the work was profound and extensive. Throughout the Randolph Circuit there was a deep current of divine influence, and scores were inaugurated into the divine favor. At Auburn and at one other place on the Auburn Circuit over ninety joined the Church. At Mount Meigs there were fifty justified, and more than that many accessions. The Choctawhatchee Circuit had twenty-two appointments, and at Abbeville, Clayton, Dawkins's Camp-ground, Epworth, Elizabeth Chapel, and Wright's, on that Circuit, there was a divine work which resulted in a large number of accessions. Over two hundred were added to the Church on Columbia Mission. There were more than seventy conversions on Oak Grove Circuit, and the Lower Peach Tree Circuit had great times, while on the Havana Circuit seventy white and fifty colored persons were received into the fellowship of Christians in one quarter of the year. The region between the Tombigbee and Warrior Rivers was visited by divine influences, and at Clinton, Ebenezer, Eutaw, Pine Grove, Sardis, and Springfield there were grand times, and the refining fire there, as at other places, purified the Church. Selma, Dayton, and Demopolis received the unction from on high, and at each of said places souls were made inexpressibly happy. In the bounds of the Conference the increase that year was reported at two thousand two hundred and forty-seven white and eight hundred and sixteen colored members.

Greenesborough Station had a noble set of men and women connected with it through all the period from 1845 to 1865. Dr. Joseph A. Moore was a steward there from 1841 till 1849, and Dr. Pleasant W. Kittrell was a steward there from 1844 till 1850. These two men were active, punctual, and efficient in Church work until 1849, when they both became somewhat delinquent. Some time after that Dr. Kittrell moved to Texas.

John Du Boise and Joseph W. Houck, and their wives, who were sisters, were pillars in the Church of God. They were members at Greensborough from 1835 till beyond the period where this History will close. Du Boise, who has often been mentioned in these pages, was a local preacher, and Houck was an exhorter. In thirty-three years, beginning with 1835, and closing with 1868, one hundred and thirty-two Quarterly Conferences were held for Greensborough Station, and Joseph W. Houck, exhorter, was present at one hundred and eight of them. He was a man of God, and after the type of William Carvosso, the noted class-leader of England.

Thomas M. Johnson had a long time association with the Church at Greensborough. In 1835 he contributed fifty dollars for the support of the ministry, at that place, and in 1836 he was the class-leader there, and for seventeen years after that he was steward, and subsequently he was Superintendent of the Sunday-school.

J. W. Walton, a native of North Carolina, and a man of sound judgment, joined the Methodist Episcopal Church at Greensborough, under the ministry of the Rev. James M. Boatwright, in 1839, and was steward there for more than twenty years beginning with 1847. In the Canebrake region of Alabama he made large property and possessed great wealth. He contributed a large sum to build and equip the Southern University. In 1869 he moved to Gallatin, Tennessee. He now, in 1892, lives near Birmingham, Alabama, seventy-five years old, and in penury. He has children to relieve his wants.

During the first quarter of 1847 Mrs. Amanda Peterson and Mrs. Elizabeth Hunt were received into the Society at that place by certificate, and the first Quarterly Conference for that year elected Gideon Nelson a steward. While in itself not a promise of accession of power, and while not a revelation of well conceived plans to be executed in great advancements, and while not to be recorded here as one of many fabulous deeds, yet it is a fact that at the Quarterly Conference held for that Station in September, 1847, Sam Dillard, a colored member, was brought forward as a candidate for the ministry. No recommendation had been secured from either the Society of which he was a member or from the Leader's Meeting as the Discipline required, and for that reason the case was indefinitely postponed.

Dr. William Thomas Webb was elected steward for Greenesborough Station, in 1848, and he continued in that office until the close of 1850, when Henry A. Stolenwerck was elected to that position in his place. Three or four years later he was again elected steward, and then in about two years he tendered his resignation, and it was accepted.

Stolenwerck continued in the office of steward for more than fifteen years, and beyond the time to be recounted in this History. He died in 1891. His first wife was the daughter of Dr. Gaston Drake, of Greenesborough, Alabama, and his last wife was a daughter of Dr. Thompson, of Camden, Wilcox County, Alabama.

Warren E. Kennedy, than whom a more excellent man seldom appeared in the Church at that place, was elected steward in the first part of 1849, and continued in that office far beyond the time to which this History extends.

Dr. Gaston Drake, a man of great personal worth, was elected steward, in May, 1851, in place of David Berkley, who had removed to Texas, and he was continued in that office till beyond the time reviewed in this History. He was industrious, prompt, punctual, and useful.

As an indemnification in a ministerial crisis, at the Quarterly Conference in January, 1853, on motion of T. M. Johnson, a Resolution was adopted pronouncing it absolutely expedient to found a District Parsonage. What further was done toward the work in that good cause this deponent saith not.

R. G. Hammill was a local preacher in that Station for a number of years, and R. S. Hunt was a class-leader, and in 1853, these two worthy brothers were appointed to superintend the Sunday-school of the colored people. That bestowed honor and rank, and was an award to modesty, integrity, and worth.

John H. Y. Webb appeared in official position in connection with that Station as early as the first part of 1855, and, though more than a third of a century has elapsed, he is, in 1892, still there, faithful, true, and honored.

At a Quarterly Conference held at Greenesborough, December 1, 1855, the Rev. James K. Armstrong was recommended to Alabama Annual Conference for admission on trial, and the Conference at its next session admitted him.

December 1, 1855, according to a detailed report made to the

Quarterly Conference, though the ideal standard was still unattained, the Church at Greenesborough was in a firm and healthy state. The stewards, so it was claimed, were men of ability, enterprise, and efficiency; and the current expenses of the Church were liberally provided for, and cheerfully and promptly liquidated. It seems, however, that the Church at that place had long indulged the liberty and the luxury, if liberty and luxury it was, of debtor, for it is stated in the report above referred to that "the old debts have all been paid, and this Church for the first time in its history is free from debt." Credit may be necessary to commerce, and commerce may be the signs and the means of opulence, and debit and credit may be words peculiar to civilized and Christian nations, but debt is not assuring to a Church. Public worship at that time was well attended, though the prayer meetings and class-meetings were greatly neglected, and were, evidently, treated as of little utility by the majority of the members of the Society. Singing, which is an important part of divine service, may have been good or indifferent. The report states that the music was specially engaged in with spirit and pleasure, and had been greatly improved by the concentrated efforts of several brethren who had taken that part of worship under their own paternal care. There was a well regulated Sunday-school in the charge, having connected with it the Infant Class and the Bible Class. That Society, at that time, was composed of gentlemen and ladies of great personal worth, and yet that was a season of profound tranquillity, that sort of tranquillity which prevails where zeal and ardor have disappeared. There was a tendency to gayety rather than to pensiveness and piety. There was a tendency to conformity to the world just in the measure that religious sociability was lacking. Pastimes were rather sought and relished than class-meetings and religious interviews.

At the Quarterly Conference, July 5, 1856, the names of the Trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in Greenesborough, were entered on the record, and said Trustees were ordered not to allow the Church to be used, after that date, for other than religious services, and meetings under the control of the Church and the Southern ministry. There had been usurpation and there had been desecration of the sacred place; and there was a rally of authority for rescue and protection.



Through the period now under review there was the same fluctuation in the white membership at Greensborough as at other places. In 1846 there were one hundred and seventy white members, five years later there were only one hundred and thirty, and in 1864 there were two hundred and twenty-eight, counting probationers. The colored members increased throughout the period: two hundred and thirty in the beginning, and four hundred and thirty-three at the close, counting the probationers.

The Alabama Conference held a session at Columbus, Mississippi, January 16-24, 1850. The Rev. Ebenezer Hearn, by appointment of the Bishop, presided over the deliberations of the first day. Bishop William Capers presided the remainder of the time. Bishop Robert Paine was present most of the Session. At that day there was no such thing as a Joint Board of Finance, but each Conference had authority to adopt and recommend such plans and rules as to them appeared necessary to raise supplies for the respective allowances recognized by the Discipline; and the Conference appointed annually a committee to estimate the sums requisite for necessitous superannuated ministers, widows, and orphans. At that session of the Alabama Conference there was adopted a Financial Plan, and it was enacted that: "There shall be a Joint Board of Finance, composed of one lay member from each District in the Conference, an equal number of ministers and a chairman." That Plan embodied substantially what, many years afterward, was put in the Discipline providing for a Joint Board of Finance. The illustrious lay members elected at that time on that Board were: Charles Gascoigne, of Mobile, B. O. Glover, of Demopolis, William Godfrey, of Gainesville, T. C. Billup, of Columbus, Alfred Battle, of Tuskalooza, J. G. L. Huey, of Talladega, Daniel Pratt, of Prattville, J. Thorington, of Montgomery, and A. McGehee, of Eufaula.

The Delegates elected then to the General Conference were: T. O. Summers, W. Murrah, J. Hamilton, A. H. Mitchell, T. W. Dorman, E. Calloway, G. Garrett, and J. T. Heard. The Reserves: E. Hearn, G. Sheaffer.

At the next session of the Annual Conference, and which was held at Auburn, Alabama, January 8-15, 1851, Bishop Capers again presiding, and at which the Rev. James E. Glenn, then

venerable in years, was present, the new Financial Plan approved itself by the achievements attained under its operations. Previous to that year the claimants on the Conference Collections had been paid about forty cents on the dollar, under the new order at that time they were paid about seventy cents on the dollar. That session of the Conference was the first ever held in the State further east than Montgomery. Though Auburn was then only a small country town, it was a pleasant place, and the hospitality of the citizens was unbounded, and the Conference was admirably entertained.

The Missionary Anniversary at that time and place was marked by enthusiasm. Impromptu speeches were features of the occasion, and some of them were most felicitous, and produced most admirable effects. At that anniversary, at Auburn, the ladies of the congregation made Thomas Eady, a member of the Church at that place, and who for many years was the sexton of the Church, a life member of the Missionary Society, by a contribution of twenty dollars; and a School girl who had been favored with the pastoral care of the Rev. Thomas Y. Ramsey when she was a pupil at Centenary Institute, at Summerfield, made him, by a contribution of twenty dollars, a life member of the Missionary Society. Twelve thousand seventy-one dollars and thirty-nine cents were collected that year just then closing for Missions in the bounds of the territory embraced in the Conference. Enon Circuit, in the Eufaula District, paid that year to Missions one thousand and twenty-two dollars, and Franklin Street Church, Mobile, paid for the same object one thousand seven dollars and forty-five cents.

About that time unusual enterprise began to show itself in the cause of Missions in the Alabama Conference, distinguished attention to the work followed, and the Methodists of Alabama enlarged their contributions for carrying the gospel to the regions beyond. Tuskegee Circuit had nineteen places for preaching in it in 1851, and the First Quarterly Conference for that Circuit for that year resolved to hold missionary meetings of two days continuance at every appointment in the Circuit, and that in addition the best hour at all the Camp-meetings on the Circuit be devoted to the cause of Missions. The resolutions thus adopted were carried out. The Crawford Circuit, with sixteen appointments, adopted and carried out similar

resolutions. The Glennville Circuit, with eight appointments, had the same kind of meetings for the same purpose, and the Enon Circuit, with Chunnennueggee in it, held similar meetings. Enthusiasm was intense, as attested by the results, which were infinitely greater than had been anticipated. The amount collected for Missions in the bounds of the Conference was twenty-five thousand eight hundred thirty-one dollars and sixty-five cents. Enon Circuit, in the Eufaula District, still held the Banner, having paid twenty-nine hundred and seventy-five dollars. The Tuskegee Circuit, in the Montgomery District, pressed hard for the prize, paying into the treasury twenty-nine hundred and twenty dollars. Tuskegee Circuit at that time consisted of the following places, each one of which contributed to that great sum; Loachapoka, Soule Chapel, New Hope, Providence, Franklin, Notasulga, Rocky Mount, Warrior Stand, Baldwin's, Perry Chapel, Society Hill, Mount Nebo, Asbury Chapel, Segrests, McKendree, Payne Chapel, Fort Hull, Mount Zion, and Texas. Auburn, which was then a Station, contributed the largest amount for Missions that year of any Station in the Conference: it paid four hundred and eighty dollars. At the session of the Conference held in Mobile, Alabama, January 7-14, 1852, Bishop James O. Andrew presiding, at which these sums for Missions were reported, it transpired that the Alabama Conference had gone beyond all the Conferences of the connection in the amounts contributed to Missions, and had taken the honor which hitherto the South Carolina Conference had possessed. But that solitary grandeur was not all in which the Alabama Conference rejoiced. The work had prospered in other respects during the year 1851, the year just then closed. Great revivals had swept through the State, and there had been an increase of twenty-seven hundred and twenty-six members. The Sunday-schools had flourished, and the *esprit de corps* was admirable.

It became necessary at that session of the Conference to investigate the conduct and the theological teachings of the Rev. William H. Milburn, who had been in Alabama three or four years, and had been in Mobile two years. He was once a member of the Illinois Conference, and located in September, 1847. That investigation was the only thing at that time to disturb the tranquillity of that occasion. It seems that Mr. Milburn

had been guilty of some erratic conduct, some questionable association, not suited to one occupying the position of a Methodist preacher. In some way he associated with and participated in a ball, a sort of pantomime, a celebration at New Year's by a Mobile club. It seems also that he had given utterance to such doctrines as induced the charge of heresy. For these he was called to answer. He was so enamored of scientific exactness, and had so entangled himself in the meshes of his own researches and his speculative abstractions, that he spurned all systematic arrangement of theological doctrines, and he knew nothing as he ought, either of science or theology. When called to answer for his conduct in connection with the New Year's pantomime he put in a plea of good motive. When called to answer for his theological vagaries, he asserted, in defense of himself, that the preaching of theology was the bane of the Church and the curse of the pulpit. But he made such plea of good motives in the matter of the ball had by the club, and he made such explanations of his theological views as induced the Conference to condone both his questionable conduct and his theological errors.

About the time of that session of the Conference in January, 1852, the Rev. P. P. Neely, D.D., preached two sermons in the city of Mobile. He had then just closed a term of two years in the Station at Columbus, Mississippi, and had been just three years in the Alabama Conference, having been transferred from the Tennessee Conference. There was a sojourner in the city of Mobile at the time here referred to, and, attracted by the fame of Dr. Neely's eloquence, said sojourner joined the auditors who sought to hear the sermons. That sojourner wrote an account of the sermons and the preacher, and as said production contains the best portraiture of Dr. Neely that can be had it is transferred to these pages. Notwithstanding a deep shadow fell upon Dr. Neely and continued to rest upon him till his sun went down in death, he continued in the ministry, and maintained his reputation for eloquence, and attracted multitudes to his ministry as long as he lived. But here is the calm and dispassionate estimate of the man:

"About the time of the late Conference here, the Rev. P. P. Neely, D.D., preached two sermons; and as his fame had reached me, I, of course, heard him. How one is often disap-



pointed in the appearance of a person of whom we have often heard. Before seeing him, I had pictured Dr. Neely as a slight, graceful man, of *spirituelle* expression; but he is tall, and large-framed, florid complexion, light eyes and hair. His voice is soft, sweet, yet withal a little husky. He reads the hymns and Scripture lessons pleasantly, but not impressively. And upon standing up to preach, you are grieved to perceive what appears to be a manuscript volume before him. With the exception of the eye in the main kept book-ward, you would scarce guess he was reading. He has a good deal of action, and his voice has all the cadences suited to the passage. His style is elaborate, but not finished; ornate, but not elegant; it has copiousness, but not precision; abounds in finely conceived attenuative passages, but lacks the bullet-like accuracy and telling power of the short, terse sentences. The smooth, liquid sounds predominate. He does not seem to have made the harsh, grating sounds a study. His voice, together with the effects he produces by it, is astonishing. It has no compass of tones, and its volume is limited, yet its influence over you is very great. It propitiates, then wins you. You cannot resist its soft and touching sweetness. It blends too in beautiful accord with the style and matter of the discourse. I am mistaken if much of his power does not lie here. His view of a subject is marked by adaptation to popular apprehension, rather than original or profound thought. It is not a bold and comprehensive grasp of it, but rather an embellished reproduction of what has been already thought and said. His presentation of it tends to excite emotion more than to stimulate reflection, and hence he is effective. It is no mean office, so to reclothe old thoughts, animating them with the breath of a rich life, bringing them again to our acquaintance as unknown and yet well known. The passions he awakens are admiration, pity, and love; rarely fear, never terror. His passion is his strength, without it his adornment would be tinsel, his moving appeals but as 'sounding brass or tinkling cymbal;' his rhetoric faulty to the last degree, and his whole discourse but a declamation.

To sum him up, I should say he has more fancy than imagination; excelling in embellishment rather than creation; more feeling than thought, passion than reason; less cultivation than natural vigor; prolixity without condensation; greater afflu-

ence of language than finish of expression; more power than you can well account for. His genius is luxurious, not ascetic: it singing robes, but not the purged ear or the rapt vision; disporting itself in descriptions, never girding up its loins for a pilgrimage in the pathless realms of thought; delighting in sentiment more than principles: breathing dulcet sounds of melody, but never reaching the lofty pitch of harmonic sublimity."

With Bishop William Capers presiding, the Alabama Conference met at the classic town of Marion, Perry County, Alabama, December 1, 1852, and continued in session eight days. The year was noted as a year of success. The patient labors of the men of God had been rewarded with satisfactory results. Great ingatherings were had in many pastoral charges, and there was an increase of twenty-one hundred and thirty-eight white and two hundred and seventy-three colored members during the year. The interest in education increased, the Sunday-schools flourished, and the zeal in Missions continued, though the amount collected on that account was not quite as much as the preceding year. Twenty-one thousand one hundred ninety-six dollars and eighty-eight cents had been gathered for the cause. A large class of preachers was admitted on trial, thirty-one in all.

Noteworthy events transpired on the Cedar Bluff Circuit during the year 1852. Though contrary to the list of appointments published in the Minutes, yet it is a fact that the Rev. Thomas P. Crymes was in charge of the Cedar Bluff Circuit that year. That Circuit at that time had in it the then village of Gadsden, and that village was at that time in Cherokee County. The Second Quarterly Conference for that Circuit for that year was held at Gadsden, in July. The meeting was continued for twelve days, and twenty-five persons professed justification, and thirty were received into the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The Third Quarterly Conference for that charge for that year was held at Spring Creek Camp-ground, in September, in conjunction with a Camp-meeting. One hundred conversions and fifty accessions to the Church were reported as the result of that meeting. But notwithstanding all that revival work one of the most unseemly things occurred at Gadsden that same year. The Methodists and the Cumberland Presbyterians preached and worshiped in the same house at that place, each denomination

having its days and hours for its own service. On one occasion there was a most fearful collision of these two denominations; the Cumberland Presbyterians occupying the house and utilizing the hour, and the Methodists claiming the hour as theirs by the stipulations in force. The Rev. T. P. Crymes, the preacher, was present, and, bold in the maintainance of his right, claimed his hour. The Cumberland people, aggressive in their movements, claimed to be in actual occupancy of the house and the hour. Crymes arose at his place in the house and made announcements of his services for the remainder of the day. Words and menace ensued, and the scene was not assuring, was not religious. The Cumberland Presbyterians appeared before the Grand Jury of the County of Cherokee and obtained an indictment against the Rev. Thomas P. Crymes for disturbing public worship. He answered to the indictment and was actually tried for the crime alleged in the court-house in the town of Center. While he had counsel, he acted as his own attorney, made the speech in his own defense. He was persistently prosecuted and bitterly persecuted, but he was acquitted by the verdict of the Court. The audacious and revengeful conduct of the enemies of Mr. Crymes did their cause no good, and they endured a recoil. They have reaped the fruits of their own doings. The Methodists have ever been in advance of the party who led that unrighteous assault upon the Rev. Thomas P. Crymes.

The mention of Gadsden gives opportunity for the introduction of the name of one of the most noted Methodists ever in that section of the State. General D. C. Turrentine lived in the vicinity of Gadsden for nearly four decades, and died there September 11, 1883, in his seventy-sixth year. He was a native of Georgia. His name first appeared on the records of Alabama Methodism in the Wills Valley Circuit. L. M. Nicholson, David Sibert, and D. C. Turrentine, a Committee of arbitration in a case of controversy between Brothers Bristo and Watts, of Wills Valley Circuit, on July 24, 1841, rendered a decision which is on record in the Journal of that Circuit. Upon moving to the vicinity of Gadsden General Turrentine organized a Sunday-school with five scholars, and he continued in the Superintendency of the Sunday-school there for thirty-four years. Who ever held the position of Superintendent of a Sunday-school longer than that? In that position he was distinguished and

successful. It was an humble position which he filled, and routine work in which he engaged, but, in conducting a Sunday-school and teaching and training the children, committed to his care, in the doctrines of the Bible, he did a work grand in its import and far reaching in its results. He was a man of great firmness, persistence, and energy. Mrs. Caroline Turrentine, the wife of General Turrentine, was a woman of much worth, a member of the Church, a thorough Methodist, and a devoted Christian. She performed her part in the drama of life punctually and well. At the Camp-grounds in the section of the State in which he lived General Turrentine had provision for tenting, and he helped to entertain the crowds who had to be entertained at the Camp-meetings. He and his wife were fine Camp-meeting singers, and great workers at a Camp-meeting service, and they would sing and pray for, and talk with penitents, who were seeking the pardoning mercy of the Lord Almighty. At the house of General Turrentine was dispensed as generous, and graceful a hospitality as was ever bestowed anywhere, by any one. He kept open house, and it was no uncommon thing for the preacher and his family, with a most cordial welcome, to stay at General Turrentine's home weeks at a time. Firm as the everlasting hills, unyielding as the everlasting rocks, these two, General D. C. Turrentine and his wife, Caroline Lucy Turrentine, adhered to their principles, maintained the faith, and went to their reward in full triumph.

The preachers who had charge of the Station at Marion and who dispensed the gospel to that congregation from 1845 to 1865 were: the Rev. T. H. P. Scales, John M. Vestal, T. P. Holman, T. Y. Ramsey, E. J. Hammill, P. P. Neely, James A. Peebles, Josiah Bancroft, T. W. Dorman, W. Shapard, A. H. Mitchell and W. C. Harris. Neely was there four years, Ramsey three, Dorman and Shapard two, and the others one. Peebles and Bancroft served in the capacity of junior preachers, and sometimes Hamburgh was associated with Marion. At the close of 1845 there were at Marion one hundred and fifteen white and seventy-two colored members, and at the beginning of 1865 there were one hundred and one white and two hundred and fifty-three colored members, the members at Hamburgh included.

The twenty-third session of the Alabama Conference convened at Talladega, Alabama, December 13, 1854, and continued the ses-



sion until December 21, Bishop James O. Andrew, presiding. That was a very important session of the Conference. Twenty-three preachers were admitted on trial; eighteen were continued on trial; sixteen were admitted into full connection; three were re-admitted; the Rev. Edmund Baldwin, an elder in the Methodist Protestant Church, applied for admission according to the provisions of the Discipline, and was received into the Conference; ten were discontinued; four located; one, the Rev. Stephen Olin Capers, was expelled; three, the Rev. Thomas J. Campbell, the Rev. Lewis S. Oslin, and the Rev. John Gross, had died. There had been a magnificent work of grace that year, the Lord had appeared in his glory to the worshiping assemblies, and there had been an increase of sixteen hundred and sixty-seven white and seventeen hundred and fifty-three colored members, and seven local preachers. Four thousand three hundred thirty-five dollars and sixty-nine cents had been collected for the Superannuated Preachers, and the Widows and Orphans of Preachers, and to make up the deficiencies of those who had not received their regular allowance. Ninety-two cents in the dollar was the amount paid the claimants. Twenty thousand nine hundred seventy dollars and ninety-five cents had been contributed for Missions. Eleven hundred seventeen dollars and fifty-five cents had been contributed for the purchase of Sunday-school Books. Twelve hundred ninety dollars and thirty cents had been contributed for the American Bible Society; that amount was reported, in some instances the Agents failed to report the amount raised for that purpose. Two hundred and thirty-nine Sunday-schools were reported. Eight hundred and thirty dollars were collected at the Missionary Anniversary at Talladega.

The Conference gave considerable attention to the subject of education, evinced great enthusiasm on the subject, and adopted aggressive measures for the establishment of Colleges and the fostering of Schools.

The Revs. Thomas J. Campbell and Louis S. Oslin, who had died during the year, had died of consumption. They died in peace and triumph.

The Rev. T. H. Foster was transferred to the Louisiana Conference and died during the next year. The Rev. W. Monk was transferred to the East Texas Conference. The Rev. C. C. Gillespie and the Rev. R. S. Finley were transferred to the

Texas Conference. The Rev. J. W. Ellis, Sr., and the Rev. J. C. Stewart were transferred to the Pacific Conference.

A sermon was preached before the Conference on the second day of its session by the Rev. A. H. Mitchell, D.D., on Denominational Education: the Text Deuteronomy vi. 7. The tradition is that the sermon was preached in the chapel of the Synodical Female Institute, which was under the auspices of the Presbyterians. The sermon is still in existence, having been published. There is a sentence in the sermon in which occur the words "to be fed upon the husks of Calvinism." The Rev. Mr. McCorkle, who then, and for more than a quarter of a century, was pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Talladega, was present, and heard the sermon. Dr. Mitchell had an engagement to dine with Brother McCorkle that day. Mr. McCorkle was full of humor, wit, and satire. Dr. Mitchell and the other guests of the occasion having reached the residence of Mr. McCorkle, were seated, possibly, in the preacher's study. Dr. Mitchell observed a large number of Newspapers in the room, and remarked: "Brother McCorkle, I see you have and read an array of Newspapers." Brother McCorkle replied: "Yes, Doctor, I supply myself with them 'to be fed upon the husks of Calvinism.'" Dr. Mitchell did not pursue the conversation further. Very soon they repaired to the dining-room where the repast of the hour was served and enjoyed.

The various preachers who served Talladega during the period from 1845 to 1865 were: The Revs. O. R. Blue, one year; T. H. P. Scales, one year; E. J. Hammill, three years; Joseph Phelan, one year; J. W. Starr, one year; D. Carmicheal, two years; J. C. McDaniel, one year; J. S. Moore, one year; B. B. Ross, one year; T. P. Crymes, one year; James S. Lane, a local preacher, one year; T. F. Mangum, two years; C. W. Miller, a preacher from Kentucky, a part of one year; T. J. Gouch, a preacher from Missouri, the part of the year after Miller left; R. B. Crawford, two years. Talladega was in a Circuit till the close of 1857, when it was made a Station. At the close of the first year as a Station it had one hundred and forty-three white members, and sixty-five colored members. At the beginning of 1865 there were one hundred and five white and one hundred and four colored members.

Than the Rev. E. J. Hammill no more popular preacher was

ever at Talladega, hence he was returned there two or three different times. Notwithstanding his popularity, on one occasion, and by one man, he was treated most unseemly and beaten most unmercifully. The first Trustee named in the deed to the first lot conveyed to the Methodist Episcopal Church at Talladega, Alabama, was James M. McCann, and he it was who maltreated the man whose office it was to minister in holy things in the very house of worship of which he had been a Trustee. There were some reports in circulation in the community detrimental to one or more of the members of the Church, and the matter was of such a serious nature that it was absolutely necessary to take cognizance of it. Mr. Hammill, as a faithful pastor of the flock, had the matter investigated as the ecclesiastical law to which he was amenable directed. When the unsavory report was traced to its origin and the matter was adjusted upon its merits, the guilt was attached to Mrs. McCann, one of the members of the Church, and the wife of James M. McCann, and by the decision of the ecclesiastical court she was put under penalties due to her untoward conduct. That enraged Mr. McCann, and he proceeded to avenge himself on Mr. Hammill, the preacher. He waylaid Mr. Hammill, and in the darkness of the evening, as Mr. Hammill was on his way to the Church, where a congregation was assembling for divine service, and a Sunday evening it was, just as Mr. Hammill reached the corner of the block in which the Church was located and was turning down to the Church, Mr. McCann came upon him in a cowardly and dastardly way, and delivered upon him indignity, and numerous, furious, and dangerous blows. Even after he had been made to suspend his blows, by some persons who happened to come upon the scene, and after he had promised to desist from further assaults and indignities, he returned to Mr. Hammill, and gave him a number of most violent blows. Mr. Hammill was a meek man, and held the doctrine of non-resistance. He believed that violence should never be resisted by force, and on that occasion he acted according to his creed, and he made no effort to repel his assailant. He was so wounded and prostrated that he could not proceed on his way, and he was conveyed to the house just at hand, where he was cared for. James M. McCann, the miscreant, received condign punishment, the divine vengeance recompensed him. He died

in the poor house in the County of Talladega, Alabama. He lived in odium and died in poverty. He lived in sin, and died in shame.

The Rev. E. J. Hammill was born in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1818. When an infant he was carried to the city of New York, North America. It was the purpose of his father to make him, through the proper channels, a priest in the Church of Rome, and to that end he sent him to the Romish Church Schools in the city of New York; but, before he reached his majority, he went to Columbus, Georgia, and there he was justified, joined the Methodist Episcopal Church, and was licensed to preach. He professed the attainment of Christain Perfection. After that he went to Irwinton, Alabama, where he was recommended as a suitable person to be admitted on trial in the traveling connection, and in December, 1841, he was admitted to that relation by the Alabama Conference, and appointed, for 1842, to Talladega and Mardisville. For twenty-seven years he worked in Alabama as an itinerant preacher, filling good appointments and responsible positions. He married a Miss Simmons, whose father lived at the time at Hillabee, in the bounds of the Coosa Circuit, which Circuit Mr. Hammill served one year. Mr. Hammill thought, spoke, and gesticulated very rapidly. He was a man of intense and enthusiastic nature, and a man of faith, prayer, and consecration. He was a man of intense political convictions, and the course of conduct and the tide of events in the South did not please him. He was conscientiously opposed to the doctrine of Secession as advocated and adopted by the leaders of the Southern people. He was bitterly opposed to the purpose and effort to establish a government of Confederate States in the South. His political alliances made him offensive to those who held the prevailing sentiments in the South, and, under the pressure, in 1869, he left Alabama, and went to Missouri or Illinois, and united with the Methodist Episcopal Church, and preached as an itinerant in his new field. He died in the communion of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He was in a Rail Road car in transit from Illinois to Alabama, and died suddenly, in the early part of 1892.

The Rev. Joseph Phelan located and lived in the bounds of the Talladega Circuit. The Rev. John C. McDaniel, in 1857, withdrew from the Methodists and united with the Baptists.



The principal persons and officials at Talladega during the period now under review were the Rev. James S. Lane, a local preacher and a man of much worth, James G. L. Huey, Sunday-school Superintendent and class leader, A. J. Cotton, George Miller, James S. Chambers, J. W. Martin, class leaders, John B. Huey, H. H. Hammill, John L. Harris, Thomas J. Cross, John A. Winbourn, Charles Carter, Joseph H. Johnson, C. M. Shelley, W. J. Rhodes, J. B. M. Landers, Abner Jones, J. H. Vandiver, stewards, William H. Thornton, steward and class leader. Some of these men were there through all that period from 1845 to 1865, others were there only a part of the time.

As the lives of these men whose names are here grouped are reviewed the conviction is reached that it is not a pleasing act nor an easy task to transfer to the written page all the facts of history. Men do not always appear to as good advantage in groups as they do apart and alone. The aggregated follies of a community present a scene appalling. The real life and final end of even men who have avouched the Lord to be their God admonish of frailty in human nature and of contingency in human destiny. An ideal excellence is not always maintained, and a happy exit is not always secured.

The Rev. James S. Lane was for about six years a member of the Georgia Conference. He located in December, 1847, and moved to Alabama, and made his home in Talladega. He was associated with the town of Talladega from 1848 till 1864. He was a member of the Alabama Conference for the year 1855, but he did not leave Talladega. The last record made of him on the Quarterly Conference Journal for Talladega Station bears date October 29, 1864, "character of J. S. Lane, L. E., passed." About that time, or a few months thereafter, he moved to Texas. He was about forty-seven years old when he left Talladega. He was associated with several Schools in Texas, and did much for education in that State. He inspired an interest in the citizens of Georgetown and vicinity in the Southwestern University; he canvassed in the interest of that Institution. He was re-admitted to the traveling connection in the Northwest Texas Conference in November, 1869. He did efficient work in the ministry in Texas. He was a man of social attainments, and in conversation he was wise and instructive. He was strongly attached to the views and principles of the South.

He was free from sordidness and selfishness. He was full of ardor. He had dark eyes and black hair. He died December 8, 1882, and was buried at Georgetown, Texas. His remains were buried a long way from his native land of Georgia.

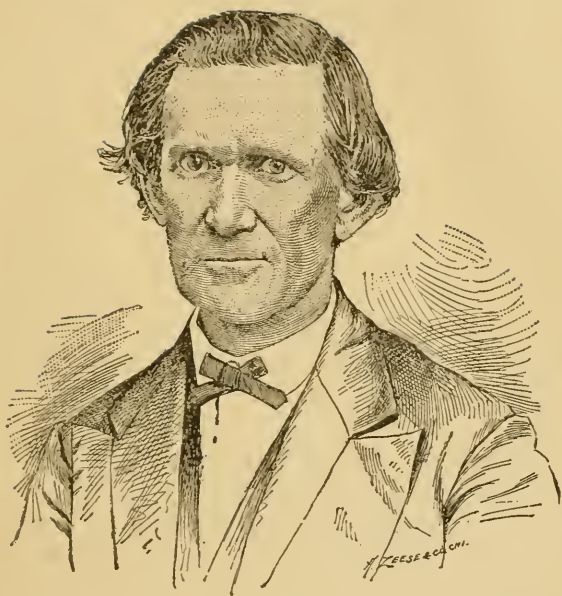
On January 1, 1838, James G. L. Huey, a native of South Carolina, and then in his twenty-fifth year, cast his lot with the denizens of Talladega, Alabama, and on a beautiful Sabbath in the flowery month of May, 1842, he presented himself at the altar of the little Meeting House which stood on the hill above the magnificent Spring in the town of Talladega, a candidate for membership in the Methodist Episcopal Church. By process provided, he was received; and he was immediately selected by the women who had hitherto guided the affairs of the Sunday-school, to take charge of the Sunday-school as Superintendent. He was the Superintendent of that Sunday-school from then till 1867. He was also one of the class leaders of the Society. He kept up a good Sunday-school through all the years in which he managed its affairs. It was a good Sunday-school not only in the numbers constituting it, but in the character of its pupils and teachers and in the work performed. For sufficient reasons it is impossible to catalogue the teachers and pupils connected with that School through the quarter of a century its destinies were guided by Brother Huey, but a few ought to be named. Miss Susan Dixon was a tower of strength in that School. She was endowed with the powers of investigation, and furnished with stores of Biblical knowledge, and she had firmness of will, and personal influence. Mrs. S. F. Rice, Mrs. Rebecca Moody, Miss Mary Jane Douglass, Miss Charlotte Walker, Miss Sarah J. Shelley, Miss Mary C. Shelley, Miss Alabama Stephenson, Miss Martha Stephenson, were noble women of brilliant lives who rendered valuable aid in the good cause. James E. Shelley, Charles M. Shelley, Henry E. Shelley, H. H. Hammill, John B. Huey, and William H. Thornton were men who wrought well in the sublime work. However pleasant and profitable it might be to study the political systems of extinct empires, and to search for the beauties of ancient classics, a sublimer work was enterprised in that School. The Bible was studied, expounded, and revered. The Bible was considered not the symbol of power, but power itself, not the semblance of truth, but truth itself.

James G. L. Huey was of French and Irish extraction, and blended in himself the various characteristics of his ancestors, the generous and impulsive predominating. Evidently he had the elements of stability in him or he could not have continued in the routine work of Sunday-school Superintendent for a quarter of a century. He served the general interests of the Church with fidelity and liberality. He was ever ready to assume responsibility for the Church and act in her interest whenever and in whatever her cause was to be advanced and protected. He not only guided her Sunday-school work, but was prompt and prominent in her class-meetings, prayer meetings, and general public services. He was ready, if need be, to render even police duty in the interest of the divine cause. An instance, attesting the truth of this averment, is on record. In the days when such a thing as police force was not known in Talladega, and when the men and women sat apart in a Methodist audience, a special meeting was in progress at the old Meeting House. During one of the services of that meeting two wicked persons, in a state of intoxication, moved around on the outside of the Church and with boisterous speech disturbed the congregation. Finally they walked up to one of the windows on the side of the house occupied by the women and poured forth a volley of insolent utterances. Huey sprang up instantly, and with determined bearing and rapid step passed out of the house and to where the insolent disturbers of the peace were standing. Jacob D. Shelley, a man of extraordinary worth in the community, and a very pillar in the Church, actuated by the same motives which moved Huey, went with him. These two class leaders, having provided themselves with suitable cudgels, chastised the base fellows in real good style. They felled them to the ground with quick and heavy blows. The culprits plead for mercy, and were permitted to depart with their wounds and their shame; and were left to reflect upon their relation to moral suasion and the effectiveness of physical force. Huey and Shelley returned to their places in the congregation, and participated in the divine worship as complacently as if they had been to join angels in a hymn of praise. General Huey was public spirited, and held a commission as General of Alabama troops, and was commissioned to act as a visitor to the United States Military Academy at West Point previous to the war be-

tween the States. He was the trusted Fiscal Agent and Deputy Treasurer of the Confederate States. He was a member of the Senate of Alabama from Talladega County, in 1845. He was one of the moving spirits in the building of the East Alabama Female Institute at Talladega; and, after the Masons and Methodists had both failed in the effort to sustain it as a Female School, he was the chief agent in inducing the State of Alabama to take it for a Deaf Mute Institute. He abstained strictly from the use of all intoxicants. The destitute shared his alms; and the sick shared his kind offices; and he visited and tendered his sympathies to the grief stricken mourner; and he was at the obsequies of even the humblest. He was twice married, and his first wife was the mother of seven children, all of whom, except two, preceded him to the grave. Hon. Benjamin M. Huey, distinguished as a Senator in the General Assembly of Alabama, from Perry County, is his son. General Huey left Talladega about the latter part of 1867, or the first of 1868, and spent the remainder of his days in Perry and Bibb Counties, Alabama. He died at his country home in Bibb County, Alabama, March 20, 1887, and was buried at the town of Marion.

William H. Thornton, a native of Wilkes County, Georgia, when seventeen years of age entered the mercantile business, and continued in that line of business until he was forty years old. Being a man of business, he studied and learned the practical things of life, and did not spend much time reveling in the domain of speculation. While living at Bluff Springs, Alabama, in 1856, he was elected Judge of Probate of Talladega County, and immediately moved to Talladega, where he resided till he passed to the grave. He held the office of Judge of Probate of Talladega County from the time he was first elected thereto until the acts of reconstruction went into force after the close of the war between the States. In 1876 he was restored to, or reinstated in the office, and then he held it until impaired health caused him to resign in 1884. He professed religion and joined the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1838, and shortly thereafter he erected his home altar, and kept up worship with his family with great punctuality until impaired health disqualified him for conducting religious services. He was a man of strong religious convictions, and did his duty in the Church of his choice faithfully and well. He was in





HON. WILLIAM H. THORNTON.



his place at the house of God, and was ever in the front rank as a worker in the divine cause. He was a man of solid piety, who both knew and loved Methodist doctrine and discipline, and had natural and acquired abilities to transact the temporal business of the Church. He had positive convictions and steady purposes. He mingled firmness with gentleness, persistence with kindness, and assertion with meekness in most admirable harmony. It is said that his most noticeable errors in judgment were committed in excessive efforts for peace and friendship. It is quite possible to sacrifice right on the altar of friendship, and in what is supposed to be the interest of peace. Judge Thornton's hospitality was boundless, making him, in dispensing it, literally the servant of the people. He kept open house. Never did preacher have a wiser counselor, a firmer friend, and a more willing and efficient comforter than was found in William H. Thornton. He married Miss Emeline E. White, a most admirable woman, and a fit companion. She was a Methodist and a Christian. To them were born ten children, and that household was a model. Judge Thornton died May 17, 1888, and his wife followed him in less than three years. There was never any family in Talladega who gave more strength to Methodism than the family of Judge William H. Thornton.

Than Dr. J. H. Vandiver no man was ever more firmly attached to the principles of Methodism. Under every ordeal he resisted every overture to desert the Church at whose altar he was dedicated to God. Steady, tried, and true he ever stood to his post. The Church ever had his personal presence, his best counsel, his warmest sympathy, and his benevolent contributions. Under his roof the Methodist preacher and his family found shelter and hospitality. Whether or not his physical make-up and peculiarities answered to the descriptions given of those of melancholic temperament, he was oftener in a state of melancholy than in any other. The melancholy mood seemed to be his normal mood, and yet the most mirthful youth whose heart beat high with hopeful anticipations was never more sanguine than he was at times. If merit there is in the inveterate use of the noxious weed called tobacco, then Dr. Vandiver possessed merit in a high degree, for he was a devotee of the quid. It would be esteemed exaggeration to state the facts in

his use of tobacco. In all other habits he was strictly temperate. For a long while he was a physician in active practice, afterward he was a druggist. He lived at Alexandria and administered medicine in that section before he moved to Talladega.

In 1861 Mrs. Mary Ann Harris, Sister Savery, Sister Hogan, and Miss Lizzie Frazier died in peace and triumph. In 1862 Mariah Whittaker died; and in 1863 Col. J. J. Woodward, another of the members, was killed in the army; and in the same year Mrs. Margaret Kennedy and Mrs. A. T. Plowman went hence. In 1864 J. W. Martin and Eliza Markham closed their earthly pilgrimage. George McLane was killed in the army.

In the latter part of 1860 the order of things carried Mrs. Rachel M. Duncan, the wife of the Rev. Daniel Duncan, to Talladega, where she became a member of the Society, and where, on December 29, 1891, she ended her pilgrimage. She was a woman of great piety.

The space at command forbids a record of the many pious and worthy members who wrought righteousness and added strength to the divine cause. On the roll of worthy ones might be placed the names of J. T. Adams, Mrs. Carroll, Mrs. Chambers, the mother of Miss Marcy, Mrs. Donahoo, Mrs. John B. Huey, Mrs. Harvey Joiner, Mrs. Martin, Mrs. Scott, Mrs. Stevens, Mrs. Thompson, Mrs. Dr. Vandiver, and Mrs. Dr. Whitson. Mrs. Jane C. Parsons, the wife of Governor Lewis E. Parsons, an ideal woman in practical sense and in personal worth, was long a working member of the Methodist Church at Talladega, and died there in the faith.

The name of Mrs. Emily A. Johnson, the wife of Dr. Joseph H. Johnson, must go on the calendar. Dr. Joseph H. Johnson and his wife deserve a monument. They wrought in the field assigned them in great modesty, and wrought that which shall endure in endless splendor. Call it a figure of speech if you will, but they gave sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and speech to the dumb! Patriotic and philanthropic hearts will ever swell with gratitude upon every review of what these two achieved in educating the unfortunate ones committed to their care. The Alabama Deaf and Dumb Asylum, a School for the education of the indigent deaf-mutes of Alabama, was located at Talladega in 1858, and Dr. J. H. Johnson was chosen to take



charge of its affairs. The blind were also admitted to the School. Dr. Johnson was admirably fitted for the work and position assigned him, and met every emergency and every expectation. It is no disparagement of Dr. Johnson to say, that from the opening of the Institution, his wife, Mrs. Johnson, was a light, a guide, a strength, and a benediction in the Asylum for the deaf, dumb, and blind at Talladega, Alabama. It is true that the Institution was always under the auspices of the State, and not of the Church, but it is the glory of the Methodists of the city of Talladega that of their number there were those capable of filling such a philanthropic and noble position, and capable of acquitting themselves with such credit in such humane work.

There is on record in Book sixteen in the County Records of the County of Talladega a warranty Deed to a parcel of ground therein described. The Deed is made and signed by John T. Morgan, and is made to James G. L. Huey, Alexander J. Cotton, and William H. Thornton, Trustees for the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at Talladega, Alabama, and bears date October 10, 1857. The description is as follows: "Part of Lot No. 156 in Talladega, Alabama, commencing at the North-west corner of said Lot, and running thence east ninety-five feet along a street in front of the New Methodist Episcopal Church, thence one hundred and thirty feet at right angles with said street running in a southerly direction, thence west at eighty angles with the last mentioned line to the street, thence one hundred and thirty feet to the commencing point; being the same Lot on which the New Methodist Episcopal Church Edifice is now standing." The facts of a house being built on the Lot before it was secured by Deed, and its being described as the New Methodist Church edifice are explained by an item of history.

One bleak Sunday morning in the first months of 1854, at the close of a class-meeting, John T. Morgan and James G. L. Huey lingered at the door of the old Church after the other members of the congregation had dispersed. Morgan, looking up and surveying the old house, said: "The Methodists must have a better house of worship, and this location will not do." Huey concurred in what Morgan had said, and added: "There is a place near this just suited to our wants." The two then walked to the place referred to, and after satisfactory inspection, they resolved

to obtain possession of the Lot, and hold it as the site for the anticipated better house of worship for the use of the Methodists. Before the dawn of another Sunday they had purchased the Lot, and it was deeded to John T. Morgan, hence after the house of worship was erected on it he had to convey it to Trustees as the property of the Church. Morgan moved away from Talladega before the new Church was erected, but to him and Huey belong the honor of inaugurating the enterprise of a new Church. These men both attained titles in after years. For years Morgan represented Alabama in the United States Senate. The new Church was erected in the period between the time of the incident and the date of the Deed above recited, and is the Church now in use by the Methodists of Talladega. The corpse of Leroy Huey was the first one ever carried from the altar of that new Church.

The Rev. Silvester E. Swope served the cause of Methodism in Alabama for many years. His influence and labors as a local preacher extended over the country from the Georgia line to the Coosa River, in the original large Counties of Randolph and Talladega. He was the most noted man in the Fish Valley and the Hillabees. He was a native of Kentucky, commenced the Christian life in the State of Georgia, and it seems he was connected with Methodism in Alabama from 1843 till his death. He served Randolph and Hillabee Circuits and Coosa Mission as a supply. He had a warm place in the affections of the people among whom he labored and preached so long. He died at the age of eighty-six, in 1890, at Anniston, Alabama.

While many faithful Christians were at Jacksonville, Alabama, during the period from 1844 to 1865, E. L. Woodward and J. F. Grant were the two most active and liberal men in the support of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. They were men of great worth. Woodward was a thrifty merchant. Grant was an Editor of ability and success. He was the Treasurer of the State of Alabama for one term, and he maintained his integrity and his religion. Though busy with the duties of his responsible office, he found time to attend the public services of the Church. He attended the class-meetings regularly. Woodward was the Superintendent of the Sunday-school for many, many years at Jacksonville, and was successful in that work.

The twenty-fourth session of the Alabama Conference of the

Methodist Episcopal Church, South, commenced at Eutaw, Alabama, December 5, 1855, and continued ten days. The reports made to the Conference showed the total increase in the membership for the year to be fourteen hundred and eighty; and that the amounts necessary for the Superannuated Preachers, and the Widows and Orphans of Preachers, and to make up the deficiencies of those who had not received their regular allowance were settled at sixty-two cents in the dollar; and that twenty-three thousand two hundred eighty-four dollars and twelve cents was collected during the year for Missions.

With benevolence abounding, and philanthropy aglow, the great event of that occasion was the discussion of the question of locating and establishing a College within the bounds of the Conference. The question was intensely interesting, and the discussion was long and warm. It was that discussion which prolonged the session of the Conference to ten days.

One member of the Conference, the Rev. Charles McLeod, had passed to his reward. He died at the home of Brother Mayhew, near Bridgeville, Pickens County, Alabama, October 19, 1855. He started in the itinerant work in November, 1830, and he was in the local ranks about seven years after that. He was presiding elder on the Montgomery, Montevallo, and Tuskaloosa Districts, and he was the presiding elder of the Columbus District at the time of his death.

One man, the Rev. William M. Lovelady, was expelled from the connection. Four men located. Bishop Robert Paine presided over the Conference.

The next session of the Conference was held at Tuskegee, Alabama, commencing December 10, 1856, and closing, after dark, December 17, 1856. Bishop George F. Pierce, by some detention, did not reach the seat of the Conference till the second day of the session, and the Rev. E. V. Le Vert was elected President, and directed the affairs of the Conference for one day.

At the previous Annual session the Conference resolved to increase the Missionary collections during the year, and to raise at least thirty thousand dollars. Thirty-two thousand sixty-one dollars and sixty-six cents was paid into the treasury.

The increase of the membership that year was very satisfactory: Thirty-seven hundred and eighty-nine.

Four members of the Conference, the Revs. Thomas Burpo,

James M. Wells, Robert S. Spence, and James S. Belton, had died during the year.

The Rev. Thomas Burpo was a native of North Carolina, grew to manhood in Tennessee, commenced his ministry in Alabama as an itinerant on trial in the Mississippi Conference, the last days of 1823. In November, 1831, he located, in January, 1847, he was re-admitted to the Alabama Conference. He was a modest man, and a model Christian. He died at his home in Wilcox County, Alabama, in January, 1856, in the fifty-second year of his age.

The Rev. J. M. Wells was born, and regenerated in Georgia, and was never out of the ranks of an itinerant preacher. He joined the Alabama Conference on trial in December, 1842, the same month in which he was licensed to preach. He died at North Port, Alabama, January 24, 1856. His wife, who was the daughter of G. and A. Curling, and who was born at Tuskaloosa, Alabama, June 27, 1831, died at North Port, October 30, 1857. Her father, George Curling, who died in Tuskaloosa, in April, 1860, was for more than fifty years a Methodist. All these were buried in Tuskaloosa.

The Rev. Robert A. Spence died at the home of his mother in Kemper County, Mississippi, April 27, 1856, lacking only fourteen days of being thirty-two years old.

The Rev. James S. Belton was a man of deep experience in religious things. He had a thirst for the acquisition of knowledge and grace. He claimed a special call to the mission field, and left his native land for heathen shores that he might be a light to those in darkness and death. He was a native of South Carolina, but in childhood and youth was a resident of Lowndes County, Mississippi. Before he was nineteen he had graduated with distinction at La Grange College, Alabama, having been previously licensed to preach. When only a few months past his majority, having been ordained deacon and elder under the rules for ordaining those to be appointed to Mission fields, in May, 1854, he sailed for the distant shores of China. His career was brief. Failing health compelled him to leave the land which he longed to reclaim from the follies of superstition and idolatry. He set his face toward America, and bent his eager steps toward his Southern home. He recrossed the ocean, but death met him and arrested his goings. He died in the city of



New York, United States of America, March 17, 1856. His last words uttered were: "praise the Lord." Bishop James and his wife and other friends in New York attended him during his last illness and administered to his comfort. Brother Belton was lovely in his death, and those noble persons, here named, who gave him such kind words and sweet solace in his affliction were lovely in their deeds. Belton was cut down in young manhood, but his work, short as it was, still lives, and his memory is still precious.

One of the special incidents at the Conference at Tuskegee was the presentation of a memorial from the Quarterly Conference for Montgomery Station, praying the establishment of a Religious Journal in the city of Montgomery, under the patronage of the Alabama Conference. A protracted debate on the subject ensued, and the memorial was finally withdrawn. The champion of that enterprise exhibited before Methodism on that occasion for the last time. He has never appeared to Methodists since.

The session of the Alabama Conference at Selma, Alabama, beginning December 2, 1857, and continuing nine full days, was honored with the presence of three Bishops: Joshua Soule, James O. Andrew, and John Early. Bishop Early was absent the first day, and Bishop Soule conducted the affairs of the Conference until his arrival; and they both preached on Sunday, at the same hour, in different Churches, and Bishop Soule ordained the deacons and Bishop Early ordained the elders. By the distribution of the work in the plan of episcopal visitation, Bishop Early was in charge of the Conference, though all three of them present presided as occasion justified or required. Some of the members of the Conference were displeased, took offense at Bishop Early, and at the next General Conference made complaint against the Bishop's administration. The truth of history requires the statement that the members of the Conference had the advantage of the Bishop in that under the provisions of law they had the opportunity to lodge complaints against him, and he had no opportunity to lodge complaints against them. The truth is he was not guilty of any maladministration. His offense was in the rigid adherence to law. The tones of his voice were naturally short and rough. He was inflexible. Some of the members of that Conference were as im-

pulsive as the Bishop was rigid, and were as irritable as he was persistent, and they treated him with insolence. An instance may be stated: Bishop Early, at a certain stage of the proceedings of the Conference, demanded that the Conference take action and appoint the month within the Conference year in which the missionary collections should be taken up throughout the bounds of the Conference, and that the action and the month designated should be according to the law on the subject in the Discipline. Objection was interposed to the action suggested. The Bishop urged that the action be had at once, and that its provision conform to the law, and, to a member, who was on the floor opposing the proposed action, he responded, and said: "This is the law, Brother." The member of the Conference, with flushed face, with irritated tone, and in defiant attitude, said: "Sir, we know no law, and have no law down here." Of course, though he were hard to suppress, the Bishop had no response to that utterance.

At that session of the Conference one preacher was tried for immorality in the management of his secular affairs, and was acquitted, it appearing that he was only unskillful and not intentionally criminal; and a most remarkable debate arose in the case of one preacher who was eligible to membership in the Conference and to deacon's orders, barring the matter over which the discussion arose. Of purpose he failed to appear at the appointed time and consummate a betrothal which existed between him and a lady in Virginia. That was a most serious complication. The feast was furnished, the intended bride was attired, the guests assembled, but the intended bridegroom never came, neither at midnight nor later. The marriage ceremony found in the Ritual of the Church was called into use in the effort to acquit the brother of a charge of breach of marriage. Whether or not the ceremony helped, the brother was acquitted, and passed to membership and orders. He had been simply unsteady.

So far as the records to hand show, the first bequests to the Alabama Conference were reported at that session. The following Preamble and Resolutions were adopted by the Conference:

"In view of the liberal bequests made to this Conference by the late William McAlister and William Thompson and his wife, Altona Thompson, in their last will and testament, that

their memories may be perpetuated, as an example of benevolence held forth to the living, therefore,

Resolved, 1. That we request T. O. Summers to prepare and publish a biographical sketch of each of our deceased friends, in our Church papers, to be embodied in the printed minutes of the Conference for the ensuing year.

2. That the presiding elder of the Demopolis District furnish Brother Summers with the necessary information of these, our deceased friends, as soon as practicable."

The Rev. James M. Hood, who died in Pickens County, Alabama, in 1864, left a legacy of one thousand dollars to the Annual Conference, and a Mr. Mahan, and a Mr. Jackson, and a Mr. Harris, of East Alabama, all left legacies to the Conference. These legacies all amounted to about seven thousand dollars, and were paid over to the legal Conference in 1864 in Confederate securities, and, as a matter of course, when the Confederate States Government collapsed the securities were gone. The McAlister Fund was never secured until after the Confederate States Government had passed out of existence, as it was secured at the end of a contest in the Courts.

The Conference in session at Selma elected Delegates to the General Conference which was to meet in May, 1858. They were twelve in number, and as follows: T. O. Summers, J. Hamilton, O. R. Blue, A. H. Mitchell, F. G. Ferguson, E. Wadsworth, G. Shaeffer, T. J. Koger, J. J. Hutchinson, T. W. Dorman, C. D. Oliver, P. P. Neely.

Sister Monaghan, the widow of the Rev. Daniel Monaghan, had died during that year, 1857, and the Conference ordered the money due her turned over into the hands of the preacher in charge of Orrville Circuit, to defray her funeral expenses, and to erect over her grave a suitable monument.

The Rev. L. B. McDonald had died August 23, 1857. He died near Columbiana, Alabama. He had been a faithful minister of the New Testament, and had been eminently useful in the administration of the affairs of the Church. He was a native of Giles County, Tennessee, and was in the forty-third year of his age at the time of his death. He joined the Methodist Episcopal Church in August, 1833, and about the same time entered the La Grange College, where he remained as a student until December, 1837. He was a presiding elder for six years.

At that Conference Union Springs, with the Rev. William H. Ellison as preacher in charge, was added to the list of appointments, and Dr. Ellison was in charge there for the two years, 1858 and 1859. In the first of these two years he organized a Society there, composed of ten women and one man. The Society for a time met in private houses. The first class-meeting was held in the parlor of R. Powell, and the prayer meetings were held in the residence of Sister Paulk. The great burden then on that new and small Society was the burden of building a house of worship. It is said that Dr. Powell made the first subscription, in the sum of five hundred dollars, to the enterprise. In the process of time the Church was erected, the same one in use now, 1892, and was dedicated, by Bishop George F. Pierce, in 1859. The Powells, Branscombs, and Judge Pullum were among the first members at that place.

The next session of the Alabama Conference was held at Macon, Mississippi, beginning November 24, and closing December 3, 1858, Bishop Robert Paine presiding. During the year then reported there was an increase of thirteen hundred and thirty-eight white members, twenty-seven hundred and sixty-seven white probationers, and seven hundred and eighty colored members, and ten hundred and fourteen colored probationers.

The next session of the Alabama Conference was held at Eufaula, Alabama, beginning November 30, and closing December 8, 1859, Bishop H. H. Kavanaugh, presiding. At that Conference Robert K. Hargrove was received into full connection and ordained a deacon, with thirteen others. He was afterward elected and consecrated to the Episcopacy. Three preachers had died during the year. The Rev. Francis M. Crain, a native of Autauga County, Alabama, and who had been preaching six or seven years, died near Greenesborough, Alabama, a little past thirty years of age. The Rev. Joseph T. Abernathy, a native of Alabama, and who was licensed to preach in Macon County in his native State, and who had not yet reached elder's orders, died in the bounds of Socapatoy Circuit. The Rev. Dennis B. Leyne, a native of Ireland, and who was brought up in the faith of the Romish Church, and who was justified in Clarke County, Alabama, and who had been in the itinerant ministry from January, 1846, died at the Navy-Yard, near Pensacola, Florida.

The Rev. W. E. M. Linfield, and the Rev. Samuel Armstrong



were transferred to the Louisiana Conference. Linfield died in Mississippi, and Armstrong in Texas.

At Montgomery, Alabama, December 12-21, 1860, the Alabama Conference held its session, Bishop J. O. Andrew presiding, and Bishop Joshua Soule also present. The country was greatly agitated at that very time. While the Conference was in session three of the preachers, the Rev. P. P. Neely, the Rev. J. B. Cottrell, and the Rev. William P. Harrison attended political meetings, and delivered speeches in favor of Secession. Cottrell made, so it was said, the most fiery and rousing speech of the occasion. While the Conference was in session the State of South Carolina adopted her order of Secession, and Montgomery was wild with excitement. A little fire alarm in the city put everything on nervous tension. There was fearful looking for of insurrection and fiery indignation. Bishop Joshua Soule advised the preachers of the Conference to be dispassionate and conservative, and to eschew the subject of the times, Secession.

Three members of the Conference and one preacher on trial in the Conference had died during the year: The Rev. John Foust, the Rev. R. R. Dickinson, the Rev. J. W. Hightower, and the Rev. Peter J. Walker.

The next session of the Conference was held at Greenesborough, Alabama, December 11-19, 1861, Bishop John Early presiding.

At Auburn, Alabama, December 3-9, 1862, Bishop George F. Pierce, presiding, the next session was held. Three preachers had died during the year: The Revs. Thomas J. Koger, Lewis P. Golson, and James F. R. Brandon. No memoirs were published.

The Alabama Conference held a session at Columbus, Mississippi, beginning November 25, and closing December 2, 1863, Bishop James O. Andrew presiding. At that session the Conference resolved to divide into two Conferences, one to be called Montgomery and the other Mobile. Bishop Andrew presided at the first session of the Alabama Conference, and also at the last session. The Alabama Conference in its existence included a period of just thirty-one years. The lines fixed for the two Conferences were as follows: The Montgomery Conference to include West Florida, except Apalachicola, and all of Alabama

east of the line beginning at the mouth of Mobile River, thence up that and the Alabama River to the town of Selma; thence up the Alabama and Tennessee Rivers Railroad to Montevallo; thence along the Elyton road to the Cahawba; thence up said river to the eastern line of Blount County, and along the said line to the Southern boundary of the Tennessee Conference. The Mobile Conference included all the other part of the Territory which had been included in the Alabama Conference.

The first session of the Mobile Conference was held at Tuscaloosa, Alabama, November 23-28, 1864; and the first session of the Montgomery Conference was held at Tuskegee, Alabama, December 7-13, 1864. Bishop James O. Andrew presided at the sessions of both Conferences. The General Conference in session in New Orleans, April 7, 1866, adopted a Resolution declaring "that, though the division of the Alabama Conference was irregular, we approve of its division into what are known as the Mobile and Montgomery Conferences, the circumstances justifying the separation."

The last session of the Montgomery Conference was held at Union Springs, Alabama, December 8-14, 1869; and the last session of the Mobile Conference was held at Selma, Alabama, December 15-21, 1869. Bishop Robert Paine presided at both sessions.

By action of the General Conference the territory in Alabama was provided for by the organization of the North Alabama and the Alabama Conferences in 1870.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

### THE WORK OF METHODISM IN ALABAMA AMONG THE COLORED PEOPLE UNDER THE NEW ECCLESIASTICAL JURISDICTION.

THE pleasing opportunity of augmenting the sacramental host, and the animating scene of Ethiopia stretching out her hands to God, inspired the Methodists of Alabama, and, prompted by the generous impulses imparted to them by the Holy Ghost, they went forth evangelizing the Negroes and elevating the slaves in their midst. They did much to relieve the wants and woes of the colored people, and to bring them to the observance of the will and word of God. The Methodist preachers followed apostolic precedent, and preached the gospel to the poor, and deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind; and many of the converts among the enslaved race beautifully exemplified the indwelling power imparted to them. About the time the new ecclesiastical jurisdiction was established in the South and was fully under way in the affairs appertaining thereto there were in the State of Alabama about eighteen Missions to the people of color. From that time the work was carried on with great vigor, with enlarging liberality, and with ever-increasing good results. The Methodists did more for the colored people in Alabama than any other denomination in the State.

A long line of worthy men served Missions to the people of color in Alabama. Among them may be named the Revs. T. S. Abernathy, W. B. Adams, Thomas Burpo, James W. Brown, B. F. Blow, Dugal Carmichael, Elisha Calloway, Lewis P. Golson, J. C. Huckabee, J. W. Jordan, C. N. McLeod, J. W. McCann, Alexander McBride, P. R. McCrary, James M. Patton, W. M. Shockley, Charles Strider, O. B. Stanley, Henry Urquhart, John Williamson, James M. Wells, and F. H. Wardlaw. Others who served a year or two, and a number of worthy local preachers, are not named in this list.

The Mobile State Street Colored Mission had a good brick

Church, with a spacious gallery, and at the close of 1856 had five hundred and forty-four members and eighty-nine probationers. The Mobile Little Zion Colored Mission had at that time two hundred and twenty-seven members and ninety-one probationers; and two hundred and seventy-five dollars were paid that year for repairing the house of worship. The Rev. Greenberry Garrett served those two Missions that year.

As a specimen of the work in its environments and achievements the following statement, which is exact, may be made. Dayton Colored Mission was served in 1856 by the Rev. A. McBride and the Rev. F. Jeter, who reported fifteen preaching places, five Churches, three hundred and seventy-four members, three hundred and thirty-eight catechumens, fifteen hundred and eighty-three preached to, forty-two adults and forty-three children baptized, fourteen members expelled, six hundred fifteen dollars and eighty cents received from the Mission on the salaries of the missionaries. There was still some opposition to the Mission, but on the whole it was promising, and the hope was entertained that the planters would give it more efficient support.

That year, 1856, the work among the colored people was at the highest point of prosperity attained for it, and there were then in the bounds of the Alabama Conference thirty-seven Missions to that people.

About 1855 or 1856 an incident occurred which may serve to show the measure of simplicity, and the standard intelligence on the part of the people and their teachers of that time. The Rev. Charles L. Hays, then a member of the Georgia Conference on the superannuated list, living in Russell County, Alabama, was employed as a preacher on the Uchee Mission, which Mission lay in the bounds of Russell and Macon Counties. Andrew Chapel, in Macon County, where Dr. Calhoun, Benjamin Borum, Mrs. Green, the Threadgills, and others, held membership, being in the midst of a Negro population, was one of the preaching places of the Mission. There the venerable preacher dispensed the gospel. In instructing the catechumens he used the Catechism prepared by Bishop William Capers for the use of the Methodist Missions. Just at the Chapel lived the Rev. Richard Webb, a preacher of the Primitive Baptist persuasion, a man who, by creation and creed, by birth and bent, by preach-



ing and practice, was opposed to the Methodists and Missions. He seems to have conceived the idea of breaking down both the one and the other. He made the charge and gave out the report that the Rev. Charles L. Hays was instructing the Negroes in the doctrines of the Abolitionists, and that the Catechism which he used was replete with the doctrines. The entire Nation was, at that time, under intense excitement about the emancipation of the slaves, and conjectures about a general uprising of the slaves and the escape of fugitives were indulged in the homes and social circles of the land. The charges so emphatically made and so industriously circulated by the Rev. Mr. Webb created intense excitement in the community immediately concerned. The citizens about Andrew Chapel were in humor to treat the Rev. Mr. Hays as a cullion, and were ready, if the accusations could be established, to inflict upon him indignities and banishment, if not something worse. For a man to use his ministry to induce the very people committed to his care to demand emancipation was in their eyes a crime not to be endured. Under the tension of the hour a day was appointed for assembling the community and investigating the accusations against Mr. Hays. At the appointed time a large concourse thronged the grounds at Andrew Chapel. Webb was there to implead. Hays was there to ascertain his doom. Webb presented his bills of indictment, and proceeded to the establishment of the same. In a speech of great length, and with ravings and rantings, he reviewed the Catechism. His whole speech was very satisfactory to himself, but only his peroration was pleasing to his auditors. The termination was appreciated. Precedents, statutes, and tactics were all ignored in his harangue, and as he was approaching the collapse of his effort, Mrs. Green spoke in a decided tone and declared she was not convinced that the Catechism contained unsound or unsafe doctrine, and her slaves should still be instructed therein. About the time Webb caught his breath for the termination of his incoherent oration, Benjamin Borum, an exhorter in the Church, and who owned a goodly number of slaves, accosted him with declaration and interrogation: "Wabb, you han't got the sense you ought to ha' been born with! Don't you know Congress has examined that book, and approved it? And don't you know they'd not a done it had it had abolition teachings in it?" To

these questions Webb responded: "No, I don't know any such a thing." Borum, being bold as a lion, continued: "Well, sir, they have. You turn to the leaf on which the title o' that book is printed, and you'll see that Congress has endorsed its contents." Webb turned to the leaf referred to and read: "Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year, —, by William Capers, in the District Court of the United States for the — District of South Carolina." When Webb had finished that reading he was dumb! He had not wherewith to answer. He was demolished! He retired from the contest with the overpowering conviction on his mind that he had, without knowing it, set himself dogmatically against a book the contents of which the Congress of the United States had carefully examined and sent forth with official endorsement. Borum's ignorance gave him confidence, Webb's ignorance brought him defeat. Ignorance ended that battle and settled that contest. Ignorance did what neither logic nor sword could have done, for in that case both logic and sword would have been impotent. The skillful dialectician was not needed in that case. It only required the boldness born of ignorance to meet the ignorance which gave birth to the original attack. Brother Hays was as ignorant as the other two, for when asked what he understood by the words: "Entered according to Act of Congress," etc., he said: "I thought it meant that Congress didn't have anything agin the book." In that instance gross darkness covered the teachers. Here were two preachers and an exhorter, leaders of the people, who had no knowledge concerning the law of copyright.

The mention of ignorance recalls a scene in the history of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at the town of Camden, Wilcox County, Alabama. The house of worship in which the scene occurred was built in 1844, at least the deed to it bears date August 21, 1844. In 1861 the Rev. James W. Glenn was stationed at Camden, and he had one of his local preachers arrested on the charge of trading intoxicants. The accused demanded a trial before the whole Society, and with open doors, and the preacher acceded. The hour fixed for the trial was Sunday morning, and notice was made. The whisky dealer rallied his patrons. The day arrived, a beautiful Sunday it was, and the house was crowded, the sensation was complete. The in-

vestigation proceeded. The accused, in pompous and hectoring style, made his defense. He commenced his oration in these words following: "Fellow citizens, Through the ignorance of the preacher I have been arraigned before you this day." When the vote was taken on the question of the guilt of the accused the thundering voices pronounced him innocent, notwithstanding his traffic in the alcoholic beverages was as public as his trial.

At the time of manumission there were in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in the bounds of the State of Alabama, twenty-five thousand, or more, colored members and probationers. The Methodists of Alabama had a responsibility imposed upon them in the slave population of the State. The thousands of that people who worshiped at Methodist altars and received the divine word and sacraments at the hands of Methodist ministers are witnesses that they met their obligation, and conserved the interests committed to their hands.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### POLEMICS.

DURING the entire period covered by this History, beginning with the introduction of Christianity into the State and extending to 1865, ecclesiastical controversies prevailed in Alabama. The Methodists were in at the beginning and at the *finale*. It seems that, in one particular, at least, the Methodists have been like Ishmael; their hand against every man, and every man's hand against them. In the whole of their doctrines, polity, and customs there are none like them; and while the other denominations can never agree among themselves about many things, they agree in antagonizing Methodism. Through the years over which this History extends the Episcopalians and the Presbyterians, naming them in alphabetical order, were too few in number and confined to too few localities to be much in the way of the Methodists. Only in certain localities did they operate. As late as 1865 the Episcopalians and the Presbyterians together did not have in Alabama fifteen thousand members. Wherever the Episcopalians existed they poured contempt on the Methodists as being only a Society, late in arrival, without orders, sacraments, and divine recognition. The only honor which they conferred on the Methodists was to proselyte, wherever they could, their preachers and members. Wherever the Old School Presbyterians existed they were stout and persistent in their efforts to demolish the Arminian doctrines of the Methodists. The Cumberland Presbyterians, whose shibboleth was *union*, had a way of trying to proselyte the Methodists and the Old School Presbyterians to their negative creed by the intimation that they could *unite* on the doctrines thereof which were neither Arminian nor Calvinistic. All these, the Episcopalians and the Presbyterians, engaged diligently in antagonizing the polity and customs of Methodism. They all were of one heart and mind in ridiculing class-meetings, and Lovefeasts, and in pouring contempt on an itinerating ministry.



For a number of years the Baptists of Alabama were engaged in a controversy among themselves. In the fourth decade of this century a controversy which commenced with them in the first half of the preceding decade on the subject of Baptist State Conventions, Theological Schools, Sunday-schools, Missionary Societies, Bible Societies, and Tract Societies culminated in a division of the denomination in Alabama. That division of the denomination produced a deplorable state of things among them. Members were, in many instances, excommunicated for their opinions on the matters in controversy. That wing of the denomination which fought their brethren on the subject of Missionary Societies, and kindred agencies, and called themselves Primitive Baptists, and were in some sections of the State the strongest party, were in line against the Methodists, and right well did they prosecute the conflict. While contesting the validity of Societies they made unceasing war upon the Arminian creed so tenaciously held by the Methodists. The Primitive Baptists were, in creed, as sound Antinomians as were ever found in Alabama. They wore themselves out trying to demonstrate that human beings could not do anything which would either hinder or help the divine cause. Not until the sixth decade of this century did the Baptists begin to recover from the effects of their own strifes and divisions. About that time the wing of the denomination which adopted Conventions, Sunday-schools, Missions, and Education began to gain strength, and increase. In some places they had already grown very strong; and by that time the Primitive Baptists had already declined. The Missionary Baptists waxed valiant in fight against the Methodists, and the battle went on. The Methodists themselves belonged to the militant host. They had on the armor, that they might be able to stand in the evil day.

The Methodists preached that the Holy Scriptures set forth all doctrines necessary to be believed and contained all precepts necessary to be obeyed. They instruct in the science of salvation perfectly. The Methodist preacher never failed to set out that Jesus Christ suffered death on the cross for the redemption of mankind; and made there a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world. He never failed to emphasize the universality of the provisions of the atonement. It was constantly held everywhere that because

of the corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, every one needed the regeneration of the Holy Spirit. Conviction followed by repentance and terminating in faith which secures justification was never lost sight of in the ministry of a Methodist preacher, in the time with which this History deals. The power of all, through prevenient grace by Jesus Christ, to seek God and obtain divine recognition was always set out with great force, if not with technical precision, yet in popular form. That Christians are to maintain good works, and that good works are pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ was incorporated into Methodist Sermons, and everywhere the injunction "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" was enforced with great zeal. A conscious experience, in which the Spirit himself testifies that the individual is a child of God, was held as an attainable state. The Methodists have ever held that a Christian may be made perfect in love in this life; and that one may depart from grace given, and fall into sin, and be lost forever; that the punishment of the wicked in a future state, and the reward of the righteous are alike eternal. The diversions which could not be used in the name of the Lord Jesus were denounced as pernicious. Baptism was administered to adults and infants alike, and by any mode preferred. The Episcopal form of government was recognized with presiding elders and an itinerant ministry. A "desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins" was the only condition required of those who sought admission into the fellowship of Methodists. Class-meetings and Lovefeasts were held, and shouting was a common thing.

During the period covered by this History a few Campbellites and Universalists were in the State. They had little to do but dispute, and they seemed delighted with that occupation.

Excursions into the State of Alabama were constantly made by the agents of the Mormons for the purpose of gathering recruits for the Mormon settlements in the West. Some deluded women, enamoured of the prospect, and some men, of voluptuous tendencies, were from time to time converted to the doctrines of polygamy, and induced to emigrate to the land inhabited by the people calling themselves Latter-day Saints.

The Methodists, engaged to spread scriptural holiness over

the lovely land of Alabama, and under vow to be "ready with faithful diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's word," were active champions in the polemics of the day. They entered the lists and exposed every atrocity and every heresy. Throughout the State there were those specially engaged in vindicating Methodist doctrine, polity, and usage. The heterogeneous forces who seemed inspired with the sole purpose to arrest and destroy Methodism were met, and, as far as possible, repelled. In the regular ministrations of the pulpit, sermons were preached on the various doctrines in controversy. Special occasions, when the multitudes were convened, at such times and places as Quarterly Meetings and Camp-meetings were utilized in defending the doctrines of Methodists and in refuting the views of assailants. Some of the themes on such occasions were: Election and Reprobation; Possibility of Apostasy; Apostolic Succession; Validity of Orders; Terms of Church Membership; Baptism; Restricted Communion, and the Witness of the Spirit. Debates, in which the antagonists would meet and discuss points of difference, were common. The Revs. E. V. Le Vert, James A. Clement, Walter H. McDaniel, E. J. Hammill, Daniel M. Hudson, and W. P. Harrison were noted controversialists.

The Rev. E. V. Le Vert rendered long and efficient service in contending for the faith as the Methodists had received it.

The Rev. James A. Clement, a native of Greensborough, Alabama, was, while in the active ministry, a polemic of splendid gifts and superior skill, a master in controversy. He could state the questions of faith with precision, delineate the doctrines of the gospel with logical clearness, and authenticate them. He could excoriate his antagonist with such dexterity as made the performance almost enjoyable. A book, written and published by him, bearing the title: "Baptist Pretensions to Antiquity," is a work unique and engaging.

The Rev. Walter Houston McDaniel was endowed with the constitutional elements of a controversialist. He was of Scotch descent, a native of White County, Tennessee. He was about medium height, of stout, square build, and of rough exterior. His hair was red and bristly. His forehead and chin were broad, and his face was covered with discolored spots called freckles. He was educated at the Southern Presbyterian Semi-

nary at Maryville, Tennessee. Four years and five months he spent at the Seminary, paying his way there with money which he made by splitting rails. He read Greek and Latin readily. He had nothing of the polish and refinement supposed to be obtained by acquaintance with literature. He chewed tobacco, and kept his lips discolored and his shirt bosom besmeared with the liquid secreted by the parotid, submaxillary, and sublingual glands. He had a misunderstanding with one of the Professors of the Seminary at which he was educated, and left the School in the middle of the session. He repudiated the Calvinistic doctrine taught in that School. He joined the Methodist Episcopal Church at a place in the upper end of Jackson County, Alabama. In his twenty-seventh year he was licensed to preach at Liberty Church, in Saint Clair County, Alabama, Ashville Circuit, Alabama Conference, May 3, 1834. His license was signed by Jesse Ellis, the preacher then in charge of the Ashville Circuit. In December of the year in which he was licensed to preach he was admitted<sup>1</sup> on trial into the Alabama Conference. In due course he was ordained, and he continued in the itinerant work so long as he lived, though he was superannuated for some years. He died near Randolph, Bibb County, Alabama.

He dressed in a niggardly style and was narrow in his conceptions of the enterprises of the Church. He owned at the beginning of the war between the States a fine plantation on the Cahawba River, and twenty-five slaves. He would take from the box of shoes purchased for his slaves on the plantation a pair of brogans for his own use. As a preacher he went among the people clad in brogan shoes, a dime hat, and other apparel to match. When presiding elder he was known to make speeches in which he would denounce men for preaching for money, and then receive a donation made to him for his speech from some penurious member of the Church who would not do anything to support the institutions of Christianity. He would denounce preachers for being in search of money, and then carry a mangy pig in a sack and drive a lousy calf, which one would give him upon suggestions made in hints, for miles across a whole Circuit and beyond. He did much to retard the development of liberality in the Church, and he did much harm to the cause of Missions.



After all he was a magnificent preacher, and a champion in controversy. He served the Talladega District as presiding elder for four years, beginning with 1851. There he found Two Seed Baptists, Primitive Baptists, commonly called Hardshells, Missionary Baptists, the two last named very numerous. He opened the battle against all these, and exposed their peculiar dogmas with the merciless logic of truth. In the course of his controversies he had a great many personal experiences. One or two may be related. He was preaching a sermon at Bethel, in Howell's Cove, four miles from the town of Talladega, on Baptism. In the congregation was a woman, dressed in an ordinary attire and a sun-bonnet, of the Baptist persuasion, who, at one of the first stages of the sermon, responded to a statement made by the preacher: "That's a lie." A little further on she again said: "That's a lie." All through the part of the sermon pertaining to Baptism she repeated the language which was so much more direct than polite. After the preacher had finished his argument on the theme in hand, he delivered an appeal to the emotions, in an eloquent exhortation, in which, or under which, the congregation broke down in tears. The woman who had delivered the emphatic language, calling in question the preacher's veracity, was among those who were in a flood of tears. The congregation retired from the Church, and stood about the yard in groups, and indulged comments on the sermon. The woman who had gained notoriety by her burning and indignant utterances, said, and the preacher overheard it: "I would not have minded it, if, after telling his lies, the confounded old fool had not made me cry."

It was in 1857, perhaps, that he went on a visit to Alexandria Camp-ground in Calhoun County, Alabama, to attend a Camp-meeting. The Baptist Church in the vicinity of Alexandria had a numerous membership, and dominated everything in that section of the country. There was also a place in that section known as Post Oak, and in that community there was a Baptist Church bearing the name of Post Oak. About that time "Post-Oak Circuit," a very exquisite little Book respectfully inscribed to the people called Methodists: to the Jonathan that is in them, was having a sensational notice. It was a book which presented in a very unique manner the subject of Church finances. Mr. McDaniel, for that reason, did not like the book. On

Sunday at 11 o'clock<sup>o</sup> A.M., he preached on Baptism to a vast throng, and crowds of them were Baptists. He preached one of his sublimest and profoundest sermons on the subject. The Baptists literally quailed under the master strokes of his logic and his severe castigations of the pretensions, superstitions, and follies held by that sect of people.

The Rev. Mr. McDaniel thought, in order to appease the Baptists present, to throw in a few mollifying utterances in the close of his powerful sermon, and in this behalf, with that magnanimity which scorns all sectarianism, he stated in a general way that in all the denominations there were some things which he disapproved, and in the correction of which all would be improved. He then gave a specific instance in the case of the Methodists. They were, he charged, in their work, pressing the subject of money and Missions too much into notice for the general good. Then he made special reference to the book bearing the title of "Post-Oak Circuit." Though that book was written by a Methodist Preacher, published by a Methodist Publishing House, and purchased and perused by hundreds of Methodists he denounced it as of mischievous tendency. With great emphasis, he said: "Down with Post-Oak! Down with Post-Oak!" Only a few persons in that vast audience had ever heard of the book bearing that title, while all but a few knew of the adjoining community and the Baptist Church in it called Post-oak. Of course, the only thought of that vast assembly, a few persons excepted, was that the preacher referred, when he said: "Down with Post-Oak," to the community and Baptist Church of that name: and, consequently, instead of mollifying, the denunciation only irritated the Baptists more, and intensified their wrath to the very verge of resentment. There was in the audience a short, corpulent woman, a Mrs. Vice, the wife of John Vice, who was a member of Post-oak Baptist Church. About the time the preacher wound up and closed out what he had to say, finishing all with his denunciation of Post-Oak, the dumpy woman, Mrs. Vice, commenced swaying her body back and forth, slapping her hands, and shouting. Swaying, slapping, and shouting, she said: "Glory, glory to God, halleluia! I live in Post-Oak, I drink water outner spring which runs frum undner post-oak tree, and I'm glad I do; glory, glory to God, halleluia! I want to know your name, you ol', ugly, freckled-

faced preacher you, your name an't in the book. I want to know your name, you ol', ugly, freckled-faced preacher you, glory, glory to God, hallelujah!" A fat Negress, hard by, made exclamations in accord with those of Mrs. Vice. The Rev. Mr. McDaniel perceived that things were in a bad plight, and that he did not understand matters. He inquired of Dr. Vandiver, who was sitting by, what the point in the affair was. Dr. Vandiver knew the country, and knew Mrs. Vice, and he took in the situation at once, and gave McDaniel the information which he sought. McDaniel then undertook to explain. He stated that he had no reference to the country or the Church called Post-oak, but to a book bearing that name. His explanation was received as an invention and a fabrication, and only intensified the rage, and made matters worse. The scene was unparalleled as a scene in religious service. It made things ridiculous, and effectually killed the impression of the sermon of the hour. The Baptists retired jubilant and happy. McDaniel and the Methodists retired crest-fallen and defeated. Mrs. Vice was a foe whose prowess he could not meet, he could not withstand, especially in that community.

About 1854, a series of Letters, written by J. R. Graves, an accredited preacher of the Baptist Church, issued through the columns of the *Tennessee Baptist*, a Newspaper, at that time, edited by the notorious Graves, and published in the city of Nashville, Tennessee. These Letters were soon published in a book entitled "The Great Iron Wheel;" and The Great Iron Wheel received unlimited praise and unremitting indorsement from the Baptists, and attained an extensive circulation. It became notorious not by reason of its beauty and truth, but on account of its repulsiveness. That book so highly prized and so industriously circulated by the Baptist fraternity assaulted the doctrines, polity, and usages of the Methodists, and denounced that people as destitute of piety, integrity, and virtue. By it the Methodist Itinerancy was caricatured, the Methodist Episcopacy denounced and reviled, and John Wesley, the Founder of Methodism, defamed. By that notorious work Mr. Wesley was represented as an arrogant mischief-maker, a tyrant, indulging imperial dictation, and usurping authority over the consciences of his parishioners, a rejected suitor avenging his ire, and, at last, an indicted outlaw fleeing from justice under

cover of night. Defamation, exaggeration, misrepresentation, and vituperation abounded. The Baptists of the country were jubilant, and seemed to think that the Methodists would actually pass out of existence under the blighting, withering stroke given them by that scurrilous production. About the time the Great Iron Wheel was moving along with its greatest velocity there were in circulation two other volumes, fit companions, which had been sent out by the satellites of Graves, a sort of fifth-rate Novels, which discussed the subject of Baptism in the spirit of sectarian bigotry, the one entitled "Grace Trueman," and the other "Theodosia Earnest." These two volumes were held in as great admiration by the Baptists as the Great Iron Wheel, and these three books were with the Baptists text-books from which they received their instruction and drew their arguments with which they plied their trade of proselyting and gathering recruits to their Church. Some of the Baptists in Alabama, and, perhaps, in other States, in their enthusiastic appreciation of these volumes and their authors, named their children after them. To the boys they gave the name Graves, and to the girls Grace Trueman and Theodosia Earnest.

The potency of the books herein named was in the uncharitable assumption that Methodism was "the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth," and deserved vials of wrath. As ruinous consequences must follow treachery and the vaultings of unholy ambition, those books were ominous of disaster. The Great Iron Wheel, judging from its contents, must have been conceived in bigotry, and worked out in the cause of mischief; must have been the spontaneous product of an evil nature. In that book fact and fancy are made to figure in such manner as to despoil justice and suppress truth; and only distorted views can be obtained from its pages. In that book gall and bitterness abound, and not a ray of charity or a scintillation of humility, not a note of tenderness or an echo of sympathy can be seen or heard. All the moral affinities of the author appear to have been evil, and strife was congenial to his mind and heart, and through his evil affinities and propensities he constantly created the strife so congenial to him. Even his impulses, judging from his writings, were malignant, and his very energies were expended in the execution of unholy purposes. Nothing about him was praiseworthy, except alertness, and diligence, and



these seem to have originated in his venom. If he was ever scrupulous, it does not appear in his book. He had no aptitude to discover the proper limits of a statement. There was in his nature an utter destitution of everything felicitous. He was endowed with a propensity to circumvent and overthrow. He was apt in reviling the saints and accusing the brethren. He seems to have been a man of extreme vanity and of feeble judgment, whose mind was never subjected to the authority of conscience, or even to the common instincts of religion, though he assumed the offices of the Christian ministry.

A Reply and Refutation of the Great Iron Wheel was written and published with the following title: "The Great Iron Wheel Examined; or, its false Spokes extracted, and an exhibition of Elder Graves, its builder. In a series of chapters. By William G. Brownlow, Editor of *Brownlow's Knoxville Whig*." The Dedication was as follows: "To every honest and impartial reader, who loves Truth and despises Falsehood, whether perpetrated by a Priest or a Levite, for the sake of Fame or money-making: To every Protestant Christian, who, to whatever sect or denomination he may be attached, is unwilling to see a sister Church pulled down by a collection of tales, fabrications, and blackguard insinuations, which a decent man should be ashamed to listen to, and utterly too disgraceful for a Minister of the Gospel to repeat and publish, this work is confidently Dedicated by its Author: Who here, most respectfully, as a local preacher of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, apologizes to the Christian public for the seeming severity of this work, in some parts, on the ground that he has performed the painful task of refuting a series of the most scurrilous falsehoods, and a collection of the lowest abuse of the age!"

The Title and Dedication pages give an insight into the character, purposes, and authorship of the book. The author, the Rev. William G. Brownlow, residing at that time at Knoxville, Tennessee, was well qualified for the work, and well adapted to it, and he brought his talents into requisition, and did a good work in exposing the fabrications and fallacies of the Great Iron Wheel, and in administering to the relief of the saints who had been so soundly abused and so vilely slandered. The character of the great Iron Wheel necessarily involved the work of refutation in some phases not exactly to the liking of a refined taste,

but, distasteful as it was, better service was never rendered to truth than Mr. Brownlow rendered in refuting the foul aspersions and infamous calumnies heaped upon the Methodists by the book which he reviewed. When, unanswered, the Great Iron Wheel was making its revolutions over the southern and southwestern sections of the United States the Baptists were expecting it to exterminate the Methodists, and it was avowed by them to be of great price, but when, by Mr. Brownlow it had been answered, and its bolts and tires loosened, its spokes shattered, and its hub bursted asunder, its merits, in their estimation, depreciated, and like Edgar, in *King Lear*, they began to say: "Let's exchange charity." They soon put a flag of truce on the field. The Baptists then put the two books in the same category, and insisted on relegating them. Then they would, if they could, have passed them to oblivion. They suddenly perceived that they did not appreciate that class and style of literature. They felt themselves that damage had accrued to their cause through the Great Iron Wheel.

Upon any other hypothesis than that the business of the Great Iron Wheel was to indulge malice and perpetrate slander its attack upon the character and life of John Wesley is inexplicable. Not a man even in the college of the twelve apostles was of nobler mind and heart than Mr. Wesley, and than he not one of them committed fewer mistakes. The very account which Mr. Wesley himself gives of his troubles at Savannah, Georgia, is replete with integrity, honesty, and truth. He abated not a tittle. He gave a statement of the whole affair, even the views expressed of the matter by his prosecutors. No one who has any measure of intelligence, and any degree of insight, and the least of the light of grace, can read Mr. Wesley's account of his unfortunate affairs at Savannah, and come to any other conclusion than that Mr. Wesley was honest and without guile; a man sinned against, rather than sinning.

The Rev. Samuel Henderson, D.D., a minister of the Baptist Church, and the Rev. E. J. Hammill, a member of the Alabama Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, engaged in a controversy on the Government of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The controversy was carried on through the columns of a paper published at Tuskegee, Alabama, under the auspices of the Baptists, and edited by Dr. Henderson. Dr.

Henderson, on his part, maintained much the same views on the subject in debate as that entertained in the Great Iron Wheel. He charged the Methodist ministry with usurpation, and tyranny, and asserted that the Government of the Church was organized in that behalf. He made a virtue of appealing to what he supposed the prejudice of the people of the United States, who had adopted for themselves a Republican form of civil Government. In 1856, the papers produced in the discussion, by these two men, were published in a book. The discussion intensified the agitation which already existed.

In 1858, the Rev. William P. Harrison, then a member of the Alabama Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, published "Theophilus Walton, a reply to Theodosia Earnest." That was a work of some merit, and the cause of Methodism in Alabama, as well as in other places, was strengthened by it. Dr. Harrison had a number of oral discussions on the subjects of controversy through the bounds of the Alabama Conference.

The Rev. Daniel M. Hudson, one of the best scholars in Alabama, and who was possessed of one of the largest and most select private Libraries anywhere found, had many personal debates with Baptist and Campbellite preachers. He discussed various subjects before public audiences with the best champions the opposing denominations could marshal.

Many entered the lists in that day, and the public debates were occasions of great interests in which much oratory was expended and much scholarship exhibited. Sometimes acrimony was dominant, but often wit and humor prevailed. He who, in the debate, could maintain his equilibrium, and exquisitely goad his antagonist, generally had the advantage. Judges were often selected to act as umpires, whose business it was to keep order, enforce the rules of debate, and award the judgment to the successful disputant. The people were taught, and made partisans.

The Methodists of Alabama were ever ready to respond to any challenge to defend their doctrines, polity, and usages; and they wrought well, and did not spend their strength for naught. They met their antagonists, repelled their assaults, and conquered a peace.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### FURTHER HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN ALABAMA UNDER THE AUSPICES OF METHODISM.

THE Florence Wesleyan University at Florence, Alabama, flourished from the time it was opened at that place until it was interrupted by the War between the States. It was filled with a large number of students the very year the war began.

Centenary Institute, at Summerfield, Alabama, with its Male and Female Departments, flourished all through the years from its first opening until the date at which this History closes, though, of course, it was under more or less distraction during the four years of the civil War. For some time the Rev. E. D. Pitts had charge of the Male Department, and then for some years more the Rev. D. C. B. Connerly had charge thereof. Dr. A. H. Mitchell was President of the Female Department until the year 1857, when he resigned, and was succeeded by Joseph Montgomery. The Institute improved for a while under his presidency, but soon, for reasons in him, declined. Dr. R. H. Rivers took charge of the Female Department, as President, in 1861. At the expiration of its thirteenth year the Centenary Institute had had an average attendance of two hundred students a year, and there had been an average of forty conversions a year among its pupils.

The opening dawn of a brighter day, the gathering forces of better work, the splendors of accumulating achievements, for education in Alabama were everywhere perceptible. There was an increasing interest in the education of preachers' children, as well as the children of others, and an advance upon the old state of things, and extra efforts were being put forth in that behalf. A Convention called in pursuance of a Resolution of the Alabama Conference on Education, and numerous attended by preachers and laymen, met at Summerfield, Alabama, July 15, 1848. Robert Daugherty, of Macon County, Alabama,



was the President of the Convention, Price Williams, then of Sumter County, Alabama, was the Secretary, with R. H. Powell, of Macon County, Alabama, as Assistant Secretary.

The Convention did a good work, and reviewed the whole subject. A Committee was appointed to consider and report the number and grade of Institutions of learning to be established, and the extent of Endowment to be secured. The following was adopted:

“Resolved, That this Convention recommend the Alabama Annual Conference, to take under its patronage and direction the Institution about to be established at Oak Bowery, provided that they shall be satisfied that the buildings and grounds are put in good condition, that it be free from embarrassment, and that it be provided with a suitable endowment.”

The Convention also declared that “the support and maintenance of the Literary Institutions depend mainly upon the efforts of our itinerant ministers.”

The Alabama Conference at its session January 17-24, 1849, took the Oak Bowery Female Institute under its patronage and control, and the Institute opened the second Monday, in February, proximo, with the Rev. G. W. Chatfield, President, and Miss Emily Baily, Assistant. John W. Jones, Robert Mitchell, James F. Dowdell, Charles Bilbro, Henry W. Todd, John B. Glenn, and T. J. Williamson were the Trustees, to which were added the names of a number of the preachers of the Conference.

The Oak Bowery Institute closed the examination of its first classes August 2, 1849, and the second session of the Institute commenced January 13, 1850, the Rev. Thomas B. Russell, late of South Carolina, President, the Rev. G. W. Chatfield and Miss Emily Baily, assistants, and Miss Mary F. Williams in charge of Music and French. During 1850 a vigorous appeal was made to the Church for money to aid the Institute in its divinely appointed work. James Maddux and W. W. Kidd had been confirmed as Trustees of the Institute at the session of the Annual Conference January 8-15, 1850.

In September, 1852, the Rev. Thomas B. Russell resigned the Presidency of Oak Bowery Female College, on which occasion Miss Laura Saddler, in a neat speech, presented to the retiring President a beautiful Bible.

The Rev. W. F. Samford succeeded the Rev. Mr. Russell as President of the College, and he had the Rev. Alexander Means, D.D., to preach the Commencement Sermon at Oak Bowery in the summer of 1853. Mr. Samford retained the Presidency of that College only about one year. He had the talents and the learning, sufficient qualifications, to write a creed of religion, and a code of jurisprudence, had he been minded to do so, but he could not guide successfully the interests of the College in the village of Oak Bowery. The Annual Conference at its session at the close of 1853, and at the close of Mr. Samford's administration, reported that Oak Bowery Female College was in a languishing condition, but that improvement was anticipated under the management of the incoming and new President, the Rev. Alexander Speer, and who opened its next session January 1, 1854. At the close of 1856 Oak Bowery College dropped out of the list of Colleges under the patronage of the Conference.

There was a "Macon Female Institute," at Macon, Mississippi, which was under the patronage and direction of the Alabama Conference, at least from the beginning of 1848 till the close of 1855. The Rev. F. G. Ferguson taught in it one year, and the Rev. William Wier was Agent for it in 1852.

In December, 1852, the Alabama Conference organized a "Ministerial Education Society," the object of which was to aid such young men, in limited circumstances and with limited education, as gave evidence of being called of God to devote themselves to the work of the itinerant ministry, in obtaining such an education as would enable them to discharge acceptably the duties of the sacred office.

The Alabama Conference also had funds for aiding the sons of the preachers of the Conference in securing an education. That was praiseworthy. The funds were used for a while at La Grange College, and were appropriated to paying the board of the sons of the members of the Conference who were there as students.

At the session of the Alabama Conference at Tuskaloosa, Alabama, December, 1853, a communication from the Trustees of a projected Female College at Tuskegee, Alabama, was received and referred to the Committee on Education. The preliminary steps for that projected College were taken in the

autumn of 1852, and the enterprise was pushed with vigor and with good success through 1853. The Rev. C. C. Gillespie, who was stationed at Tuskegee for 1852 and 1853, operated the scheme for the anticipated College with great efficiency, and at the time above stated of the session of the Conference twenty-six thousand dollars had been subscribed for the forth-coming College on condition that the Annual Conference would take it under patronage. In accord with the conditions of the subscription in hand, and as they intended to increase the amount to forty thousand dollars, the Trustees desired the business with the Conference consummated at once. The Annual Conference acceded to the proposition of the Trustees, and engaged to foster the College. The work then went on. The General Assembly of Alabama, by an Act, approved February 2, 1854, incorporated The Tuskegee Female College. The Trustees named in the act of incorporation were: David Clofton, Lewis Alexander, John B. Bilbro, Robert F. Ligon, James Dent, James M. Alexander, Richard H. Powell, Arnold Seals, D. E. Anthony, J. Bedell, Joshua W. Willis, Job Thompson, Robert H. Howard, William H. Ellison, and Dow Perry. In the spring of 1854, immediately after the act of incorporation, active efforts were made to get forward in erecting the building.

The work proceeded without ceasing, and in due course the walls were completed and the building finished. A Faculty, with the Rev. Andrew A. Liscomb, D.D., LL.D., as President, was selected. The halls were thrown open for the great work for which they had been erected, and on February 11, 1856, the first pupils matriculated. That was a coronation day in which a dispensation of letters, refinement, grace, elegance, and moral beauty was inaugurated for the fair daughters of Alabama. Before a twelve months had elapsed from the time of opening its halls one hundred and ninety pupils were arranged under its curriculum. The first graduates of the Institution consisted of four young ladies, in the class of 1856. The Rev. Mark S. Andrews was Agent for this College the year before its halls were opened for the work of instruction, and he was one of the Professors in the College during its first session.

The Rev. Samuel Armstrong was Agent for it during the years 1858 and 1859.

In 1859 the Rev. G. W. F. Price succeeded to the Presidency

of the College, and continued until the Trustees, under financial pressure, sold the College to the Rev. Jesse Wood, who took charge of the management. In 1863 the Rev. Mr. Wood sold the College to the Rev. C. D. Elliott, an old teacher, who conducted the College until 1865, where this history closes. The Rev. Mr. Price continued as one of the Professors in the College from the time Mr. Wood took control until 1865.

Tuskegee is one of the most beautiful towns in the State of Alabama, with a refined, liberal, and pious people, and the Tuskegee Female College has been one of the chief ornaments and principal attractions of the place.

At its session at Talladega, Alabama, beginning December 13, 1854, the Alabama Conference adopted measures for the establishment of a Female High School at the town of Talladega, to be called the "Talladega Conference Institute." A Board of Trustees, consisting of four preachers, J. Hamilton, James S. Lane, D. Carmichael, and O. R. Blue, and five laymen, J. G. L. Huey, John M. Moore, J. E. Groce, John T. Morgan, and A. J. Cotton, was appointed, with powers and restrictions usually conferred upon Trustees, subject to the supervision and control of the Alabama Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

The Masons of Talladega built a fine edifice for School purposes at Talladega, and a School was opened under the auspices of the Masonic Fraternity. The School became financially embarrassed, and it was turned over, as herein stated, to the Alabama Conference. The effort was made by the Conference to liquidate debts and make the School, under the management of the Church, self-sustaining, but the effort failed. First the Rev. James S. Lane and then the Rev. Joseph T. Abernathy was appointed Agent for the School. The Rev. B. B. Ross and the Rev. F. M. Grace were put in charge of the School as officers and teachers, but success was not achieved, and in 1858 the property was turned over to the State of Alabama, since which time it has been used as a School for Deaf-mutes and Blind.

At that same session of the Alabama Conference at Talladega, a resolution was adopted concurring with the Tennessee and Memphis Conferences in the proposed removal of La Grange College to Florence, Alabama; and also a resolution was adopted avowing the purpose to retain and have guaranteed all the



original rights and privileges which had been hitherto enjoyed in connection with that Institution. Vested rights and privileges tenaciously retained, existing compacts and contracts disannulled to the contrary notwithstanding, steps were taken, at that session of the Conference, looking to the establishment of a Male College in South Alabama.

The subject was brought before the Conference by a memorial from the citizens of Auburn, Alabama, and its vicinity. The whole question was thoroughly investigated by an able Committee, and the Conference espoused the cause by the adoption of the following Resolutions:

“Resolved, 1. That there should be a Male College in the bounds of the Alabama Conference.

2. That to place such College on a firm basis, it will be necessary to secure in good subscriptions the sum of one hundred thousand dollars.

3. That the Conference appoint a Commission, consisting of Lay and Clerical members from each presiding elder's District, who shall receive propositions for the location of a College within our bounds until the fourth day of July next, when they shall meet at Summerfield, and fix the location of said Institution.”

The Clerical members of the Commission were: T. W. Dorman, E. Baldwin, G. Sheaffer, J. J. Hutchinson, C. C. Callaway, A. H. Mitchell, C. Strider, James S. Lane, O. R. Blue, S. F. Pilley, E. Hearn, A. S. Dickinson. The Lay members were: R. A. Baker, D. W. Goodman, D. B. Turner, B. N. Glover, H. W. Foote, A. A. Coleman, J. T. Sharpe, A. B. Clitherall, L. Q. C. DeYampert, R. N. Harris, W. M. Byrd, Daniel Pratt, J. L. McClanahan, J. E. Groce, William Garrett, N. J. Scott, D. Clifton, E. R. Flewellen, J. H. Miller, J. W. Portis, A. C. Ramsey, H. V. Smith, J. P. Nall.

The Commission carried out their work under the terms and authority of their appointment, and the subject, under the forms which it assumed in the on-going of affairs, was before the Alabama Conference at its session held at Eutaw, Alabama, December 5-14, 1855.

The stipulation for bids to secure the location of the intended College, induced, as no doubt was intended, great rivalry, and, during the time allotted for submitting propositions and stipu-

lating prices in the premises, strenuous efforts were put forth in the cause. It will be necessary to secure in good subscriptions one hundred thousand dollars. That was the manifesto of the Conference. The people of Auburn and vicinity, with whom originated the memorial for a College, firmly believed that Auburn would furnish the site for the College, and filled with genuine enthusiasm, and moved by a lofty purpose, they put forth herculean efforts in behalf of their cherished ambition. All East Alabama responded nobly, and liberally. They clearly met the requisitions officially set forth.

The people of Greensborough, and vicinity, entered the contest for the prize, and they worked with dogged persistence. To begin with, Greensborough had a majority of the Commissioners on their side. Strange as it may seem the form of the Districts so governed the selection of the Commissioners as to give a greater number, who, by their alliances, were in sympathy with the interests of Greensborough. There were a greater number of strong men on that side. Therefore, notwithstanding the people of Auburn had the prestige which inured to them by virtue of the fact that they inaugurated the enterprise for a new College, and notwithstanding they had made a splendid canvass in behalf of the enterprise, and notwithstanding they had secured subscriptions and had formulated stipulations which could not be discounted, yet, the Annual Conference in session at Eutaw, Alabama, after much deliberation, determined to establish a College at Greensborough, Alabama, and appointed a Board of Trustees to manage its affairs, and a Committee to procure for it an act of incorporation, and recommended that the name *Southern University* be set out in the act of incorporation. The Rev. C. C. Callaway was appointed Agent.

The General Assembly of Alabama, by an act passed January 25, 1856, incorporated the Southern University, naming in the act of incorporation the following persons as Trustees: Robert Paine, J. O. Andrew, E. Wadsworth, T. O. Summers, J. Hamilton, A. H. Mitchell, P. P. Neely, T. J. Koger, C. C. Calloway, J. J. Hutchinson, J. T. Heard, T. Y. Ramsey, L. Q. C. DeYampert, John Erwin, R. A. Baker, H. W. Hilliard, J. W. Walton, T. M. Johnson, Thomas W. Webb, A. A. Coleman, D. W. Goodman, Gideon Nelson, Gaston Drake.

Steps were immediately taken, under the direction of the

Trustees, to erect the University buildings. The corner-stone was put in place June 11, 1856. Finally, the buildings completed, and equipped, and a Faculty selected, the halls of the Institution were opened for the reception of students, October 3, 1859. The number of the matriculates in the University, taking a number of years, did not average very high.

The Rev. William M. Wightman, D.D., was Chancellor of the University from the time of its opening till he was elected to the Episcopacy in 1866, immediately after which he resigned. The members of the first Faculty were: The Rev. Edward Wadsworth, A.M., D.D., Professor of Moral Philosophy; Oscar F. Casey, A.M., Professor of Ancient Languages; the Rev. J. C. Wills, A.M., Professor of Mathematics; N. T. Lupton, A.M., Professor of Chemistry; the Rev. J. A. Reubett, A.M., Professor of Modern Languages and Hebrew. These, except, perhaps, Mr. Reubett, continued through the time of Dr. Wightman's administration as Chancellor, and after. That was an able Faculty: the men composing it were worthy of commendation, for both their mental endowments and moral qualities.

It has been estimated that in 1861, the Southern University had an Endowment of over two hundred thousand dollars. The Rev. C. C. Callaway was Agent for the University from the beginning of 1856 to the close of 1861. Much of the original Endowment was in the form of subscriptions and notes, and was never collected. It has been asserted that Greensborough paid for the Southern University buildings, and furniture, and apparatus, in the beginning, one hundred and twenty thousand dollars. The statement, of course, includes the contributions made by persons in the vicinity of Greensborough and surrounding country.

The Departments of the University were never all opened. There was never any teaching in the department of Law, though a Law Faculty was organized. This History of the Southern University closes with the close of the War between the States, in 1865.

The session of the Annual Conference at Eutaw, Alabama, continued ten days, three days of which were occupied almost exclusively in debating the question of locating a College. The Rev. O. R. Blue, possessed, as he was, of courage, coolness, deliberation, and persistence, great elements in a debater, was the

master spirit in that great discussion, and was the actual and acknowledged leader of the party who advocated the claims of Auburn as the place for the proposed College, and he held the field against the horde of antagonists who confronted him. While he could not induce the Conference to adopt Auburn as the place for the College, he could detain the Conference from and arrest action favorable to Greensborough. Unable to break his power, the Conference, finally, by formal action, decided to decline all propositions on the subject and all cognizance whatsoever of the enterprise. Upon that status Blue changed his tactics, marshaled his forces, and acceded to the proposition to establish a College at Greensborough; immediately the Conference rescinded its action, and, as stated on a preceding page, determined to establish a College at Greensborough, Alabama. That final action of the Conference, induced by Blue, though against Auburn and in favor of Greensborough, anticipated, and meant, a College at both places.

That discussion on the College question was fiery and exciting, and engendered strife never allayed, and inaugurated division never arrested. Dr. A. H. Mitchell was on the side of Greensborough, and was, no doubt, perfectly sincere in all he did and said, but was injudicious and unwise, and he made utterances which gave mortal offense to the people of East Alabama. He taunted the people of that section. He ridiculed their claims, stigmatized them as paupers, and denounced the idea of their building a College as preposterous. He had, at some time, made a journey through East Alabama, and must needs refer to that pilgrimage, and, throwing up his hands, and assuming the attitude and tone of exclamation, he said: "Everywhere I went, poverty stared me in the face!" The people of East Alabama never forgave him, and for a long while not one of them would have experienced any special pleasure in extending to him even common hospitality. Not one of them was disposed to put poverty under contribution for that purpose.

To every people there comes an epoch, a period remarkable for events, a time accumulative of events which will have great subsequent influence. Such a period had come to the people of East Alabama, and they were at the crisis, and in a dilemma. They had conceived the idea of establishing, in their midst, a literary Institution of high grade. In the prosecution of their com-



mendable ambition they had aroused their latent forces, put under contribution their energies, and called into requisition their resources. Manifestly the work, in its inception and design, in its outline and detail, in its execution and progress, was under intelligent guides and active agents, and was not the outcome of day-dreams, wild reveries, and idle rhapsodies. Industry and liberality had been shown which merited success, and means had been accumulated which, so far as finances were concerned, guaranteed success, and they had with them moral force and popular influence. Withal, they had contested for the prize of an Institution of learning in their midst, under the auspices of the Annual Conference, and, according to the letter of the action, had lost. They had been put under an embargo, they had been estopped. They had been rebuffed. They were to be pursued, assaulted, and rebuked. An impetuous crusade against them was impending. The people at Greensborough and the other friends of the college to be built at Greensborough, claimed chartered and exclusive rights in the premises, and denounced any and every purpose and effort to establish a literary Institution and secure patronage at any other place. A constellation of circumstances admonished that if the enterprise was persisted in there would be severe conflict and a long struggle. The people of East Alabama, however, had been driven from, and were fully detached from the people of the contending section, and were united among themselves, the whole section of East Alabama stood ready for the enterprise. Nor hard speeches, nor adverse decisions, nor rebuff, nor rebuke, nor impending crusade could abate the interest of the people of East Alabama for a College in their midst.

After so much time devoted to the cause, so much talent developed in its advocacy, and so much money gathered for its use, it was a moral impossibility to refrain from the work. The materials so copiously gathered could not be abandoned, and left to disintegrate and disappear. The day for caution and procrastination was gone, decision and promptitude were in order. Loyalty to Conference action, so-called, could not be induced by the railings of prejudice or the revilings of caprice. A good conscience could not be bound by the requirements of diplomacy. Audacious and versatile reiterations about pains and penalties to be visited upon devoted heads, cut a very sor-

ry figure in arresting purposes born of pure benevolence. Hec-toring could not terrify men engaged in the promotion of a public benefaction. Men could not be convicted of departing from pure doctrines and true principles because they declined to unite on some particular enterprise and to take care of some special local interest; enterprise and interest upon which there could not be infallible pronouncements. Fiery assault and persistent crusade advertised the cause at Auburn, revealed and developed strength in its behalf, and united its agents and abettors, and made them persistent. A gale of enthusiasm swept the friends of the College for Auburn on in their grand work. The taunts which they received, the scoffing allusions made to their poverty, helped to stir the humblest plebian among them.

The friends of the enterprise, acting in accord with the facts and purposes already indicated, moved forward with the work in hand, and on February 1, 1856, just seven days after the passage of the act incorporating the Southern University, an act of the General Assembly of Alabama was passed incorporating the "East Alabama Male College." The Trustees named in the act of incorporation, forty-nine in number, were: John B. Glenn, N. J. Scott, A. Frazer, J. M. Carlton, J. B. Ogletree, W. T. Davis, Isaac Hill, C. Raiford, J. F. White, F. W. Dillard, John Darby, J. W. Jones, Wesley Williams, Simeon Perry, Edwin Reese, W. A. McCarty, O. R. Blue, Mark S. Andrews, Samuel Armstrong, C. D. Oliver, W. B. Neal, F. G. Ferguson, W. H. McDaniel, Lewis Dowdell, E. J. Hammill, Daniel Pratt, J. E. Groce, William Garrett, E. R. Flewellin, J. F. Dowdell, Samuel Harris, A. A. Lipscomb, David Clopton, J. W. Willis, Robert Daugherty, R. A. Baker, Duke W. Goodman, N. B. Powell, W. H. Ellison, J. B. Banks, J. Cunningham, Arnold Seals, John McTyeire, Frank Gilmer, John B. Tate, John P. Nalls, Thomas H. Watts, E. G. Richards, and J. M. Jennings.

If that was not a working Board, it was, nevertheless, sufficiently large to contain a sufficient number of working members, and was evidently intended for an influential Board.

In the year 1857, the corner-stone of the College building was put in place. Bishop George F. Pierce was the orator of the occasion, and right well did he sustain the interests of the hour. That was an event in the history of that section. The conditions were all propitious, the circumstances all auspicious, the

incidents all inspiring. It was a time of benediction. Everything was radiant with cheer. The very air emitted charming sounds; the atmosphere was full of music. The impulse inspired by the hour lasted through the struggle made to complete the building and furnish the outfit for the literary work anticipated. As those benevolent men laid in the corner-stone of that beautiful building which they had designed and commenced for the furtherance of sanctified learning, and as they contemplated the good which would be achieved by their beneficence there might justly come to their minds visions of "The golden crowns of life, due to the saints" who work righteousness and dispense benefits.

The building constructed, even complete in its towers and furnishings, and a Faculty selected, the youths of the land were invited to enter the halls of the East Alabama Male College, for the study of classical and scientific lore under Christian auspices. It was in the beautiful autumn of 1859 that the first persons were matriculated, the first classes formed, and the first lessons taught in that College.

The session of the Alabama Conference was held at Eufaula, Alabama, November 30 to December 8, 1859. A long session. The Conference assembled with the prospect of a fiery discussion during the session. The Southern University, at Greensborough, and the East Alabama Male College, at Auburn, had both, just a few weeks before, opened their first session. That was a new order of things in the Church in Alabama. The Southern University was already, by formal action, under the patronage and control of the Annual Conference. The East Alabama Male College was a College *de facto*, and had most flattering prospects. Perhaps, no College in the South, or in the whole country, had ever opened with so large a patronage. Its best friends were surprised at the unprecedented numbers which crowded its halls immediately upon its opening. Its patronage largely exceeded that of the Southern University. Its Trustees asked the Annual Conference to take it under the supervision and control of the Conference. That proposition renewed, in a different form, the issue between Greensborough and Auburn. The proposition was before the Conference in due form and had to be acted on.

The special friends of the Southern University exerted them-

selves to prevent favorable action on the proposition to foster the East Alabama Male College. Speeches countless, if not brilliant and beautiful, were made in the Conference on the subject. On Friday night, the last night of that prolonged session, the discussion culminated and terminated, and the issue was settled by final action. That evening the Rev. Christopher C. Callaway, the financial Agent of the Southern University, who, by virtue of his relation to that Institution, had a substantial reason for the faith which was in him, made what might be termed the final oration on the subject. His speech consumed one hour or more in its delivery, and was as full and strong as he could make it. His speech was really a homily on the authority of conscience, the inviolableness of contracts, the sacredness of plighted faith. He maintained that the Alabama Conference was, by official action, voluntarily taken, committed to the exclusive support of the Southern University, and that conscience and contract prohibited the assumption of an obligation to foster the East Alabama Male College, and that it must, in fidelity, be denied recognition and patronage, and that it should be rebuked as an arrogant intruder encroaching upon the rights of others. His was the most persistent effort of the occasion, and he, and others, attaching importance to his speech, expected, of course, labored and lengthy replies to it. The Conference and spectators, the moment he closed, were on the *qui vive*, and expectant. A long and labored argument in response was anticipated. The Rev. O. R. Blue, the friend and champion of the East Alabama Male College, arose, and said: "This Conference can keep its conscience on this subject, we are ready for the vote." The vote was immediately cast, and the issue settled, and, by an inspiring majority, the East Alabama Male College was taken under the supervision and fostering care of the Alabama Annual Conference. All this was done so quickly, that all was finished before the echoes of the Rev. Mr. Callaway's voice had fairly died away. Such cruelty! an oration in response to his labored effort would have been a mercy to him. Never was a speech so completely punctured, never did a man so thoroughly collapse! The battle was now ended, and the Alabama Conference had under its fostering care more than one Male College; and why not?

The Rev. William Jeremiah Sassnett was the first President



of the East Alabama Male College, and he was President down to the period, when, under the influence of the distracting and destructive War between the States, the College had to suspend operations, and he was nominally President down to the time of his death, November 3, 1865, at which period this History closes. His name and talents made the College popular, and enabled it to hold the large patronage with which it commenced until the War called the young men of the country to the army.

The Rev. E. J. Hammill was appointed Agent of the East Alabama Male College in 1856, and continued in that position without intermission until the close of 1862. He was as competent an Agent as ever went out in the interest of a cause. He had hope in his cause, the hope which made him not ashamed, and he was diligent, persistent, and devout. It was said that when he solicited a contribution for the College and the person addressed declined to give to the cause he would have him kneel and pray about it, and he would lead in prayer, and when the prayer was ended he would zealously press the claim for a contribution; and it was currently reported that in that way he did succeed in securing gifts. He was thoroughly consecrated to his work, and he succeeded most admirably until a devastating war made things unpropitious.

Tuskaloosa, La Grange, Summerfield, Athens, Oak Bowery, Huntsville, Tuskegee, Florence, Greensborough, and Auburn were the educational centers in Alabama under the auspices of Methodism, during the years included in the period from 1825 to 1865.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

### FURTHER HISTORY OF THE METHODIST PROTESTANT CHURCH IN ALABAMA.

THE history of the Methodist Protestant Church in Alabama, being here resumed, shall be briefly traced from the middle of the fifth to the middle of the seventh decade of this present century.

There were in the bounds of the Alabama Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church for 1845, two Stations, eleven Circuits, and four Missions. The Stations were: Montgomery, and Hayneville and Lowndesborough. The Circuits were: Montgomery, Mount Jefferson, Union, Benton, Rocky Mount, Cahawba, Cedar Creek, Sumter, Coffeerville and Washington, Coosa, and Lowndes. The Missions were: Florida, Pea River, Pickens, and Talladega. The appointments here given show the sections of the State to which that Church was mostly confined. The strongest following of that denomination was in Autauga, Butler, Coosa, Dallas, Lowndes, Montgomery, and Wilcox Counties. The whole membership in the bounds of the Conference for Alabama for that year was twenty-eight hundred and seventy-two white, and eleven hundred and fifty-seven colored members, and fifty-three itinerant preachers. The preachers adhering to that Church in the State of Alabama, so far as catalogued, at the close of 1845, were: W. W. Hill, Peyton S. Graves, Benjamin Dulany, W. Rice, James Holly, John B. Perdue, Samuel Oliver, Sen., Jesse Mings, Samuel Johnston, John Jenkins, James Jenkins, Zachariah Williams, O. L. Nash, E. Myers, M. E. Murphy, F. Freeman, James Meek, Samuel M. Meek, John Steadman, W. C. Marsh, C. Kelley, A. D. Stewart, J. M. D. Rice, J. W. S. Deberry, O. H. Shaver, Thomas Shaw, C. S. V. Jones, J. L. Wright, Stephen Williams, D. B. Smedley, A. Roberson, A. A. Lipscomb, Mark Howard, T. F. Selby, F. W. Moody, B. S. Anderson, J. L. Clarke, W. A. Bently, W. Mazingo, A. C. Patillo, R. P. W. Balmain, J. F. Burson, C. F. Gillespie, J. J. Bell,

W. Coleman, R. F. Perdue, Luther Hill, W. B. Sims, G. W. Vest, D. A. Murdock, E. W. Sewell, W. J. Stanton, John T. Mings, W. Loker, J. F. Smith, Luke Brooks, G. Royster, William Bowden, W. W. Chapman, Dempsey Dowling, D. Henderson.

As related in another place, the Rev. Samuel M. Meek died in May, 1846; and as related on another page, the Rev. Peyton S. Graves, after notice given that a motion would be made to expel him from the Conference was given permission to withdraw on December 14, 1847, and he withdrew with charges pending against his moral character. The Rev. Dempsey Dowling was received by the Methodist Protestant Church into the traveling connection, November 24, 1845. He had been a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Rev. James Jenkins died in 1849. The Rev. Benjamin Dulany died in 1852. The Rev. John Jenkins died in 1854. The Rev. Zachariah Williams joined the Baptists in 1856. The Rev. James F. Smith, one of their most zealous preachers, withdrew in 1857, and united with the Protestant Episcopal Church, and during that same year, the Rev. Oscar H. Shaver, one of the most intelligent, pious, and useful preachers among them, died. The Rev. John Steadman, who, when about twenty-two years of age joined the Methodist Episcopal Church, and went off with the Seceders, died in 1862, having passed his three score years.

The Rev. J. J. Lazenby was received, by them, as a preacher into the traveling connection, so far as they had any traveling connection, in December, 1846; and the Rev. John W. Skipper in December, 1847; and the Rev. C. C. Howard, the Rev. D. J. Sampley, and the Rev. S. N. Graham, in November, 1849, and the Rev. Samuel E. Norton was received by transfer from the South Carolina Conference at the same time. The Rev. C. C. Howard voluntarily surrendered his credentials in November, 1855. The Rev. Alexander McCaine was received, and recognized by the Alabama Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church, upon a certificate of good standing from the South Carolina Conference, in November, 1850. He was a man of note, and he died in 1857. In November, 1850, the Rev. Edwin Baldwin, the Rev. D. A. M. Ferguson, the Rev. James Lindley, and the Rev. R. F. Perdue were received as itinerant preachers.

In December, 1854, at Talladega, Alabama, the Rev. Edwin Baldwin, an elder in the Methodist Protestant Church, applied

for admission into the Alabama Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and, under the provisions of the Discipline, was received. He remained with the Methodist Protestant Church, as a preacher, but a short time, and for the simple reason that the field furnished him under the auspices of that Church was not equal to his gifts. He filled the first Stations in the Methodist Episcopal Church in Alabama, such as Montgomery, Mobile, and Selma. He was a native of Georgia, and was only thirty-eight years old when he died. He died at Selma, Alabama, January 9, 1866. When attending the ministry of the Rev. Joshua T. Heard and the Rev. Josiah Barker, at Hayneville, Alabama, he obtained justification, and immediately entered the ministry under the auspices of the Methodist Protestant Church. In the organization of the work, in the administration of ecclesiastical affairs, he never took much part. He had no talent for such work. In preaching was his strength. He was not famous for his knowledge of the Arabic, and the Coptic, the Sanscrit, and the Syriac, but he was earnest and eloquent, brave and brilliant, and made a polished use of the English language. He had a purpose in all his work; it was his purpose to irradicate vice, and vindicate virtue. Direful prospects and melancholy retrospects never affected him in the discharge of duty. Vicissitudes, however great, and battles, however sanguinary, never daunted him. The preaching of the gospel might irritate the weak and exasperate the wicked, invective might be poured forth in the full measure of folly, but he moved on like a warrior bent on success and marching to victory. He maintained a virtuous life, and a spotless character. The hospitality of his home was tendered to his friends; his finances, though limited, were expended, in part, in alms; and his calumniators were treated with the silence and his enemies with the forgetfulness which their deeds merited.

The Rev. R. F. Perdue, mentioned above, left the Methodist Protestant Church, and united with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, as an itinerant preacher, in December, 1869. He continued in the itinerant work of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, until his death, March 10, 1875.

The Rev. John E. P. Cowart was received into the pastoral work in November, 1851; and at the same time the Rev. S. E. Hoagland was received by transfer from Illinois. In November,



1853, the Revs. W. W. Tupples and W. F. Bonham were accepted as itinerant preachers.

In November, 1854, the Rev. F. L. B. Shaver, formerly a member of the Virginia Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church, and who had been in South Carolina, Missouri, and in Louisiana, presented himself at the session of the Annual Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church of the Alabama District, and was received as a member. He served as President of that Conference, much of the time he was eligible, from November, 1857, till December, 1869, when he left the Methodist Protestant Church, and united with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. He continued in the itinerant work of that Church until he was superannuated, and he was a member of the Alabama Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at the time of his death, January 4, 1880. He died at Fort Deposit, Alabama. He was a man of solid attainments, and of pleasant manners and was useful through his ministry. He filled prominent places among the Protestant and the Episcopal Methodists. In 1870, he was presiding elder of the La Fayette District. The strength of his years was given to the Methodist Protestant Church. Why did he leave the Church of his youth and manhood? Did he think it a waning Church? The questions are suggestive.

The Rev. Joseph R. Nix was received into the Methodist Protestant Church as a traveling preacher in connection with the Alabama Conference November 10, 1855, from the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, he having been also a Baptist. The Rev. William H. Grace was accepted that day as a traveling preacher, and the Rev. C. C. Howard tendered his credentials which were accepted. The Rev. James W. Harper and the Rev. George S. Mouchett were also received under the stationing authority two days later. November 8, 1856, the Revs. John Henning, James M. Scott, William C. Norris, J. R. Johnson, A. J. Jenkins, and James S. Jarratt were received into the itinerancy. On that same day the credentials of the Rev. W. W. Tupples were demanded, by the Conference, and he was returned to the ranks of the laity, on the confessed charge that he had been intoxicated in a drinking shop.

The Rev. James M. Scott, a tall, dark-skinned man, left the Methodist Protestant Church in December, 1869, and was re-

ceived as a traveling preacher into the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and appointed to the Farmersville Circuit, in Lowndes County, Alabama, a better Circuit than the Church he left had for him. He was an efficient preacher on a Circuit and a good man.

The Revs. James Collins, W. J. A. J. Hilliard, E. C. Odum, J. C. Weaver, and Angus K. McDonald, were received into the itinerancy in November, 1857.

The Rev. E. C. Odum, a pale-faced man, a Christian of zeal, a minister of much usefulness, left the Methodist Protestant Church, in which he was brought up, and joined the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in December, 1869. For two years, 1870 and 1871, he was appointed to Fayetteville Circuit, in Talladega County, Alabama, a better Circuit than the Church he left had for him. His excessive labor on that Circuit, labor self-imposed, literally wore him out, and he died there in 1871. In his zeal he forgot moderation. He was a good preacher, and was only about thirty-seven years old when he died. He was buried at Childersburg, Alabama.

The Revs. G. A. McAllister, James Cisk, W. Smith and Ax-ford were received under the stationing authority in November, 1858. The Revs. William Luker and James Cisk were expelled in 1859. The Rev. T. W. Matthews voluntarily surrendered his credentials to the Conference November 10, 1859. The Rev. George A. McAllister died in 1859, in Pickens County, Alabama. The Rev. George H. McFaden was received by the Alabama Conference as a regular transfer from the Maryland Conference, and recognized November 11, 1859. He was in every fiber a member of the Methodist Protestant Church. However, in November, 1888, he withdrew from the Alabama Annual Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church, and in a short time united with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and was, in the course of twelve months, recognized as a local elder in the Church. He lived then in Autauga County.

Prominent laymen in the Methodist Protestant Church during the period from 1845 to 1865, were, to name them alphabetically: M. B. Abercrombie, B. S. Bibb, James K. Benson, E. H. Cook, C. E. Crenshaw, Albert Crumpler, C. W. Dunham, P. P. Daniel, A. N. Ellis, Peyton T. Graves, F. M. Gilmer, Bolling Hall, J. H. Howard, Leonidas Howard, R. T. Houser, John A.

Houser, C. M. Howard, Edmond Harrison, Edwin Jenkins, Seth Little, William Little, J. J. Little, Abner McGehee, C. Matthews, W. A. Oliver, A. F. Posey, L. Robertson, S. Robbins, R. Robinson, Robert Russell, D. M. Smith, John Steele, D. C. Shaw, James H. Smith, P. B. Smith, J. M. Stoudenmire, Ezekiel Salter, T. F. Smith, B. J. Saffold, Benjamin F. Tarver, A. W. Townsend, Daniel Turnipseed, William Taylor, E. Watson, William N. Williams, B. B. Wilson, H. H. Whetstone. There were others of equal standing and zeal. A few names of the honorable women who labored for the furtherance of the gospel are found on the Record. Here they are: Mary McGehee, Nancy D. Long, Sophia L. A. Bibb, Elizabeth Reese, Rebecca L. Melton, Mary Smith, Ann Elmore, Silvia Stone, Mary L. Peebles, Mary Crenshaw, and Sarah Crenshaw. There were, doubtless, other women among them of equal virtue and fidelity.

So far as is now known, these men and women here named were all, without an exception, persons of worth, and many of them were possessed of wealth. They were representative persons in the communities in which they resided, and they did that which was pleasing in the sight of the Lord, shunning the abominations of the wicked. Some of these have already been named in a preceding chapter.

The wealthiest man among them was Abner McGehee. He was warmly attached to the principles of the Methodist Protestant Church, and in the support thereof he made frequent and, what was considered, munificent donations, and consequently he was considered by his brethren a man of piety and of enlightened liberality. In 1855, being venerable in years, he laid down his body and his worldly cares, and his spirit went to God who gave it.

John Steele, James H. Smith, William Little, Bolling Hall, B. S. Bibb, William Taylor, F. M. Gilmer, Peyton T. Graves, and John Tipton contributed liberally to some of the enterprises which the Methodist Protestant Church attempted; though it is true that the Church never enterprised many things in Alabama, and some of the few things she did attempt never culminated in success.

At the close of 1851, after a career of more than a score of years, time sufficient for reaching from birth to majority, that Church had in Alabama eighty-nine houses of worship, and two

parsonages, all valued at thirty-one thousand eight hundred and fifty dollars, making each, on an average, worth three hundred and fifty dollars. The house of worship and the parsonage in the city of Montgomery were valued at eight thousand five hundred dollars, and there were five houses of worship on the Yellow River Mission, all valued at forty dollars. The highest salary paid to a preacher among them that year was eight hundred dollars, and the lowest salary paid that year was thirteen dollars. The average of the salaries was a few cents less than one hundred and fifty dollars. The whole collected on deficiencies in the entire Conference was eighty dollars and five cents. These statements compass the entire of material substance in the whole realm of the Alabama District; except, that there was in existence a subscription, made by seventy different persons, amounting to four thousand eight hundred and forty dollars, for a nucleus, around which an effort was being made to gather ten thousand dollars, for what was called the Samaritan Fund. The Samaritan Fund was to be used, when the subscription reached ten thousand dollars, in the interest, the principal remaining forever untouched, in supplying the deficiency in the receipt of the allowance of the itinerant preachers, and in the support of superannuated preachers, and the orphans and widows of deceased preachers.

A permanent move in providing the Samaritan Fund was made at the session of the Annual Conference in December, 1846. At that session the Conference determined to make an effort to raise said Fund, and ordained rules, methods, and agents to govern and accomplish the work. The subject met with favor, at least from a few, who were steadfastly minded to go on to the consummation of the good work, and while it was a long time before anything was accomplished calculated to do much good, yet, through the liberality of Abner McGehee, and B. S. Bibb, there was accumulated, in the on-going of things, a Fund sufficient to yield a measure of relief to a few deficient ministers and the widows and orphans of deceased preachers.

Abner McGehee donated to the Samaritan Fund, in the Montgomery and West Point Rail Road Stock, ten thousand dollars, which was paid to the Treasurer of the Fund some time after the death of the donor. B. S. Bibb, about the same time, donated to the Samaritan Fund, in similar Rail Road Stock, five



thousand dollars. Liberal donations to the Fund, about the same time, by Mary McGehee, and Sophia Bibb, and others, enlarged the Fund, so that in November, 1857, the sum of it was twenty-one thousand nine hundred fifty-seven dollars and forty-five cents. The interest on that amount would yield relief in the case of several destitute ones. It is presumed that the fifteen thousand dollars in Rail Road Stock evaporated, finally, as, in after time, the Samaritan Fund was reported to be less than six thousand dollars.

Outside of supporting the preachers and Missionaries employed in the State, the Methodist Protestant Church had no benevolent enterprises in Alabama, down to the period at which this History closes. In November, 1840, under the influence, and leadership of Bolling Hall, the Annual Conference set out a declaration in favor of literature and science, and, in furtherance of the same, and with the purpose of finally establishing a College, authorized the establishment of a Male High School, at Robinson Springs, Alabama, and clothed with authority to supervise the Institution a Board of fifty-five Trustees. In obedience to the action of the Conference, the Board of Trustees went to work immediately, settled such questions as were before them, and appointed the Rev. O. H. Shaver, Agent to secure subscriptions for the contemplated School. At the next session of the Annual Conference those having the matter in hand, reported that "seventy-two dollars cash, and the gross sum of seventeen thousand, nine hundred and eighty-two dollars, in subscriptions, as also, ten thousand dollars Rail Road Stock, by Abner McGehee" had been secured. The parties interested were induced to believe that there would be still further responses, and that the amounts in a reasonable time would be largely increased. A certain site in the community of Robinson Springs was recommended as the permanent spot on which to locate the School. It had been determined to call the School The Snethen Institute, but it was recommended to the Trustees to change the name to McGehee College, as a memorial of gratitude to Abner McGehee, for his liberal donation in aid of the cause, and for his zealous advocacy of its interest. It was recommended also that the Georgia and Mississippi Conferences of the Methodist Protestant Church be requested to co-operate in the building and equipping a College. The Annual Confer-

ence adopted all the measures recommended in the premises, and there seemed to be great enthusiasm on the subject, but thrift did not attend the enterprise. At the Annual Conference in November, 1853, held at Autaugaville, Alabama, it was reported that the project of building a College at Robinson Springs, did not entirely meet the views of the Conference, and that it was then invested with such embarrassments as to render its prosecution impracticable. At the same time there was before the Conference from the citizens of Auburn, Alabama, a proposition to build a Male College at that place. The Conference considered the proposition with favor, and there was instituted a contest between Auburn and Robinson Springs. The question then was, will the friends of Robinson Springs still adhere to that locality, or transfer the subscriptions and the enterprise to Auburn. From the contest inaugurated distractions ensued. The burning sands of a desert do not more surely drink up the streams which descend upon them from the mountains, than do contests dissipate interest in public enterprises. The enterprise utterly failed, as did also the project of building a Female College in the city of Montgomery, Alabama, in 1859.

Through the belligerent spirit, which has ever been peculiarly strong in the adherents of the Methodist Protestant Church, that people were prompted to attempt to go up, and cover the earth with followers; but the very elements which gave existence to that tribe limited achievements; and while that Church had in Alabama a number of intelligent and enterprising families, the main body of the membership thereof were not of that type, and there were never in Alabama a sufficient number of intelligent members among them to prosecute any large benevolence to a successful issue.

The Methodist Protestant Church in Alabama suffered no little from the characteristic weaknesses of its adherents, as well as from the weaknesses of its cherished principles. It is the task of the historian to record such items of detriment and notice such elements of weakness as were apparent, and such as made the history, and of which the leaders of the Church themselves complained.

Much damage was suffered by premature and injudicious notice of malicious reports involving the character of ministers

and members, and so extensive was the evil that measures were adopted and committees appointed, by the Annual Conference, to arrest it. Much detriment was incurred by putting ministers and members on trial upon charges trivial in themselves and notoriously false. That evil had to be checked. An irresponsible and an untrained membership had too much control in the administration of affairs.

The Annual Conference was without authority and without power to keep the preachers at their legitimate work, and make them efficient in the prosecution of their divine calling. That fact came out, ever and anon, in the utterances of the Annual Conference from time to time, and was manifested in many ways. There was constantly a list of unstationed preachers; some left in the hands of the President of the Conference, and for whom he had no places; and others were left without appointments at their own request, and the whole order originating in inefficiency. Governed by the peculiar principles which prevailed, and the special circumstances which existed, and, yet, goaded by the desperation which could not be ignored, the Annual Conference would from time to time attempt an utterance, in which the inefficiency of the administration in the reception and control of the preachers of the Conference would be declared in more ways than one. A Report, made by a Committee to the Annual Conference, at Shiloh, Autauga County, Alabama, November 17, 1849, and acted on two days later, gives testimony on the subject. A portion of the Report transferred to this page is as follows: "The results of our modified itinerancy in this District, are too obvious to escape notice; they may be summed up as follows:

1. The power of the Conference is so weakened over its own Ministers, as to be incapable of proper legislation for the Church.

2. A large, and valuable class of Ministers, known to us as unstationed Ministers, is made to occupy a position not recognized in the Church law.

3. The regular Itineracy of the Church is so affected in its operations, as to be but partially effective in its legitimate work.

4. The wants of the Church are not met, and cannot be met, where, in arranging ministerial work, so many in their fixed relations to home and business, have to be consulted and suited.

Other effects might be mentioned. The working of the system is, however, known to us all; and we believe there is a general feeling that a change, by returning to the regular plan prescribed by our Law, is most imperatively demanded."

When the Report came up, two days after it was read, for final action, a motion that "So much of the Report as relates to the Itinerancy, be laid on the table," prevailed by a vote of thirty-three to thirteen. On a subsequent day of the session of the Conference twenty of those who voted to lay the paper on the table felt constrained to explain their vote in the following composition:

"We, whose names are hereto subscribed, being desirous that our votes to lay on the table so much of the Report of the Committee, appointed by last Annual Conference to prepare business for this, as relates to Itinerancy, should not be misunderstood, beg leave of this body, to spread the fact upon their Journal, that our vote was given from prudential considerations, connected with the subject at this time, and not from any objection to the sentiments of the Report."

Wild, profligate, and baleful as it was, the Quarterly Conferences, in many instances, ignored, not to say rejected, the preachers appointed to the pastoral charges by their own chosen Stationing Committees, and employed other preachers, and gave the employees the stipends of the Church. It seems that a Committee, composed of one in the ordinary grade of elder and of laymen, and elected by and from the constituency, for stationing preachers, lost its enchantment in the annihilation of distance, and could not please, in all instances, even the liberty-loving Methodist Protestants. The practice of ignoring the regular appointees, and hiring one of their own choosing by the Quarterly Conferences, became so prevalent, as to endanger the very existence of one of the very few things in the system of the Fathers of Methodism which the Methodist Protestants would have, the Itinerancy, and to call out an expression of alarm and complaint on the subject. The practice was too prevalent, and too far reaching in its consequences to be considered immaterial, especially by those who had direct interest in the treasure involved. The matter came up for consideration in the Annual Conference, and the pious and the sufferers were sufficiently numerous to give a majority vote in rebuke of the



reckless profanation of the cause of liberty and stipends, but the vote and the rebuke could not dispel the reproach, nor altogether arrest the impolitic practice.

The last analysis in the liberal form of Church government was presented in the Alabama Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church in the form of constant complaints that the liberal government was not respected, and obeyed, and conformity to its laws maintained. The preachers were well-nigh hedged out from any participation in the management of Church affairs. They could scarcely claim *authority* to do anything. By law, it was made the duty of the Quarterly Conference to "appoint the advisory Committee to the Superintendent;" and the superintendent, who was the preacher, or the minister appointed to the pastoral charge, had to obtain the consent of the "advisory Committee" before he could preach on special subjects; so it was expressed by a paper adopted at one of the sessions of the Annual Conference. By law provided, some of the preachers were appointed to labor under the *direction* of the Quarterly Conferences. The freedom of the divine heritage from ministerial authority was so carefully guarded that the Annual Conference would not retain a Resolution *authorizing* ministers to attend Camp-meetings and Protracted-meetings in their own Circuits. That it was their *privilege* to do so, was the most the Annual Conference would maintain on the subject. The members of the Churches, and it seems to have been the rule, arranged, and carried on affairs at their own option, oblivious of the preachers in charge of the Circuits. The power to admit persons into full membership was vested in the members of the Church, and not in the preacher. Such was the liberty of the sons of men in that communion.

That liberty which is a source of weakness in the administration of human affairs may be rejected as no liberty, and as not a whit better than imperiousness. To deprive one of making achievements by placing over him arbitrary power is not any worse than preventing the achievements by placing him under inadequate laws and inefficient agencies. Liberty may not, under any pretext, be contravened. Liberty may not be circumscribed, curtailed, diminished, restrained, suppressed, eliminated, transferred, under any conditions, by any laws, for any purposes. To deprive a man of doing that which he should do, or of

enjoying that which he should enjoy, or to make him do that which he ought not, or to make him suffer that which he ought not to suffer, is evidently oppression, but it is not oppression to demand that which should be bestowed, nor is it oppression to prevent the doing of that which ought not to be done. Authority divinely reposed is, as all must admit, rightful authority, and to exercise authority so reposed, as is self-evident, neither abridges nor annuls liberty. The exercise of authority and the demand for a recognition and maintenance thereof cannot be considered the perpetration of tyranny, any more than the demand for redress of personal injuries, or the demand for restoration of stolen property could be considered striking against the divine law. To take and carry away feloniously in order to reimburse one who had been robbed, and to redress injuries by the infliction of injuries would not be more obnoxious to the divine law than removing authority from its proper deposit, than taking it from hands where by divine appointment it reposes. Tyranny, oppression, and injustice can never promote good. That which impinges the law of God is not liberty, but usurpation. The wise and prudent should not make the fatal mistake of confounding these, as they should not make the fatal mistake of confounding might and right, and as they should not make the egregious blunder of enthroning might as the supreme arbiter in the administration of human affairs, and as they should not perpetrate the error of supposing that private liberty and public rights antagonize. Any assumptions concerning liberty, or conscience, or freedom from civil or ecclesiastical restraints which tend to enervate the divinely chosen agencies, for carrying forward the work of the Redeemer must be false and pernicious. "Whosoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God," and there is nothing more pernicious, and criminal, "and they who resist shall receive to themselves damnation." No one is endowed with liberty to work evil or produce mischief in any state or in any wise. No law can restrain the exercise of liberty, but there are some things which are not involved in liberty. Liberty no more involves the right to indulge passion, and avenge wrath, or impinge justice, than truth confers the right to perpetrate falsehoods. Law restrains, but it does no violence to liberty. The liberty which exists under the law of God is simply the right and power to act the part of a moral be-

ing. Liberty exists and acts within the realm and limit of moral law. That is no more a restraint upon liberty in man than the impossibility for God to lie is a restraint upon his actions, and a limit of his perfections.

The champions of ecclesiastical liberty in Alabama were never famous for literary work, or literary attainments. They founded no Schools, though, as related above, they made a few free efforts in that behalf. They published but little, and that of a fugitive complexion, nothing very classical, and nothing reflecting any special credit. In literature, learning, and erudition they were not adepts. In poetry, music, and the fine arts they were not proficient, and they were not skilled in things profound. It is but just, however, to state that they did not have among them more than their just proportion of those who consider learning both useless and pernicious. There is certainly a beauty in the simplicity of Christianity which makes the frippery, pomp, and pageantry of gorgeous ceremony and adventitious rites revolting, but in the adoption of a Ritual so inferior, this sect, which had removed the dazzlings of human power so far away that the suffrages of presbyters and people were seldom sought, not more than once a year, surely overdid the matter in getting rid of ostentation, and ecclesiastical embellishments. Men who made a pious boast of rejecting ecclesiastical adornments would not be apt to seek personal embellishments and high order of literary refinements.

The Rev. Alexander McCaine was a man of talents and attainments, and he did some literary work, work which made him notorious, but he completed his literary work, or most of it at least, before he came to Alabama, and he was in the State of Alabama only a brief while, and that in age and feebleness extreme.

The Rev. Andrew A. Lipscomb, who had conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Divinity, and the degree of Doctor of Laws, for forty-five years, and, perhaps, for a longer period, had his official relation with the Alabama Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church. Though he was out of the State a part of the time, for many years he was intimately associated with the work of his Church in Alabama, and though for much of the time he was on the unstationed list, he was for some years in the pastoral work and the active ministry. He was a man of good talents, excellent scholarship, and of unblemished reputa-

tion. Though he had native gifts, and though he acquired learning, he was by his temperament, by his aptitudes, disqualified for distinguished leadership. No one who knew him would have selected him to suppress a riot, or to guide a revolution. No one would have chosen him to issue a proclamation, or to formulate a Confession of Faith. He was not the man to find and touch the springs of public life, or to enterprise matters, and make things potent and illustrious. There was nothing bold, or dashing, or aggressive about him, he was not capable of impetuous daring. He was of a soft mold, and gentle disposition, and more docile than vigorous. He was not the man to participate in stirring events. He was better suited to tranquil times. He was, by nature, disqualified for the task of soldier or surgeon. It is judged that in a University he would have been more in place as a Professor than as a Chancellor. He was as free from artifices as he was destitute of the positive elements which make a warrior and a leader. In several of the Institutions of Learning in the country, he had, for a time, place and rank. For a short while he was connected with the University of Georgia, and likewise with the Female College, at Tuskegee, Alabama, under the auspices of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and, then, also, with the Vanderbilt University, at Nashville, Tennessee. In all these Schools he was honored. He was an author, and was regarded a forcible writer, with pleasing style, and classical taste, perhaps, more polished than profound. He penned prose, invoked the Muse, and attempted rythm and rhyme. His poetry was printed and praised, but never reached the stately and sublime heights and popular plaudits of Pope's verses and Milton's poems. He was the author of a number of Essays, on various subjects, Essays of merit, though none of them comparable to the Essays of John Locke. A book, bearing the title "Studies in the Forty Days between the Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus Christ," which was published in 1884, six or eight years before his death, was considered, by some, his most valuable production, though it is not as profound, nor as engaging, nor as helpful as the treatise "On the Rule and Exercises of Holy Living," by Jeremy Taylor. Among all the Methodist Protestants in Alabama to the date of which this History takes cognizance Dr. Lipscomb stands pre-eminent, if not alone, as an author.



The last statistics published by the Methodist Protestant Church in Alabama, prior to the close of the War between the States, and which can now be found at hand, were published at the close of 1860. Said statistics show that that Church had, at that time, in Alabama, three thousand two hundred and sixteen white members, and one thousand seven hundred and sixty-five colored members; and eighty-five houses of worship, and three parsonages, all valued at ninety-one thousand three hundred and seventy-five dollars; and ten Sunday-schools, with forty teachers, and two hundred and eighty-four scholars. There was not a member of the Methodist Protestant Church in any place in Alabama at that time a city, except Montgomery. The principal towns in the State at which there were any members of that Church were Autaugaville, Greenville, Lowndesborough, and Robinson Springs.

THE END.



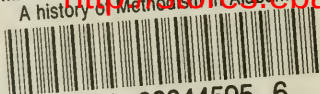








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