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CYCLOPEDIA OF METHODISM -- LETTER-V (2784--2814)

Embracing Sketches of Its Rise,
Progress and Present Condition,
With Biographical Notices
And Numerous Illustrations.
Edited by Matthew Simpson,
One of the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

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2784 -- VAIL, Stephen Montfort, was born in Union Vale, Dutchess Co., N. Y., January 15, 1818, and entered the Oneida Conference Seminary in June, 1832. After remaining two years in that institution, he went to Bowdoin College, whence he was graduated in 1838. He was afterwards teacher of Languages for one year in Amenia Seminary, then attended the Union Theological Seminary, New York City, and he was graduated thence in 1842. He joined the New York Conference in 1842, and performed pastoral work till 1847, when he became principal of the New Jersey Conference Seminary. In July, 1849, he was elected Professor of Hebrew and Biblical Literature in the theological school at Concord, N. H., which has since been removed to Boston and incorporated with Boston University. He continued in this position for nineteen years, till his health failed. After a year of rest, he was appointed consul for the United States in Rhenish Bavaria. He made an extensive tour in the East, and returned to the United States, after more than four years of absence. Since his return he has lived in retirement on his farm on Staten Island, N. Y., writing frequently for the press. He is the author of works on "Ministerial Education" and "The Bible against Slavery," and of many sermons and addresses published between 1842 and 1870, and has contributed numerous articles to the Methodist Quarterly Review, Zion's Herald, and other periodicals of the church.

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2785 -- VAN ARSDALE, Mellville -- A minister of the M.E. Church, was born in Montgomery Co., Ind., March 21, 1845, and died at Thorntown, December 25, 1875. He was converted in the fourteenth year of his age, when he was a student in Thorntown Academy. He entered the service of his country as a soldier during the Civil War; was honorably discharged when it closed. He was admitted on trial in the Upper Iowa Conference in 1867, and traveled successively Buffalo Grove, Winthrop, and Strawberry Point Circuits. He was transferred to the Northwest Indiana Conference, where, his health failing, he returned to Thorntown, and died in peace, saying, "All is well."

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2786 -- VAN BENSCHOTEN, James C. -- Professor in Wesleyan University, was born at La Grange, N. Y., December 15, 1827. He entered Geneva College, Lima, N. Y., in 1850. In 1855 he was teacher of Ancient Languages in Oxford College Institute, N. Y.; in 1856, teacher in the same department in the Susquehanna Seminary, Binghamton, N. Y.; in 1857, principal of the Oxford College Institute, N. Y.; in 1862, principal of the High School at Lyons, N. Y.; in 1863, teacher of Ancient Languages in the Oneida Conference Seminary, Cazenovia, N. Y. and in 1864 he was chosen Professor of the Greek Language and Literature, and Instructor in Modern Languages, in Wesleyan University.

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2787 -- VANCE, George -- Is an influential member of the Irish Conference, which he entered in 1835. He has been stationed in the principal circuits for many years, and as "chairman of district" and "delegate" has served Irish Methodism well. He is a profound student, and in the department of "ecclesiastical history" has made many valuable contributions. He became a supernumerary at the last Conference, and it is hoped that the leisure now afforded may result in his giving still more permanent form to his researches and views.

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2788 -- VANCE, James M. -- A member of the Louisiana Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was born in Nashville in 1826, in slavery. Converted in 1838. He entered the ministry of the African Methodist Episcopal Conference in 1853. He was received into the Louisiana Conference of the M. E. Church in 1866, and was for several years presiding elder in that Conference.

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2789 -- VAN CLEVE, J. -- Was born in Shrewsbury, N.J., May 28, 1804, and died in 1876. He was converted in Cincinnati while an apprentice, in 1822, and soon after united with the "Stone Church" in Cincinnati. In 1825 he was licensed to preach. He was admitted on trial in the Illinois Conference, October 9, 1828, and was appointed to Bloomington circuit. He spent on circuits and stations thirty-four years, and on districts fifteen years. He was elected delegate to the General Conference four times, and at the time of his death was a member of the general missionary committee. In all these relations he was faithful and efficient. By his own persistent

effort he attained to very respectable scholarship. He was a methodical and earnest preacher. At the Conference preceding his death he was appointed to preach a centennial sermon, it being the semi-centennial of His itinerant ministry, but he was called to his reward before the time came for its delivery. He died in New York while attending the meeting of the missionary committee.

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2790 -- VAN CORTLAND, Pierre, -- formerly lieutenant-governor of New York, was born in New York City, Jan. 10, 1721, and was the possessor of a large manor, which originally consisted of 83,000 acres. He was an ardent friend of the republic during the Revolutionary War, and such men as George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and George Clinton were frequent visitors at his house. His daughter, Catharine, afterwards Mrs. Van Wyck, was converted under a sermon by Woolman Hickson, and, uniting with the church, introduced Methodism into the family. Governor Van Cortland early identified himself with its interests. His house was a preaching-place until he gave the land and erected a house of worship upon it. From the piazza of his house Whitefield preached to listening hundreds, and Bishop Asbury, Freeborn Garrettson, and other early preachers found a hearty welcome in his hospitable abode. In 1804 the first camp-meeting east of the Hudson River was held in Carmel, Putnam Co., N. Y. Governor Van Cortland and his family attended it, and the presiding elder having applied for a grove on his land, he readily offered it, saying, "I have seen all this grove grow up, and have been solicited to cut down the trees because of the goodness of the soil, yet I have never consented to it, nor could I tell why till your application for it solved the mystery. It seems as if it is from the Lord." In this grove camp-meetings were held annually until 1831. While the governor lived, he and his family were constant attendants, and remarkable spiritual influences accompanied many of the meetings. He died calmly and triumphantly May 1, 1814.

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2791 -- VAN COTT, Mrs. Margaret -- Was born in the city of New York, March 25, 1830. Her father was William K. Newton, an Englishman and an Episcopalian, and she was, at the age of eleven years, confirmed at the church of the Epiphany. During her girlhood her home was for four years so near the M. E. church, at the corner of McEwen and Grand Streets, Williamsburg, that she could hear the singing and prayers. She longed to attend these services, but was not permitted to do so by her mother. She was married, in 1847, to Peter Van Cott, and her first affliction came in the death of her only daughter. A second child was born to them; but her husband's health failing, she felt obliged, in various ways, to sustain and continue the business by which he had supported his family. She was enabled to do this by great industry, and it was in the midst of her heaviest burdens of care and sorrow that she made that surrender of herself to God that made his will ever

church, and was persuaded to attend a class-meeting to aid in the singing, but consented to go only on the promise of the leader that she should not be asked to speak. She did speak, however, and began there her public utterance of testimony to God's grace. After becoming a member of this church she became interested in meetings at one of the city mission stations at the Five Points. She held meetings here assisting the missionary, and so at intervals for twenty months, at the corner of Leonard and Baxter Streets, where her audiences were mostly colored people. Then in 1866, while on a visit to Durham, Greene Co., N. Y., she was invited to speak in the school-house. This

meeting was the beginning of a series, resulting in many conversions, and it was the beginning also of a public work which since then has extended to almost every State in the Union. In 1868 she gave up all other business and devoted herself entirely to the work of winning souls. As a result of her first year as an itinerant evangelist, she numbered 500 persons received into various churches. Her method is to respond to the invitation of churches to aid in revival meetings, and during her visits she often preaches every night in the week and twice on the Sabbath. In the afternoons she conducts promise and praise meetings, silent meetings, prayer and fasting meetings, mothers' meetings, young converts' meetings, etc.

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2792 -- VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY is located at Nashville, Tenn. It was founded in 1872, and was called the Central University of the Methodist Episcopal Church South. The following year it received a donation from Cornelius Vanderbilt, Esq., of New York, of half a million, which he subsequently increased to one million of dollars. He directed that of this sum \$600,000 should be permanently invested for an endowment fund, and that Bishop McTyeire should be president of the board of trustees, and its organization should be directed by him. The cornerstone of the edifice was laid April 24, 1874, in a campus of 75 acres of land, which had been purchased for the university, and the institution was opened Oct. 4, 1875. L. C. Garland was elected chancellor, and Rev. T. O. Summers, who is editor of The Christian Advocate, at Nashville, was chosen as dean of the theological faculty and is ex officio vice-chancellor. The institution has four departments, -- theology, law, medicine, and philosophy, embracing science and literature. The faculties of medicine and philosophy have each eleven professors. There are several courses of study which are elective, and the collections for library apparatus and cabinets are quite valuable. Tuition is given free to theological students. The institution has already taken high rank. During the first academic year there were in attendance about 300 students.

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2793 -- VANHORNE, Richard -- Of the New Jersey Conference of the M. E. Church, was born in Bergen Co., N. J., October 20, 1819. He was converted in 1837, and joined the New Jersey Conference in 1842, having traveled the previous year under the presiding elder. In 1856 he became, by division of the territory, a member of the Newark Conference. He has filled a number of important appointments in Trenton, Elizabeth, Orange, Paterson, Hackettstown, Jersey City, and Newark. Since 1872 he has been presiding elder in the Jersey City and Newark districts.

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2794 -- VANNOTE, Jonathan -- Was born in Monmouth Co., N. J., September 3, 1838. He was converted at the early age of fifteen; was educated at Pennington Seminary, N. J., and entered the New Jersey Conference in 1857. He served at Pennington, Marlton, New Egypt, Front Street, Trenton, and organized the Central church of that city. He was appointed superintendent of the M. E. mission press in China, but sickness prevented him from going. Afterwards he assumed the editorial charge of the Trenton State Gazette, and continued four years, when he removed to Pittsburgh, and is now editor of the Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette. He holds a supernumerary relation in the New Jersey Conference.

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2795 -- VAN VLECK, John Monroe -- Professor in Wesleyan University, was born at Stone Ridge, Ulster Co., N. Y., March 4, 1823, and was graduated from Wesleyan University in 1850. In the same year he was appointed teacher of Mathematics in the Providence Conference Seminary, and also an assistant in the office of the Nautical Almanac, at Cambridge, Mass. In 1853 he was elected Adjunct Professor of Mathematics in Wesleyan University, and in 1858 Professor of Mathematics and Astronomy in the same institution, which last position he still retains.

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2796 -- VARDEN, Josiah -- Of the Methodist Protestant Church, was born in Washington, D. C., July 25, 1806, and died a peaceful death in Leonardtown, Md., January 6, 1863. Blessed with good educational advantages he consecrated himself to God in his youth. In 1830 he joined the Maryland Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church, and soon advanced to great usefulness and popularity as a preacher; filling all the prominent appointments of the Conference. In 1848-49 he was president of the Conference, and in 1850-52 he served Sixth Street station in Cincinnati. He was a representative in the General Conferences of 1846, 1850, 1854, and 1858. As a preacher, he selected peculiar and striking topics and texts; dwelt much on the scenery of the Bible; had gorgeous rhetoric and a flowing elocution, and audiences were charmed under his ministrations. He was a useful minister, deeply devoted to the cause of Christ.

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2797 -- VASEY, Thomas -- Was endued with superior mental powers, and spent thirty-two years in the active work of the ministry. As a preacher he was noted for great earnestness; he did not preach "about Christianity," but "Christ," and the freeness and fullness of the salvation of the gospel. Mr. Vasey was a great sufferer, -- just when the suffrages of his brethren would have placed him in the chair of the Conference he was compelled to retire, and he shortly after died, aged fifty-seven.

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2798 -- VERMONT (pop. 332,286) was first discovered in 1609, by Champlain and other French officers. The first white settlement was made in 1724, at the present city of Brattleboro. For many years there was a contest with the state of New York as to part of its territory. It was admitted into the Union in 1790.

Methodism was introduced in the western part of the state from the adjoining portion of New York. In 1788 there were but two preachers on extensive circuits in the vicinity, Cambridge and Lake Champlain, in charge of Lemuel Smith and Samuel Wigton. In 1788, Mr. Garrettson was presiding elder of a district extending from Rochelle, N. Y., to Lake Champlain, and visited some portion of this territory. A local authority says that Wigton and Smith came to Hampton, Washington Co., N. Y., and called at the house of Mr. Samuel Bibbins and opened to him their mission. They were made welcome to the hospitalities of his house, and permitted to preach.

Bibbins declared that he had in a dream seen these two men, and he knew them as soon as he saw them. His family was awakened and converted, a class was formed, and his house became the preachers' home. From this point the work spread into Vermont.

In 1793, Thomas Ware succeeded Garrettson on the district, and his work embraced a portion of Vermont. In 1794 Methodism was introduced into Vermont from New Hampshire, and also from Massachusetts. Joshua Hill was sent as missionary under George Roberts, who was then presiding elder in Massachusetts. In 1795, Thomas Cooper was appointed to Orange circuit, known the following year as Vershire. In that year Vermont appears in the statistical report with Vershire as its only appointinent. Jesse Lee says, " This circuit was the first formed in the state of Vermont. We had been preaching in that town and in many of the bordering towns some time before that, but had no society formed. We had some societies in the state which belonged to circuits of other states, but Vershire was the first circuit formed within the state. It extended from the towns near Connecticut River to Montpelier, and to the mouth of Onion River, which runs into Lake Champlain. Many places where we preached on that circuit were quite new settlements. The houses were very small, and but scattering through the country. The preachers had to encounter many difficulties and to endure many hardships; but one thing which made up for all the difficulties was this: the people were fond of attending meetings by day or night, and were very kind to the preachers and the best of all was, sinners were soon awakened, and in a little time some of them became the happy subjects of the favor of God, and were zealously engaged in trying to help forward the word of the Lord as far as they could. Since then we have prospered considerably in this new part of the country."

In 1798 Vergennes circuit was reported with 186 members. In 1800 the state reported 1096 members, with the following circuits: Essex, Landaff, Vergennes, Vershire, Weathersfield, and Whitingham. In 1810 there was a Vermont district in the New England Conference, which reported 1877 members. The state now embraces the Vermont Conference, numbering 129 traveling and 81 local preachers, 13,239 members, 13,794 Sunday School scholars, 120 churches, and 86 parsonages. In addition to this the Burlington district lies chiefly within the state of Vermont and has 3514 members, 3527 Sabbath-school scholars, 36 churches, and 28 parsonages. The Newbury Seminary was for many years a flourishing institution under the patronage of the Vermont Conference, and a large number of ministers were educated there, who have added strength and influence to the church. Within a few years, however, it has ceased to be held as a seminary by the church, and the interests of the Conference are concentrated on a new seminary at Montpelier, which is doing effective service in the cause of education. A local Methodist paper, The Vermont Messenger, was also for many years published within its bounds. Methodism in point of numbers stands only second to Congregationalism in this state.

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2799 -- VERMONT CONFERENCE, M. E. CHURCH, was organized by the General Conference of 1844. Its boundaries were defined to include the state of Vermont, except that part lying west of the top of the Green Mountains, which was then embraced in the Troy Conference. Previous to this time the territory organized into the Vermont Conference had belonged to the New Hampshire Conference. The members of the Vermont Conference finding the territory too small for effective work, in 1856 the General Conference gave permission to reunite it to the New

Hampshire Conference, but the measure did not receive a majority of the votes of the Conferences, and they have remained separate. In 1860 the boundaries were changed so as to include the entire state, except some of the appointments embraced in the Troy and Poultney districts of the Troy Conference; but the members in the Burlington district being dissatisfied, the lines were so changed as to permit the Burlington district to be in the Troy Conference, while St. Alban 's remained in the Vermont Conference. The Conference now embraces the entire State except the Burlington district. Its first session was held June 18, 1845 when it reported 9010 members. In 1876 its Statistics were as follows: 129 traveling and 81 local preachers, 13,239 members, 13,794 Sunday-school scholars, 120 churches, and 86 parsonages.

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2800 -- VERMONT SEMINARY AND FEMALE COLLEGE is situated at Montpelier, the capital of the state of Vermont. It is under the control of a board of trustees, and under the patronage of the Vermont Annual Conference of the M. E. Church, but its character is broad and liberal. The faculty consists of Rev. Lorenzo White, principal, and Professor of English Language and Metaphysics, assisted by a corps of able teachers, both gentlemen and ladies.

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2801 -- VERNON, Leroy, M. -- Was born in Montgomery Co., Ind., April 23, 1838, and was converted in his eighteenth year. He was educated at the Iowa Wesleyan University, where he graduated in 1860. He entered the ministry the same year, and among his chief appointments were Simpson chapel, St. Louis, the presiding eldership of Springfield District, and Sedalia. He was a delegate to the General Conference in 1868, and was appointed a member of the general book committee for four years. He assisted his father-in-law, the distinguished Rev. Dr. Charles Elliott, in the preparation of his later works. In 1871 he was sent to Italy as superintendent, to organize the mission work of the Methodist Episcopal Church in that country, where he has since remained (1878), and has been instrumental in erecting a church in Rome, and in establishing stations in various parts of Italy.

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2802 -- VERSAILLES, KY. (pop. 5995), is the capital of Woodford County, 10 miles from Frankfort. It is in the Kentucky Conference.

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2803 -- VETO POWER is given in many forms of government to the crown, president, governor, or mayor to prevent what may be considered hasty or injurious legislation in kingdoms, states, or municipalities. Generally, after such veto, it requires a vote of two-thirds of the legislative body to enact the proposed measure. In some bodies, however, only a majority vote is required. No veto power is given in any form of Methodism to either bishop, presiding elder, or preacher, except in the M. E. Church South. In that church, if the General Conference adopts a measure which the bishops believe to be unconstitutional, and against which they present their objections in writing, the passage of the measure requires a two-thirds vote of the General

Conference, to be followed by a three-fourths vote of the Annual Conferences, as in the case of the alteration of a restrictive Rule. This measure was adopted in 1874. Presiding officers, however, in Quarterly and Annual Conferences have the right to decide questions of law, and thus to prevent legislation which is by them considered to be contrary to the order and discipline of the church. Yet the application of the law rests with the Conferences and in such cases the decisions are entered on the journals, and the final revision of them belongs to the General Conference.

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2804 -- VICKERS, Hon. George -- Of the Methodist Protestant Church, was born in Chestertown, Kent Co., Md. He united with the M. P. Church in 1848. He has been secretary and a member of the Quarterly Conference, steward, etc., and once a member of the Maryland Annual Conference. He was elected and served in three General Conferences. He studied law, and was admitted to the bar in 1832, was elected to the Senate of Maryland in 1836, and was commissioned a major-general of militia by Governor Hicks in 1865. He was elected to the Senate of Maryland in 1865, and was an electoral candidate for General McClellan in 1864. He was a visitor and governor of Washington College, Chestertown, Md., for a number of years, and was elected to the Senate of the United States in March 1868, and served five years.

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2805 -- VICKSBURG, MISS. (pop. 11,814), the capital of Warren County, is situated on the Mississippi River. It is the largest city in the state, about 408 miles above New Orleans, and is the chief commercial city between Memphis and New Orleans. It first appears in the minutes of the M. E. Church for 1830, and reported in the following year 40 members, with J. O. T. Hawkins as pastor. The Mississippi Conference held in this city its session in 1832. In 1833 it became the head of a district of the same name, and had Rev. C. K. Marshall as pastor. In 1845 it adhered to the M. E. Church South. Since the close of the war a colored church was organized by the M. E. Church. There is also a society of the African M. E. Church. It is in the Mississippi Conference.

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2806 -- VICTORIA UNIVERSITY is located at Cobourg, Ontario, Canada, and is the successor of the Upper Canada Academy, subsequently Victoria College. It embraces a faculty of arts, a faculty of medicine, a faculty of law, and a faculty of theology. Rev. S. S. Nelles is president, and Professor of Mental Philosophy, and is assisted by eight professors in the collegiate department. The cabinets contain some five thousand specimens in mineralogy and paleontology, and an excellent modern apparatus is employed for the illustration of chemistry and physics. Two medals are given through the bounty of the Prince of Wales, called the Prince of Wales Gold Medal and the Prince of Wales Silver Medal, to the graduation class of each year. There are also five scholarships awarded each year to under-graduates in arts the Brethour scholarship of \$100 to the matriculant who obtains the highest standard in classics with honors, one of \$75 to the matriculant who obtains the highest standard in mathematics with honors, and three others of smaller amounts. There are also ten prizes awarded to excellence in various departments of study. It has an affiliated relation with the medical colleges in Montreal and Toronto. Its faculty of law

embraces four professors, and its faculty of theology four professors, besides the president. In 1876 there were 207 students registered in the different departments.

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2807 -- VINCENNES, IND. (pop. 7680), the capitol of Knox County, is situated on the Wabash River, and is the oldest town in the state, having been settled as early as 1735. It is first reported in the minutes of the M. E. Church for 1809, with 43 members, William Winans being in charge. The first M. E. church was built in 1812, during the pastorate of Jacob Truman, which was rebuilt in 1829, and again in 1857. It is in the Indiana Conference and in 1876 reports 320 members, 180 Sunday School scholars.

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2808 -- VINCENT, John H. -- Editor of the Sunday-school publications of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was born in Alabama in 1832, and joined the New Jersey Conference in 1853. He was transferred to the Rock River Conference in 1856. He became especially interested in the work and literature of the Sunday-school, and visited the Holy Land, in order to prepare himself the better to be of service in that department. In 1865 he was appointed general Sunday-school agent of the Methodist Episcopal Sunday-School Union. In 1868 he was elected the General Conference editor of The Sunday-School Journal, and of the books of instruction. He was elected in 1872, by acclamation, editor of the Sunday-school books, papers, and tracts, as well as corresponding secretary of the Tract Society and of the Sunday School Union, and was re-elected in 1876. He has labored successfully for the advancement of the department with which he has been identified for twelve years, and has contributed materially to the development of the Sunday-school literature of the church. He has acquired a national reputation in all the churches as an indefatigable Sunday-school worker.

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2809 -- VIRGINIA (pop. 512,806). -- The first permanent settlement in this state was made at Jamestown. May 13, 1607. The colonists brought with them the forms and ceremonies of the Church of England, and regarded their enterprise as a religious one. Its civil and ecclesiastical history are closely interwoven. In 1664 the territorial assembly passed very stringent enactments in reference to religious duties. Whoever absented himself from divine services without a lawful excuse was to be fined one pound of tobacco, and if he offended the second time he was to be fined five pounds. No person was allowed to sell any of his tobacco until the minister had first received his portion. The minister was also required to preach at least one sermon upon the Sabbath. One of the provisions reads: "Ministers shall not give themselves to excess in drinking or riot, spending their time idly by day or by night, in playing at dice, cards, and other unlawful games but at all times convenient they shall hear or read the Holy Scriptures, or take up themselves with other honest studies."

In 1642 the Act of Uniformity was made very stringent, and all persons who could not conform were compelled to leave the colony. A Mr. Bennett, from Virginia, in 1641, visited Boston, and invited ministers to visit his state, but under the Act of Uniformity the Puritans were

driven away. Notwithstanding this the Congregationalists increased, and in 1648 had several congregations, the most flourishing of which was one in Nansemond County, numbering 118 persons, under the care of Rev. Mr. Harrison, who was subsequently driven out, and became useful in England and Ireland. In 1671, Governor Berkeley said, "We have 48 preachers, and our ministers are well paid, and by my consent should be better if they would pray oftener and preach less; but of all other commodities the worst are sent to us, and we had few that we could boast of since persecution in Cromwell's tyranny drove divers worthy men hither." The Friends, or Quakers, also suffered in this persecution. They were described in the legislative enactments as an "unreasonable and turbulent sort of people, who, contrary to the laws, daily gathered assemblies and congregations of people, teaching lies, miracles, false divinations, prophecies, and utterances tended to destroy religious laws, communities and all the bonds of civil society." Officers of trading vessels were forbidden to bring a Friend into their colony under the penalty of £100 sterling. Notwithstanding this, many arrived, and were arrested and imprisoned, and ultimately sent out of the country. If one sent out of the country should return he was liable to be put to death. Notwithstanding these severe laws, in 1681 there were three or four Quaker Congregations, and One Presbyterian church.

In 1692 the charter for William and Mary College was secured, and its first commencement was held in 1700. In 1699 a Presbyterian church was organized. In 1699 a Presbyterian minister, Francis McKendree, was licensed under the Act of Toleration, and two places of worship were allowed him. In 1710 the presbytery of Philadelphia writes, "In all Virginia we have one small congregation, on Elizabeth River, and some few families favor our way in Rappahannock." As early as 1714 the Baptists had a congregation in the Isle of Wight. The church grew rapidly, and in 1770 there were Baptist churches in several portions of the northern neck. They were persecuted by the Church of England, and sometimes arrested. The prosecuting attorney on one occasion said, "These men are great disturbers of the peace. They can't meet a man on the road but they must ram a text of Scripture down his throat." Many of them lay in jail for weeks, but they preached to the people from the jail windows. Patrick Henry became their defender, and through his eloquence they were liberated and more reasonable terms were offered. The religious question became a matter of controversy. The Church of England was defended in its ecclesiastical course by such men as Pendleton, Carter, etc., and the liberty party by such men as Jefferson, Madison, and Mason. The writings of Madison were chiefly instrumental in the liberal triumph.

In 1740, Whitefield preached a few sermons in the bounds of this state, but Methodism proper was planted by Robert Williams, who was a local preacher in England, and had arrived in New York in 1769. His first appearance in Virginia was in 1772. He preached his first sermon in Norfolk, at the door of the court-house. He also visited Portsmouth where a prominent business man, Isaac Luke became converted. His labors were succeeded by these of Boardman and Pilmoor, and subsequently by Asbury and other pioneers. Pilmoor, in Company with William Watters, the first native itinerant Methodist preacher, crossed the Potomac at Alexandria, and preached where opportunity offered on their way to Norfolk. These pioneer preachers were assisted in their labors by Rev. Mr. Jarret, a devout and earnest minister in the English Church, and who early invited the Methodist preachers to hold services in his parish, and he administered the sacrament to their people. In 1773, at the first Methodist Conference, 100 members were reported from Virginia, and the appointments read: Norfolk, Richard Wright; Petersburg, Robert Williams.

Under the ministration of Williams the family to which Jesse Lee belonged was received into the Methodist Church, and became one of the most influential families in Methodism.

During the Revolutionary War the societies increased rapidly, and a controversy sprung up in reference to the administration of the sacraments. Many of the preachers of the English Church had left the country, and the people being dissatisfied, a portion of the ministers in Virginia resolved to ordain a few of their number for the purpose of having these ordinances administered to the people; but through the influence of Bishop Asbury they were induced to suspend the administration and take counsel of Mr. Wesley. This led at the close of the war to the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church. A freer scope was given to the progress of the church after the close of the Revolutionary War by the enactment of the bill for religious freedom in 1786, through the influence of Mr. Jefferson. The disestablishment of the English Church speedily followed, and after that period all churches had equal opportunities.

The first secession of any moment from the Methodist Church occurred in the bounds of this state, under the leadership of James O'Kelly. He had long been a presiding elder, and was strong in certain convictions. When defeated at the General Conference of 1792, he withdrew from the Church and organized what was called the Republican Methodist Church. Having been very popular, and having traveled very extensively, especially in the southern part of Virginia, he took large numbers of people with him, and the statistics show that a larger percentage was lost to the church than in any other separation which has occurred, except the one in 1845.

The state of Virginia was the locality of remarkable revivals, and in various parts of it the church grew with great rapidity. Prior to 1845, the Baltimore Conference embraced the valley of Virginia and the territory north of the Rappahannock, including Fredericksburg. The Holston Conference embraced the southwestern part of the territory. Western Virginia had been included in the Pittsburgh and Ohio Conferences, but was subsequently organized into the Western Virginia Conference. In 1845 all of Virginia, except the part included in the Baltimore Conference and West Virginia, adhered to the Church South and in the bounds of the Baltimore Conference, and in West Virginia, the churches in many places were divided, and bitter controversy arose. After the General Conference of 1860, almost the entire part of Eastern Virginia declared its independence of the General Conference of the M. E. Church, and at the close of the war identified itself with the ME. Church South; though societies and churches still remained within the bounds of the former Baltimore Conference.

The state now embraces the Virginia Conference of the M. E. Church South, and a portion of the Baltimore and Holston Conferences. The Methodist Episcopal Church has a Virginia Conference, and a part of its Baltimore Conference and of its Washington Conference are included within the state. The Methodist Protestant Church has a Virginia Conference, and also a portion of the Maryland Conference. In the African M. E. Church the Virginia Conference includes the entire state, with a portion of West Virginia. There are also churches of the African Zion Church and of the Colored Church of America. Randolph Macon College is a flourishing institution under the control of the Virginia Conference. M. E. Church South, which has also Farmville College and the Wesleyan Female College under its patronage. Emory and Henry College, at Abingdon, is also a prosperous institution under the patronage of the Holston Conference, M. E. Church South. Prior to

the separation, in 1845, an official paper was published at Richmond, and which has been continued from that time.

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2810 -- VIRGINIA CITY, NEV. (pop. 13,705), the capital of Story County, is the largest city in the state, and occupies a very elevated position in the slope of Mount Davidson, in the immediate vicinity of immense silver mines. The first Methodist sermon was preached in 1859. A daily paper of that locality says: "The officiating clergyman, whose name we do not now recall, was a small, lank, lean-looking individual, on the verge of consumption. The miners tuned out to hear him, and listened attentively to the discourse; when the hat was passed around, more with characteristic impulse than religious appreciation, they showered twenties in such profusion that the worthy expounder of the faith found himself the happy possessor of more coin than it had been his good fortune to own before -- some \$600 being realized from the collection." It adds: At that time nearly all the business places were also gambling houses, the principal games being monte-and vingt-et-un. Twenties were plentiful, small gold was scarce, and little silver in circulation."

The first Methodist church was organized in 1860, by Rev. Rand, and the first services were held in a canvas tent. Afterwards the present property was purchased, and a small frame church erected. In 1862 a large brick church was erected, under the efforts of Rev. C. V. Antony, which was dedicated in 1863. In 1871 this church fell to the ground in consequence of a defect in the roof, and about six weeks later the ruins were consumed by fire. In 1872 a frame building was erected at cost of about \$10,000. Two years afterwards it was so injured by a storm of wind that it required about \$4000 for repairs, and in 1875 the church and parsonage, with all the furniture, were destroyed by fire. A new church was erected in 1876. The African Methodists had a small church, which was destroyed by fire also in 1875, and has not yet (1878) been rebuilt. The present statistics for 1877 are: members, 65; Sunday School scholars, 250.

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2811 -- VIRGINIA CONFERENCE, AFRICAN M. E. CHURCH, includes all the state of Virginia east of the Alleghany Mountains. The statistics are not at hand.

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2812 -- VIRGINIA CONFERENCE, M. E. CHURCH, was one of the six original Conferences formed by the General Conference of 1796. It embraced all that part of Virginia which lies south of the Rappahannock River, and all that part of North Carolina on the north of Cape Fear River, including the circuits on the side branches of the Yadkin River. Little change was made until 1804, when the western boundary was defined by the Blue Ridge, and Wilmington was excepted from the Conference. In 1836 its boundaries were defined to be "on the east by Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean; on the south by Albemarle Sound, Roanoke and Staunton Rivers, on the west by the Blue Ridge, on the north by the Rappahannock River, except Fredericksburg and Port Royal." In 1803 there were reported 13,099 white and 3794 colored members, and in 1844, prior to its separation, it reported 26,268 white and 4949 colored

members, with 101 traveling and 158 local preachers. In 1845 it adhered to the M. E. Church South, and its further history is in connection with that church.

By the authority of the General Conference in 1864, Bishop Scott organized a Virginia and North Carolina Mission Conference, holding its first session at Portsmouth, Va., Jan. 3, 1867. There were then reported 14 preachers, 671 members, 8 Sunday schools, and 463 scholars, and the territory included the two states of Virginia and North Carolina. In 1868 North Carolina was separated from it, and it embraced the state of Virginia, except what was included in the Baltimore and Washington Conferences, and it included also the counties of Pocahontas, Greenbrier, and Monroe, of West Virginia. These boundaries still remain.

The first Conference thus limited was held by Bishop Ames, in Alexandria, March 30, 1869, and there were reported 36 preachers, 4382 members, 1309 Sunday-school scholars, 38 churches, and 5 parsonages. The statistics for 1876 are: 59 traveling and 78 local preachers, 7093 members, 4801 Sunday School scholars, 104 churches, and 11 parsonages.

It was within the bounds of this Conference that the discussion concerning the administration of the sacrament originated in the early days of Methodism, and that an attempt was made to introduce ordination by a few of the ministers, and which was delayed through the intervention of Asbury and others until the advice of Mr. Wesley could be obtained.

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2813 -- VIRGINIA CONFERENCE, M. E. CHURCH SOUTH, is one of the largest and most influential Conferences that adhered to the Church South at the division in 1845. The following year it reported 104 traveling and 166 local preachers, 25,592 white and 4781 colored members. Its boundaries were enlarged so as to embrace a part of what had formerly been included in the Philadelphia Conference, and as defined by the General Conference of 1874 are as follows: "On the east by the Atlantic Ocean, embracing the eastern Shore of Virginia and all the portions of the states of Delaware and Maryland not included in the Baltimore Conference., on the north by the Potomac River, from its mouth to the line of Stafford and King George Counties, by said line from that point to the Rappahannock River (excluding Fredericksburg station) to the Blue Ridge, on the west by the Blue Ridge to the North Carolina state line, and on the south by the said state line to its intersection by the Roanoke River (excluding Union church, in Mecklenburg Co., Va., and by the Roanoke River and Albemarle Sound to the Atlantic Ocean." The reports in 1875 show 181 traveling and 189 local preachers, 48, 182 white and 213 colored members, and 33,687 Sunday-school scholars. Within the bounds of this Conference the Richmond Christian Advocate is published, which is extensively circulated, and its chief literary institution is Randolph Macon College; Farmville College and Wesleyan Female College are also under its patronage.

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2814 -- VIRGINIA CONFERENCE, M. P. CHURCH. -- On the re-organization of the Conferences under the union of the Methodist Protestant and Methodist Churches, in 1877, the boundaries were so far changed as to transfer to the Maryland district that part of her territory lying east of the Alleghany Mountains and north of the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad not

heretofore included in the Maryland district; and also to transfer Greenville circuit to the North Carolina district, thus leaving the larger portion of the state embraced in the Conference. It reported, in 1877, 28 itinerant and 18 unstationed ministers, 3300 members, 600 Sunday-school scholars, and 33 churches.

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THE END