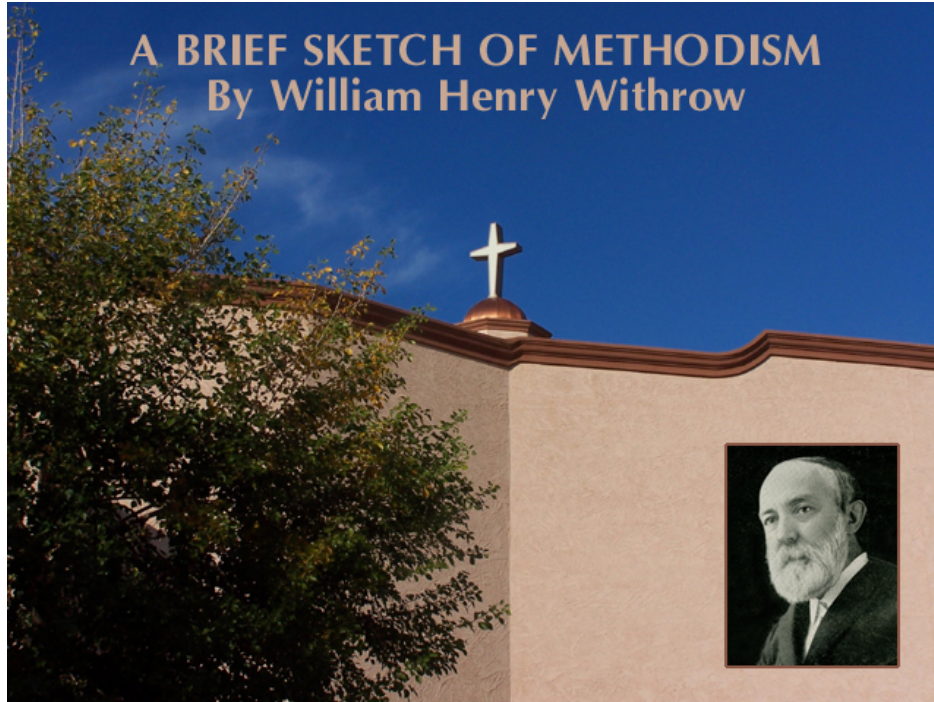


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**A BRIEF SKETCH OF METHODISM
By William Henry Withrow**



**Taken from
"Religious Progress
In The Nineteenth Century"**

Published in 1900

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ABOUT THIS FILE

This little file is taken from the 468-page volume, "Religious Progress in the Nineteenth Century," by William Henry Withrow, published in the year 1900. The three chapters of this document (1-3) were chapters 26-28 in that volume. I have taken the liberty to rename the first of these chapters. The latter two are titled as they appear in the book from which they were taken. -- Duane V. Maxey, Chandler, Arizona, October 14, 2006.

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01 -- THE METHODISM IN THE BRITISH ISLES

It is seldom that the life of a single man sees such an extraordinary development of the religious movement of which he was the chief organizer as did that of John Wesley. At the time of his death in 1791 the members of the Methodist societies of Great Britain (including the West Indies and British America), numbered 76,968, and in the United States 57,631. The aggregate numbers in both hemispheres were 134,599 members, with five hundred and forty traveling preachers, and two hundred and thirty-six "circuits." These are the statistics given by that accurate historian, Dr. Abel Stevens. But these figures represent only the names actually enrolled in the church's membership. They do not include the much larger number, probably five times as great, of sympathizing adherents.

This was the growth of a little more than half a century since John Wesley organized his first society and built his first place of worship. His life was one of intense activity. He preached over 42,000 sermons after his return from Georgia, or more than fifteen a week for nearly fifty-four years. Whitefield, in the thirty-four years of his ministerial life, preached 18,000 sermons, or over ten a week. Wesley traveled, for over fifty years, over five thousand miles a year, chiefly on horseback; equivalent to girdling the earth ten times at the equator. He expended in Christian philanthropy over £30,000, most of which he had earned with his pen, for his

stipend as a minister seldom amounted to over £100 a year, and for a long period was only £30.

At the very time that John Wesley passed from his life of toil to his everlasting reward, the throes of the French Revolution were convulsing the world. "The throne, the altar, and social order were prostrated; and for a quarter of a century the political foundations of Europe, from Scandinavia to the Calabrias, from Madrid to Moscow, were shaken as by incessant earthquakes." The skeptical teachings of Voltaire and the Encyclopedias, and especially the coarse and vulgar infidelity of Thomas Paine's Age of Reason were scattered broadcast among the people. But for the moral antiseptic furnished by Methodism, and the revival of religion in all the churches which it produced, the history of England would have been far other than it was. It would probably have been swept into the maelstrom of revolution and shared the political and religious convulsions of the neighboring nation.

But Methodism had greatly changed the condition of the people. It had rescued vast multitudes from ignorance and barbarism, and raised them from almost the degradation of beasts to the condition of men and the fellowship of saints. The habits of thrift and industry which it fostered led to the accumulation, if not of wealth, at least to that of a substantial competence; and built up that safeguard of the commonwealth, a great, intelligent, industrious, religious middle-class in the community.

By the intelligent piety and patriotism thus created, England was saved from the convulsions which shook all Europe. "John Wesley substituted," says Stevens, "reformation for revolution."

A few years before his death, in 1784, Wesley made provision for the corporate continuance of the organization of which he was under God the author, by the Deed of Declaration, which organized a hundred of the Methodist preachers in Great Britain as the legal conference, and by the ordination of Dr. Coke as superintendent or bishop of the Methodist Church in the United States. During his life his administrative ability, "not less," says Macaulay, "than that of Richelieu," together with the love and reverence in which he was held, made his will supreme, and the annual conferences seasons of harmony and peace.

He had up to the last regarded with affection the Church wherein he was born and ordained, although it had thrust him out of its pulpits; and for many years had relentlessly persecuted both himself and his helpers. But toward the close of his life his apostolic character and piety won him the sympathy and respect of all good men. Many of the churches opened their pulpits to his ministrations. From being one of the worst hated he became one of the best loved men in the kingdom. Where he had been mobbed and maltreated, the people came out in throngs to meet him "out of love and kindness, gaping and staring as if the king were going by."

Wesley had for some time deprecated the administration of the sacraments to his followers except in the churches established by law. But he conceded this right in many cases, as where his converts had been nonconformists, or where the established clergy were profligate in their lives; and had ordained several of his preachers for their administration. Indeed, for a long period, and in many places, the Methodist services were held at such hours as would not conflict with those in the parish churches. Hence the extraordinary phenomena of multitudes of people going to the Methodist preaching by lantern light before dawn in the morning, and late in the evening.

When the strong and firm hand of Wesley was withdrawn divergences of opinion and the growth of parties developed. "There were those," says Stevens, "who, from their attachment to the Establishment, wished no change unless it might be a greater subordination to the National Church by the abandonment of the sacraments in those cases where Wesley had admitted them; of such as wished to maintain Wesley's plan intact, with official provisions which might be requisite to administer it; and such as desired revolutionary changes with a more equal distribution of powers among laymen and preachers."

Out of these differences arose the first division in the ranks of Methodism. Alexander Kilham was, like Wesley, born in Epworth, 1762. He became a zealous preacher, enduring hardship and persecution, laboring with great success, especially in the Channel Islands. He was a man of intense zeal and fervent piety. He favored, too, new departures to which Wesley had been opposed: the presence of laymen as representatives of the people in the annual conference, and the administration of the sacraments by the Methodist preachers. These he urged by pamphlets and in the conference. Concessions were made in a plan of pacification in both these regards, but they failed to meet the demands of Kilham and those associated with him.

Kilham, persisting in his agitation, was suspended from the Methodist Connection in 1796. The following year, with three other preachers, he founded in Leeds the Methodist New Connection, with which five thousand seceders at once united. This body adopted the Wesleyan teaching and polity in every regard except in claiming for all ordained ministers the right to administer the sacraments, and according to the laity an equal representation with the ministers in the annual conference. It has maintained a vigorous existence to the present time. It has had many men of mark among both ministers and laymen. It has established successful missions in Ireland, in Canada, and in China. In Canada it was the first of the Methodist bodies to unite with the Canadian Branch of the Wesleyan Church in 1875. It has for many years maintained most kindly relations with the mother church of Methodism, and has responded heartily to the movement in favor of the integration of Methodism in the Old World as well as in the New. It has an excellent theological school at Ranmoor (Sheffield).

The years of ecclesiastical controversy which led to the secession of the New Connection did not seemingly impair the spiritual life or retard the progress of the parent body. All the divisions which have arisen in Methodism have arisen from other than doctrinal causes. They all arose from differences of opinion as to ecclesiastical policy and discipline. Thus the parent tree and the vigorous offshoots which sprung from it were nourished by the same great principles and brought forth the same manner of fruit. Notwithstanding their outward divisions, they maintained the spiritual unity of the brotherhood in the bond of peace. Great revivals continued to follow the preaching of the Word. In seven years from the death of Wesley the connection increased nearly one-third in the number of members and ministry, and about two hundred and fifty chapels were erected.

Methodism was not without its eminent scholars and commentators. Their studies were not pursued in the cloistered seclusion of college quadrangles or academic halls. They were men of affairs even more than men of books. They were busy itinerant preachers ranging through the realm and employing only the spare hours of life -- the horoe subsecivoe which many men think not worth saving -- in their biblical studies.

Among these were Adam Clarke, the Irish lad who one day digging in a garden found a guinea, with which he bought a Hebrew Bible, and thus laid the foundation of his great Oriental scholarship. A faithful itinerant, and thrice President of the Wesleyan Conference, he labored alone for forty years in the preparation of his great Commentary on the Holy Scriptures.

Dr. Thomas Coke, amid his many journeyings by sea and land, in the crowded cabin of a ship or amid the uncongenial surroundings of a country inn, found time to prepare, besides many other volumes, his Commentary on the Scriptures in six quarto volumes, splendidly printed on the University press at a cost of £10,000.

Joseph Benson, filling the most important stations in Methodism, twice President of the Conference, and editor of the Methodist Magazine, also wrote a commentary on the Scriptures, which is regarded by the Wesleyans as one of their standard works.

Richard Watson, the carpenter's apprentice, became an accomplished scholar, a profound theologian, an eloquent orator, an indefatigable Missionary Secretary and President of the Conference. He wrote a Life of Wesley, and a Theological Dictionary, one of the best of its day. His Theological Institutes is still a standard Textbook. With feeble physique and impaired health his herculean labors were performed under a burden of suffering and pain from which he was seldom exempt.

The second secession from Methodism, that of the Primitive Methodists, occurred in 1810. Its cause seemed singularly inadequate, but doubtless the event

was overruled by God for the furtherance of His Kingdom. Early in the century Lorenzo Dow, an eccentric but earnest-souled Methodist preacher from America, felt that he had a call from God to range through the English-speaking lands to preach the gospel. His ministrations were accompanied by great power, and under them many persons were turned from their sins. He proposed to introduce into England the American type of camp meetings common in parts of the country where but few chapels of any denomination existed.

A flag was raised at Mow Hill, Staffordshire, and from far and near the people thronged, and the first English camp-meeting was held. William Clowes, and Hugh and James Bourne, prominent laymen, took zealous part in these meetings. Much good was accomplished, but many excesses, it was alleged, attended these services. The Wesleyan Conference declared that "even supposing such meetings to be allowable in America, they are highly improper in England, and likely to be productive of considerable mischief, and we disclaim connection with them."

Pamphlets and counter pamphlets were issued. At length Bourne and Clowes were expelled for insubordination from the Wesleyan Connection. They forthwith organized a new society, namely, the Primitive Methodists. They adopted many of the aggressive modes of the early Methodists, preaching in the highways, in the market-place, on the village common. They are very democratic in their spirit, and their conferences have two lay representatives for each minister. Devout women were permitted to preach and exhort in public. Their zeal and piety attracted a multitude of sympathizers.

The new society was specially successful with the toiling and unlettered classes, among whom Methodism won its first successes. It spread rapidly throughout the United Kingdom, and through emigration and by missionary effort into Canada, the United States, New Zealand, Australia and Tasmania. "Methodists, of whatever party," says Dr. Stevens, "may well excuse what they deem objectionable in its early history, and gratefully recognize it as one of the most important results of the revivals in this period of their annals." In Great Britain the Church has a vigorous publishing house, issues a high-class Review and a graded series of magazines and periodicals of much literary merit and instinct with religious spirit. It has also a successful college and training institution at Sunderland.

In 1815 still another secession took place, namely, that of the Bible Christians or "Bryanites," so named from William O. Bryan, a local preacher of Cornwall, England, who was their leader. They were characterized by intense religious earnestness. They manifest great plainness and simplicity in dress, and are very zealous in their mode of worship. They, too, have established missions in the United States, Canada and Australia. In the latter country the son of one of the Bible Christian ministers, the Hon. S. J. Way, rose to the distinction of Chief Justice, and since 1891, of Lieutenant-Governor of the colony of South Australia. He maintained in his high place of office the Christian zeal and devotion which characterize this

communion. In Canada the Bible Christians, like the Methodists, generally entered the union of all the Methodist bodies in the Dominion in 1883.

In the year 1816 nine thousand of the Methodists of Ireland formed a new organization, under the name of the Primitive Wesleyan Methodists. The leader of the movement was Adam Averill, who revolted against the departure from Wesley's original plan in allowing the societies to hold their services at the same time with those of the Anglican Church. In 1877 the body was again united with the Wesleyan Methodists.

The secessions were not at an end. "Every new question," says Dr. Scholl, "admitting of a difference of opinion seemed to carry in it the seeds of dissension and separation."

The independent Wesleyans and the Wesleyan Protestant Methodists in 1828 went out from the main body; the original occasion being a dispute over the introduction of an organ into a chapel at Leeds against the wish of the class-leaders. Neither of these bodies attained much importance.

"Of more significance," says Dr. Scholl, "was the Warren Movement in 1834, occasioned by the project of the conference to establish a theological seminary, against which Dr. Samuel Warren protested. Warren was ultimately excluded from the conference, and, with twenty thousand others, constituted the Wesleyan Methodist Association."

The Wesleyan Church continued to enjoy peace and prosperity for ten years. One of its most notable and influential men was the Rev. Jabez Bunting, D.D. "His history," says Stevens, "is that of Wesleyan Methodism for nearly sixty years," thirty-three of which he spent in London. He became the recognized legislative leader of the Connection. It cannot be denied that Dr. Bunting was somewhat of an autocrat in his way. His great abilities gave him commanding influence; this he never used selfishly, but for the good of the Connection, as he understood that phrase. Nevertheless, there were those who resented this autocracy.

This feeling found expression in the so-called Fly Sheets, which, unsigned, were sent to every Wesleyan minister. In 1847 the conference passed a resolution "requiring every minister who had not taken part in their dissemination to sign a document to that effect. About one-fourth of the members refused their signatures, rebelling against a demand which they regarded as inquisitorial. The agitation spread, and Messrs. Dunn, Griffith, and Everett, the latter the reputed author of the Fly Sheets, were excluded from the Conference, while others were reprimanded. The excluded preachers were regarded as martyrs.

"The excitement in Methodist circles," says Dr. Scholl, "was intense, and in a single year, 1850-51, the body lost fifty-six thousand communicants. In 1850 the British Conference in England alone had 358,277 communicants, and in 1855 only

260,858. It continued, however, year after year, to refuse any concessions; and the agitators, finding their efforts hopeless, ceased agitating.

"Of the one hundred thousand who had left the main body, nineteen thousand in 1857 united with the Protestant Methodists and the Wesleyan Methodist Association, numbering twenty-one thousand members, to form the Association of the United Methodist Free Churches."

It required a number of years to allay the irritation caused by this controversy. The constitution of the Wesleyan Church became liberalized by giving its lay membership a larger representation on the committees, and in constituting a Representative Conference in which laymen and ministers are represented in equal proportion. In latter years the bitterness and strife of controversy has entirely disappeared. The Church has steadily advanced in number, in influence, in culture and in aggressive zeal. While it maintains the spiritual earnestness and sincerity of its earliest years, it meets the intellectual and the aesthetic needs of the closing decades of the century. It has vigorous theological colleges at Richmond, Didsbury, Manchester, Headingly, Leeds and Belfast. Its publishing house sends forth a ceaseless stream of religious literature, issues a high-class Review, and maintains the oldest religious periodical in the world, established by John Wesley one hundred and twenty years ago. There are also several independent Methodist journals.

As we have seen, the mother church of Methodism early entered upon aggressive missionary work, its successes in the foreign field, in the West Indies, Sierra Leone and South Africa, in Ceylon, in India, in China, and in other foreign lands, as well as in Germany, Italy, France and other countries of Europe, are among its chief glories. One of the great merits of Methodism is that it has emphasized individual responsibility and aggressive Christian work.

In 1881 the first (Ecumenical Methodist Conference was held in City Road Chapel, London, the principal center of Wesley's labors. Four hundred delegates from all parts of the English-speaking world and from many foreign lands were present, representing twenty-eight different branches of the Methodist family, with an aggregate of over five million church members. It remained in session for a fortnight and greatly strengthened the feeling of unity and solidarity among these various subdivisions of this revival Church. So in this great gathering was fulfilled the Scripture: "I will bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth."

In 1891 a similar ecumenical conference was held at Washington, D. C., with a still larger and more widely representative assembly of distinguished ministers and laymen. The result of this rapprochement is seen in the overtures for corporate union which have been exchanged between the different branches of English Methodism, which it is hoped the early years of the twentieth century will see accomplished.

The anniversary of the death of Wesley was observed with devout religious services throughout the wide Methodist community in all lands. City Road Chapel, the mother church of Methodism, has been beautifully restored with portrait busts, marble columns, stained glass windows, and other memorials contributed by many of the seceding Methodist churches.

While the mission of Methodism has been, in large part, to the poor and lowly, yet the very thrift and industry which it produces has made it largely the church of the great middle-class -- the backbone of the British commonwealth. "It has won for itself," says Dr. Scholl, "in spite of scorn and persecutions, a place of power in the State and Church of Great Britain. It has its representatives in Parliament, and no statesman can afford to trifle with it any longer. It roused the Anglican Church itself to activity and renewed faith a hundred years ago, and has not only a history behind it, but a work before it. The fulfillment of its great aim depends upon its continued emphasis upon the practical temper of its founder. It was this which has given it the sway over a constituency of twenty-five million (now thirty million) of souls in all parts of the world."

The flexibility of the Methodist system is such that it adapts itself to the varied needs of humanity in every land and in every condition, gentle or simple, rural or urban. It has inaugurated a Forward Movement, under the inspiration of the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, for the evangelization of the masses in such large centers as London, Liverpool, Leeds, Manchester, Glasgow and elsewhere. Its London, East, Central and London West missions, with their complete system of district visitation by deaconesses known as "Sisters of the People," and their manifold forms of Christian philanthropy are very successful centers of Christian work.

In the closing years of the century the Wesleyan Church is raising a twentieth century fund of a million guineas as a thank-offering for the mercies of the past and a consecration to the work of the future.

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02 -- METHODISM IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The greatest development of Methodism in numbers, in resources, in aggressive Christian activities has been in the New World. The broad areas of this virgin continent, the rapid creation of great commonwealths and provinces throughout its vast extent, the extraordinary growth by emigration and natural increase, the freedom from the dominance of an Established Church and other conventional limitations have all conspired to give Methodism its prominent position as the leading Protestant body of the North American Continent.

Yet, in the New World as in the Old, its beginnings were of a very humble character. The persecuting zeal of Louis XIV. on the Revocation of the Edict of

Nantes drove a number of German refugees from the Rhenish Palatinate to Great Britain and Ireland. Some of these came under the influence of John Wesley in Ireland. On the tenth of August, 1760, a little company of these Irish Palatines reached New York. Among them were Philip Embury, a local preacher, and Paul and Barbara Heck. At the instigation of Barbara Heck, Embury began to preach, first in his own house, then in a hired "rigging loft."

In 1770 the first Methodist church in America was built on John Street, New York, the first in the world to bear the honored name of John Wesley. Captain Webb, a Methodist military officer, became an active member of the new community. He founded societies in Philadelphia and other parts of the country. In 1769 Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmoor were sent out by the English Conference to take charge of the new societies. They were followed by Francis Asbury and other Methodist preachers. The first Methodist Conference in America was held in Philadelphia, 1773, with ten preachers and a membership of 1,160. The Revolutionary War greatly interfered with the growth of Methodism. But at the close of the war its dependent relations to the Mother Country ceased and it became an independent church.

In 1784 John Wesley ordained at Bristol Thomas Coke as superintendent of the new church. At the "Christmas Conference" held in Baltimore that year the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized with Dr. Coke and Francis Asbury as superintendents. The growth of the church was so rapid that for several years the membership was nearly doubled annually. This soon made it necessary to limit its chief court to a delegated body meeting every four years.

Of Dr. Coke as a missionary organizer we have already spoken. He continued till the end of the century to visit the rapidly growing missions and to attend the constantly enlarging conferences. Two continents were now contending in friendly rivalry for the services of this modern apostle. Alternately president of the English and of the American Conference, his presence seemed so manifestly needed in both countries that he was continually crossing the ocean on his missionary voyages, as if either hemisphere were too narrow for his energies. At last the American General Conference of 1800 yielded to the request of the British Conference to allow Dr. Coke to remain in England.

Asbury's new office of superintendent, or bishop, increased neither his power nor his influence among his brethren. He already ruled by love in all their hearts. His elevation in office gave him only preeminence in toil. In labors he was more abundant than even the apostolic Wesley himself, since the conditions under which he toiled were so much more arduous. He ordained upwards of three thousand preachers. He preached seventeen thousand sermons. He traveled 300,000 miles -- from the pine-shadowed St. Lawrence to the savannas of Georgia, from the surges of the Atlantic to the mighty Father of Waters -- through pathless forests, over rugged mountains and across rapid rivers. He had the care of a hundred thousand souls and the appointment of four hundred preachers.

Bishops Asbury and Coke had worthy comrades and successors in the great work of building up the Methodist Church on the American continent. From the plastic state of society, and from the mighty forces which were moulding the age, men of force of character were enabled to leave their impress more strongly on the times than is now possible. They stood near the springs of the nation's history and were able to turn their currents into the deep wide channels in which they now flow. Such men as Freeborn Garrettson, Jesse Lee, William Black: and other plumeless heroes of the Christian chivalry, ranged through the continent from the Everglades of Florida to the pine forests of Nova Scotia preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God.

William McKendree, Enoch George, Robert Roberts, Joshua Soule, Elijah Hedding and Nathan Bangs were among the Makers of Methodism in the formative period of the early decades of the century. In 1819 its Missionary Society was organized, and its rapid growth beyond the Alleghenies and the Mississippi greatly developed. Our limits of space will prevent anything like adequate treatment of this phenomenal growth. We can only glance at a number of its ramifications and give a brief resume of its principal enterprises.

In 1839 the Centenary of Methodism was celebrated in Great Britain and the United States with much enthusiasm. The sum of £216,000, or considerably over a million dollars, was contributed in Great Britain for religious purposes; the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States contributed \$600,000 more.

The first great division, or bisection, as Dr. Buckley calls it, in the Methodist Episcopal Church, took place in the year 1844. "The question of slavery," says Dr. Strong, "had been agitated in the Methodist' societies in America, and in the conferences, previous to the formation of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and still continued as a disturbing element after the organization." At the General Conference of 1844, however, the agitation reached a crisis, which resulted in the disruption of the Church. The Rev. Francis A. Harding, of the Baltimore Conference, had been suspended from the ministry for refusing to emancipate slaves belonging to his wife; and he appealed from this decision to the General Conference. Bishop James O. Andrew was also found to be in possession of slaves through marriage and bequest, the laws of Georgia not allowing them emancipation. This state of affairs, and a growing conviction on the part of a majority of the Church that slavery and Christianity are inconsistent, brought the Conference to definite action.

"The Conference resolved that Bishop Andrew should desist from the exercise of his office so long as this impediment remained. This decision gave severe umbrage to the Southern delegates. A committee of nine, composed of Northern and Southern delegates, was appointed to prepare a plan of separation, which they submitted to the Conference, and which was adopted by a nearly unanimous vote. The 'plan' provided for the voluntary withdrawal of the annual conferences of the slaveholding States, it gave permission to ministers and

members to adhere to the body of their choice, -- the Methodist Episcopal Church, or the Church South, -- it arranged for an equitable distribution of the church property, and a formal agreement not to interfere with the work of each other.

"The Southern delegates issued an address to their constituents, detailing the facts, and calling for a convention, composed of delegates from the annual conferences in the ratio of one to eleven, to meet in Louisville, Kentucky, May 1, 1845. This convention organized the Methodist Episcopal Church South, invited Bishops Soule and Andrew to become itinerant general superintendents, and appointed its first General Conference to be held in Petersburg, Virginia, in May, 1846."

Other minor divisions had previously taken place. As early as 1820, William S. Stockton, a prominent member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, began the publication of the Wesleyan Repository at Trenton, N. J. in the interest of lay representation in the conferences, advocating also the representation of the local preachers. At length a general convention of the dissidents was held at Baltimore in 1830, and the Methodist Protestant Church was organized. The doctrines are the same as those of the parent body. In 1858 the Methodist Protestant Church was divided on the slavery question into two bodies, -- the conferences of the North-Western States seceding, and forming the Methodist Church; and those of the Southern States continuing as the Methodist Protestant Church. These were reunited in 1877 under the original name. There are two Book Concerns belonging to this Church, -- one at Baltimore, the other at Pittsburgh, -- several colleges and academies, and a number of church papers.

The Wesleyan Methodist Connection originated in 1839 as an outgrowth of the slavery agitation. This body abolished episcopacy; adopted lay representation in the annual and general conferences; admitted local preachers to membership in annual conferences. After the abolition of Slavery a large section of this society returned to the Methodist Episcopal church. It has a publishing house at Syracuse, N. Y., and several institutions of learning. Its government is a slight modification of that of the parent Church. It has two educational institutions, a monthly magazine and a weekly church paper. Its conferences are all the Northern States.

"Methodism was early employed as an agency in the conversion of the Negroes in America, both slaves and free. Vast numbers united with the Methodist societies, and many of them continue as members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. A number, however, believing that their spiritual interests would be advanced by a separate organization, assembled in convention in Philadelphia, April, 1816, and organized the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The doctrines are the same as those of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the government is very similar. They have several educational institutions, especially Wilberforce University, Xenia, O.; and, seminaries at Baltimore, Columbus (O.), Allegheny, and Pittsburgh. They have two religious periodicals."

Before the Civil War in America, the colored people in many of the Southern States were forbidden by law to hold meetings among themselves; and accordingly, the vast majority of them united with the Methodist Episcopal Church South.

"The large influx of Germans to America was the occasion of great solicitude to the leaders of early Methodism; and measures were adopted, wherever practicable, to give them the gospel. There are now eight annual conferences of German Methodists in the United States, with a membership of about 50,000. Two periodicals, a weekly paper and a monthly magazine, are published by order of the General Conference. Sunday-school supplies and various standard books are also published in German."

The Evangelical Association originated in eastern Pennsylvania, when, about 1790, Mr. Albright felt himself called to promote a religious reform among the German population of that region. He had no thought at first of organizing a denomination, but he was so successful, and his little societies were so multiplied, that at a general meeting called to consider what should be done, Mr. Albright was unanimously elected and ordained by the preachers as their general superintendent or bishop. The epochal year of this church is 1800. They have the same conferences or conventions as the Methodist Episcopal Church, with similar powers.

The United Methodist Free Churches and the Wesleyan Reform Union are minor bodies of Methodists.

Notwithstanding the manifold divisions of Methodism-about sixteen in the United States, and about half as many in Great Britain -- still the Methodists are essentially one throughout the world. With the single exception of Whitefield's Calvinistic movement, all these divisions have been on matters of polity only. There have been no doctrinal dissensions sufficient to cause a formal division. "Methodism," said Wesley, "is one throughout the world." This is still true after an unparalleled expansion in numbers in all lands.

In the broad areas of the New World and in the crowded population of the Old these divisions have not been so harmful as might be anticipated. There has been ample room and verge enough for the activities of them all, and their operations have seldom overlapped or interfered with one another. Most cordial feelings of fraternity and good-will have almost universally obtained between these manifold divisions of the same great army.

From the very beginning, as, we have seen, Methodism made liberal use of the press for the instruction of the people. In 1789 the "Methodist Book Concern" was established at Philadelphia with \$600 of borrowed capital, and John Dickins became Book Steward. In 1804 this publishing house was removed to New York. In 1836 it was destroyed by fire, with a loss of a quarter of a million dollars. Three years later the business which had been growing up in Cincinnati was chartered as

the Western Methodist Book Concern. The growth of this combined establishment has been phenomenal, till it is now one of the largest institutions in the world. The Methodist Episcopal Church publishes fourteen weekly periodicals, besides a Quarterly Review and an extensive series of Sunday-school and missionary periodicals aggregating about as many more. Besides these a large number of independent and unofficial Methodist periodicals are published.

The genius of Methodism is essentially missionary. Its venerable founder declared, "The world is my parish." The Methodist Episcopal Church in America felt, too, that its commission was to all nations. Its missionary society was formed in 1819. The entire receipts for the first year were \$828.04. It has since girdled the world with its missions. In 1833 it entered Africa. In 1836 it began its prosperous work in South America. In 1847 its missions in China were begun, that in Germany two years later. Its marvellous work in India, begun in 1856, was followed by that baptism of blood, the Indian Mutiny. Others have followed in Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Bulgaria, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Korea.

The educational institutions of the Methodist Episcopal Church have been one of the most important agencies for the education of its ministers and the diffusing of Christian culture among its people. Methodism in the old world was cradled in a university. The Holy Club of Oxford, where the Wesleys and some godly students met for the study of the oracles of God, was its real birthplace. In 1787 was opened Cokesbury College at Abingdon, near Baltimore. It commemorated by its name both Coke and Asbury, by whose joint labors it was founded. After eight years of struggling existence it was destroyed by fire. The college was reorganized in Baltimore, but in a year it, too, was consumed.

Undeterred by disaster, schools, academies, colleges and seminaries were established as the needs of the people and ability of the Church would permit, till now it has 230 colleges, universities, seminaries and mission schools, valued with grounds at \$17,132,501, having an endowment of \$12,299, 601, with 3,143 professors and teachers and 46,708 students.

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03 -- CANADIAN AND COLONIAL METHODISM

In no part of the British Empire has Methodism made greater relative progress than in the Dominion of Canada. Although about a million and a quarter of the people are of French origin, and of the Roman Catholic faith, yet Methodism numbers one-fifth of the entire population, and in Ontario, the largest and most populous province, it claims one-third of the people.

It is a curious circumstance that the first Methodist preachers in both Lower and Upper Canada were British soldiers. In Quebec, Mr. Tuffey, a commissary of the 44th Regiment, began in 1770 to preach to the soldiers and Protestant immigrants

of that city. Six years later George Neal, major of a British cavalry regiment, began to preach to the settlers on the Niagara frontier.

At the time of the American Revolution a number of British subjects who remained true to the old flag left their homes in the revolting colonies and came to Canada. These were known as the United Empire Loyalists. Among them were Paul and Barbara Heck, Philip Embury and other Palatine Methodists from Ireland, who, in 1765, had organized in New York the first Methodist society in the United States. They came to Montreal in 1774, and afterwards formed a Methodist class at Augusta on the St. Lawrence in 1788.

The first Methodist itinerants who visited Canada in 1790 and 1792 were William Losee and Darius Dunham, missionaries from the newly organized Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States. These "Gospel rangers " preached their way among the scattered settlements on the banks of the St. Lawrence and on the Niagara frontier. They were true pathfinders of empire, preparing a highway for the Kingdom of God.

The War of 1812-1815 embarrassed the arrangement whereby Canada was missioned from a foreign country and many of the American preachers were withdrawn. Methodism had already been planted in Newfoundland, in the Maritime Provinces and in Lower Canada, partly by British and partly by American missionaries. After the war the English Conference appointed ministers to Lower Canada. Their operations gradually extended also to the Upper Province. The Methodist Episcopal Church in Upper Canada was permitted by the General Conference of the United States to be organized as an independent body. In course of time branches of the Primitive Methodist, New Connection and Bible Christians came to the country. Thus it was evident that much sacrifice of economy in this overlapping of work, and sometimes a degree of friction, made a union of forces very much to be desired. In 1874 a union of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada, numbering 675 ministers, 73,557 members, and of the Methodist New Connection, numbering 113 ministers, 7,449 members, with the Wesleyans in Eastern British America numbering 223 ministers, 20,950 members, took place in 1874, forming a united body of 1,000 ministers and 100,000 members. The resulting body took the title of the Methodist Church of Canada.

The benefits of this union were so marked that nine years later a more comprehensive union of all the Methodist bodies in the country took place, namely, the Methodist Church of Canada, with 1,216 ministers and 128,644 members; the Methodist Episcopal, with 259 ministers and 25,671 members; the Primitive Methodist, with 89 ministers and 8,090 members; the Bible Christian, with 79 ministers and 7,398 members -- total, 1,633 ministers, 169,803 members.

The seal of the Divine approval on this union of heart and union of effort was shown by the rapid development of the Church in every respect -- by the consolidation of its forces, the combination of its publishing houses and

periodicals, the affiliation of its colleges and universities and the strengthening of its missionary and benevolent enterprises. This Church has a vigorous mission in Japan, with 37 ministers and preachers, and more recently one in Chentu, in Western China. It has also extensive missions among the Indian tribes of Canada.

In Australasia, including the Island Continent of the South Pacific, New Zealand and Tasmania, a vigorous Methodism has grown up. This has been strengthened by the emigration from the varying types of British Methodism and by an active internal development. These bodies have sent forth missionaries to many islands of the Southern Seas, and form a highly successful and prosperous Church. Here, too, negotiations for union have been begun, which will probably be forthwith carried into effect.

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