

AFRICAN METHODISM IN THE SOUTH
OR
TWENTY FIVE YEARS OF FREEDOM

—BY—

RT. REV. WESLEY J. GAINES, D. D.

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Fraternally Yours,
W. J. Gaines.

African Methodism in the South;

—OR—

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF FREEDOM.

BY RT. REV. WESLEY J. GAINES, D. D.,
Sixteenth Bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

PROF. W. S. SCARBOROUGH, A. M., LL. D.

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TO
MY FAITHFUL WIFE AND DAUGHTER
AND TO THE
CONFERENCE OF THE SIXTH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT
THIS BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

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PREFACE.

In undertaking this work I have had in mind to present to my readers and to the A. M. E. Church a brief but comprehensive survey of the work of our church in the South, especially in the State of Georgia; so that in passing over the pages if there be found anything omitted which would seem necessary to make the history of our church work in the Southern States complete, it must be remembered that such a comprehensive history has not been my design. Such would call for more space than this small volume can comprise, and there are historians who will undertake the task of setting forth the work in other individual States.

It has been my aim to touch upon the adjoining States to Georgia only so far as seemed necessary to a proper understanding of the spread of the work, and when the relationship is so close as to make one a necessary complement of the other, and so far as my own personal experience in those States would warrant my adding them to my list.

The early years of work in every section throughout the United States is only a repetition of the early years of the existence of the A. M. E. Church from its inception in 1687 to its birth in 1816 and through the years of its infancy. It is a record whose data

are difficult to find. It has been most difficult in the South because when the church began, before the fortunes of war were finally settled, there were no set plans, no systematic work and the changing conditions surrounding all things affected it as well.

We know this era to have been one prolific in events, yet a conscientious desire for accuracy leads us to omit much data that may have been due to the passions and prejudices of men, and, as a minister of peace, place that before the world which we find to be irrefutable facts.

It is not the purpose to make this book one of abstract history. I have moved among these Southern scenes from birth, and with the birth of the A. M. E. Church in the South, I have ever since been identified with its Georgia history. My familiarity, with the Conferences of this State and their results is that which comes from being present every session from that of the first Conference held in Charleston in 1865; and my knowledge of how much the growth of our work can be explained only by the details, has led me to give place to those of importance in each record of the proceedings of these bodies.

It has been my purpose to make mention of all growth as far as I could find accurate data for it, and to bring before my readers the men whose entrance into the church work has caused this growth.

In my preparation I have to acknowledge my obligations to numerous friends whose kindly help in gathering scattered material has greatly aided me. I am especially indebted to Dr. T. G. Steward's early history of the work as found in the Georgia Conference Minutes and in his Centennial address; also to

Bishop B. W. Arnet for statistics kindly furnished, and to the valuable Centennial Budget of the A. M. E. Church, compiled by the same.

If my little volume shall be an incentive to others likewise to add to the literature and future history of the A. M. E. Church, it will have fulfilled largely its "reason for being," while at the same time it enables me to pay a tribute to the Church of Our Fathers, to its work in my native State and to the negro race, to all of which I am attached by the ties of fifty years.

W. J. G.

INTRODUCTION

The fact that the color question is *the* question of the day, attracting more or less attention throughout our entire country—North, East, West and South—makes everything pertaining to the negro—his past, his present, his future, his educational, his moral, his financial status—all the more important. In fact, the negro is at present the center of attraction. All eyes are turned toward him and he is served up in short story and in long, in history and in fiction, in prose and in poetry, as it may suit the fancy of men.

Scientists, theologians, men of letters and even the politicians, are all trying to solve what they call the "Negro Problem"—*Whither is the negro drifting? What will eventually become of him? Will he in time lose his identity in the heterogeneity of the American people? or will he maintain his racial characteristics despite circumstances? or finally will he, like the barbarian hordes of the orient, imbibe a migratory spirit and conclude to leave these shores for a more congenial clime?* These are the questions that arise daily by "germs and by fractions" in every paper that one takes up. Some affirm one thing, some another. Suffice it to say, however, despite the discussions, despite the difference of opinion, the negro intends to hold his own. He has a future, and that, too, in America. If not, what mean these twenty-

five years of progress in all lines of industry—progress more marked than that of any other people in the same length of time and under the same circumstances? What means our great A. M. E. Church, with its hundreds of thousands of communicants and its thousands of preachers and teachers, its bishops and general officers? Surely the history and growth of African Methodism in these United States are an evidence not only of progress, but of permanence as well. From a small seed—infinitesimally small as it were—has grown a magnificent tree, as wonderful as it is magnificent. In every State and Territory, wherever the negro is found, African Methodism is known.

Its greatest field is in the South. It is here that we find the numbers both as to churches and as to membership—due, of course, to the fact that the colored people are found there in larger majorities than elsewhere.

The present volume, which discusses African Methodism in Georgia and Alabama, is another welcome addition to the Church literature—emanating as it does from the pen of one who grew up as it were in the Church, and who is thoroughly competent to state the facts as he sees and knows them. Our distinguished friend, Rt. Rev. Bishop W. J. Gaines, stood by the cradle of African Methodism in its incipient stages in the State of Georgia—assisted in nursing it until it became able to stand alone, and thereafter a power throughout our Southern clime—whose influence is felt far and wide. No man of my acquaintance has done more for the propagation of the Church of his choice than Bishop Gaines. Go where you will,

in Georgia especially, search the records of the African M. E. Churches, examine the scrolls, and the name of Dr. W. J. Gaines will be found to stand out in bold relief, not only as a builder of churches, but as a wise and faithful shepherd; as one who always reposed an unfaltering trust in God, however dark the hour, and, therefore, as a pre-eminently successful pastor and teacher. Such, then, is the writer of this volume. Certainly there could not be found one who is more fitted to portray the growth of African Methodism in the South than he whose name this volume bears. Born and reared in that section, a close observer of the many vicissitudes—civil, political and ecclesiastical—through which the South has passed during these twenty-five years, a friend of reforms, a vigorous advocate of the cause of temperance, an unswerving defender of the rights and interests of his race—conservative rather than radical—with a soul smitten with the love of virtue, with a ruling passion for the true, the noble, the good and the beautiful in all the walks of life—the Rt. Rev. Wesley J. Gaines may justly claim the right to be an authority on the subjects discussed in this treatise. We hail it with joy, and trust that it may be instrumental in awakening a deeper interest in the spread of African Methodism in this great country of ours, and that those into whose hands it may fall may be inspired to go forth as doers of the Word and not simply hearers.

W. S. SCARBOROUGH,

Wilberforce University.

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African Methodism in the South ;

OR

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF FREEDOM.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

When, over one hundred years ago (1787), a handful of men, led by Richard Allen, took the momentous step in the Quaker City of Philadelphia, which resulted in the organization of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the most sanguine well-wisher could hardly have prophesied that the small beginning would have such a glorious, wide-spread result as is evidenced to-day.

This little band was desirous of serving God, but of serving him as men ; and so, breathing deeply that spirit of independence and love of freedom which was rife in the air of America that eventful year, and which has wrought so much for this broad country, they threw off the yoke which bore so heavily upon them in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and boldly set out for themselves.

They felt, wisely for us, that the service they wished to render Him would be more acceptable in

His sight if they took every opportunity for elevation that lay in their way ; and that this separation from a church that recognized them only as inferior servants of God, was such an opportunity seemed clear as a direct message from on high.

From such a small beginning of sixteen men, meeting in the first convention in 1816, and led by the first bishop who received consecration to that holy office—Richard Allen—the little twig of African Methodism, then planted, grew and flourished. It sent out its roots eastward and westward, even penetrating the South and Southwest ; everywhere there seemed the merest chance for lodgment, and in almost every instance they took firm hold and sent up new shoots of living work for the glory of God.

Though slavery held such fast grasp upon that portion of our country given over to the curse that this free religious movement could hold but slight and precarious existence, there were countless hearts beating high and brave throughout that land, waiting only for the dawn to step out boldly into the light of freedom. Throughout the South was that vast multitude of enslaved ones, doing their duty as they saw it, and doing it marvelously well, despite wide-spread ignorance, while patiently biding their time when they might drop shackles from body, mind and religion. This mass was not altogether ignorant. There was scattered here and there throughout the mass a little leaven. Here and there one had drunk from the fountain of knowledge with that eager thirst which restraint and secrecy only

stimulate. Here and there one was silently helped by those whose innate sense of right told them that the Negro had not only a soul to save, but a mind to train, even though the practice of generations had rendered their moral sense so obtuse that they devoutly believed in the "divine right of slavery." There were some good men and women, too, who did not hold this belief, but who were too weak to brave this sentiment which allowed them to hold in bonds their fellow-creatures, and so trod in the paths of their fathers, seeking to ameliorate in other ways the condition of those who called them masters of their bodies. To all these who so labored the slaves of those days give thanks for these gleams of sunshine in the surrounding darkness; for the scattered people thus partially enlightened were enabled to take up the reins when the day of freedom broke, and carry on the work which came to their hands in a creditable manner.

The Negro of the South had listened for years to the pulpit which taught, "Slaves, be ye subject to your masters," but when the first gun of the rebellion was fired on Major Anderson at Fort Sumter, it found its echo in the hearts of thousands who saw a brighter future in a dim, undefined light they could not analyze—a future which was to rid them of the weight of this doctrine at least; and when that great and good man, Abraham Lincoln, struck off the shackles from the limbs of four million beings, he in reality shattered as well the fetters which had bound the Southern Negro's religious freedom.

CHAPTER II.

ORGANIZATION OF THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN THE SOUTH.

The joyful news of emancipation had scarcely been heard before the African Methodist Episcopal Church of America made its preparations to send missionaries to the South. These brethren in that more favored locality had borne us upon their hearts, and with the first chance for entrance into the region so long closed by slavery and still defended by cannon, they hastened to extend the hand of "Our Father's Church" through Rev. James Lynch and Rev. James D. S. Hall—the former from the Baltimore Conference, the latter from the New York Conference—the first two men to come to Southern soil from that church. These two men were the men first regularly commissioned as missionaries to the freedmen of the South. Of the two, probably Rev. James Lynch* was the more prominent worker, as shown by his subsequent career. He is described by one who knew him as having a piercing black eye, a forehead of immense breadth, jet black hair and possessing unmatched eloquence and persuasive manners.* These men were those through whose

*Rev. T. G. Steward, D. D., in his Centennial Address.

labors the South Carolina Conference really came to be brought into existence—they were the forerunners of the great work stretching out before us now, twenty-five years later, through the States of South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Florida and the Southwest.

It was in the city of Savannah, Ga., that the first missionary of African Methodism was found to begin the labors of our church in that State. Rev. James Lynch was the first minister of the African Methodist Episcopal Church to visit Savannah after the war, as he was the one to stand in that city, almost before the smoke of the armies had died away, when the United States forces entered and captured that city in 1864; so the same State and city were, for the second time in the history of America, the starting point of great missionary work, for it is a peculiar coincidence that the great founder of Methodism, John Wesley, preached his first sermon in that city in 1730, when he and his brother began their missionary labors in America.

At the close of the war the colored Methodists in Savannah, while really under the watch-care of the M. E. Church, South, were under no regular pastor, but were kept together by William Bentley, C. L. Bradwell and William Gaines. When James Lynch visited Savannah at that time, he made secret arrangements with Rev. C. L. Bradwell to take out the church. Through the efforts of the latter, then a local preacher, it was not a difficult matter to bring them into the fold of our church. The affiliation he

proposed to them was thoughtfully considered, and after mature deliberation was accepted, and the first African Methodist Episcopal Church in the State of Georgia was organized by Rev. A. L. Stanford.* Still, little more than some mission work was done in the immediate vicinity of that city in the few months which intervened between that time and the recognition of this church by the first session of the South Carolina Conference.

In May, 1865, according to the act of the General Conference of the A. M. E. Church of 1864, calling for the establishment of the church in the South, Bishop Daniel A. Payne entered the city of Charleston, South Carolina, to plant the standard of African Methodism. Thirty years before he had left the self-same city because of the persecutions which put an end to his labors there as a teacher of his race, and this was his first return to the scenes of his childhood and early manhood, and a most triumphant one. He was accompanied by Elder James A. Handy, and T. G. Steward and James H. A. Johnson, licentiates. These three were to be missionaries to the "Freedmen," a partial support being assured them by the American Missionary Association, as aid in the good work.

Bishop Payne, then in the thirteenth year of his bishopric, set about the organization of the A. M. E. Church in Charleston. The large brick edifice, known as the Zion Presbyterian Church, was the

*Rev. James Lynch at last left the A. M. E. Church to join the M. E. Church, after having been editor of the only church paper we then had—The *Christian Recorder*. He died later, after long and useful labors.

place of assembly for the first session of what then became known as the South Carolina Conference. There were then over 40,000 colored Methodists scattered throughout that State. The session opened May 15, 1865, with sixteen ministers. Seven men had been selected by Bishop Payne to assist in this opening up of Southern work—A. L. Stanford and T. G. Steward, from the Philadelphia Conference; James A. Handy and James H. A. Johnson, from the Baltimore Conference; R. H. Cain, from the New York Conference; George A. Rue, from the New England Conference, and George W. Brodie, from the British M. E. Church. Of these only T. G. Steward, James A. Handy, James H. A. Johnson and R. H. Cain were present, and from the whole number but the first three of these are living to-day. Dr. James A. Handy is the Financial Secretary of the A. M. E. Church and Drs. J. H. A. Johnson and T. G. Steward honored ministers of the Baltimore Conference in the same church.

Nine other ministers from the South were associated with these transferred men, making the whole force sixteen. These were Charles L. Bradwell, Wm. Bentley, James Hill, Gloucester Taylor, Robert M. Taylor, Richard Vanderhorst and John Graham. From these sixteen of this first Southern Conference eight regular itinerant preachers went out, but only one of the nine above mentioned entered their ranks. This was Charles L. Bradwell, who was appointed to Edisto Island, and entered immediately upon his work. This makes Elder C. L. Bradwell the oldest

native itinerant preacher to-day in the whole of the Southern field.

The work already done in Georgia was recognized and heartily welcomed at this session. William Bentley and James Hill, of Georgia, were ordained. C. L. Bradwell, Gloucester Taylor, R. M. Taylor and Cornelius Murphy were received on probation as licentiates.

William Gaines, of Georgia, who was absent from this Conference, was elected to deacon's orders and was ordained by Bishop Payne at Hilton Head, South Carolina, in June following the adjournment of Conference, and was sent as first missionary to the northern and western parts of Georgia. The work of this important session, which particularly affected this State, was the placing of all the native preachers, except William Gaines and C. L. Bradwell, in local work in the neighborhood of Savannah. Of the transferred men, Rev. A. L. Stanford was placed in charge of Savannah,* R. H. Cain in Charleston; James A. Handy in Wilmington, N. C.; G. W. Brodie in Raleigh, N. C.; T. G. Steward in Beaufort, S. C.; J. H. A. Johnson at Hilton Head, and G. A. Rue in Newberne. There were but twelve appointments in all, and we see but eight of these were supplied.

The Southern work had now opened most auspiciously, and the brethren endeavored to push it forward. William Gaines visited Macon, Atlanta and Columbus and organized the A. M. E. Church in

* Rev. A. L. Stanford died in Africa.

these cities. When Conference adjourned, the Rev. James Lynch took his way through the upper part of the State of Georgia. One of the most interesting points was Augusta, and there his efforts were crowned with such success that a church of about two hundred members was received into the connection—the Protestant Methodist Church—with a pastor who did valuable service in the church of his adoption in the years following. This pastor was the veteran worker, Samuel W. Drayton, who labored with us until the year 1885. Of him and other pioneers, we shall have occasion to speak elsewhere.

The Lord had blessed us. The connection was growing with what might be termed a healthy growth—that is, the churches to which the right hand of fellowship was offered made no unseemly haste for affiliation, but after mature deliberations, which were at many times lengthy and critical, transferred themselves to the fold of African Methodism. This deliberation was wise, for it gave assurance of the future stability of a union which must possess this important characteristic for successful increase in strength.

With the two main points of Savannah and Augusta as centers it was only a matter of time when the radiating influence should draw in other outstanding bodies of Methodist Christians. As has been said, Rev. William Gaines (the writer's brother) had visited Macon, Columbus and Atlanta, and soon those large and interesting bodies of colored Methodists were withdrawn from fellowship with the M. E.

Church, South, and added to our own.* With the winter of 1866-7 Rev. Henry M. Turner, who held the appointment of a chaplain in the U. S. Army, came to Augusta, Ga., to begin his efforts for the A. M. E. Church, succeeding William Gaines, who died in Columbus, Ga., Nov. 20, 1865. It was through his unwearying efforts principally that the successful ingathering was carried on. He made a tour of upper Georgia, visiting the cities of the most importance in pursuance of the work. The extensive tour of the newly-elected bishop, A. W. Wayman, through the State during this winter (1866) accomplished much for the cause, as had also the visit of the same with Elisha Weaver at Savannah in the early spring of 1865—a visit which Bishop Wayman mentions in his "Recollections," and a memorable one, for the two came down at the call of Rev. James Lynch, and the Bishop gave his noted sermon from the text, "I seek my brethren," in the same church where the first Conference was held in Charleston the May following.

When the South Carolina Conference held its second annual session in Savannah, May 14th, in the spring of 1866, Rev. H. M. Turner had fourteen brethren to present to it. They were Andrew Brown, W. B. Campbell, Henry Strickland, Harry

*The writer was licensed to preach in the M. E. Church, South, by the Rev. Mr. Davies, Presiding Elder of that church; but he joined the A. M. E. Church under the administration of William Gaines, in Columbus, Ga., and upon the street, St. Clara, having met him there. William Gaines then authorized him to organize the A. M. E. Church in the counties of Muscogee and Chattahoochee, as he was then living on the line of these two counties on a plantation ten miles from Columbus, owned by Gabriel Toombs, the brother of Robert Toombs.

Stubbs, S. B. Jones, Burrell Jackson, Thomas Garrett, Joseph A. Wood, Thomas Crayton, Robert Anderson, Fortune Robinson, E. L. Bailey and the writer. Of these there are now living (1890) S. B. Jones, Joseph A. Wood, Henry Strickland, Thomas Crayton, Robert Anderson and the writer. Rev. Peter McLain was present but was not ordained. All of these, except Joseph A. Wood, immediately entered upon the itinerant service, and all have remained faithful to the church with one exception—W. B. Campbell, who withdrew and joined the Colored M. E. Church. Although Joseph A. Wood did not take itinerant work, he did the church great service as a local preacher.*

But these fourteen did not comprise the entire number who were presented by elders for itinerant service. Thirty-eight in all were admitted on trial, and the remaining twenty-four were from South Carolina, North Carolina, Florida and Alabama. It was a solemn scene as Bishop Payne set apart forty-six persons as deacons and elders—one which, as Bishop B. T. Tanner declares in his "Apology for African Methodism," "will never be forgotten by those whose privilege it was to be present." It was a session of rejoicing as well, for we all knew what it meant for the South and for the church we loved.

*He organized Wood's Chapel in Atlanta, known to-day as Allen Temple.

CHAPTER III.

THE FIRST GEORGIA CONFERENCE.

The South Carolina Conference at this time (1866) embraced the States of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida and Alabama, and the work which it entered upon at this session was one of importance. The efforts of Rev. H. M. Turner were recognized by his appointment as superintendent of the work in upper Georgia, with Macon as his headquarters. No better man could have been found to bear and plant our colors, for in the early prime of life he was what we see him to be to-day, a fearless, aggressive man—one so much needed in those early days at the close of the civil war, days which tried men's souls as well as did the tumult and dangers of the battle-field.

Lower Georgia was provided for in Rev. A. L. Stanford, whose headquarters were at Savannah. Rev. Robert Anderson was at Americus, and later, Rev. W. H. Noble at Cuthbert, and Rev. Fortune Robinson at Lumpkin. Rev. Joseph A. Wood was an able preacher at Atlanta about this time, while, among early leaders, Richard Vanderhorst succeeded S. W. Drayton at Augusta, whom Conference had consented to locate. The writer also began the work

in Southwestern Georgia on Florence Circuit on the Chattahoochee River.

This year was one of trying labor from these important local centers. There was much to contend against from both white and colored. The former noted a movement, the independence of which grated harshly upon them under so recent defeats and losses, and the inexperience in our own ranks led to varying results. Then there was a prejudice born of generations, of the recognized dominion of the whites which we had to meet and overcome in leading the bodies of Negroes to seek a church where they could be free and untrameled in their religious worship.

Still we increased, but the data concerning the opening up of other districts that conference year, is insufficient to enable us to give a detailed account of the spread of the church. It is sufficient to the credit of the laborers, that when the spring of 1867 opened, with the Annual Conference, held at Wilmington, N. C., the cheering report was made that it had nearly covered the States under its jurisdiction. Thirty circuits and stations were reported for Georgia alone, and equally as many or more in South Carolina, with quite a number in Florida and Alabama, while there were not less than 48,000 or 50,000 members in the whole.

At this Conference, forty-six ministers joined the itinerant force and ninety-eight ministers were ordained. The appointments all told were one hundred and two, and they were nearly all supplied.

Opposition had been met at Americus, Ga., and there were dark discouragements from Rome, but the light was strong and it threw its beams so far into the darkness that we could but exclaim that the Lord had indeed been good to us as a people and as a church. Savannah had taken the lead in forward movement, as she should, through Rev. A. L. Stanford, and the report of a church site purchased, a parsonage built and a church basement in process of erection, gladdened the brethren's hearts. At this Conference, Rev. H. M. Turner presented sixteen brethren: John Ricks, Ephraim Russell, Willis Jones, Lazarus Gardner, R. B. Bailey, Wm. Raven, Wm. H. Harris, Watty Parks, Wm. Cherry, Joseph Brown, Robert Brown, Willis Persons, Joseph Jennings, Nelson Beacham, Robert Crumley and Edward Trapp.

This was an all-important session for the States of Georgia, Florida and Alabama. A petition was made to Bishop Wayman* to set these States off into a separate Conference, for the A. M. E. work had so increased in the two years of its Southern existence that this step was not only warranted but demanded as an actual necessity. In fact, it was just such vigorous growth that demanded the increase in the Bench of Bishops at the next General Conference.

This petition was recognized, and Bishop Wayman

*Bishop Payne was absent from his regular work and Bishop Wayman held his Conferences in his absence.

gave more than was asked—he granted each State separate Conferences. With this wise action, the Georgia Conference took its rise and entered upon an independent existence, though as yet it was really only a mission Conference still awaiting the higher sanction which was to come at the next session of the General Conference to be held in Washington, D. C., May, 1868. But the youthful body held its first session as a separate Conference on the 30th of May, 1867, fifty days after the adjournment of the body of which it had been a part.

Of course it was not burdened with business at this time. Some matters unattended to at the South Carolina Conference were dispatched, and we proceeded to see clearly where we stood. The leading points in Georgia then stood manned as follows: Rev. C. L. Bradwell, at Augusta; Rev. David Pickett, at Columbus; Rev. H. M. Turner, at Macon; Rev. R. P. Gibbs, at Savannah; Rev. W. H. Noble, at Cuthbert; Rev. Fortune Robinson, at Albany; Rev. T. G. Steward, at Lumpkin, and the writer at Atlanta. From the one handful at Savannah in 1864, protected by military forces, we had increased to about 20,000, as near as we could judge, scattered throughout the State, for which we gave thanks to the Lord.

The work which lay outside of the State, and yet within what was called the Georgia Conference, embraced all charges lying along the Chattahoochee River in Alabama. With this outlook the forces moved forward the following year until the next

meeting of the Georgia Mission Conference—its second session—which was held in Macon, Ga., 1868. This was its first regular annual session, Bishop Wayman presiding, and the regular Conference business was harmoniously carried on.

To improve and set going missionary interests, the State work was divided into six districts, each in the hands of a competent Presiding Elder, who, with the President of the Conference Missionary Society, would meet and further the work. A traveling agent was also appointed in the same cause. The educational work was looked after as well. The African Methodist Episcopal Church was keenly alive to the importance of both of these interests from the first in the South, and now, with Rev. B. T. Tanner placed as Chairman of the Educational Committee, that report, as might be expected, expressed "the highest present duty to ourselves and people, in view of already possessing robust constitutions and a living faith, as being to strive to acquire wisdom that we may be accounted workmen that need not be ashamed."

A large delegation was elected to the General Conference to meet in May following (1868), ten in all, aside from the alternates and those who were members, under the existing law. The delegates were Rev. H. M. Turner, Rev. W. J. Gaines, Rev. C. L. Bradwell, Rev. Andrew Brown, Rev. W. H. Noble, Rev. T. G. Steward, Rev. H. Stubbs, Rev. H. Strickland, Rev. S. B. Jones, Rev. David Pickett, Rev. S. N. Drayton. Rev. Peter McLain and Thomas K. Brown were alternates. Rev. H. M. Turner and

K. Brown were alternates. Rev. H. M. Turner and Rev. R. P. Gibbs were the members under the laws then in force, but as the latter had died, Rev. J. B. Hamilton took his place.

There was some opposition to the admission of these delegates when they met the General Conference in Washington, D. C. It was true, that if the General Conference were to follow the constitution then in force for fifty years, these delegates had no claim whatever to a seat in the body, but it wisely and justly saw that the work they represented must be recognized, and an unwritten motion by Rev. Wm. Moore, of the Philadelphia Conference, brought about the recognition, and seated the delegates. As a result, this revolutionary step changed the constitution of the A. M. E. Church, and the mode of making up the General Conference for all the years which have followed.

The progress reported at Washington was cheering. Churches were being built and church property purchased. At Atlanta two churches were commenced,* and there were fifty-seven appointments in the State, aside from the mission work, and all were filled. The most aged person of the Georgia Mission Conference, Thomas K. Brown, then eighty years of age, had been left without an appointment.

There was nothing to do but recognize the work

*The church on Summer Hill, built by Rev. Joseph A. Wood and called Wood's Chapel, and Bethel A. M. E. Church, Wheat st., by the writer. A new church was built later (1883) by Rev. J. G. Yeizer, at corner of Clarke and Frazier Sts., and called Allen Temple.

and sanction the division from the South Carolina Conference already made under Bishop Wayman. The table of statistics showed an encouraging outlook at this session of the Georgia Conference, and as a whole, proved the wisdom of the work begun in 1864 and shaped in 1865.

And here we quote from the records, which give briefly the words of one of these grand pioneers—Rev. Andrew Brown—spoken fourteen years later upon the rise and progress of the A. M. Church in Georgia:

“I am not so superstitious as to claim to be a prophet, nor the son of a prophet, but I saw the A. M. E. Church in 1844 as bright as I see her tonight. I then prayed that I might outlive the surrounding circumstances, and see the church in reality as I then saw it in my mind. The day the M. E. Church, South, split from the M. E. Church, while in the woods upon my knees, God showed me this church. The day was dark, but, thank God, we waited on and on. God’s horse was tied to the iron stake. For a long time he failed to prance in Georgia and South Carolina. The day the first fire was made at Sumter, I saw the Gospel Horse begin to paw. He continued to paw until he finally broke loose and came tearing through Georgia. The colored man mounted him and intends to ride him. He is not particular where he goes, for he has practiced until he can and does ride him in the white man’s pulpit. In 1866 I was in Dalton. In 1865 I, a poor bare-footed, bare-headed man, had met in Atlanta a

man named James Lynch; he told me of the A. M. E. Church. The first of September the M. E. Church, South, held their Conference and sent a preacher to preach to the colored people in Dalton. He sent for me and told me he was sent there. I told him we could not comply with his request; we must look for ourselves. He said if I was going to take the people, to take them and leave. I thanked him and we left. We were in a sad plight, for there was not an ordained minister from Chattanooga to Atlanta.

“In 1866 we met in Savannah for the first time as a Conference. There I met Dr. Turner, who gave me the Marietta District. Turner threw me on the right wing, Stanford on the left, and he held the centre.

“What did we know at the first Conference ?

“When I was Presiding Elder of the Marietta District, there was but one colored man that could write his name and read the hymn-book. We had to get little white boys and poor white men to act as Secretaries of the Quarterly Conference. Now (1880) we cannot call a dozen men together unless there are several scribes among them. At the Conference in Atlanta, only one Secretary could be found, and he had to read his writing while it was hot, for if it ever got cold he could never have read it in the world. After the rising of the adjourned Conference, which met in Macon, Ga., we commenced to grow, and have advanced steadily on until now.

CHAPTER IV.

GEORGIA, 1868-1871.

The General Conference of 1868 gave us three new bishops : James A. Shorter, T. M. D. Ward and J. M. Brown, the first named now called to rest from his labors. It also gave the South Carolina, Georgia, Florida and Alabama work to Bishop J. M. Brown.

Under this arrangement the next session of the Georgia Annual Conference was held at Columbus, February 6, 1869, Bishop J. M. Brown presiding, though his first work was to organize the Alabama Conference at Selma, July 25, 1868. He brought to his work his scholarship, amiability, firmness and sympathy, which won from us our love and respect for him as a gentleman and the embodiment of dignity.

It was at this Conference that two representatives from the M. E. Church, South, were introduced to the Conference and made some very interesting statements. It was claimed that the M. E. Church, South, proposed to carry out in good faith the terms of amity and alliance agreed upon with our Church in the General Conference of the former in New Orleans in 1866. During the subsequent remarks it was learned that one of the gentleman, Rev. James

Evans, was the chairman of a committee appointed by that General Conference on the condition of the colored people. It was also elicited that the M. E. Church, South, intended to organize an independent colored body in connection with themselves, not, as Rev. James Evans said, "for the purpose of engendering strife," and that they "did not propose to disturb our congregations and would not affiliate with a minority of our congregations for that purpose," whatever that might mean. Co-operation and friendship, though, were pledged us, but with caution, as was evidenced by the expression, "only while we were engaged in 'our one work.'"

Of course we were at liberty to interpret each for himself what was meant by this and act accordingly. And here I may say that Rev. James Evans was an able preacher, full of the Holy Ghost, whose influence as a minister was above the average of ministers in his church, and had the M. E. Church seen fit to stand by the pledge made in their General Conference in 1866, there would have been no division of the colored Methodists of the South, except of those brethren who joined the M. E. Church. The A. M. E. Church was well organized to take care of the colored Methodists of the South, and there was no need of a Colored Methodist Church of America as set up by the M. E. Church, South. It was the fear of the political influence of the North that made that church organize this C. M. E. Church of America. They felt that the African Methodist Episcopal Church was a political church in sympathy

with the North. They made a mistake. While the A. M. E. Church believed fully in the freedom of the race and appreciated those who brought about that freedom, this church is not, and never has been a political church no more than is any other Christian church.

There is no doubt, however, that the M. E. Church, South, already felt at that early date the serious transition which must take place when the colored people became independent church bodies, and fearing the possible results, it was deemed necessary to retain what hold might be possible, as the words from the General Conference of 1866 indicated.

At this session of the Georgia Conference, the public evinced a desire to know what our body was doing, and the editor of the *American Union* tendered us the use of his columns, which favor was accepted in the same spirit as offered.

This Conference admitted nineteen in full fellowship and elected the following to deacons' orders: Samuel Ross, George Reed, Jeremiah Brown, S. H. Robertson, Daniel Brown, Martin Johnson, Larkin Matthews, Jesse Dinkins, Henry Redd, Washington Benjamin, Larry Thomas, Lacy Beck, Wesley Mappe, Daniel McGee, Lewis Davis, James Jackson, Greene Yorke, Nelson Harris and Wesley Rogers.

The cheering news was also communicated to us, in a memorial from Fort Valley, that the colored Methodists there desired to give in their adherence to our church. Thus our strength increased.

One thing noticeable was that there were few complaints before us at this session, and, as they turned out to be errors of the head in most cases, were easily disposed of.

The work was extended to take in new points. Sylvania Mission in Screven Co.; Cherokee Mission, embracing Powder Springs, Cherokee and Acworth; Albany Mission, Dougherty Co.; Mitchell County Mission and Starkville Mission, Lee Co., were created. Mt. Zion was added to Griffin charge, and Union Point and Fork Chapel were added to the Greensboro charge.

The churches of other denominations showed such fraternal feeling, that the ladies of the Second Baptist Church donated a sum of money. It is to be noted that from the first the women of the South took an active part in helping on the cause. Two societies of our church also sent in money: the "Daughters of Conference" and "Daughters of Wayman."

Education absorbed much of the attention of Conference. Support was pledged to Wilberforce University, the only school of note of which we could then boast, and ministerial education was warmly urged in an able sermon by Rev. H. M. Turner. A report from the Assistant Superintendent of Schools of the sub-district of Augusta ably set forth the general condition of the schools, and of education throughout the State. Some of these points are so pertinent to our work in those days that they are noted here. The Atlanta schools were reported with an average attendance of but little less than 1,000;

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Macon had about the same, and Augusta about two-thirds that number. The buildings in these cities were fine and commodious. It is true that the Negro race in the South started in upon the work of education under the existing state of affairs in a very encouraging manner. There was no such thing then as a public school system in the South, but from the North had come teachers of intellectual ability and refinement—educated Christian disciples—and in 1868–69 the colored schools of the South were without doubt the best manned and systematized of any in that section. This was especially true of Georgia. It was a great change from the sheds and cabins of three and a half years before, where, by the light of pine-wood knots, the rudiments were taught under trying situations. The work of the Macon and Atlanta schools was particularly noted in this report, and it was also noted that Latin and Algebra were taught—there being in the case of one pupil sufficient advancement for these studies.*

The Conference was exhorted by this gentleman to raise up competent teachers and to acquire means for supporting schools as fast as possible. It is safe to say that these words have always been with us from the day of utterance, and the schools of the South which we foster to-day are eloquent witnesses of our endeavors.

It was at this Conference that, according to pro-

*Prof. W. S. Scarborough, of Wilberforce University, Professor of Latin and Greek, was then a youth in Macon, and the pupil who studied Latin. He was the first pupil in Latin in the Atlanta University.

vision, Rev. T. G. Steward addressed the Conference upon the "Rise and Progress of the A. M. E. Church in Georgia."* The statistics of this year show that there were sixty-three circuits, stations and missions, while building was on the increase, as well as the Sunday-school work, which was also earnestly presented in an interesting report. Thus early was the future welfare of our church looked after, and every means urged to make this important part of our work a nursery indeed of the church.

It is pleasing to notice that even literature had a start at least in Georgia. Rev. T. G. Steward, who was at the time President of the Freedmen's Saving Bank in Macon, put his varied talents into use, and, with his other duties, published a Sunday-school paper called "The Sling and Stone," which Conference adopted and promised help in sustaining. The session of 1869 adjourned February 15, after nine days' deliberation, to meet in Americus, though there was contention for several other leading points as the place of assembly. In Americus, then, January 28, 1870 it was opened. Bishop J. M. Brown was in his place in the chair, and J. W. Randolph was appointed Secretary, with T. G. Steward as Recording Secretary. From the six Presiding Elder districts, into which the State was then divided, a large number were presented for admission on trial. H. M. Turner, Presiding Elder of the Macon District, pre-

*It is to this document that the writer owes much in the way of history concerning those first few years when it was almost impossible to obtain exact data, because of the uncertain and scattered condition of the church work and the few records which were kept.

sented Henderson Brown, Isaac Goodwell, Abram Purdee as itinerants, and James C. Greer, Wm. McKay, Willis Dupont, J. G. Mitchell, C. H. Fairfax, A. B. Davis, H. B. Dowell, Warren Shorts, Thomas Smith, Thomas Ball and Madison Brookins, local; S. W. Drayton, P. E., of Savannah District, George Christburg, Henry Taylor, itinerants; Andrew Brown, P. E., of Atlanta District, Robert Brown, itinerant, and Charles Prince, local; Burrell Jackson, P. E., of Augusta District, John H. Harris, Hamilton Birdsong, Andrew Lowe, itinerants, and Wm. McCullough, Peter Cruse and Ebenezer Davis, local; S. B. Jones, P. E., of Marietta District, Jonathan Parks, Wm. H. Harris, Houston Holloway, Madison Neal, itinerants; W. H. Noble, P. E., of Cuthbert District, George Gambel, Mansfield Dilliard, Richard Ford, Crawford Buford, Samuel Perry, George Hood, Anderson Perkins, local. In addition to these were the following names : Josiah Jones, Madison George, Benjamin Cummings, Peter Harris, D. O. Alexander, John M. Cargile, John Mimms, Berry Jackson, E. P. Holmes, Martin Wright, Henry McGhee, Shadrach Cargile, John Wynne, Aaron Dickey, Washington Brown and Peter Harris, itinerants.

When the ninth question of discipline was taken up, the following names were reported for deacons' orders : James Greene, C. H. Fairfax, Harrison Dowdell, Abner Davis, Warren Shorts, Johnson Parks, Madison George, Patrick Park, W. H. Harris, Houston Holloway, John Harris, H. H. Taylor,

George Christburg, Mansfield Dilliard, Abram Purdee, W. McCullough, all itinerants, with Prof. John G. Mitchell, Charles Prince, Shadrach Cargile, Eli Kimble, Claiborne Bush, Buford Crawford, D. O. Alexander, Washington Brown, Aaron Dickey, Anderson Perkins, Thomas Ball, Burton Saunders, Luke Kirkland and Berry Jackson, of Alabama, all local. The Elders, Nelson Beacham, H. O. Neal, Robert Brown, N. H. Russell, Henry Porter, Archie Gilbert, Benjamin Lampkin, R. Williams, F. Robinson, Zachariah Armstrong, J. K. Brown, John T. Gibson, David Anderson, G. P. Brown, A. N. Burton. Rev. C. L. Bradwell and Rev. J. W. Stevenson, respectively, preached the ordination sermons.

There was an endeavor to have a branch of the Book Concern located in Atlanta, Ga., and a motion prevailed to the effect that if such could be brought about, the Conference would purchase a suitable location. A very necessary matter was looked after at this session, by appointing a Committee on Homesteads and Deeds, to examine into the legal status of our church property. Up to the present everything was found to be in correct form. The same committee urged upon the Conference to advise those of our people who do not desire to remain longer in the State of Georgia to go to Florida, where land then could be easily procured, and at low prices. There were 10,000,000 acres of government land in that State, much of it in the most thrifty portions, which could be purchased at fifty cents per acre. Immigration thither was strongly being encouraged.

Law and order, of which there was a "plentiful lack" in some other sections, prevailed there, as did a general kindly sentiment toward immigrants to a larger extent than in any other Southern State.

The writer opposed emigration then as now, believing that a rolling stone gathers no moss, but had we then bought farms and accumulated property generally in Georgia, our financial situation would have been increased far above what it is said to be to-day—\$20,000,000.*

The Committee on Missions suggested, for the success of our missionaries, that each church or Sabbath-school form a Missionary Society, and that a proper, efficient traveling missionary be appointed. At the same time, the Committee on Church Extension impressed the Conference with the necessity of owning commodious buildings if the work of enlightening and evangelizing the race would grow as it should.

Two brethren had died during the year—Wesley Mappé and Daniel Williams—each on his field of labor. When the session closed, it was to meet in Atlanta in January following.

*Mr. Henry Grady stated this to be the amount just before his death. The writer would not pass him by without paying a tribute of respect. As an orator, Georgia has probably never produced his superior. His style was chaste and beautiful, and his eloquence upon the occasion of his great prohibition speech was deemed by the writer the grandest effort to which he ever listened. Personally he was the writer's friend.

CHAPTER V.

GEORGIA, 1871-1872.

Bishop J. M. Brown was not able to reach the Conference in time to open it in Atlanta, January 14, 1871, but by his direction through a telegram the Conference proceeded to business after being opened, with Rev. A. Brown, Presiding Elder, in the chair. Rev. T. G. Steward was appointed Secretary, with S. H. Roberton as assistant.

A long list was admitted on trial, and when the Conference proceeded to the election of deacons, the following were elected: Itinerants, Isaac Hamilton, John Robinson, Samuel George, James Etheridge, F. P. Evans, Henry Hutchinson, Riley Covington, Turner Jones, David Williams, Alfred Attoway, Alfred Sapp, J. M. Cargile, E. P. Holmes, George Christburg, Wm. Abrahams, La-Fayette Wesley, Geo. Strickland, James Hilson. Local, Augustus Stroud, Madison Taylor, Andrew Miller, Herbert Mathews, Burrell Halin, Henry Holsey, Henry Warren, Andrew Lowe, G. H. Clower.

We had with us at this Conference Bishop James A. Shorter and Rev. B. T. Tanner, also Henry J. Young, of Philadelphia. Rev. B. T. Tanner

preached the Ordination Sermon of Deacons. A beneficent gift was presented Conference, through Rev. Henry Strickland, by Mrs. Sarah Marshall—a new roof to the church in process of erection at Savannah, in value more than \$1,000. It will be remembered that Rev. A. L. Stanford organized the church in Savannah, and he also laid the basement of the church edifice, but Rev Henry Strickland deserves the credit of building the church, and saving our congregation in that city.

Four of the Georgia Conference have fallen under the Reaper's blade this year. Nelson Beacham, Fortune Robinson, Washington Benjamin, Eli Kimball, and suitable respect was paid to their memories, Elder H. M. Turner delivering the sermon.

The matter of Conference school was broached at this date, but it assumed no definite form. It was a subject requiring consideration and deliberate arrangements before we could hope to make other than a lamentable failure. It was wisdom to wait until strength sufficient for success was an assured thing.

Savannah, Ga., was the place decided upon for the next session, as it was intimated that the reports of the Conferences in the past were too meager in details to give a correct idea of Conference doings; it was also gently hinted that the Secretaries in the future might be more copious with advantage to the church. The hint was well taken, as it seems, and acted upon, as records show. There is no doubt that the want of accurate data

concerning our church work, as a whole, is largely due to the brief, and often unsatisfactory, way of writing up the minutes of the various Conferences, and that the history of our church must lose much of interest, and thus suffer proportionally by loss, perhaps of moment, by too great brevity. This quality may be the "soul of wit," but it is not that of history, and even prolixity may be better endured when important matters are before us, and we desire positive and complete information concerning every detail, such as only full, approved minutes can give.

Bishop J. M. Brown suggested at this time Geo. W. H. Williams, J. W. Randolph and S. H. Robertson as proper persons for Elders' Orders, and they were elected, as was also James F. A. Sisson. After discussion, C. R. Edwards was also included in the list, which comprised the following brethren, when the ordinance took place with impressive and solemn exercises: William Lewis, Patrick Parks, Lacy Beck, Wm. Pine, G. B. Reed, J. W. Randolph, S. Ross, J. W. Ricks, Branch Davis, S. H. Robertson, Daniel Brown, W. H. Harris, G. W. H. Williams and J. F. A. Sisson.

An interesting discussion was held upon the temperance question, and the expression of a sentiment in favor of temperance in all things, the discarding of tobacco, snuff, cigars and all intoxicants was indulged in by a large number. The filthiness of the habit, as well as its injurious effects, physically and morally, were dwelt upon, and resolutions placing

the Conference on record as opposing the use of all these were reported and adopted by a large majority.

The finances were helped out by Rev. H. M. Turner's proposition to print the minutes for what he might receive from their sale, and accepting this, 1,500 were ordered printed, and the price set at fifteen cents each. The Sabbath-school Banner, which had been promised to the school raising the most missionary money, was awarded to the Columbus Sunday-school, as it came forward, through Rev. C. L. Bradwell, with \$100, though Savannah followed closely, through Rev. H. Strickland, with \$60.

The minister who should be stationed at Macon was designated as the District Book Steward, and it was also determined upon that each minister be required to raise one collection monthly, for the eight collections to be taken up during the year: the Contingent, Missionary, Book Concern, Bishop's Support, Superannuated Bishops and Preachers, Widows and Orphans, Deficiency and Wilberforce University, and that no preacher be permitted to divide any one of these collections under penalty of being silenced for six months. Bishop Shorter entered a protest with reference to the division of the money, stating that the Conference violated the law governing it.*

The cases of complaints were few and the offend-

*This was before the Dollar money system was adopted, which was at Nashville, in 1872.

ers were dismissed with a reprimand, or referred back to their Quarterly Conference.

It was decided that the Electoral College meet in Macon the coming June—the first Thursday—to be in readiness for the General Conference of the coming year.

The report of the Committee on Education was very hopeful. Schools were springing up in different localities all over the State. The only drawback was the engaging of teachers of too meager qualifications, but still there was progress. The committee looked to the future in recommending a Theological Seminary within the Georgia Conference, that our young men might be properly trained in the ministry, so we see the trend in the right direction. The ministers were strongly advised, however, by Bishop J. M. Brown to a close study of the course laid out by the Conference under whatever guidance they might find possible. Pending the establishment of a school within our own denomination, the work of others was recommended, and at all times, the common schools were to be recognized as one means of uplifting the people. We had all that we could do just then to assist the mother college of our church, Wilberforce, which was brought to our notice again. It was then incomplete under the efforts to raise it from the ruins in which the flames had enveloped it in 1865, and the Conference resolved to do all in its power to aid this uni-

versity—the only one then owned and controlled by colored men on the American continent.

The Georgia Conference this year took steps to organize the Home and Foreign Missionary Society, and a goodly roll of members was made up by the payment of \$1 each. The South was still in the midst of financial embarrassment, but it is to be noted that the Georgia Conference statistics showed a decided improvement financially each year. Though the people were poor and the masses yet groping for the light of knowledge, it was not an altogether beggarly people. It did what it could and that was much for the times and under the circumstances. No more could be asked—no more could be expected.

It was on January 5th, 1872, that the Lord allowed us to reassemble in Savannah to transact our business. For the second time within its history an assembly of colored ministers met in that city. Bishop Brown presided at the opening, Rev. J. F. A. Sisson was elected Conference Secretary; J. W. Randolph, Statistical Secretary; and F. J. Peck, Recording Secretary. The Bishop made some most pertinent remarks upon the dilatory attendance of the members composing the body, as well as upon their behavior at Conference. Among other things, he told them not to stand about our church doors and the street corners smoking; he admonished them so to dress and live that they should be attractive to our people and not repulsive; he warned them not to drink wine or brandy, and told them to avoid giving

trouble to the families with whom they might stop, to rise early from their beds, be kind to the children, and always see that prayers were held with their host and family.

These remarks apply equally well to-day, and if faithfully followed out, the ministry would stand upon a higher plane, the labor of entertainment would fall much more lightly upon our people, while the general good which would result would be incalculable.

Rev. S. H. Robertson was constituted reporter for the *Christian Recorder*, and the writer of the *Missionary Record* published in Charleston. The annual sermon this year was preached by Rev. C. L. Bradwell. The ministers were urged again by the agent of Wilberforce University, Elder Young, to assist in raising endowment money, that the trustees might comply with the conditions of Mr. Avery's will, whereby \$10,000 would be secured that institution for its completion. The will was read, and ere the close of the fourth day's session, he had received \$140 in money, pledges, notes and dues. These we gave of our little, as we were advised.

The visitors to Conference included some members of the M. E. Church, South, and the Rev. Elisha Hathaway, of Bristol, R. I., a minister of the Christian Convention, who had within the year past donated \$59,000 for the elevation of the freedmen, and he encouraged us to aid all good work by his statements. He gave a short sketch of his life, upon being introduced to Conference, and among other things, he gave us this to consider: that he had

known both extreme poverty and abundant riches, and that he felt himself constantly made spiritually and financially richer by giving of his substance to the poor, thereby lending to the Lord.

CHAPTER VI.

GENERAL CONFERENCE YEAR.

Forty-eight was the number reported by the Committee on Admission to Conference on probation. Bishop J. M. Brown made the remark that it was the largest class save one he had received since he had been made Bishop. It was a most interesting one, as it was composed mostly of young men. The Bishop gave them some sound advice as to their conduct, ministerial and otherwise, which is as applicable to-day as it has ever been. After telling them to stand up for Jesus, he warned them that they would have no time for mirth and folly. "Be prudent among women," said he, "Confide only in your wife." Upon marriage, he said, "Get for a wife one that has good parents who have trained their daughter well, one who is willing to wash your clothes and scour your floor," and to the class personally he said, "Avoid affectation and the wearing of finery and jewelry. Be plain even in dress and manners; be honest, pay your debts and pay them promptly."

The matter of Missionary Agency coming up, the writer moved a resolution in favor of leaving that office vacant, though Conference had a stand-

ing rule to the effect of filling it by appointment of the Bishop. His arguments were that as yet nothing had been accomplished save to make an indebtedness by each Conference. His idea was the same as now—the plan at present followed by our Church—to make each pastor raise a special Missionary collection, thus avoiding any salaried agent. It was opposed, however, and by vote to rescind, the Bishop was left to appoint the Missionary Agent as heretofore.

The Book Concern report gave such a depressing view of its financial condition that, after an explanatory speech from the Bishop, urging liberal contributions to its treasury, a movement was made by the writer favoring the raising as much as \$50 weekly, if possible, to aid in publishing the *Christian Recorder* until the next session of the General Conference—seventeen weeks hence. It was learned that this would be the cost of publication per week, and the motion prevailed almost unanimously, there being but one dissenting voice. Believing in rapidly striking while the iron was hot, business was suspended and eleven clubs were formed with cash (\$140.25) in hand. The writer was elected Secretary of the fund and C. L. Bradwell, Treasurer, and the money was paid over to H. J. Young, the Book Concern Agent, and receipt given.

Again, an endeavor was made looking to the establishment of a school within the bounds of this Conference. While strong speeches were made in

favor of the education of the ministry by Revs. Noble, Young, Harris and others, it seemed the prevalent opinion that for the present Wilberforce University offered all advantages required, and that we were not yet ready for giving the support which a second college or institution would demand. Nevertheless, a motion prevailed to take steps toward a school, with the words "College" and "Branch of Wilberforce University" stricken from the original motion; and it was finally decided that a committee of five select a site for such a school as desired, Presiding Elders forming that committee. Under the resolution this was done, and Rev. J. A. Wood was made Treasurer of the School Fund, and Rev. W. J. Gaines, Secretary.

Seventeen brothers were offered for Deacon's orders and elected: Jacob Graham, Eli Erby, Lawrence Thomas, Nathan Berry, George Landrum, Henry Boyd, G. G. Fleming, Richard Graham, Anthony Brown, Andrew Wynn, George Davis, Jefferson Cary, Shadrach L. Mimms, John M. Henderson, James Porter, John B. Butler, George T. Strickland. Those elected to Elder's orders were Henry M. Taylor, Elijah Pennyman, James Daley, C. H. Fairfax, H. B. Dowdell, Warren Shorts, A. B. Davis, itinerants, and Daniel J. McGhee, local. Henry Daniels was left without an appointment for one year; also George Lumpkin, John McDougald and L. Matthews. The ordination of the seventeen Deacons took place under the Presiding Bishop at the close of the morning sermon, January 14th,

while the Elders were ordained in the afternoon. One brother had slipped up to the altar during the ceremony of ordination of Deacons, and had received the Bishop's hands upon his head, but he unfortunately called for his certificate later and this fact leaked out.

Wisely, so it seemed to the Conference, the minority report of the Committee on Third Year Studies was adopted, and all the members thereby continued in that class. The funeral services of five deceased brothers were carried out at the ninth day's session by addresses from Rev. H. M. Turner and others. This was followed by a collection for the benefit of the widows of the deceased brothers and preachers.

It appeared at this Conference that the minutes of the Georgia Conference, up to this date, had not been properly recorded, and a resolution passed to pay Rev. F. J. Peck thirty dollars to do this work up to close of the present session.

As 180 members of the Georgia Annual Conference, together with 48 probationers, were reported by the Committee on General Conference Delegates, it was entitled to send 26 delegates to represent the members, and 6 to represent the probationers. The election which then took place resulted as follows:

H. M. Turner, W. J. Gaines, S. B. Jones, Andrew Brown, F. J. Peck, Henry Strickland, Thos. Crayton, S. W. Drayton, W. H. Noble, J. A. Wood, Wm. Raven, Robert Anderson, Henry Porter, Peter McLain, Albert McGhee, Levi Walker, A. J. McDowell,

Robert Cromby, R. M. Taylor, S. H. Robertson, W. H. W. Sherman, J. F. A. Sisson, John McDougald, John T. Gibson, G. W. H. Williams, Lawrence Wood, Z. Armstrong, G. P. Brown, Thomas Garrett, Robert Alexander, C. L. Bradwell, B. K. Brown. Aside from these, the Secretary of the Electoral College reported the election of two lay delegates to represent the Conference: G. H. Clower and Lewis Williams.

Among the changes made this year, the District Book Steward was made the Treasurer of the Conference, and the writer was made District Book Steward.

In the line of the effort to prepare for a school in the State of Georgia, an effort was made for each pastor to bring to Conference, next year, five dollars for educational purposes, and the preachers were to be furnished with certificates to be used in making such collections. The sum of fifty-eight dollars and fifty-eight cents was also ordered sent to the Treasurer of Wilberforce University.

Looking forward to their preservation, as the literature of the time, all authors of Conference sermons before the sixth session, were ordered to place their manuscript in the hands of Bishop Brown, who would see them published and bound with the minutes. The manuscript of J. W. Randolph's Anthem and Tune Book was commended to the General Conference for its examination and hoped-for approval.

The Domestic University Society held its meeting, through a suspension of regular work, and made a

most favorable show of work. It had a total in bank of \$185.92, and collected at this session an aggregate of \$53. A re-election of officers made Rev. H. M. Turner, President; C. L. Bradwell, J. A. Wood and W. J. Gaines, respectively, first, second and third Vice-Presidents ; J. F. A. Sisson, Secretary; Henry Strickland, Treasurer ; J. W. Randolph, Recording Secretary. A short meeting of the Preachers' Aid Society followed this meeting, when the regular business of the Conference was resumed.

A pleasant feature of the session was the recognition of the services of our beloved Bishop, J. M. Brown, who had been with us for four years, and according to our church economy, would sever his direct connection with the Episcopal District of which Georgia formed a part, with this session, or rather, after the meeting of the General Conference in Nashville, Tenn., on the first Monday in the following May. The Conference, therefore, decided to testify to its appreciation of his work with us by the presentation of a copy of Webster's Unabridged Dictionary to him, and Rev. H. M. Turner, C. L. Bradwell and the writer were appointed to execute the will of the Conference, which was carried out at the next session.

When the question was asked which Sunday-school should keep the Annual Conference S. S. banner during the ensuing year, the answer came promptly from Americus, Ga., representatives, which school, through Rev. C. L. Bradwell, pastor,

reported thirty-six dollars and seventy-six pupils. As it was to be awarded to the Sunday-school sending the largest Missionary collection to Conference this session, in proportion to the number of pupils, this school held it until the next session.

The sermons for the next year were appointed as follows: Annual Conference Sermon, Rev. R. Anderson; Annual Anniversary Sermon, Rev. W. J. Gaines; the Doctrinal Sermon by Rev. W. H. Noble, and the Ministerial Education Sermon by Rev. James F. A. Sisson.

Elder H. M. Turner requested the Bishop and Conference to allow him to retire from the office and work of Presiding Elder. He desired rest and opportunities for study, composition, and the practical duties of the pastorate without distracting cares outside of the course he had marked out. The address that he delivered after this, as a valedictory, was of historic value to the A. M. E. church, and of general interest.

Scarcely a report of this Conference was presented which was not full of interest. The one upon Denominations was especially powerful, as it breathed a spirit of Christian brotherhood, which alone can unite all the kingdoms of this earth under the one Kingdom of His Son. A growing feeling of fraternity was shown by it to be prevailing upon the part of all denominations, especially in the South. We quote from the report of the Committee on State of the Country that which is true, and which alone will bring about amity and peace: "With a free

press, freedom of speech, and freedom of educational advantages and religious privileges, applicable to all alike, without reference to 'race, color or previous condition,' then will each bosom thrill with rapturous joy."

CHAPTER VII.

GEORGIA, 1873.

With the arrival of the eleventh of January, 1873, the Conference found itself at Macon, Ga., with Bishop T. M. D. Ward, as the Presiding Bishop. Bishop J. M. Brown accompanied him as Assistant Bishop. Thus General Conference had given us another strong worker for the South. We also received an addition to our ministerial ranks, by the transfer of Rev. George Washington, of Alabama, and Rev. W. D. Johnson, of Florida, while we lost Rev. Lawrence Wood, who took a transfer to South Carolina, and Rev. J. F. A. Sisson, who went to the Arkansas Conference.

The Secretaryship was immediately placed upon the shoulders of Rev. Wm. D. Johnson, and Rev. J. W. Randolph was made Statistical Secretary, with Rev. F. J. Peek, Recording Secretary.

The General Conference of 1872 had condemned the wearing of Episcopal robes in strong terms, but, as in all such matters, there was diversity of opinion, and the question was again raised here by Rev. Dr. H. M. Turner; finally a movement was made to purchase and present a robe to the Presiding Bishop, but was lost.

Thirty-seven preachers were admitted on trial: John Flintroy, D. T. Green, Andrew Bigham, L. S. Smith, Augustus Jones, Augustus Stroud, War. Lee, Hamilton Spann, Minor Lewis, J. B. Davis, Lewis Tyson, Anthony Johnson, I. N. Fitzpatrick, G. G. Fleming, Charles Green, David Green, Wilson Williams, Frank Johnson, Augustus Scott, Green Decatur, J. A. Brown, Jefferson Cary, George Parks, Albert Pearce, Burrell Mitchell, A. J. Miller, J. H. Brown, Prince Gadsen, Isaac Coachman, Wm. Askew, Harris Powell, Peter Williams, George Bass, Clabron Randall, Burrell Davis, Irwin Butler, Eldridge Reed. An equally long list remained on trial.

On the fourth day the Conference was shocked by the information that Bishop Wm. Paul Quinn was lying very low at his home in Richmond, Ind. As it soon appeared, it was the hand of death indeed, which had been laid upon him, against which no mortal can successfully struggle, and in the following month of February our beloved senior succumbed, and entered upon eternal rest and heavenly reward. His was the first death in the Bishopric of the A. M. E. Church since 1848, when Bishop Morris Brown was called hence. With his death, Bishop D. A. Payne passed to the Seniority—a position he fills to the present, crowned with gray hairs and an honorable career of usefulness.

Our ranks have been visited by the same dark angel, and Thomas Ball, Adam Bruton and Edmond L. Bailey were the ones to obey the call. The me-

morial sermons were preached by Dr. H. M. Turner and Rev. Branch Davis.

The ordination of Elders and Deacons began on the Sabbath day (January 19th), with a sermon by Rev. S. W. Drayton to the deacons in the morning, followed in the afternoon by Rev. C. L. Bradwell to the Elders, in which the latter eloquently declared the awful responsibility, and high dignity of the office, moving many to tears.

The Elders ordained were: W. H. Harris, E. P. Holmes, J. M. Cargile, Haley Hardy, Semenson Gardener, James Porter, D. J. McGhee, Paton Stokes, J. Parks, A. J. Miller, A. M. Wright, J. Hamilton, H. Lester, C. B. Edwards, J. McGhee, T. S. Smith, H. H. Holoway, G. H. Hood, Jesse Durkins, M. Millard, L. Davis, A. Dunwoodie, A. Attaway, C. H. Rice, C. R. Edwards, G. C. Christburg, A. Lowe, D. Hamilton, A. Perkins, L. Thomas. The deacons were: Charles Wilson, Wm. Americus, Jefferson Carey, C. Hamilton, I. B. Davis, E. A. Shepherd, P. Matin, A. Pace, B. Mimms, M. Lewis, B. Mitchell, L. Smith, J. B. McCoy, J. Waters, J. Watson, M. O. Bodie, J. Whittaker, L. Cooper, J. Brown, C. McDowell, P. Gadsen, A. Bigham, Wilson Williams, Irwin Butler, Green Person, Mark Cox, Randall Fulson, Charles Warren, Alexander Price, Wm. Flagg, John Joshua, Edward Thomas, Burrell Davis.

Our visitors were Prof. W. D. Williams, of the Blind Asylum, of Macon; Rev. E. E. Rogers, of the Congregational Church, and Rev. G. H. Eaton, of

Savannah, with Rev. Robert Brown, of the Colored M. E. Church of America.

When the committees reported, the exodus to Arkansas through paid agents, employed to deceive and mislead, was vigorously condemned, and the prophecy made that Georgia was destined to be a great and thrifty State, despite all true reports of the greatness of the former State, and one fitted to maintain its people in greater comfort. Experience has proved what sober reflection at the time should have proved. Many of those who sold themselves, as it were, for their passage money have to regret the hasty step most bitterly. But it was the report upon division of Conference which created the most interest.

The Georgia Conference had become unwieldy, over two hundred and sixty members being enrolled at this date. It was a difficult task, amounting almost to an impossibility, for the presiding officer to have entire control of such a number, with due regard to the advance of the best interests of the Church. One other argument had its weight as well. The people at that date had not reached that degree of prosperity which enables them now to entertain large church bodies in those larger cities. It was a severe tax upon the Church still struggling with poverty and ignorance; and what causes thoughtful ones among us even now to hesitate long before locating Conferences, especially the General Conference, was not to be ignored at that time in our history, when locating the Annual Conference. The

time necessarily taken to transact the business of Conference was a long time to be a burden to a poor people, therefore the question was brought up as to a division. A committee was appointed upon the matter, consisting of the following: Elder H. M. Turner, Revs. W. J. Gaines, Andrew Brown, C. L. Bradwell, Henry Strickland, S. B. Jones, Scipio Robertson, F. J. Peck, Peter McLain, S. W. Drayton, W. H. Noble, W. H. Harris, Henry Porter.

A majority and a minority report were brought in. As motions to lay the latter upon the table, also to adopt it, were both lost, the majority was adopted. The committee had taken into consideration all these difficulties mentioned, and it recommended the division into two bodies, to be called the North Georgia Conference and the South Georgia Conference.*

The former was to embrace all the territory north of Macon, both east and west; the latter all south of the same point, also east and west. It was also recommended that the South Georgia holds its next session in Thomasville, Georgia, and the North Georgia in Augusta.

For six years we had been linked together as a whole under the name of Georgia Conference. It was with regret that we saw the separation because of the memoirs of these years, but it was with joy that we looked over the field and saw the progress,

*The South Georgia Conference dropped the prefix "South" after a time, and was known, as now, as the "Georgia Conference." This served also to distinguish bet'er the older Conference.

the expansion, the growth in every way, which had demanded such a separation. With this in our hearts we could but look forward to the sessions of the two new bodies with gladness, and prepare for the change which placed the writer in the North Georgia Conference at Macon Station.

We note the changes in districts, circuits, etc., this year because of this decision. The Macon District was changed, to consist of Macon Station, Columbus Station, St. Johns's Chapel, Pitt's Chapel, Talberton Circuit, Fort Valley Circuit, Perry Circuit, Hawkinsville Circuit, Prattburg Circuit, Box Springs, Reynolds, Eastman, Chattahooche County Circuit; Harris County Circuit, Columbus Mission; Howard Circuit, Bibb County Circuit. Atlanta District suffered no change excepting in the loss of Jones County, Jasper County and Monticello Circuit being added to the new District, Forsyth, which also included Forsyth Station, Clinton Station, Sugar Hill Circuit, Crawford County Circuit, Coleman Chapel, Indian Springs Circuit, Whitesville Circuit and Zion Mission. Marietta District remained the same, excepting Indian Springs, including all the West Point Railroad. Augusta District was left intact, as well as the Savannah District. Red Circuit only was taken from Cuthbert District and added to Americus District, which was further enlarged by the addition of Oglethorpe, Ellaville, Buena Vista and Red Hill Circuit. To Sandersville District was given all the new work that might be

added. La Grange District was also untouched. Upon the division of Conference, the Atlanta, Augusta, Marietta, Macon and LaGrange Districts were placed within the bounds of the North Georgia Conference.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE NEW WORK.

With the opening of the year 1874, the A. M. E. Church in Georgia entered upon its new work of conducting the deliberations of the two Conference bodies instead of one. The North Georgia Conference was the first to assemble. Bishop T. M. D. Ward opened the first session of this body, in the city of Augusta, upon the 8th of January. His opening remarks were most opportune and well received, though some objected to the statement that the division of the old Georgia Conference had passed into history. This objection must have been made upon the ground that the Georgia Conference, as a separate body, had as yet held no session, while the North Georgia was but opened.

Be this as it may, the work of final division went on, such as definitely settling the boundary lines between the two, which work was assigned to a committee of fifteen, after the election of a Conference Secretary in the person of Rev. W. D. Johnson, J. M. Cargile being appointed Statistical Secretary. This committee consisted of Dr. H. M. Turner, Revs. W. J. Gaines, J. A. Wood, William Raven, H. H. Taylor, John Ricks, Augustus Gonickie, S. H. Rob-

ertson, E. P. Holmes, S. B. Jones, W. H. Harris, W. D. Johnson, Andrew Brown, Robert Cromley, Daniel Brown, Robert Anderson, Lawrence Thomas and W. H. Noble. In brief, the boundary was laid off as follows, and the report of the committee adopted: "Commencing at the Chattahoochee river, the following counties and all north of them, to constitute the North Georgia Conference—Harris, Meriwether, Upson, Monroe, Jones, Baldwin, Hancock, Warren, McDuffie and Richmond; the following, and all south of them, to constitute the South Georgia Conference—Muscogee, Talbot, Taylor, Crawford, Bibb, (except Macon station, which was included in the North Georgia work) Wilkinson, Washington, Glascock, Jefferson and Burke." This, as we said in our last chapter, gave to the North Georgia Conference the Atlanta, Marietta, Macon, Augusta and LaGrange districts, leaving Cuthbert, Sandersville, Valdosta, Americus and Savannah districts in the South Georgia work.

The following persons were sent before the committee on admission: Joshua Brown, Perry Simon, J. B. Lofton, William Stansel, Alfred Floyd, George Chapel, Willis Covington, Handy West and Albert Gaines.

Bishop S. H. Holsey, of the Colored M. E. Church of America, was introduced to Conference, and spoke words of congratulation upon our success. He spoke of the tendency of all Christian bodies to unite, and the strength that would result from union in Methodism, especially in the colored churches. In the

response which was made by Dr. H. M. Turner, the statement was acquiesced in, and the declaration made that the African Methodist Episcopal Church—the church organized by Richard Allen and others—was the first step made by colored men toward the equal rights mentioned by all, and it was “like stone cut out without hands—a rolling power that had scattered hallowed fire wherever it has penetrated.” Have not the years established the truth of this?

Although the state of education was encouraging in view of the hopeful outlook from Wilberforce University, which reported three hundred students, and that the committee stated the desire expressed upon the part of the Public School Boards in a number of localities, to open more schools for the colored children, yet it seemed best, notwithstanding this, to look now to our own denominational school work in the South with a critical eye upon what was sorely needed, as we were pressed for properly qualified ministers for our increasing fields of labor. In view of this a motion was put on foot looking to the joint efforts of the two Conferences in raising up an institution of learning in our midst, that should be an honor to our church and to the race. A convention to consider the matter was appointed at Thomasville, Ga., January 22d, the date of the coming first session of the South Georgia Annual Conference as a separate body.

It was at this place that Bishop T. M. D. Ward opened this Conference, at the appointed date, and

this Convention met and deliberated upon an "Institution of Higher Learning," and appointed its Trustees to act upon the same—seven from the North Georgia and eight from the South Georgia Conference.

Rev. Wm. D. Johnson was made Secretary and Rev. Francis J. Peck Statistical Secretary of this Conference at this session, and it proceeded to the business of announcing transfers: Revs. J. M. Cargile, Andrew Brown and F. J. Peck took transfers to the North Georgia work, while Revs. W. J. Gaines, C. L. Bradwell, Wm. Raven, Rev. Wm. Bradwell, of Florida, and Godfrey B. Taylor, of Alabama, were transferred to this Conference. The action of the joint committee dividing the Conference was brought up for ratification, but by motion of Dr. H. M. Turner, it was indefinitely postponed. This motion, however, was ruled out of order by Bishop T. M. D. Ward, who decided that the separation of the Conferences was settled in Macon in 1873. Upon this, Dr. Turner stated his intention to appeal to the next General Conference, as he wished Macon struck from the South Georgia list.

Rev. Andrew Brown preached an able sermon the evening of the first day from the text, Ex. iv. 1; "And Moses answered and said, but behold, they will not believe me." Henry Boyd, Richard Graham, David Williams and George Gamble were elected and ordained as elders, while eleven received deacon's orders: Andrew Jackson, Benjamin F. Franklin, H. P. Powell, Augustus Scott, Wm.

Askew, Isaac Stewart, B. W. Wilson, Isaac Coachman, David T. Green, George Bass, James Ricks. The ordination vows were also administered to Rev. T. N. Stewart and A. R. Spencer, elders from the colored M. E. Church of America. These latter had been fitted for this office by their previous training. At the same time these two, with Wesley C. Gaines, G. H. Washington, S. M. Clark, B. W. Wilson, G. J. Jordan, B. F. Franklin, Isaac Stewart, Andrew Jackson, A. J. Johnson and Andrew Monroe, formed the class admitted on trial.

It was a pleasure to the Conference that it received a most cordial welcome from the inhabitants of the city, white and colored, so far exceeding any heretofore, that it felt constrained to recognize it by proper thanks. African Methodism had accomplished the task of commanding respect for it, though its adherents were of the Negro race.

This Conference body received the glad news that Hon. Mr. Haynes, of Pottsville, Pa., having donated five hundred dollars to our Southern work, fifty of that sum would come to each of the two Georgia Conferences.

With this session we closed the Conference year, and with the coming year we reached the first decade of what might be called our Southern work, beginning as it did in Charleston upon the 15th of May, 1865.

The North Georgia Conference at Athens, Ga., opened the ensuing year's work, with its second session held in "Pierce's Chapel," January 17th, Bishop

Ward presiding, and Rev. Wm. D. Johnson, Secretary, with Richard Harper, as assistant. It was not a busy session, and closed on the fifth day. The date for convening was changed to the month of December, and some changes were made in the Districts.

J. H. M. Durand, W. A. Pearce, H. Cargile, Washington Campbell, R. W. Mitchell, B. Johnson, Sandy Luster, J. L. Smith, Richard Harper, A. Williams, H. D. Bush, S. A. Bush, were admitted on trial. Alexander Price, M. O. Boddie, L. H. Smith, John Whittaker, Turner Jones, Jefferson Cary, Jr., E. A. Shephard, Burrell Mitchell, were made elders, and the deacons who were elected and ordained, were: Richard Harper, David T. Green, George Chapell, Wm. Lee, J. H. M. Brown, C. H. Green, Augustus Jones, J. F. Brown. The transfers made were, Rev. W. H. Jackson, from the Tennessee Conference, and Henry Porter, E. P. Holmes, Wm. D. Johnson, S. L. Mimms, J. M. Cargile, to the South Georgia, with Martin Wright to the Mississippi work.

Thomas K. Brown and Johnson Parks were on the death roll this year. The former closed his career at the age of ninety-three, after seventy years of labor, and yet was a man of remarkable vigor at time of his death.

On January 21st, 1875, the second session, or rather the the ninth session, of the mother Conference, convened in the courthouse at Albany, Ga., and was opened by Bishop Ward, who read Isaiah

xxxv. Rev. Wm. D. Johnson was conveniently present to accept and faithfully discharge the duties of Secretary, with J. M. Cargill, his assistant.

The announcement of transfers showed that Henry Porter, J. M. Cargile, W. D. Johnson, S. L. Mimms, G. H. Neely, J. J. Bowman had come from the North Georgia, and that Rev. S. H. Robertson and H. B. Dowdell were transferred to the North Georgia Conference. The interest of the people was made manifest by small gifts of money from various sources; especially pleasing in one instance, in the shape of one acre of land for church purposes, donated by Hon. John Hall. A number of visitors also attested their Christian fellowship and good-will by their presence and cheering words. Death had visited the work and taken away Revs. Zachariah Armstrong and Hamilton Spann. The death of these, with that of Father Thomas K. Brown, who, all felt, belonged to the whole of Georgia, irrespective of the division, was fittingly commemorated with special services.

A. J. Johnson, H. W. Whitaker, Samuel J. Thomas, J. R. Thornton, D. O. Alexander, L. R. Smith, Jasper Maxwell, Morgan Smith, Daniel Duncan, Wilson Williams, Anthony Rousseau, W. H. Hammond, Henderson Bowen, J. F. Campfield, Kelly Moses, Robert Hamilton, George Holt, A. Randolph, B. F. Brazell, Scott Devereaux were admitted into the itinerant ranks; and Andrew Monroe, Alfred Dunlap, Benjamin Simmons, Stephen Gadsen, Samuel Wright, Henry Williams and Prince Irwin,

were admitted as local preachers. Irwin Butler Clayborn Randall, J. A. Brown, Andrew Bigham, George Bass, Augustus Scott, H. P. Powell, P. W. Williams, William Askew, Isaac Coachman, David T. Green, were admitted into full connection. The elders of this year, elected and ordained, were Irwin Butler, Prince Gadsen, Gabriel Clark, Pineo Martin, E. R. Erby, Caleb McDowell; while the list of Deacons ordained comprised Giles Jordan, P. W. Williams, Andrew Monroe, Henry Williams.

The Sunday-school work was made a matter calling for clear consideration, and a set of rules was recommended as an order of exercises. Something of the kind seemed to be needed, as the ministers were not as observant of all things pertaining to its interest as the future welfare of the church demanded. Proper persons were especially needed to look after the details of the work, and this body felt moved to urge it upon all present to do their full duty in this respect under penalty of censure, suspension or any punishment which in the opinion of the Conference seemed advisable.

Upon the Sunday-schools and general education much depends. The church that neglects either must expect to suffer the consequences in diminishing numbers and disintegration. There have been many Sunday-schools established by the Missionary churches of other denominations throughout the South, in which schools our children have been reared, as we may say, with the result, in by far the great majority of such cases, of attaching them-

selves to the church which thus fostered them. Each church may expect this outcome. The Sunday-school becomes a family, with strong family relations and ties. It is but a step—and a natural one at that—to ally oneself to this family by Church Bonds; so that wisdom calls for every church that would retain its children and youth for its service, to make its own Sunday-school relations so strong, so sacred, so attractive, that no mere inclination will lead these away from its fold, for inclination is largely the reason given for the abandonment of the church of their fathers and mothers. But it must be remembered that in but few cases is this inclination superinduced by any of the theological reasons, but by those things that appeal so directly to the young, and seem to satisfy their craving desires, the desires of the most intellectual and refined spirits. These things are good teachers, possessed of winning manners, good moral character, and an enthusiasm for souls, managed with that discretion the young demand. To these then must be added a knowledge of the Scriptures, and the ability which comes from natural talent and experience, to make all things clear that belongs to man to know. This has been felt from the first by those whose minds were groping in the darkness for the full light that rests in God's Word. The A. M. E. Church to-day is awakening to that fact. Its Sunday-schools are being made centers, closed in by the church instead of assemblies, upon its circumference, as it were, ready to drop off at every jolt or show of neglect from

those whose duty it should be to keep careful watch over them.

Education received an impetus in the vigorous report its committee presented. The theological training in our own schools was recommended first of all, if possible. Wilberforce was ready and competent to receive and instruct all who might seek her walls ; but it was recognized that pecuniary lack made it impossible for many to leave the South for that purpose. Atlanta University was with us, and as we had been assured that its religious policy was not sectarian, the general education that its extraordinary advantages offered was heartily recommended to all. Best of all, the spirit of the true teacher showed itself in the offer of Dr. H. M. Turner to instruct such young ministers who could find time to spend a few weeks or months with him, and the necessity of an educated ministry was re-impressed upon the brethren by the committee of which he was chairman.

“ We cannot expect the people to feed, clothe and reverence us unless we are able to repay them with that instruction and knowledge which our exalted position demands, and they naturally expect. The simple titles of preacher, deacon and elder are not enough to satisfy those who are thirsting for moral and religious knowledge. We must be able to impart the same, otherwise we will become mere sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal, and our preaching will be but little more than the low of an ox or the bray of an ass. The minister is the rep-

representative of our Lord Jesus Christ, and as such he should be able, learned and chaste, and every spare moment should be devoted to the acquisition of such information as will fit him for his high station."

The above quotation is just as applicable to-day as then. In fact it will always be applicable, and every minister of the church feels the need of exciting all to redoubled efforts for the sake of our church, our children and our race.

The growth in recognition of our work, worth and bearing was shown by an amount of interest exceeding that exhibited at our last meeting in Thomsville, Ga. Bishop T. M. D. Ward, Rev. W. J. Gaines and Rev. Wm. D. Johnson were invited to preach in the M. E. Church, South, a courtesy never before extended to us in the State, and the white citizens alone, of Albany, contributed some five hundred dollars toward the support of the Conference.

Cartersville, Ga., was the place selected for the third session of the North Georgia Conference, and then it assembled in St. Luke's Chapel, December 16, 1875, with Bishop T. M. D. Ward presiding. This change of time brought two sessions of this Conference within the one year, the first having been held at Athens in January.

Sermons were preached before the body by the writer and by Rev. T. N. Stewart, who filled Bishop Ward's place, he being in feeble health. Rev. F. J. Peck preached the Ordination Sermon, and Conference also listened to a discourse by Rev. Robert

Anderson. There was very little business aside from the regular order.

William Foster, John Jackson, George Towns, George Martin, Alfred McCarver, L. McClaren, M. M. Nelson, Benjamin Franklin, Wesley Neale, B. R. Glass, A. Blunt, Aaron Pursons were admitted on trial; M. N. Nelson, H. T. Cargile, T. Slaughter, G. Jones, G. Martin, George Copeland, H. D. Bush and J. H. M. Durand were ordained deacons; the only elder ordained was Mark E. Cox.

Edward Purdee's was the only death the North Georgia Conference was called to mourn this year.

The General Conference which was to meet in May, 1876, called for an election of delegates at this session, which was carried out with the following list as the result: Andrew Brown, J. A. Wood, S. B. Jones, F. J. Peck, L. Gardner, H. Strickland, S. H. Robertson, Dr. T. N. Stuart, George Washington, Daniel McGhee, Peter McLain, and as alternates, Levi Walker, Daniel McGhee, Robert Anderson, Burrell Mitchell, S. Gardner, J. L. Smith, A. R. Spencer, Jefferson Cary, Jr., A. Price, H. C. Boyd, J. A. Davis. The lay delegates were also approved. This Conference made a report of Dollar Money as reaching \$2,699.00.

CHAPTER IX.

A SKETCH OF THREE YEARS.

For the year of 1875 St. Philip's Station was manned by Rev. W. D. Johnson, and St. James Mission by Rev. H. M. Turner, Bethel Mission by W. C. Gaines, St. John's Chapel by E. P. Holmes, and Columbus City Station by the writer. Albany Station was filled by S. W. Drayton.

The State Missionary, Rev. T. N. Stewart, reported \$86.80 for the year; and from the grand total, as reported by the Secretary, the Georgia Conference brought up \$1,511.30 for Dollar Money. This last showed that Georgia meant to do her duty and promised well for the next answer to the Financial Secretary, J. H. W. Burley, who appealed for aid in helping swell the receipts of the fiscal year to \$50,000.00.

The Centennial year of 1876 found the Georgia Conference down upon the coast at Savannah, January 29, where the body opened its deliberations in St. Philips A. M. E. Church. Bishop Ward was present, not having been once absent during his years of service with us. S. H. Robertson was made Secretary and W. D. Johnson, Statistical Secretary. This year, Revs. S. H. Robertson, W. H.

Jackson, H. B. Dowdell, Lewis W. Tyson, were transferred from the North Georgia Conference to this; Rev. Edward Ware from the Florida to this, and Revs. William Price, S. S. Mimms, J. W. Ricks and Kelley Moses from this body to the Florida work.

The General Conference, which was to meet in Atlanta in May following, necessitated the election of delegates to that body. The Georgia Conference was entitled to thirteen representatives—one to every eleven members according to Discipline—therefore the following delegates were chosen: Dr. H. M. Turner, Revs. W. J. Gaines, C. L. Bradwell, W. H. Noble, Geo. W. H. Williams, William Bradwell, Henry Porter, E. P. Holmes, W. H. Taylor, Wm. Raven, W. D. Johnson and Robert Crowley. The alternates were Revs. William Price, W. H. Harris, Mansfield Dillard, Alfred Attaway, Warren Shorts, W. H. Harris, George Linder, John McDougal and James Porter. The lay delegates were John Steward, Jackson Holt, L. B. Bateman, Louis DeGraffenreid.

An effort was made to provide each P. E. District with a parsonage for a home for its Presiding Elder, but the time was not ripe for the success of such a movement. Various visitors addressed the Conference, among them Col. J. E. Bryant, and Rev. W. E. Markham, of the Georgia Congregational Church, also Mr. John H. Deveaux, editor of the "*Colored Tribune*." The good Daughters of

Conference remembered us, as usual, with a gift of money, and a committee was appointed to draw up a constitution for this guild of workers, while the brethren were recommended to organize one in each charge. Woman was first at the tomb and last at the cross, as has been said, and ever has been the helper in the church. There are thousands of churches which owe a large share of their prosperity, spiritually and financially, to the faithful work and earnest prayers of these sisters, who, in their own way, have solved many a problem perplexing to those bearing the responsibilities, and have made many ways smooth, which without them would have been most rough and thorny. The ministers of the A. M. E. church fully appreciate all that woman has done, and is doing, for the upbuilding of the church of our fathers and for the glory of God.

Conference voted that eight should be the standard number of elders, sixteen of deacons, and thirteen of these admitted on trial. Rev. D. T. Green was elected to Elder's orders. A. M. H. Evans, W. H. Hammond, M. R. Granderson and Nelson S. Lowery were elected to deacon's orders. Conference admitted on trial Abram Martin, Benj. Roberts, Russell Young, Randall Jackson, Wm. Hamilton, Wesley Simmons and J. W. Wynn.

A petition was offered Conference by the writer to appeal to the Governor of Georgia, James M. Smith, to pardon Rev. Tunis G. Campbell. The facts of the case seemed to warrant an effort to obtain clemency. He was born near the close of the

eighteenth century, and had been preaching as a minister of a sister church for nearly fifty years. He had also been a Senator from the Second District of Georgia. He was found guilty by the superior court of McIntosh county of mal-administering the law of the State while discharging the functions of Justice of the Peace, and sentenced to the penitentiary to hard labor. Knowing the severe treatment and hardships to which he would be subjected, and mindful of his service to God and man, as well as of his great age and feeble constitution, it seems but a matter of duty to beseech the Governor to extend his executive clemency.*

The committee appointed to visit the West Broad Street Public School, Rev. James Porter, Principal, reported it in excellent condition, with three grades for boys and four for girls—a total of four hundred and nineteen pupils enrolled, with six teachers aside from himself. It was a lesson to every laggard minister that he must “get himself to his studies,” and the report was made the basis of an urgent demand for the ministers to meet the growing requirements of the age. The finances were in a better condition than ever before, with fourteen thousand two hundred and twenty-eight members, as reported in the Conference. The Dollar money reached \$2,010.50, while the Sunday-school money stood at \$1,123.55.

*Our efforts were in vain, however. The Governor received the committee kindly, but he wrote that the evidence was so clear that he felt the law must take its course.

The General Conference of 1872 had given us the Dollar system, which for four years we have been pushing forward. The sixth decade of the church had been reached, and eleven years had passed since the standard of African Methodism had been planted in the South, amid the influence of military forces, and under the shadow of the greatest war any country ever saw. Nine years the work in Georgia had flourished in some form. It was fitting that, as we reached another decade in our history, Georgia, as a representative of the South, should extend her arms to the church in hearty invitation to come and see what time had wrought—to come at a time when universal liberty was the keynote of the song sung by the whole land.

In pursuance of this invitation, the fifteenth Quadrennial Session of the General Conference of the A. M. E. Church, met in Atlanta, Ga., May 14, 1876, and continued in session until the 18th, Bishop D. A. Payne presided at the opening, assisted by Bishops Wayman, Campbell, Shorter, Ward and J. M. Brown. The memorial services of Bishop William Paul Quinn were held in the church May 5th.

The session was a pleasant one, as well as encouraging in all particulars. The Southern work—its rapid and vigorous growth—was most cheering, stimulating to new efforts the body which met in the heart of the South for the first time. From Washington, D. C., in 1868, after the beginning in Charleston in 1865, the General Conference had gravitated

toward the South by degrees as toward a magnet, for Nashville, Tenn., entertained in 1872, and it was to seek the South again in 1880, when it assembled in St. Louis, Mo. Now it was in the very heart of that section. The people did their part, as did the city also, and it was clear to every thoughtful mind that here in Georgia lay a great work, with unlimited possibilities and appreciative surroundings.

The church took its entrance upon a new decade of work in the Master's vineyard with Rev. H. M. Turner, as General Business Manager. Rev. J. H. W. Burley, Financial Secretary; Rev. B. T. Tanner, editor of the *Recorder*; Rev. J. C. Embry, Commissioner of Education; Rev. R. H. Cain, Secretary of the Missionary Society; and Rev. C. L. Bradwell, as Traveling Agent.

Bishop J. P. Campbell was assigned the work which included Georgia at this General Conference, and he opened his work in the State, December 1st, 1876, meeting the North Georgia Conference when it assembled to hold its session at Griffin. In his opening address he pleaded for a plain understanding of each other before there should be too great criticism—time to become acquainted, a prime necessity not to be overlooked in the itinerant system.

A class of twenty-three was admitted on trial: Revs. James Johnson, Geo. Parks, G. H. Holmes, Oscar Wardell, Jettes Thornton, Samuel C. Hyte, Adolphus Freeny, July White, John J. Belt, Henry Mullens, J. W. Lawrence, Allen McIntosh, Joel

Stephens, Edward Dillen, John Hays, Evan Davis, John Tolliver, Wm. Jackson, Warren Hill, Seaborn Jones, Doctor Griffin, Richard Butts, July Dessauer. The Elders ordained were Revs. Richard Harper, J. B. Lofton, W. C. Gaines; Charles Warren, J. W. Joshua, C. S. Green, Augustus Jones; the deacons, Revs. W. A. Pierce, Burgess Johnson, Peter Cruse, Abner Blunt, Wm. Stansell, Washington Campbell, Joel Stephens, S. A. Bush, Perry Simon.

Elder Noah H. Russel, who joined the Conference at Macon in 1867, had died this year and Clayton Bush had withdrawn.

Notice was given that the Theological Institute of our Conference would open in Bethel church, January 9, and continue each succeeding Tuesday morning. It was a step in advance to have a preachers' meeting like this, and had it succeeded it would have done a great amount of good, but under the direction of Francis J. Peck it failed to accomplish much.

The transfers to the Conference were Rev. J. E. Weir from the Florida Conference, and E. Waters from the Georgia Conference.

Bishop Campbell met the last named body, January 18, (1877) at Bainbridge, Ga., Bishop Campbell presiding. Dr. H. M. Turner, General Manager of the publication department, was with the Conference. Dr. Wm. D. Johnson wisely asked leave to make his report early that he might give his un-

divided attention to the office of Secretary of the body.

The visitors were much pleased with the work and gave words of encouragement, while Bishop Campbell in his most characteristically happy vein replied that God intends the nations redeemed to possess the earth in common, that they shall spread and people it. He instanced the settlement of America and Africa and the commencement of the scattering abroad at Babel, but one day they should return to each other. He said that the three sons of Noah had in turn mastered the world, but now possession must be in common. Though Japheth had so far exceeded his brothers in the race for dominion and wealth, Ham and Shem had determined to overtake him somewhere and make him disgorge his gains. They had caught him in America and he is now disgorging. Dr. H. M. Turner, as Vice-President of the Colonization Society, also pleaded for Africa—that aid should be given by Congress, that “*we may return to our Fatherland.*” The Bishop may yet go there, and if he does, it will be the wish of his many friends that he be made president or king of the whole country. Some members of the Friends’ Society in Philadelphia were present and arranged for contributing some books to the Conference.

The Bishop arranged for supplying Prospect and Mt. Airy Churches in the North Georgia Conference from the Georgia and Wright’s Chapel and all of Crawford County from North Georgia. The

Dollar money reached \$1,488.20. The preachers admitted on trial were Cuyler Hamilton, M. A. Grandison, John M. Collins, Geo. Green, Joseph Collier, S. D. Roseborough, Daniel Jones, Alexander Glover, Thomas Williams, C. S. Miller, with Wright Newman and Nathan Brown as local preachers. Solomon Clarke, J. R. Thornton, H. W. Whitaker and Nathan Brown (local) were the deacons ordained, also J. W. Wynnn under the rule for missionaries.

The North Georgia Conference of this year convened at Eatonton, December 5, with Bishop Campbell presiding. Dr. Turner was present, representing the Publication Department of our church, and vigorously pushed its claims upon the pastors of the Conference. He was ably seconded by the Bishop, who said that the action of last General Conference called upon each minister to take the Church Organ, and he intimated that if they failed in the duty they might fail to receive an appointment. The Bishop was most desirous of facilitating the business of the session, which seemed to drag heavily. This led him to observe emphatically "that he was sorry for one thing, and wanted all to hear him, and when he was gone to rest to do him the honor to say that they heard him say that the rising generation would laugh at us for spending three days in making the reports from the various charges when it might be done in one-third of the time.

The preachers admitted on trial were Solomon Russell (local), Aaron S. Jackson, Augustus

Dozier, Russell Clayton, Wm. Duncan, Joshua D. Hall, W. A. Walker, E. Burch, Max Whalley, W. M. Moore, John H. King, S. T. Farmer, R. Redwine, J. T. Beltsaw, Henry Crittenden, Brisco Griggs. B. R. Glass was the sole deacon elected for ordination, while Anthony Johnson, Nathan Berry, George Chapel, Wm. McCoy, J. F. Brown, were the elders. Rev. Lewis Davis had died. A number of men were left without appointments, and assigned to the various Quarterly Conferences.

The pastoral reports showed a steady advance in every direction.

The next Georgia Conference met in St. James' Church, Columbus, January 30, 1878. Bishop Campbell's opening address was "tender, soothing and sublime, yet truly eloquent."

Rev. Josiah Jones and Rev. C. L. Miller were not there to answer to their names. They had gone to the better land. Rev. James Peter was elected Secretary of the Conference, Rev. W. J. Gaines, Recording Secretary, and Rev. S. H. Robertson, Statistical Secretary.

There were a great many visitors present. Rev. Green McArthur, Rev. Nelson Asbius and Rev. Jefferson Pinkard, of the Baptist clergy, were introduced, also a number of brethren from the North Georgia Conference. Rev. J. V. M. Morris, pastor of Trinity Girard M. E. Church, South, was present, and gave his fraternal greeting in a most touching speech, claiming fellowship as one of the great Methodist family. It is true that our Methodist

brethren of all branches of the great Christian family everywhere seem not only to bear the closest relations, but to be desirous of expressing these. Yet, at the same time the writer would make no invidious comparisons, for there are those of other denominations with whom we come in contact who are most cordial in friendly feeling. It is most grateful to a struggling people to know of the kind regard in which it is held by the church which it left when it sought freedom of worship among its own. Among the visitors late in the session were Rev. Joseph S. Key, of St. Paul Church, and Rev. J. A. O. Cook, of St. Luke's Church (M. E. Church, South). The former in his remarks referred most feelingly to one of the old veterans, old Uncle Wm. Bentley, who long ago had entered upon his rest. The associations the two had with him, and the holy inspiration caught from him were especially noted. To all these fraternal addresses hearty and happy responses were made. Col. J. E. Bryant who, if possible, attends each Conference session, was also present.

Rev. S. H. Robertson preached the annual sermon, making a fine effort that profoundly moved all. The missionary sermon was delivered by Rev. G. W. H. Williams of the Thomasville, District and was a masterly one. Two other sermons were preached; one by W. H. Noble and one by Prof. James Porter.

The North Georgia delegates were introduced to the Conference, and the matter of the joint meeting

upon the late Educational Convention was brought up by the writer in a movement for Conference to adopt the preamble and resolutions drawn up. Then followed some earnest speeches by Rev. W. D. Johnson, H. M. Turner, W. J. Gaines, each in his own peculiar style. The Secretary of the Conference was pleased to record of these, "They vied with each other in their captivating remarks. The audience was held spell-bound while they soared aloft in the mazes of eloquence divine." The body was at last so moved that nominal trustees were appointed for the school, and the work of education received another impetus.

Rev. Jefferson Cary was transferred from the North Georgia to the Georgia Conference, and Rev. S. W. Drayton was allowed at this time to occupy supernumerary relationship. Several of the members had died: Rev. Patrick Wall and Rev. C. S. Miller, both young men, who died in the faith. Rev. W. H. Harris and Rev. Josiah Jones were two of the older Christian workers, numbering three-score years and more. The old men must expect to go the way of all the earth within brief periods, and their work is done. It seems hard, however, when we see the strong, youthful workers cut down, and we fail to comprehend the ways of our God in these manifestations of His power. Thanks to the living faith we have in Him, though we sorrow and wonder, we bow before His will, and knoweth within our hearts that "He doeth all things well."

Foreign Missions received the attention of this body more than ever before. It expressed its determination to do something now in their support.

The preachers admitted on trial were, Elijah Watson, Marshall Stevens, P. Brookens, Andrew Griffin, Allen Cooper, E. D. Lowrey, George Neal, John Cæsar, Toby McIver, John H. Harris, J. M. Cox, Lewis S. Beatty, J. H. Adams, Prince Davis and J. M. Mappe. The deacons elected and ordained were Abram Martin, Richard Brooks, Russell Young, Samuel J. Thomas, Daniel Duncan ; elders, S. C. Powell, L. A. Smith. Wm. H. Powell, Giles Jordan. Isaac Coachman, Jacob Graham, Andrew Johnson, James Etheridge, B. Mimms. G. G. Fleming, Samuel George. Peter W. Williams, George Bass.*

Upon the fifth day, Bishop T. M. D. Ward, then of the Fifth Episcopal District, was present with the Conference, and warmly welcomed. It was a matter of regret that the Senior Bishop could not be present with us, as invited by Bishop Campbell. His letter of regret to the Conference is so characteristic of his joy in good works that we give it here in full:

“ Reverend and Dear Colleague :

“ Yours came to hand this morning, and this is to

* Rev. David White, ordained elder of the A. M. E. Zion Church, was presented by the writer for full membership, coming to us recommended by Rev. Cain Rogers, of the Alabama Conference, as a man “ sound in faith and of good Christian character.” He was received and placed on the list of traveling elders.

say that I deeply regret that the state of my health will not permit me to leave home at present.

“I had to leave home on the 11th ult. for Trenton to attend the jubilee occasioned by the emancipation of our beautiful church from all its indebtedness—\$8,000—all raised and paid within thirteen months after its dedication, and a second church built besides, and half of its indebtedness reduced; all, under God, accomplished through the tact, pluck and common sense of Dr. Stevenson. Returning home on the 26th, I had not the means to take a sleeping car, and was exposed to draughts from a poorly heated car. I contracted a severe cold, from which I am now suffering, so that I dare not leave home at present.

“I had proposed to winter this year at Jacksonville, Florida, and St. Augustine, but to accommodate Dr. Stevenson, all my plans have been deranged. Should I recover in the next fortnight to travel with safety, and I get the means, I will follow you, if you will write again and let me know of your movements.

“A trip through Southern Georgia and Florida, would afford me no small enjoyment, because we would be of mutual aid to each other and accomplish the greatest good by our joint labors. But God’s will be done. I suppose your cherished wife has informed you of the fact that we have paid our missionary to Hayti every cent of what we pledged him. This is a noble work for one year, and to me is an earnest of the future victories which the

great head of the church intends to accomplish through the agency of the A. M. E. church.

“ But this victory should not make us content. It should rather cause us to redouble our efforts in behalf of Jesus, and within the next twelve months be prepared to send a missionary into the Spanish port of that historic island which will, in the next hundred years, pay us one hundred fold in the conversion of souls, as well as in material wealth. ‘The Lord Jesus make this bring forth abundant fruit in all ages. Fraternally, PAYNE.’”

This reference to our Haytian work, together with Bishop Campbell’s stirring address, so encouraged the brethren as to the good being accomplished by Rev. Mossell, our missionary, that a committee was appointed to write him, assuring him of the support and prayer of the Georgia Conference, and as a substantial proof of the same, to send him a donation of fifty dollars. Prayer without work is like faith without work. The two go hand in hand in any successful undertaking, religious or secular.

The transfers from the work within this Conference were Rev. W. H. Harris and the writer, to North Georgia; Rev. W. C. Gaines came into the Georgia Conference.

For the first time in any Georgia Conference, on the day preceding that of adjournment, the Bishop read out the appointments, giving the certificates the following day. The appointments were received with general satisfaction.

The statistical tables show a considerable increase over that of the previous year, and stamped the Georgia as the banner Conference. The amount of Dollar money raised was \$2,009.97. The discussion over the place at which the next session should be held, resulted in the selection of Cuthbert, Ga., where a Normal school was situated, one which the Conference then had in mind to obtain possession of, and place under our church. It was recognized that this could be made a strong school for our ministers, if such could be done.

CHAPTER X.

MADISON, CUTHBERT AND MACON.

Madison, Georgia, was the place selected for the North Georgia Conference of 1879, and it assembled there January 8, with Bishop J. P. Campbell, presiding, Bishop T. M. D. Ware, then of the Fifth District, assisting.

It was made a law of this Conference, by motion of Richard Harper, the Secretary of this session, that each pastor bring to each annual session hereafter not less than one dollar for less than one hundred members, and one cent per head for all over one hundred members. This was to be used for defraying contingent expenses, a deficit in the sum necessary for that purpose occurring too frequently. In looking over the statistical tables of 1878 and 1879, it was noted that there was a decrease in membership, according to these reports, from eleven thousand six hundred and eighty-seven, to eleven thousand six hundred and seventy-seven. It was small, it was true, but the question asked was concerning the consistency of such a decrease with the reports of revivals. There was a fear expressed then that the membership was being reduced because of the requirements under the Dollar money law. Later the

same matter has been brought to our notice in several sections, and we may have occasion to refer to it again.

Arrangements were entered into to create a fund to aid in sending Bishop Campbell to the British Wesleyan Conference, and a time set to elect two delegates and alternates to the Electoral College, meeting at Washington, Wilkes Co., Nov. 2, Oct. 1879. This was in preparation for the General Conference of 1880.

A petition was also prepared looking to the proper care of the blind colored children of the State of Georgia. The regular State Blind Asylum was located at Macon, under Prof. W. D. Williams as its Principal, and there the white blind children received every advantage. It seemed but just that an effort at least should be made towards obtaining some of these advantages for our own unfortunate ones. This resolution was prepared and sent to Prof. Williams, who was a liberal and conservative man in his feeling toward the colored people, born as he was with a kindly disposition to aid weak humanity wherever found. He in turn took up our cause and petitioned the State Legislature to build an asylum for our blind children. The result was that in 1881 the cornerstone of such an institution was laid in Macon, Ga., and a building erected and furnished with regular professors and instructors. Its first Principal was Mr. Lewis Williams, a member of Cotton Avenue A. M. E. Church,

and its Secretary for many years.* This is certainly a lesson that we should do whatever comes to our hand. Though we may not see clearly how we shall obtain what we ask, we may rest assured that if it is right that we should have it, it will be ours in due time, and so we should not hesitate to undertake those things that are in anyway for the bettering of the condition of the race. There is, despite all our troubles, a great deal of justice to be found residing in human hearts, and we have but to knock, and keep knocking, until it comes to our relief.

There was no election of elders this year, but the deacons ordained were O. A. Wardell and G. H. Holmes. Richard Smith, D. L. Durand, William Ivey, N. J. McComb, M. D. Brookens, H. B. Parks, Robert Richardson, C. H. Carter and Ralph Lawson were admitted on trial. When this session adjourned, January 15th, it was succeeded in a week by the Georgia Conference, which opened at Cuthbert upon the 22d, with a full roll of members, and before it closed its visitor's roll was a lengthy one as well.

Bishop T. M. D. Ward was present as associate Bishop with Bishop J. P. Campbell, and Rev. James Porter was made Secretary, with Revs. S. H. Robertson and Richard Harper, assistants.

The Annual Sermon was preached at Payne's Chapel by Rev. Henry Strickland from the text in Ecc. viii: 12, "Yet surely I know that it shall be well

*Mr. Lewis Williams, now deceased, was a remarkable man in many things. He was not a graduate of any school, but Prof. W. D. Williams, who was then the Superintendent of the Schools of Bibb Co., said that he always passed the best examination of any of the applicants who came before him. The writer can truthfully say of him that he, with Mr. A. H. Hendricks, were the best church Secretaries who have served him in his ministerial life.

with them that fear God, which fear before him." This pioneer of African Methodism was "in the spirit," and preached with fervor and acceptance to a large congregation.

It was ruled that all moneys coming from the charges, according to Discipline, must be reported in the financial report, and that special donations must come separately and be noticed separately upon the minutes. This plan has certainly kept financial matters in a much clearer condition and left the records so plain that no caviling could thereafter be indulged in on this head. The business of the church is important, and the financial success of the same is dependent upon the strict manner in which that business is conducted, so that for this reason, and for the purpose of avoiding all doubt and misunderstanding concerning it, there should be the clearest and the fullest possible statements.

When disciplinary questions were called, and the response reached to "How much Dollar Money?" it pleased the Conference to hear the report of one thousand, sixty-two dollars and forty-five cents.

The preachers admitted on trial in the Georgia Conference this year were, John Austin, W. C. Shelton, Newrey Ellison, John H. Adams, Prince Davis, Peter Smith, Prince Irwin, W. O. P. Sherman, S. G. Burnett, W. C. Davis, of North Georgia Conference, E. H. Wilson, M. J. Ingraham, T. McIver, D. W. Wilson and George Washington. In the election of deacons the following were set aside for ordination : E. Lowrey, G. W. Neal, J. H. Harris, L. S. Beatty,

P. H. M. Brookens, A. Griffin, Elijah H. Watson, Judge Glenn, Allen Cooper, Alexander Glover, John H. Caesar, Willis Lane, Thomas Williams, Adolphus Freeny, Sandy D. Roseborough, William Hamilton, John Hayes, G. W. Penny (for the Alabama Conference). Solomon M. Clarke and Benjamin F. Franklin were made elders. J. G. Fleming withdrew from the Connection this year. The number in Society was reported as fifteen thousand, eight hundred and forty-six members, with four thousand, eight hundred and fourteen probationers. With the exception of two expulsions and two deaths, the ranks remained unbroken save by transfers. David White and A. S. Dunwoody were on the death list. Brother White was a young man of twenty-five years and a comparative stranger to us. He came from the Zion Church and joined the Conference in 1878, being stationed at Sandersville. Rev. A. S. Dunwoody joined the Georgia Conference in 1869, before the division, and had filled in these ten years some of the most important appointments upon Circuits and Missions. He was on the Andersonville Circuit at the time of his death. Both of these brethren left families to mourn their loss. Appropriate and touching respect was paid to their memories as to those who die triumphant in the saving faith.

An exciting debate arose over the course of study prepared for the ministry, and the easy access now afforded men to enter the holy offices of the Church. It was wisely urged that the brethren be careful lest the doors swing open so wide that many unquali-

fied ones enter; but the persons under discussion being deemed as fully complying with the law they were admitted to orders.

Brother McGhee, pastor of the M. E. Church South, and of the building we were occupying through his kindly tender, visited the Conference and expressed hearty greetings. Dr. Hamilton, of the Andrew Female College, was also present and endorsed all of the sentiments of the eloquent address with which Bishop Campbell welcomed them, but when it came time for Bishop Ward to be called for, he declined, intimating, in brief, that he had lived long enough to learn to leave well enough alone, so he simply most heartily endorsed all that which had been so beautifully said.

As the General Conference had, at its last session in Atlanta, appointed Bishop J. P. Campbell to visit England and represent African Methodism in the British Wesleyan General Conference to be held in London, Aug., 1879, it behooved the Georgia Conference to do its share toward arranging for its expenses to meet this body in a manner fitting to our Church. This assembly was to be that known as the "One Hundred"—the number of men upon whom alone devolved the general direction and continuation of the British Wesleyan Methodist Church, as inaugurated by Wesley himself. Over ten years before Bishop D. A. Payne had been present at their opening, but up to this date (1879) there had been no legal representative from among us to meet them, and it was time that the A. M. E. Church, with its

sturdy growth, reached across the waters with fraternal messages to that body—the root of Methodism.*

A private matter required some consideration at the hands of this Annual Conference, and as it is one from which we suffer at times even now, it may with propriety be mentioned here. The unusually lengthy roll of visitors has been referred to, but there were more than these. The Bishop presiding informed the Conference that he had learned that this large number in attendance—approaching one hundred—explained their presence by saying that they were invited by their elders. This statement was productive of some considerable consternation, which seized upon each member of Conference—each man asking himself if he was the one who had thus been so hospitable for other people. It was a lesson. Our people were not wealthy—are not as a rule to-day—and the support of legitimate members of such a body is often a serious tax. What then must be the result of these careless, thoughtless invitations which may precipitate a host of equally careless and thoughtless visitors upon an already overtaxed, yet usually uncomplaining people. Christian charity calls for the utmost discretion in these matters. The host in all cases should provide entertainment for his guests.

The Electoral College which was to meet at Valdosta on the second Wednesday in June, called for

*Bishop Payne was present when, on his first visit to England in 1867, and in his "Recollections of Seventy Years," most vividly describes the meeting of this body, and the simple, impressive ceremony attending the installation of the new President, together with certain customs most interesting to note.

election of lay delegates to the next General Conference, and arrangements were made to this end.

When the appointments were given out Bishop Campbell gave pertinent admonition to the ministers, closing with the warning that every minister would do well to bear in mind when he receives his notice of new work. The Bishop said, as only he could say, "Get to your places as soon as possible, else the devil will get there first." Brother John Hays was transferred from the North Georgia as a licentiate.

There were those who felt that the work of the Georgia Conference was even now becoming too large for the one body to carry on, and Rev. C. L. Bradwell took a step leading to arrangements for another Conference to be known as the Middle Georgia Conference, but his motion failed of a second. Still it was a step showing our growth and the appreciation of our necessities. In 1872—the year before the former division—the old Georgia Conference reported two hundred and seventy-five local preachers. The Georgia Conference of 1879 have as a total in its seven Presiding Elder Districts two hundred and eighty-four; so it is seen that the same reasons pressed now as then. But the time was not yet ripe, and wisdom suggested that were another division to be made it would be well to bear in mind that the younger Conference (North Georgia) was growing as well, and Georgia African Methodism would be best promoted by consulting her in any step which looked to reapportioning the

work in the State, or in any sense beginning the work of extension in detail. Some changes were made, however, looking to the more even distribution of work in Southern Georgia.

Jessup was attached to Savannah District and to Jones Creek Circuit. St. Mary's Church and Dry Springs Circuit were detached from Israel Chapel, in Thomasville District, and attached to Atapulgus Church, to be known as Atapulgus Mission. Waterfall schoolhouse was added to Dry Springs Circuit, and Cochran Church to Camilla, to be known as Camilla Mission. Bibb County Circuit lost Seago Church, and Fort Valley Circuit, Allen's Crossing—the two to be made a Mission to Stinsonville and Allen Chapel Circuit, including the Clarrett Church ; Mt. Airy Church was taken from Muscogee County Circuit and Mt. Camadore Church, to be a Mission to Mt. Gilead and Pine Grove Circuit, the Munroe Graveyard Church to be attached to Stinsonville and Allen's Chapel Circuit. Cuthbert Circuit was disturbed to the extent of taking Bethel Church from the Florence Circuit, and Springhill and Smithville from Bluff Springs Circuit, the three to form a new Circuit to be known as Smithville Circuit, also a new Mission to be known as Stewart County Mission. Bethel Church to be detached from Lumpkin Circuit and attached to Webster County Circuit. Other changes were made in the remaining districts: Americus was to have a new Circuit—Cedar Creek—Mahaly's Chapel, from Beuna Vista Circuit, to be attached to it. St. Mark's and St. Luke's were to be

detached from Tabernacle, and a new Circuit formed—the Bradford Circuit. Smithville was made a station and Lee county a Circuit, under the name of Leesburg Circuit. Beal Church was to be called the Albany Circuit, and a new Mission formed—the Leary and Williamsboro Mission.

Sandersville had an equal number of changes: Wrightville, from Laurens County Circuit, helped form a new Circuit, including Buckeye, to be known as Wrightville. Mt. Pulin and Middle Hill, from Sandersville, gave another, including Sandy Run; Harris Church, Minton Spring and Bottom were to be detached from Davisboro Circuit and Bottom Circuit formed, taking in Hunt's Station and Clear Spring. Gibson Circuit was formed by taking Gibson from New Hope Circuit and adding Deep Creek and Bethlehem. Summerville Circuit, too, was made up by detaching Summerville from Swanesboro Mission and including "Nine-and-a-half," Noah's Ark and Gobait Hill. Valdosta District had three new Circuits—Blackshear, Pierce County and Charlton County Circuit—so that we saw the work was growing to the extent that division must soon again be necessary.

Among the appointments this year, St. Philip's, in Savannah, received Rev. Wm. H. Noble; St. James, in Columbus District, Rev. Wm. D. Johnson, and St. John's, Rev. R. B. Bailey.

CHAPTER XI.

ONE YEAR'S WORK.

Upon the 7th of January, 1880, the seventh session of the North Georgia Conference assembled in Cotton Avenue, A. M. E. Church, Macon, where the writer was then stationed. Bishop Campbell presided. It was the last year of his work in the District, and he prefaced the work before him at this session by a short address—at once of greeting and farewell, a model of the kind, and paternally tender.

Rev. R. Harper was made Secretary, with Revs. J. B. Warren and A. W. Lowe, assistants. The annual sermon was preached by Rev. A. W. Lowe, of Atlanta District. Sabbath appointments were also filled at Cotton Avenue Church, Presbyterian; First Baptist, Congregational, Allen Chapel, (East Macon) First Congregational, and also at Tinsonville. It was a day of feasts, participated in at these places respectively, by Bishop Campbell, Revs. R. A. Hall, J. M. Townsend, D. M. McGhee, R. Graham, Richard Harper, W. H. Harris, H. H. Holloway, George Washington, H. T. Cargile, J. B. Warner, C. S. Green, Anthony Johnson, Martin Wright, Abner Blount, H. C. Boyd.

The Bishop's address was as follows:

“MY DEAR BRETHREN: I feel glad to be once more in the presence of the North Georgia Conference, after an absence of nearly twelve months.

“Since last we met varied has been our experience. Each of us have had the ‘mingled cup.’ I have had, and have now, many causes for sorrow as well as some for joy. As for the sorrows I can call God to witness I have determined by His grace to endure them all until he sayeth, ‘Enough’, for by the grace of God I expect some day ere long, to find rest from the turmoils of this rugged life. I often desire, but am willing to wait, his appointed time. One of the causes of present sorrow is, I realize that at the close of this Conference I shall part with dear and faithful brethren, with whom I have been pleasantly associated during the past ‘Quadrennial Term.’ Yea, part to meet never again until the ‘general roll’ shall summon us around the ‘throne.’ Their conduct, conversation and faithful labor have endeared them to me. They are lovers of the church. They have manifested that love by the faithful services rendered. They are true as steel. With such thoughts as these I can but feel sad. I love those that love the A. M. E. Church—those that are true to her whether near the Bishop or not. Such ones can be trusted, such men are here to-day. Wherever I go I will speak well of them, will mention them to my successors, for they must be cared for. We cannot do all we desire for you at once, but it shall be done by degrees; go on,

take care of that assigned you, build up the church. God has brought me thus far along the 'lane of life.' What He has done for me He will do for you. Only trust him.

"Some of you must and will catch the mantle of Payne, Brown, Shorter, Ward, Wayman, Campbell and lots of other veterans that shall soon pass away. Only hold your way. Men may rise against you in the power of the evil one, but be pure and they can do you no harm. That which they produce to do you harm will do you good. Be strong in the Lord of hosts. Ever pray, labor and watch for the success of Zion."

The Bishop's remarks were received with tearful applause. The Bishop's wife was with us, and with a large number of other visitors, helped add to the interest of the session, which was one of the most interesting sessions the North Georgia Conference has witnessed. Among these visitors we noted Dr. J. O. A. Clark, Dr. Key, Rev. Robert Kent, and Rev. W. H. Francis, all of the M. E. Church, South; Rev. C. McCurdy, of the Presbyterian Church, and Rev. Henry Lathrop, of the Congregationalist, with Revs. G. H. Davis, G. R. Mitchel and Henry Williams, of the Baptist.

Dr. H. M. Turner delivered an able address upon the demands for intelligence and the promulgation of our own literature, intimating that the coming Conference would revise and advance the course of studies. Dr. Turner also spoke in glowing terms

of the deceased Bishop Haven, of the M. E. Church, our friend—a man and brother.

The ordination service was very solemnly conducted by Bishop Campbell, assisted by Revs. A. Brown, R. A. Hall, H. J. Gaines, D. J. McGhee, Peter McLain and R. Harper. The deacons were Thomas Screen, G. Parks, S. McClearen, J. W. Thornton, John Tolliver, Shadrack Brown, Evan Davis, A. S. Jackson; elders, J. B. Warner and W. A. Pierce. Revs. P. B. Peters, W. H. Heard, J. R. Gay, S. G. Gary, Homer Shaw, H. W. Madison, W. L. Bowdre, Willis Davis, S. Prichard, Alexander Smith, J. H. Hamilton, Thomas Screen, D. M. Pailsard, J. W. Kelley, J. H. Hill, Henry Hunt, J. H. Rucker, W. J. Hall, R. J. Bailey, Gifford Clarke, Miles Davis, William Upshaw, were admitted on trial.

The election of delegates to General Conference, resulted in Revs. W. J. Gaines, A. Brown, J. A. Wood, D. J. McGhee, A. W. Lowe, A. J. Miller, R. A. Hall, A. Gonickie, R. Harper, I. S. Hamilton, with M. E. Cox, W. H. Harris, P. McLain, George Washington, J. A. Davis, C. W. Warren, J. B. Lofton, R. Graham, L. S. Smith and E. A. Shephard, as alternates. The electoral college of Oct. 8, 1879, had elected W. H. Harrison and J. W. Brooks as lay delegates, with Harrison, Harris and C. C. Cargile, alternates.

The Committee on Instructions to General Conference Delegates recommended several changes in its report, such as the establishment of a Branch

Book Repository in Atlanta and other cities; a change in the composition of General Conference, giving one delegate to every fifteen members, and no Annual Conference less than four itinerant delegates; the abolishment of traveling agency, and the composition of the Board of Managers of the Church to consist of the Bench of Bishops and one traveling preachers from each Episcopal District; that the Presiding Elder system be deemed desirable to be made obligatory throughout the connection instead of optional; also in endorsing the Wesleyan Monumental Church movement, that action be taken for placing therein a Tablet commemorative of the honored dead of our church.*

The Sunday-school review, which was held at this Conference, was productive of good to school and congregation, stimulating both to a greater work.

Bishop Campbell was to leave the work in Georgia at this session, and a committee brought in the proper resolutions of regret and respect and God speed, asking only, in its own words, "that when his work is ended he may bind his sheaves together, and shout the harvest home." God grant that it

*The General Conference moved the composition of Conference, to consist of Bishops, General Officers, not less than two delegates from each Annual Conference, or one for every *twenty* members in each, and two lay delegates from each, in 1888. The General Conference ordered the establishment of a branch Repository, and the publication of the *Southern Christian Recorder*. The Presiding Elder system is now universal in the church. The Tablet Ordinance was ordered, and a window was placed in the Wesley Monumental Church in honor of the A. M. E. Church.

may be a joyous end to a well-spent life when He shall choose to call His servant up higher.

The membership reported by the North Georgia Conference this year was 12,937, with 3,040 probationers. Bishop Campbell mentioned the necessity of a correct report of this, as our history demanded it, and others were constantly asking for accurate facts concerning us. The Dollar Money reached \$2,168.30. As Bishop Campbell had attended the British Conference in the interval since the last session, the members were desirous of a sketch of his visit, which he gave characteristically in the following, as briefly reported in the summing up of his remarks in the record:

“Among the many acts of the General Conference of 1876, one of the greatest was the appointing of Fraternal Delegates to the Mother Conference. We think (and are proud to state it) that the idea originated among the young men of the church.

“The British Wesleyan Conference is composed of 756 men, in which is the ‘Legal Hundred.’ Wesley was chief in the church for fifty years. At his death it took one hundred men to equal him; hence the ‘Legal Hundred.’ If one of the Legal men dies the senior member takes his place. If more than one, the vacancies are filled by election. They have an annual election of Presidents. Each ex-President is seated at the right hand of the President. All grave questions are submitted to the ex-Presidents before being given to the Assembly.

All actions of the Conference must be sanctioned by the Legal Hundred before they become a law.

“Such, in part, is the august body before which I appeared after a pleasant voyage of eleven days upon the briny deep. And then there was a long waiting in the waiting room for them to examine my credentials, for it is a terrible job to get before the Legal Hundred. After getting before them, they desired me to say all I had to say in twenty minutes, which (as those who know me well know) was a hard job. Twenty minutes! Three thousand miles at an enormous expense to speak *twenty minutes!!* Well, I told them I'd say what I could, and managed to say just enough to cause them to extend the time twenty minutes longer. At the end of forty minutes I had said enough for them to cry, ‘Go on; go on! Say all you want to say.’ Then I went on and told my story. I found they had vague ideas relative to the status of the colored people of America, especially in the Southern States. They knew but little of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. We had been misrepresented to them. We had been laid before them as mushrooms, Jonah-gourd affairs, bad as could be, and the Southern portion a little worse.

“I told them differently. I told them of work done, and being done, in the South by faithful men of the M. E. Church South. I told them of Capers, Pierce and others. Their eyes were closed. I knocked them open. I told them there was a leaven at work in the South that would make in days these:

to equal any other nation in laboring for the advancement of the cause of Christ, and the spread of intelligence among ALL PEOPLE, irrespective of race, color or previous condition."

So closed one of the most interesting Conferences we have held in Georgia.

Americus, Ga., when the Georgia Annual Conference met there in 1880, January 21, was the sixth city in rank in the State, Atlanta, Savannah, Augusta, Macon and Columbus respectively outranking it in the order given; but it was of sufficient size to entertain the body amply, though it consisted of 165 members, 8 Presiding Elders, 53 itinerant elders, 3 local elders, 3 superannuated elders, 53 itinerant deacons, 6 local deacons, 39 traveling licentiates, while the visitors roll bore only a record of five visitors from North Georgia, among whom was the writer and Rev. J. M. Townsend, Secretary of the Parent Home and Foreign Missionary Society. To these we must add the many unrecorded friends from other churches who were present, and manifested much interest throughout the session.

Campbell Chapel was sufficiently able to contain all, and promptly at 9 a. m., Bishop Campbell opened the session after the hymn with a fervent and impressive prayer, after which he read and commented upon Acts, chapter I.

Rev. Wm. D. Johnson was made Secretary, Rev. S. H. Robertson, Assistant Secretary, and Rev.

James Porter, Statistical Secretary. The committees were appointed and the business of the Conference was begun. One new committee—two from each of the seven districts—was appointed upon new Annual Conference and Presiding Elder Districts, with Rev. S. H. Robertson, as chairman.

Little Bethel Church and Muller Church, of Savannah, the Daughters of Conference, the St. Philip's Sunday-school, with its Daughters of Conference, the Missionary Society of St. Thomas Church, Thomasville; the Florence Missionary Society and Sunday-school; Albany Sunday-school, Bethel Church, Savannah, Burke county Sunday-school, Taylor Chapel, Bainbridge, Muller Church, Jefferson County Circuit Sunday-school, Boston Missionary Society, the Good Samaritans of Tabernacle Church, Bluff Springs Sunday-school, Andersonville Sunday-school, Daughters of Conference, of Valdosta; Culter Church, Groversville Circuit, Daughters of Conference, of Tabernacle Church; Arlington, Groversville Sunday-school, Talbotton Chapel, Daughters of Conference of Summerville—all donated sums of money to Conference. They are mentioned here that the reader may know something of the spirit which has actuated the members of the A. M. E. Church from the first to give of their little to the cause of Christ in the church of their choice. This has occurred at many sessions. The sums are mostly small, but "many a mickle makes a muckle" is a favorite saying of the

thrifty Scotchman, and one the negro race must fully comprehend.

For years this Church has been aided in its support by these mites, and there is not one in the various Conferences throughout the connection that does not feel his heart warming toward those who are thus striving to help according to their ability. All the interests of the Church, both individual and corporate, seem to be resting upon the hearts of those who thus aid, for the cause to be helped by these sums sent are usually specified.

Upon the second day the election for delegates to General Conference, which was to meet in St. Louis in the following May, took place with the following result: Revs. W. H. Noble, H. H. Taylor and C. L. Bradwell acting as tellers: Elder S. H. Robertson, Rev. Wm. D. Johnson, E. P. Holmes, W. H. Noble, James Porter, G. W. H. Williams, S. W. Drayton, D. T. Green, W. C. Gaines, J. A. Cary, Mansfield Dillard. The alternates were J. W. Crayton, L. H. Smith, A. J. Johnson, Prince Gadsen, R. B. Bailey, W. H. Powell, M. O. Boddie, Henry Strickland, Samuel George. The lay delegates were A. H. Hendricks, L. J. Lester, with J. C. Erby and Allen French, as alternates.

Arrangements were also made whereby the lay delegates should receive a proportional part of the money raised for General Conference delegations, the pastors being required to raise two cents per member towards the sum necessary for all delegates' expenses.

The news of the serious illness of Bishop J. M. Brown having reached the Conference it immediately proceeded to prayer and supplication on his behalf. A telegram was also sent to the Bishop's wife expressive of the action of Conference, with its sincere sympathy. Thanks to God the good Bishop was spared to the Church and race, and yet lives, doing vigorous work for the causes nearest his heart.

Among the visitors was Rev. Samuel Anthony, of the M. E. Church South, who, after an interesting speech by Bishop Campbell, explanatory of the position of the A. M. E. Church and its prospects, addressed the Conference. Having entered the itineracy in 1832, he could speak as one having authority, more especially as he had traveled throughout the State of Georgia, preaching to both races during these years. One saying he placed before the young men worthy of being treasured up in every young man's heart : "Let the young men remember that the greatest of all blessings is piety, love to God and man."

Seventeen preachers were admitted on trial. Eight deacons were elected and ordained, and one reobligated; these were Rev. John Austin, Daniel Jones, Joseph Collier, [Marshall Stephens, Dawson George Wilson, Enoch H. Wilson, Modern Joseph Ingraham, Jeremiah Cox. William Williams was re-obligated. The elders elected this year were James F. Campfield, Marcus R. Granderson, Daniel O. Alexander, Lewis Cooper, John W. Wynn,

Morgan Smith, Henry H. Williams, George S. Davis, Richard Brooks, Samuel J. Thomas. James F. Farrier was re-obligated to the same office.

No one had located, no one had withdrawn, but Gabriel Clark had died at the three-score limit of life. He was on the superannuated list. He had been a member of the church for 45 years, and had preached for 30 years. He had joined the A. M. E. Church at the Conference in Columbus, in 1878. He died the death of the righteous, and went home gladly to meet his wife who had preceded him.

Rev. Semenson Gardener was transferred from the North Georgia Conference to this. The Committees' reports were unusually full and strong. It was claimed with every justice that our high religious position was but the result of Missionary effort—and individual effort at that—which had resulted in the establishment of churches in almost every State of the Union. It was as justly claimed that the growth and strength of the church must depend upon the amount of territory occupied, therefore the necessity of foreign missions and an aggressive policy, such as is used by other denominations, so as to keep rank with the workers in the great Christian field—the world.

The Committee "on the Exodus," made such a pertinent report that, if space permitted, the writer would be constrained, in view of the present agitation of the subject by both races, politicians, literary men, ministers and laymen, to present it as a whole, that it may indicate to future generations the atti-

tude of their forefathers in the Empire State of the South at a time when sorely pressed by the conflict which comes when a race, struggling to free itself from ignorance and vice, presses into the upper air of freedom, equality and prosperity :

“ The subject of emigration is pregnant of vital results, and has engaged the attention of all nations, not merely because, as the old maxim has it, that distance lends enchantment, but because it has ever been the means of individual and social advancement to mankind. Waiving any interpretation of Cain’s emigration to Nod, we might say that the measure was inaugurated at the foot of Babel’s cloud-piercing tower, and has been sanctioned by the nations of antiquity and of modern times. The voice of history proclaims the wisdom of emigration, viewed from any point of consideration,” etc., etc.

The writer could not wholly endorse the views set forth, but the report itself was a remarkable one, bristling with historical facts in proof of this last assertion. Some wholesome advice was also tendered in the following passage: “ If our people desire to emigrate, they ought to send out inspecting agents, or write the Governor of the State for maps, charts and other information.” The principal causes set forth were, “ political persecution and the poverty of the land.”

There was a marked increase noticeable among the members of the Conference in the tendency toward study, and the report on Education drew attention to the fact that this tendency was not confined

to the ministry. The colored population throughout the State, and especially that portion presided over by the Georgia Conference, was on the road of wonderful progress, as a whole.

Our Church school—Wilberforce—was looking toward greater usefulness, and the Conference recognized its claim to each minister's hearty support in pushing forward the work.

There was no recommendation this year from the committee for another Annual Conference, as was expected the last session, but various changes were made in circuits and stations, which had reached already an unwieldy number to properly control and provide for.

The representatives of the Methodist Church, as a whole, irrespective of slight differences in titles, having united with the M. E. Church in the erection of a Memorial Chapel, in Savannah, Ga., to Rev. John Wesley, the common founder of the church in all its branches, the Conference expressed its approval of the work, which was to be known as Wesley Memorial Church, and recommended the individual aid of all members toward its completion. It was certainly fitting that the African Methodists should unite with the others in raising this splendid memorial, which would not be complete in its idea without their hand in the enterprise. The North Georgia Conference had approved the plan and pledged financial aid; the College of Bishops had endorsed it, and it now received strong advocacy with the Georgia Conference through its agent, Dr.

J. O. A. Clark, who, being unable to be present on account of illness, wrote an urgent appeal.

It was a step toward unity of the various Methodisms—unity in spirit, at least—and an effort to preserve not only this, but the purity of true Wesleyan Methodism. Our present share in this enterprise has been already mentioned, as well as the circumstances attending our contributions.

The Presiding Elders stood by the Bishop's appointment, as follows, for the ensuing year: Savannah District, Rev. Henry Strickland; Thomasville, District, Rev. G. W. H. Williams; Columbus District, Rev. E. P. Holmes; Americus District, Rev. William Raven; Cuthbert District, Rev. S. H. Robertson; Valdosta District, Rev. J. T. Crayton; Sandersville District, Rev. S. W. Drayton; Albany District, Rev. Henry Porter.

Our beloved Bishop Campbell had been with us for four successful years. No Bishop that ever presided over the Southern States, made the impression that he did as a pulpit orator. He swayed all audiences, white and colored, and was a magnet to draw all to hear him. Dr. J. O. A. Clark, himself one of the ablest ministers of the M. E. Church South, said, on hearing him preach at Macon in 1880, that he was to be compared with Bishop Marvin and Rev. Munsey of the M. E. Church South.

We were now upon the verge of another General Conference, and a brief survey of some of the statistics of this annual Conference may not be wholly uninteresting. Members in Society were

reported as 16,772, with 4,068 probationers, as against 14,228 and 4,361 in 1876. The local preachers had increased from 255 to 336 and the number of churches from 175 to 241, their value standing as \$187,017.00 as compared with \$157,752.80, with 36 parsonages valued at \$7,564.00 instead of 21. The Sunday-schools numbered 263 with 13,945 scholars, 291 superintendents, 738 teachers and 10,344 volumes in library, against 190 in 1876 with 10,099 scholars, 187 superintendents, 520 teachers, 7,836 volumes. In moneys raised and distributed, \$5,191.48 had gone for support of Presiding Elders, \$21,673.57 for pastors; the contingent money raised was \$13,490, and for benevolence, \$1,765.84, as against \$431.02 for Presiding Elder's salary, \$16,266.94 for pastors, \$155.11 for contingent and \$644.71 for benevolence. While the Dollar money in 1876 reached \$2,010.50, in 1880 it was \$21,673.57, and the Sunday-school money which was then \$1,123.55 had reached \$10,344. It was a showing of no mean growth in four years. From six presiding elder districts we had reached eight, and no member of the Georgia Conference had need to feel any shame when the General Conference should take a survey of the field which had first felt the ploughshare of the church fourteen years.

Georgia was ready, too, for what followed at the deliberations of that body which recognized the worth of her men of might when it placed one of her foremost sons in a Bishop's seat,—Dr. H. M.

Turner, who was elected on the first ballot—a place his long and vigorous labors in the State from the inception of the church there had worthily won for him.

African Methodism in the South was henceforth to be a factor of immense power, when R. H. Cain, of South Carolina, another strong worker, was placed beside him on the third ballot, to serve the church with the talented Wm. F. Dickerson, who was elected on the second ballot, both of whom were to be called so soon from labor to reward, a loss to the church, the race, humanity and the world at large.

CHAPTER XII.

BISHOP DICKERSON'S FIRST WORK.

In the year 1881, the first Conference to convene was that of North Georgia, which assembled in Wheat Street Church, Atlanta, January 5. Rev. R. A. Hall was then pastor of that church.

Bishop Wm. F. Dickerson, one of the newly elected Bishops and the one appointed to preside for the next four years over the work which included Georgia, was present to open the session. He was alone, as his predecessor, Bishop Campbell, was unable to meet him there. From the first, Bishop Dickerson began his work systematically. A "Business Directory" was issued to each member of the Conference, and all business conducted according to it. He also immediately called the attention of Conference to another matter alluded to several times in this volume. In stating to the Conference the prominence of the State of Georgia over all other States,—its amount of taxation upon the colored people greater than in any other,—and then of the necessity of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Georgia being in the front rank in ecclesiastical matters as becomes the only Church as representative of the colored race, therefore he recom-

mended preparing for the future generation some record which would be of benefit to them and the church.

By this measure we find a chronological account inserted in the Georgia Minutes after this date. This gives the admission, ordinations and appointments of the ministers composing the Conference, with date of the same. For this wise provision the future generations will give hearty thanks.

The enterprise which has developed into Morris Brown College took more definite form in the shape of resolutions and pledges to select a site and aid in payment for it. This movement received most hearty acceptance and promises of support. The matter was then referred to the Georgia Conference, meeting on the 19th inst., for co-operation. At this date our educational work consisted of two normal high schools,—at Cartersville and Sparta—under our direct jurisdiction.

At one of the sessions of this Conference Bishop Dickerson stated that he came to his work in the South with many leading ideas, of which two were especially prominent in his thoughts—"promulgation of Christian education and the spread of Missionary work among his people. He held it was not color that made the negro inferior, but ignorance and poverty; that education and opulence would break down all barriers in the future.

The report of the Committee on Education was adopted when brought in, and enthusiasm raised to that pitch that it seemed a small thing to appropri-

ate eight hundred dollars as the first payment toward the prospective school from this one Conference. It was news to gladden our hearts that a high normal school was to be built for us also at Eatonton. Surely the day of great things was about to dawn upon us.

But four preachers were admitted on trial: Daniel Strickland, W. H. Harrison, E. Roberts, James Lake. Twelve deacons and fourteen elders were elected and ordained. The former were Reuben L. Lawson, John F. Belsaw, Wm. Ivy, Edward Dillard, Richard Butts. John J. Belt, Madison D. Brookens, Richard M. Smith, Leonard G. Gary, Preston B. Peters, Wm. H. Heard, Jordan R. Gay. The Elders were Aaron S. Jackson, Sandy S. Lester, Wm. Duncan, Howard T. Cargill, Milton N. Nelson, Matthew Taylor, Oscar A. Waddle, Hillard D. Bush, Peter Cruse, Washington Campbell, B. R. Glass, Wm. L. Bowdre, S. A. Bush and J. H. King were re-obligated.

A. R. Spencer withdrew this year, and Joshua D. Hall had died. One thing noticeable is the few losses which occur by withdrawal from us. Georgia has suffered but little from this, and experience goes to show that the same is true in other States. Brother Hall was on Monroe County Circuit at his death.

The sermons of this session, as a whole, were remarkable, given as they were upon the Sabbath by the Bishop presiding, Rev. J. M. Townsend, corresponding secretary of the Missionary Society and

the writer at Bethel Church; Revs. C. H. Boyd, J. B. Lofton and J. A. Davis at Wood's Chapel; Revs. Washington Campbell, M. E. Cox and A. S. Jackson at Shiloh Church; Revs. J. B. Warner and H. T. Cargill at the First Congregational church; Revs. J. R. Gay, W. H. Heard and L. G. Gary at St. Paul's Chapel; and Revs. C. S. Green, W. C. Warren, J. F. Brown at the M. E. Church. Decatur street church was supplied by Revs. Matthews Taylor, Edward Dillard and others. They were listened to by many of the white citizens, among them His Excellency, Gov. A. H. Colquitt, Revs. J. W. Heidt and C. A. Evans, of the M. E. Church South. The exercises of the Sabbath-school were especially pleasing with essays from even the little children.

Gov. Colquitt and Rev. C. A. Evans visited the Conference the following day, and made remarks which were full of brotherly kindness and cheer.

The reports from the Presiding Elders were encouraging, the spiritual and temporal advancement going on hand in hand in nearly all cases. Some new points have been added to the Atlanta District under P. E. Richard Graham. A total of two thousand twelve hundred and forty dollars made up the Dollar Money.

The transfers consisted of Rev. S. B. Jones, John Whittaker and J. H. King to the Georgia Conference, and Rev. R. Harper to the Tennessee Conference.

January 19th the Georgia Annual Conference assembled in session in St. Philip's A. M. E. Church,

Savannah, again, the second time since the division of the old Conference. Bishop Wm. F. Dickerson opened the session with most impressive exercises, taking, as the two lessons from Scripture, Jonah III. and James I. He made a special note of the first lesson, saying that "it makes a great difference as to what preaching we preach and who bids us to preach." He emphatically stated that satan sometimes suggests a text to the minister, and it is no wonder that failure follows. Then again he showed that instead of preaching what God bids, there are some men who are so unmerciful they would stand between the mercy of God and the sinner.

Bishop H. M. Turner, the pioneer minister, now honored by elevation to the Episcopacy, was with us again in his new office, to speak words of encouragement to those with whom he had been so long associated. It was very appropriate that he should be the one to review the history of the Georgia Conference under the successive administrations of Bishops D. A. Payne, John M. Brown, F. M. D. Ward and J. P. Campbell, not forgetting the service of Bishop A. W. Wayman in the place of the senior Bishop, during his protracted absence abroad. A very appreciative tribute was paid to each—to their character as Christian gentlemen, and to their labors, of which the present prosperous tide of affairs was the outcome. Then with a heartiness of manner and a kindness of feeling, which was echoed in all hearts present, he introduced the presiding Bishop for the next quadrennium. The ceremony of formal

introduction was reciprocated by the new Bishop, and the compliments gracefully and cordially returned, when he stated his intention to have had the pleasure of first introducing to the Conference, not Elder nor Dr. Turner, but *Bishop* H. M. Turner. Thus with hearty and great good will the two newly elected Bishops were received by the Georgia Annual Conference of 1881.

The business of the meeting first brought the election of Secretaries, which was simply a re-election of those who had so faithfully served us in 1880, Rev. Wm. D. Johnson, with Rev. James Porter and Rev. S. H. Robertson.

The Rev. J. M. Townsend and Rev. Dr. B. M. Arnett, the new Financial Secretary, were two prominent and welcome visitors of the Conference, while South Carolina and North Georgia were also represented in the persons of Rev. J. E. Hayne, L. D. Chairs and M. B. Salters from the former, and Rev. W. H. Harris, Richard Graham and the writer from North Georgia.

The reports from the districts rolled up a total of two thousand six hundred and eight dollars and ninety-three cents—this from eight districts, Columbus District bringing the largest sum, five thousand and fifteen dollars and seventy-five cents.

Presiding Elder G. W. H. Williams gave the Annual Sermon from the text: Lam. 4:2, "The precious sons of Zion comparable to fine gold." He presented his subject in the statement that Zion was built upon a hill and fortified with a wall; the

church is built upon the rock Christ Jesus, and its walls are salvation. Both are citadels of strength, and the church can only be betrayed by an enemy from within. The duty of the Christian was plainly pointed out, and the true child of God, with a heart filled with His grace, was likened to the gold of the realm, engraved by grace, and with the blood of Jesus Christ, so that years of conflict and trials have only brightened them as testimony of the truth of salvation.

It was a strong sermon with the central point, that of salvation—its priceless cost which made the sons of God so precious—then sent home to each heart by the use to which such should be put.

The statistical reports occupied some time, then the transfers were announced, being Rev. S. B. Jones and John Whittaker from the North Georgia Conference.

Visitors were plentiful, and kept up the interest of the session by letting the Conference know how much fraternal feeling after all exists in this world.

We have been told somewhere that when we read the history of all ages we are shocked to see how the times seem to have been most troublous. The printed page is so full of great wars and bloodshed, of all the dark and gloomy horrors, that we are inclined to think that nothing else has occurred. We forget that, as in the present, these are the things which history records in black and white—the startling things are handed down to us, leaving the

thousands of the common every-day deeds of humanity, with their ministry for good to be unrecognized and unpenned for posterity to read.

This is why the writer, in the times that have brought sore trials to the negro race in America from the day of freedom, desires to note with kindly good-will the many oases in the desert of its life and growth throughout these years, in order that justice, that omnipotent power in the years of time and the beginning of eternity, be done to all at his hands. We have lived and suffered countless things; we have had enemies, and have them still; we have been surrounded by almost impenetrable barriers, and confronted at every turn by soul-stinging looks, words and acts; but through it all we must pay honest and honorable tribute to any one who has made the way less stony, has lighted our path or lifted our burdens, oftentimes by diverting the scorn upon their own heads. Justice demands it. We demand justice. Let us all be just.

The resolution offered by Elder S. H. Robertson, that a committee be appointed to act with that of the North Georgia Conference concerning the college site, was referred to the regular committee on that point. After the meeting of this joint committee the report was made to the body in session. As it embodies the efforts of several years toward something tangible in the way of a school in Georgia, which should enter the field to do the work for the race remaining there for us to do, we consider it of interest enough to the future, at least, that it be inserted *verbatim*.

“*To the Bishop and Conference :*

“BRETHREN—We, the undersigned College Trustees of the Georgia Annual Conference, have the honor to report that we met the College Trustees of the North Georgia Annual Conference (or a portion of them authorized to act for the rest) in joint session this day at 1:30 P. M.

“Rev. W. J. Gaines informed the brethren of the action of the North Georgia Conference in negotiating for the purchase of 60½ acres of land, high and beautifully situated, in the city limits, with a comfortable house, having four rooms ready for immediate use. He asked our concurrence. Rev. C. L. Bradwell said he was present, and testified to the unanimity of the brethren and Trustees of the North Georgia Conference, and heartily endorsed their action; whereupon it was

“*Resolved*, That we do concur in the action of the brethren and Trustees of the North Georgia Conference, and suggest that the amount of six hundred dollars be contributed out of the percentage or other Conference money to aid in the purchase of the same.

“And we recommend that the Trustees meet as early as possible to elect officers and purchase the site.

Respectfully,

“E. P. HOLMES, Chairman,
C. L. BRADWELL,
S. H. ROBERTSON,
G. W. H. WILLIAMS,
J. W. WYNN,
HENRY STRICKLAND,
WILLIAM RAVEN,
WM. D. JOHNSON,
W. C. GAINES,
W. H. POWELL,
JAMES PORTER, Secretary.”

The Committee on Education also expressed itself as "believing that the time is fully ripe for establishing an institution for higher education, under the charge of the Georgia Conference, and we urge upon each minister, member and friend of our church the necessity of supporting the action of the North Georgia Conference, and our own, looking to the establishment of a College or University in Atlanta, Ga."

It was also wisely recommended that each minister and family in our bounds be induced to educate our children in our day-schools and Sunday-schools.

With all this as an impetus, the work of education was in a fair way to go forward in new lines. The other points suggested by this last committee are well worth mentioning here. Each minister and family was urged to take the church paper, and some daily newspaper, while all were earnestly pressed to patronize our publishing department, and those of our people who may publish books and pamphlets upon useful subjects. Similar ideas were brought out when the Committee on Sunday-schools reported.

In connection with the educational movement many good things were said. Among them Rev. S. B. Jones recalled the time when he joined the Conference in this city. He referred to the venerable Bishop Payne, who was then occupying the chair, and who, with his usual determination upon the subject of ministerial education, said in reference to the question of admission, "Don't bring any

men to me who do not know what the canonical Scriptures are." There is not a man in the A. M. E. Church, knowing our beloved and now venerable apostle of education, who does not know the vigorous insistence which he has maintained in this line—an educated ministry, and who cannot appreciate how much many men have owed to this very insistence, for it has been the means of spurring on many a laggard to do what he was capable of doing, and, it may be added, of keeping back the men who were either indolent or incapable of proper preparation for the greatest work on earth; so it will not be surprising to any of these to know of the consternation of some of that Conference who exclaimed as Brother Jones said he did upon hearing this statement from the Bishop's lips: "My God, what is that!"

Yet when we think of it, it is not strange that among the older men of that day there was much to be learned, but Bishop Payne rigidly adhered to the requirement that the necessary things should be learned. Even now when the light of knowledge pours its beams so clearly on every pathway, that the one who would preach Christ and Him crucified must need be almost blind if he see not and learn not, there are some—shall it be said there are many?—who would to-day join in the same exclamation to which Brother Jones gave utterance:

Praise God, our children indeed will not have the shadow of a righteous occasion to ask such a question!

A further spur to the movement of education had been given by the constitution of the Educational Department which was drawn up and adopted by the Bishops of the A. M. E. Church at their meeting in Newport, R. I., August, 1880. This new work provided for was to be known as the "Conventional Literary, Historic and Educational Association of the A. M. E. Church," and its object as stated was "the cultivation of literature and the study of history and the promotion of Christian education." This constitution also provided for the organization of this branch of society educational work in the churches throughout the Convention.

CHAPTER XIII.

A YEAR OF INTEREST.

On the second day of this session the Conference resolved itself into a grand Missionary Meeting, which Dr. B. W. Arnett opened. He was followed by Bishop W. F. Dickerson, who, after a few earnest words upon the work of our Home and Foreign Missionary Society and the fields of labor, together with the interest which was apparently deepening each year throughout the A. M. E. Church, introduced Rev. J. M. Townsend, who read his Missionary Report.

He presented the state of our missionary enterprise as encouraging, though, like all such enterprises, needing the steady financial aid that only complete organized effort can vitalize and render most efficient in accomplishing great results. There were in Hayti the Rev. C. U. Missell and his wife—who have since departed to the spirit land, broken down by the sacrifices there for the cause of the Redeemer. These with the two preachers he had employed to assist him, constituted our force in the interesting field of that tropical island. Rev. A. Flegler, in Africa, was reported as meeting with great success

in his endeavors, assisted by three local preachers, to spread the gospel in the name of the A. M. E. Church.

Nearer home, Bishop H. M. Turner was presiding over the field in the Indian Territory, where there was a population of thirty thousand colored people and a Conference of sixteen ministers, all doing a glorious work.

It was the old appeal which the earnest Secretary of this Department of our Church made to move hearts to contribute their mites toward the work. How much good has been done for the Redeemer's kingdom by these mites of both poor and rich, toward saving the world of mankind, we shall only know at the great last day, when the redeemed shall be gathered from the uttermost parts of the earth. May our Missionary work gain ground each year.

Bishop H. M. Turner preached a magnificent sermon in accordance with the Missionary appeal, and at its conclusion Bishop Dickerson announced that Bishop Turner had been appointed to visit Africa. This served to render the latter the recipient of numerous letters from both young men and women announcing themselves ready to become missionaries if only a little support could be provided. This is the true missionary spirit, and it is growing in our Church.

The Temperance cause, of which we shall have occasion to speak at length in another chapter, received strong support in able, eloquent and witty speeches from Revs. G. B. Reed, Irwin Butler, S. C. Powell,

Henry Strickland, S. W. Drayton, Prince Gadsen, as well as by Revs. C. L. Bradwell, W. C. Gaines, S. B. Jones, G. W. Gamble, Isaac Coachman and others, Bishop Dickerson closing with the thrilling remark to the effect that no minister, under the influence of intoxicating drinks, could glorify God. The hymn which was afterwards sung was most appropriate :

“ Help me to watch and pray,” etc.

One of the features of the Conference was the sermon by Dr. B. W. Arnett. It was one of the pithy, forcible sermons which this brother in Christ is so well adapted to give, and one which, with every true believer in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, will remain long as food for meditation. The young may well pause when the words of wisdom fall from the lips of the elders. Be they never so wise in this day and generation, experience and long years of labor have taught that which youth can never have until it, too, has passed through the trials by fire and become purified and strengthened by the ordeal.

This sermon was a masterly presentation of the argument that revealed religion is superior to natural religion ; and it appealed to both head and heart, as a sermon should. It was not a mere display of emotional oratory, though it was a masterpiece of fervid eloquence ; but irrefutable facts were given and statements made, boldly challenging the unbeliever to the proof of that which would warrant such a position. Ah, it is true that not even an Ingersoll can shake the soul that is deep-rooted in the faith of a

Redeemer—in the inspired writings of that Book of books.

What we need are young men who will enter the ministry with all their native talents strengthened and broadened by that which was denied to the older brethren—a full and comprehensive education—and then to devote all to the hourly service of the Master, counting each day lost which does not see some one nearer the kingdom than before through their ministrations.

Right in this connection, the opening events of one of the day sessions lead to quoting some of the brethren's remarks upon the subject of quoting other men's sermons. There is too great a tendency at times to be carried away by the eloquence and learning of others, so much so as to forget one's self, to be carried out of one's self, we ought to say, and this danger is especially present to bright, receptive minds which readily grasp all the meteors of thought that flash upon the mental horizon from any quarter and store them away—ofttimes unconsciously—for future use, when without change of form they are launched forth as their own fiery missiles—again oftentimes unconsciously—having lain within the mind so long, so many times recurring to it, that they have become a part of it.

Good preaching, fiery illustrations, sharp thrusts of the sword of the spirit are all enjoyable and do valiant service for the Master ; but do not let the young men think a patchwork sermon, a conglomeration of the readily apparent fireworks of another, to

be that which is most effective or wholly without suspicion—that which we are bound to speak sooner or later. Rev. C. L. Bradwell's amusing anecdote is peculiarly apt at this point. He gives the credit of its origin, as far as he knows, to Father Bentley, one of the old members of St. Philip's Church in Savannah :

“ A crow was admiring the peacocks upon their parade ground and determined that he would be a peacock. He found out their sleeping place and after picking up all the waste feathers, retired and fixed himself up with the plumage thus appropriated, by pulling out his own feathers and replacing them by the gayer ones he had taken. Then he joined the other peacocks upon the parade ground. When the line was formed, the question was asked, ‘ Are they all peacocks here ? ’ The answer was, ‘ They are. ’ But there was a little peacock that had aroused suspicion, and they concluded to examine each one by pulling at his feathers. When they came to our hero his feathers all came out and he was neither a crow nor a peacock. ” The brother pointed the moral to his tale in the observation, “ Just so in the long run it will be with a preacher who borrows his sermons. ”

The young brethren who read this may not be able to cope with a Bishop Arnett in imagination and forceful expression, or with a Bishop Payne in the depths of scholarly learning which his seventy-nine years of labor have garnered for him, but they may learn how to use, as they, in the legitimate way,

the treasures of thought, the nuggets of wisdom which are to be mined from the universe of others' learning and experience, and thus add to their own store—enriching, not substituting, adorning, not masking.

It seems to have been a time when all were urged to stand upon their own merits.

The difficulty which some ministers have in collecting dollar money might be largely overcome if they would but systematically and faithfully follow Bishop Dickerson's suggestion when he, in answer to a question which brought out his decision—the same made by Bishop Campbell at previous meetings—added, "While it is true that no one who refuses to pay that money can hold an official position in any of our churches, the preachers in charge must show the people not only that the law requires it, but he must give the reasons why it ought to be collected—show that "*Jesus is in that dollar.*" That is what is wanted everywhere: to show that Jesus is in one of the best systems we have ever had by which we may carry on our Church work—Jesus Christ's work.

The Sabbath ritualistic services prepared for our Church were introduced for the first time in St. Philips A. M. E. Church Jan. 23d, upon which occasion all listened to a sermon by Rev. Samuel W. Drayton, begotten of the spirit; and at the conclusion, in a ceremony most beautiful and experience, the Bishop ordained the following young men to the office of Deacon: J. H. Adams, W. O. P. Sherman and James R. Bennett. The ordination.

of Elders took place at 3 P. M. after a strong sermon to the great congregation by the Bishop, closing with the stirring appeal, "Brethren, study to preach Christ. Live Christ, suffer with Christ, and then at the close of your labors reign with Christ in glory. He hath said, 'Lo, I am with you always even to the end of the world.' Preach Him then, preach Him to all and cry in death, 'Behold, behold the Lamb.'"

Rev. Sandy D. Roseborough was ordained to the office of Elder, and Revs. J. B. K. Butler and H. M. Miller, who came to us in regular standing from the Baptist church, were re-obligated. At 7:30 P. M., Rev. Wm. D. Johnson, D. D., preached from the text, Jeremiah ix: 23-24, "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, etc."—a fitting climax to the trio of sermons which made the day memorable to all who heard.

As all those things looking toward unity are desirable things by all, we find at this Conference two gentlemen of Chatham County Sunday-school Association, who made earnest remarks in the interest of organizing a State Sunday-school Convention to meet next spring, which organization looked toward representation in the International Sunday-school Convention.

The year's studies were represented by a gratifying report. A rigidity of system disclosed itself and those brethren who failed to pass from one year to another were vastly comforted by this fact, and the assurance that the standard of work was rising so

that they really stood comparatively on a higher plane than many predecessors at the same stages heretofore.

Our Home Missions were found to be this year, where Home Missions most assuredly ought not to be—in a state of precarious dependence for their support. Over three hundred preachers and uncertain subsistence ! It was something to appall us, for surely while the gospel may be spiritual meat and drink, yet nowhere are we bidden to place our servants in the field, and then placidly expect them to sustain their corporeal existence upon it alone. We can do no less than see that ravens carry to them the staff of life. Hayti, Africa and our Indian Mission all deserve our earnest, prayerful, substantial recognition. Yet the South has done its share, considering how short a time since the A. M. E. Church passed from a mission field itself into self-supporting independence. We have to grow slowly, perhaps, if it would be surely, but sustenance is a prime necessity to all growth.

Then, too, in order to grow the children must be led along with us. This fact was earnestly placed before us in a plea for the children. Our present Sunday-school Department was not then organized, but the church in the South has been made to feel with every meeting that which was so especially emphasized at a North Georgia Conference some years later (1884) when Bishop F. M. D. Ward made this statement: "The A. M. E. Church to-day labors under a mighty necessity. The Roman Catholics,

have enrolled at the South over 200,000 of our children. We must go out after our children, go for them in earnest and go for them now," adding, "Let the Morris Brown College in Atlanta be used as a perpetual monument of the energy and devotion of the fathers who builded better than they knew."

When we think of the fact that there are in the South fully fifty schools and colleges backed by other denominations, we can see only one thing—that all are reaching after the children and youth. We must be up and doing or else give them up, and that suggestion every African Methodist will answer, *No!*

But to carry out this plan of drawing in our children, we must be impressed by the statements made in one of the reports: "The church will not be just what it ought to be until more time is spent with the Sunday-school. If you want an educated ministry such as God will be pleased with, and the world cannot deny, train them up in the Sunday-school. If you want Stewards, Trustees, Class-leaders, and members who will do their whole duty, train them up in the Sunday-school. You must not be afraid to teach them African Methodism—teach them to know that is the name of this church and why it is so called, and why they ought to love and support it. Teach them how to save church money. When this is done Macon, Savannah, Columbus and Atlanta will not be the only good points. The reason why the church fails to take care of the man is because the man fails to take care of the church."

These closing statements contain some significant

truths. Neither are they limited to the State of Georgia. If we wish prosperity, if we wish increase, if we wish God's blessing to descend richly upon the church of our Fathers, we must reach out for the children, not forcibly, but reasonably, and magnetically draw them in and hold them in her arms until they have reached the age at least when they can wisely be trusted to choose their own faith. Be assured there will be but few straying from our fold if this be wisely done.

The committee which had been appointed upon Division of Conference failed to find anything to report, as the majority of the committee from the North Georgia Conference were unable to meet, and the work was therefore continued to the first Wednesday in May, when the committee were to re-assemble in the city of Macon. The joint Conference Committee upon College Site were more successful. The writer had informed the session that the brethren of North Georgia had unanimously acted and negotiated for the purchase of what is now Morris Brown College. The Conference suggested that six hundred dollars be contributed to this effort for higher education in the State, as had been done by the North Georgia Conference.

Brother Waddy Parks, in the prime of life, was cut off by the hand of death—the only member of the Georgia work aside from Rev. J. D. Hall of North Georgia.

A new feature of the Georgia Conference this year was the shape in which the Presiding Elders' Reports

were placed and made a part of the printed minutes. Had the church as a whole a systematic record of its specific churches, history would be greatly aided in accuracy. Only such detailed descriptions of the life and work of the most insignificant station from its origin can make it so. But we grow with the years in all things, and all early history must of necessity be a scattered account of what is done by the early workers, and this is especially true of Methodism in all its branches. It may be that fifty or an hundred years hence our descendants will wonder why we, too, at the close of this century, were not more careful that they might know much of what we doubtless leave unrecorded, strive the best we may.

The Savannah District reported three churches built—one on Sylvania Circuit and two on Mobley's Pond Circuit, while on the Effingham River Circuit Rev. E. Lowery had erected a first-class camp-meeting stand upon our own land (a plat of fifteen acres of timber), where a church, parsonage and needed camp-meeting supplies were also to be found. Presiding Elder Henry Strickland had added to the district within the year, two new circuits and missions where we had nothing before and Rev. A. Martin, under him, had purchased a lot and built a church, having gathered a good congregation. Rev. G. B. Reed, of the Hutchison Church Circuit, had built a church whose entire property was worth over \$2,000. Rev. Wm. Hamilton, at Taylor Creek Circuit, was

also building a church there. So the work under Elder Strickland, at the close of his fourth year on this district, had been extended in every direction, and in this one year had gained \$4,000.00 worth of property.

Thomasville District was also in a favorable condition—greatly improved during the year under Presiding Elder Rev. G. W. H. Williams. An increase of three hundred and fifty-six members and a fair financial showing was evidence in itself of the hard labor that had been given.

A considerable revival on the Muscogee County Circuit, in the Columbus Presiding Elder District—Rev. E. P. Holmes, Presiding Elder—showed that Rev. W. S. Shorts was working in the right line. Talbotton was receiving valuable repairs and St. Peter's and Mt. Zion Circuit, under Rev. Wm. Ross, were building a chapel. A new church at Box Springs was nearly completed by Rev. B. F. Franklin, while a good church at Fort Valley had been built by Rev. J. W. Wynn. Reynold's and Everett's Mission, where formerly there was nothing, had been built and ten or twelve members gathered in by Rev. Newrey Ellison, and Robertson's Mission, set off from St. James church in Columbus one year before, now reported sixty-eight members and a growing work.

In Americus District, Rev. Wm. Raven, Presiding Elder, good work under Rev. W. C. Gaines was reported at Americus. In Cuthbert District, under Rev. S. H. Robertson, Presiding Elder, five churches

were already built or in progress. There was a new parsonage at Dawson, under Rev. H. B. Dowdell, and new work had opened on Brooksville Circuit, while, best of all, revivals at nearly every point occurred during this first year of Elder Robertson's presiding influence.

Valdosta District reported four new churches built, repairs made, wiping out of some debts, good Sunday-school work and increasing membership under Presiding Elder J. T. Crayton. Sandersville District, with Presiding Elder S. W. Drayton in charge, showed landed property added at nine different points and the work preparatory to building going on at a promising rate. The pastors were all workers. Rev. Henry Porter, Presiding Elder of the Albany District, reported Rev. D. T. Green, pastor at Albany Station, as doing nobly in building a new brick church, for which his flock had raised upwards of \$1,200.00. Rev. G. R. Bass, on Blakely Circuit, and Rev. E. B. Brown, on Arlington Circuit, had entered the work of building a parsonage. Rev. T. McIver, on Lee County Circuit, Rev. P. L. Jackson, on Morgan, and Rev. John Harris, at Dover, were each engaged in erecting new churches, while at Leary Rev. Boston Scott had purchased ground for the purpose.

This brings up the subject of residences. The General Conference at St. Louis ordered that the newly elected Bishops, Rt. Revs. H. M. Turner, D. D., LL. D., Wm. F. Dickerson, D. D., R. H. Cain, D. D., should live in the South. Up to this time the

South had no resident Bishop. The Senior's home was at Wilberforce, Ohio; Bishop J. A. Shorter was his next door neighbor. Bishop Brown's residence was in Washington, D. C., and Bishop Wayman was located at Baltimore, and Bishop Campbell at Philadelphia; while Bishop Ward's home was in Benning, Washington, D. C. So the South, as a region below the limits of Washington City, had no Episcopal residence.

It was, of course, a personal sacrifice to break up homes already formed and locate in a new region, but it had been ordered. Appreciating these sacrifices which must be made, the Conferences of South Carolina and Georgia decided to assist in making ready these new homes. To this end the Columbia Conference and the Georgia Conference contributed to assist Bishop Dickerson in the purchase of a home. There to-day in the city of Columbia, South Carolina, stands a beautiful residence, which the Bishop was given only a few short years to enjoy before he went to his long home—that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. His widow still resides there.

The retirement of Bishop H. M. Turner from active membership among us to enter upon the higher duties of Episcopacy was looked upon as a great loss in one sense, but he carried with him warmest sentiments of love, honor and esteem. He assumed charge of the Eighth Episcopal District. With the last General Conference nine Episcopal Districts were laid off, but though the union with

the B. M. E. Church [was agitating the Church and in the present year (1881) had been to a degree consummated, it was not yet included in our work. Georgia and South Carolina constituted the Sixth Episcopal District under Bishop Dickerson, while at that time Alabama and Florida were under Bishop Wayman as the Seventh District.

The year 1881 was a memorable year in some respects. It was the year when a noted gathering of men—laymen and clergy, ministers and bishops—met the Ecumenical Conference in London to do honor to themselves and the church. From this they returned safely under His care, bringing renewed zeal and added wisdom after having demonstrated to that great Christian assembly what the negro is and what he can do with arms half pinioned, and above all, what a glorious church work we command in the army of the church militant.

The year's work in Georgia concluded financially strong. The North Georgia Conference reported \$2,012.40, and the Georgia Conference \$2,608.93 from 13,341 members.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE YEAR 1882.

As had been the custom, the North Georgia Conference opened the year 1882 holding its session first in Bethel Church, Augusta, Ga., beginning Jan 11th. The Georgia Conference followed on the 26th, assembling in St. Thomas A. M. E. Church, Thomsville, Ga.

Bishop Dickerson presided over each in turn, with Rev. T. McCant Stewart, of Sullivan St. Church, New York City, to assist in the opening exercises of the latter.

The business of the former was promptly laid out, and on the evening of the first day the body listened to the annual sermon by Rev. A. J. Miller, Presiding Elder, from the text in Rev. iii: 21, "To him that overcometh evil I grant to sit with me in my throne."

Among the visitors introduced to this Conference were Bishop L. H. Holsey of the Colored M. E. Church of America and Revs. C. H. Collins, A. J. Stinson, S. L. Stinson and G. W. Usher of the same. After the statistical reports, an indefinite extension of time that the Conference might hear from Bishop Holsey was taken at the request of

Bishop Dickerson, who paid this neat tribute in presenting the visitor: "The church so nobly represented by Bishop Holsey, in the midst of vast difficulties and besetments, has accomplished a work for God and the African race which entitles it to the respect and admiration of the entire Christian world; but especially the colored Methodists of every name; and if it should please God to bring about an organic union of the African churches, it would be a matter of delight with me to have it strike in at first with A. M. E. Church and the C. M. E. Church, in America.

Bishop L. H. Holsey replied nearly as follows: "There is a oneness in Methodism which is like the dust of the lodestone. It will gravitate to a focal center. I have seen the same characteristics of Methodism in Europe and America. There has been a tendency among the educated people of late to stifle the original fire of truth; but there is a rekindling of that fervency breaking out into new vigor from the late Ecumenical Council. The separate bodies of Methodists are like mighty rivers running side by side, but destined to unite in the near future; or it is like laborers in separate fields, between whom the middle wall of partition is crumbling to decay. He felt glad that for once, and in London, he had found the place where it was good to be a black man; and the only trouble with him was that he was not quite black enough. He was thoroughly convinced of the high destiny awaiting the colored race; and it can be reached only through a full participa-

tion in the benefits of the Gospel; and this has well nigh been secured to us through the powerful influence of the Methodist doctrine. We have a common work in the several departments of our labor, and the grand results which have flowed from the influence of John Wesley will continue to bless the world until the innumerable company of saints, redeemed and reunited, shall enter the Master's joy in the city of the New Jerusalem. God bless your Conference and your labors with abundance of grace. Amen."

The missionary meeting was most interesting with addresses by Revs. Richard Graham, Andrew Brown, the writer and others; but it was at the anniversary of the Educational Society that the enthusiasm of the workers of the Conference showed itself. The report of this committee, which was accepted, appropriated \$700 to pay its proportional part of one thousand three hundred and twenty-nine dollars borrowed by the college trustees, while a day was set apart in May to raise funds to meet the last payment. Revs. W. H. Heard, A. W. Lowe and R. A. Hall made telling speeches upon the subject, and what the latter said in reference to sustaining Bishop Dickerson has been done bravely and nobly for him and those who have followed him—Bishop J. A. Shorter and the writer. "Help them lay the stepping stones; render a full and hearty support, that our ministers may rise higher and higher, until they shall gaze upon the bright orb of intellectual light

and strike the lyre with thoughts and words that burn with living fire."

That the youth of the present generation may know something of what we, who stand at middle age, endured in gathering precious bits of education, Rev. S. H. Robertson's remarks are inserted here. "He attended college away down on an old plantation in Mississippi and graduated in three weeks. He was taught by his master's little son; but when the overseer found it out his course was brought to a sudden close. His highest ambition at that time was to learn how to write his pass. He kept a copy of one and spent a whole year studying it; and, after wasting bottles of ink, he succeeded in learning to write; but it was bad and he was afraid to trust it. At last one night he left it lying upon the counter in a store and came back asking; 'Has any one seen my pass?' After looking around some time the clerk said: 'Here it is;' and the writer came out of the store saying to himself, 'Thank God, somebody can read it.'"

We say Thank God for the wave of enlightenment that has enabled so many thousands of those who struggled then to enjoy at last the many privileges and blessings that freedom with education has brought.

Bishop Dickerson at this time was collecting books to complete a library of Negro authors, and urged the brethren to "take hold upon the good productions of our own race and bring them home to our churches and people." It was what he was ever ready to for-

ward—literary work of the race—and his pride in it was that which should be the pride of all. No wonder that he took the book of the first author of a Greek work* that the race has produced—the first volume from the press—on his departure for England, Aug. 3, 1881, and in Exeter Hall, London, waved it triumphantly before the eyes of the vast audience assembled there to have it received with cheers by these Christian brethren. There is no race in literature, no race in education, and we have only to achieve success to receive recognition. We need, too, to be great enough to recognize greatness in our fellow men with the same unselfishness that we exhibit in recognizing Supreme greatness. In fact this is one great attribute of the man who is himself truly great. Bishop Dickerson tells of Bishop Payne's appointment to preside over that great body in London. The Senior Bishop cried, "Impossible! I cannot do that when there are so many superior men here." Then when told of the necessity, he said, "I will pray over it." But when he at last consented, we find Bishop Dickerson, exclaiming as he tells of it, "It was the grandest victory of my life when he consented with his splendid ability to represent the A. M. E. Church and the colored race."

The features of this Conference were strongly educational and the literary work of a high rank. Bishop Turner's remarks and those of others led all

*"First Lessons in Greek" by Prof. W. S. Scarborough, A. M., LL. D., of Wilberforce University, Ohio.

to feel that Georgia was rapidly going on to a higher intellectual plane than it had hitherto occupied. An instance of what might be done by any one was given in the tribute to the memory of Job K. Brown, who, when nearly one hundred years of age, was pressing on even without the support of the younger men of Conference, and stood up to advocate most advanced ideas upon the subject. These are the men whose influence in life and after death help make and mould every race.

The matter for equal accommodations upon railroads came up, for it concerned us deeply—the ministers who necessarily travel much from point to point. We thank God that constant agitation by word and prayer is working in the hearts of men through Him, so that there is light ahead upon that disgrace to American civilization—the Negro's railroad accommodations in the Southern States.

Twenty-one were admitted or re-admitted into full connection. Thirteen were elected Deacons and three Elders: William Upshaw, Homer Shaw, Henry Mullin, Austin Flewellen, Melvin W. Moore, Charles H. Carter, William Hall, Jr., Henry W. Madison, Edmund Robinson, John Henry Jackson, James Andrew Johnson, Alfred Emanuel Walker, and Charles Henry King (local), and Green Hillsman, Holmes Madison, Daniel Brookens. Perry Simon's was the only death from the ranks. There were several transfers from the work elsewhere: Lawrence Thomas, B. R. Glass, J. B. Warner, George Washington, A. G. Gonickie, P. B. Peters, went to the Georgia Con-

ference, Rev. Edward Robinson to South Arkansas Conference and Rev. Anthony Johnson to Columbia Conference. Rev. W. C. Banton, recent chief clerk of the Publishing Department in Philadelphia, came into the Georgia Conference work.

The number of members reported was 11,059 ; the Georgia Conference reported 18,066, making a total of 29,125. The reports were full this year and those of the Presiding Elder most encouraging. A. W. Lowe, Presiding Elder of the Atlanta District, reported growth. W. H. Harris, Presiding Elder of Augusta District, reported uphill work, nevertheless he had achieved results. The Sparta Mission had been created by Brother F. Davis, and where there was nothing he could now boast of two new churches with thirty-five or forty members. A school had also been established in Sparta. In short, an increase of 960 members, eight new churches and three hundred and seventy-five pupils in the schools at Eatonton and Sparta, showed faithful work in this vineyard. Macon District, with A. J. Miller, showed an increase of two hundred members and the territory was well occupied. Marietta District, D. J. McGhee, Presiding Elder, felt the number of ministers to be greater than needful for the number of members ; Acworth had received a new church, also Woodstock circuit, while eight hundred souls had been called in.

Griffin District, under Richard Graham, reported churches built on Greenville Circuit (Rev. B. Davis), Newnan Station (Rev. M. D. Brookens), Hogansville

(Rev. J. W. Waters), with others in process of building. LaGrange Mission had been instituted by Rev. J. F. Brown, and forty-two members gathered, while Corinth, also a new place, had twenty-five members. Athens District, under Peter McLain, reported an increase of four hundred and a general awakening.

As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, the Georgia Conference opened its session upon the 16th of the month in Thomasville.

The writer was present to represent Dr. B. W. Arnett, the Financial Secretary, in the financial interests of the church.

The key-note of work seems to have been well struck this year, and there is much food for thought for all Christian workers in the remark of Bishop Dickerson, who mentioned the noticeable change in the spirit of our work as inferred alone from the fact that in former years all hymns raised in our Conference were in the minor key, but those raised at the present session were in the major key. He made the contrast still more striking by singing in both keys by way of illustration.

Intemperance received the hearty condemnation which was to find expression in other ways in less than a decade.

The Deacons ordained this year were Brothers Lona Rice, L. G. Burnett and J. S. Flipper (itinerant), T S. Ward, D. C. Crawford and J. H. Johnson (local). Wright Newman was ordained an Elder. The writer filled the desk at this same evening's service and

preached from Jeremiah, xvii : 9, "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked."

Dr. J. O. A. Clark, ex-professor of Emory College, Ga., who was engaged in uniting the various Methodisms of the world in building the Memorial Church to Mr. Wesley in Savannah, was present, representing his volume, "The Wesley Memorial Volume." It was a pleasure to the Conference that he should feel moved to add, when speaking of the great Sunday-school movement and the fact that to our Methodism and to Mr. Wesley belong the purity of it, "From no church, I am free to say, have I had a warmer welcome for the work I am engaged in than from the A. M. E. Church. Presiding Elder Christian, of the M. E. Church South, also spoke, stating among other things, "he would that all Methodist churches of the colored race were united in one." To this the Bishop courteously made answer that we were only waiting for our white brethren to set the example.

It was on returning from this Conference that the writer suffered the indignity of an attempt to eject him from the first-class car from Thomasville to Albany. It did not succeed, and the result of this, with other repeated attempts upon ministers and laymen, men, women and children, has been to awaken an indignation born of self-respect which has shown itself in the manufacture of a sentiment that cries out against such proscription and discrimination, and to-day (1890) we do fare much better, though there is much to be wished for upon some lines and at

their termini. Better treatment is deserved by those of our race in the South who are intelligent, refined, whose behavior is that of ladies and gentlemen, and who are constant patrons of these roads. May the Lord hasten the day when no man shall be known by the color of his skin, but by his walk. We have cried aloud year after year against the evils and wickedness which are directed against us, and we have faith that the Lord is not deaf to our cries, but will answer them all in His own good way and time.

Waynesboro Mission, in the Savannah District, Rev. C. L. Bradwell, Presiding Elder, had new work to show under Brother Stewart, though the District suffered financially from failure of crops and high winds, which destroyed the Bethel church, also one on the Ogeechee Circuit, but the former was up again under Brother S. G. Cross. Newly built churches, with a total increase of five hundred and thirty-six members, showed Presiding Elder W. H. Powell's District work in Thomasville. St. James A. M. E. Church, Rev. E. P. Holmes, in the Columbus District, Rev. S. B. Jones, Presiding Elder, had received six hundred souls and raised \$3,712.05, while St. John's had one hundred and fifty and raised \$1,549.43.

Mt. Gilead Circuit had nearly doubled its membership under Rev. J. A. Perkins, while general progress seemed evident. In the Valdosta District, Rev. Peyton Stokes, Presiding Elder, reported all stations and circuits as doing well. In spite of much sickness and death on his work, Rev. S. W. Drayton, Presiding Elder of Sandersville District, reported

several churches built and many souls added. Albany District had also suffered, but this Presiding Elder Rev. G. W. H. Williams attributed largely to the cutting up of circuits to make new work and to the consequent inability of the remnants being able to support their ministers. Brunswick, Rev. Henry Strickland, Presiding Elder, had been made a new District in 1881, and the work was doing well for the first year.

The Georgia Conference Presiding Elder Districts now numbered nine, and the total dollar money this year was \$2,833.38.

Revs. G. W. H. Williams, L. H. Smith, C. L. Bradwell and D. T. Green took transfers to North Georgia, and Rev. H. Hardee was received from East Florida Conference.

One of the most important things done this Conference year was embodied in the report of the North Georgia Committee on Division of Conference :

“We, your Committee on Division of Conference, see the propriety of dividing it, and recommend that the Committees of the North Georgia and Georgia Conferences meet together in the month of April next. and then determine about the dividing lines of the Middle Georgia Conference. Signed,

W. J. GAINES,	R. A. HALL,
A. BROWN,	J. A. WOOD,
A. J. MILLER,	W. H. HARRIS,
A. W. LOWE,	J. B. LOFTON,
R. GRAHAM,	D. J. MCGHEE.”

This committee met as stated, in Macon, Ga., and laid off the line for the division of the Conferences. Bishop Dickerson called the new Conference—the Macon Conference—to meet in Sandersville for its first session, according to the agreement of the Committee, which was in all respects harmonious.

CHAPTER XV.

THE SECOND DIVISION.

The tenth session of the North Georgia Annual Conference was held in Jackson Chapel, Washington, Georgia, beginning Jan. 10, 1883; and the seventeenth of the mother Conference—Georgia—convened Jan. 24, 1883, in St. Andrew's A. M. E. Church, Darien, Ga.

Bishop Dickerson presided in both cases, and Bishop J. P. Campbell was with us again at both places, with words of congratulation for the work over which he had presided for four years. Rev. Wm. D. Johnson was made the Secretary of the former Conference, with Revs. W. H. Heard and J. B. Lofton as assistants. The Georgia Conference had, for Secretary, Rev. J. S. Flipper, with Revs. J. B. Warner and C. Max Manning for assistants.

The literary tone of these sessions was indeed higher than ever before. The words of wisdom which fell from the lips of Bishops Dickerson and Campbell, Dr. Arnett, Revs. Townsend, S. M. Clark and others, showed that the power which works for righteousness is working for mental elevation as well.

The North Georgia Conference elected and ordained as elders, Edward Dillard, Davis Malone,

Pinkard Williams, Henry Heard, Albert Pace, John Thomas Belsaw ; and as deacons, Wm. Henry Harrison, Hilliard Donius Canady, Daniel Strickland, Samuel Floyd Pritchard, Cosmo Plantagenet Jordan, Anderson Freeman and Anderson Bough—the last two local. The Georgia Conference ordained to the same office W. O. P. Sherman, P. H. M. Brookens. Edward Lowery and J. H. Cæsar as itinerants ; and to the office of deacon, R. W. Stewart, P. S. Smith, H. Wells, J. W. Williams, M. M. Meyers, H. Nails, T. McIver, P. D. Davis, Renty W. Fickland and E. B. Brown.

Albert McGhee and Burrel Davis, of the North Georgia Conference, had died this year.

In a financial way St. Thomas' Church Sunday-school, under Rev. J. A. Carey, was entitled to be considered the Banner Sunday-school of the Georgia Conference, having brought the largest amount of missionary money per pupil. The dollar money of the five districts of the North Georgia Conference reached the sum of \$1,662.54, with a membership of nine thousand eight hundred and two, the Atlanta District leading. Georgia Conference brought in \$2,054.40 as its dollar money, Savannah District leading, and reported from its six districts eleven thousand three hundred and eight members. In the last named Conference five Presiding Elders gave reports for publication.

In the Savannah District, under Rev. George Washington, the pastors each and all seem to have done a good work. The church at St. Philip's Sta-

tion, under Rev. H. H. Taylor, had been repaired and one hundred and fifteen members received. St. James' Tabernacle, Rev. John Justin, pastor, had also made repairs and received ninety-five members. Bethel Church, under Rev. C. Max Manning, had had a prosperous year. St. Thomas' Church, in Thomasville District (Rev. W. H. Powell, P. E.), had been greatly built up by Elder Carey, both spiritually and financially. A goodly increase of members and \$1,265.20 collected for all purposes were self-evident proofs of this. Circuits, missions and stations were generally in good condition, with a total increase of members of seven hundred and seventy-eight. Presiding Elder S. H. Robertson reported nearly all charges as having good Sunday-schools and several with good day schools. Accidents, old debts and financial dullness had been drawbacks, but well overcome. Albany District was reported by its new Presiding Elder as having been left in excellent condition by Elder G. W. H. Williams and still improving. The increase in membership was seven hundred and eighty-five, and the total amount of money raised \$5,915.75. Side by side with this report we place that of the North Georgia. Atlanta District, under D. G. Green, P. E., reported seven new churches built, a church, preacher and congregation added from the C. M. E. Church, with much repairing, and twelve or thirteen hundred members and probationers added during the year. The general report called for men who were not "for

the loaves and fishes" but for "the good of the work."

Forsyth District, under A. W. Lowe, P. E., was doing well according to its location. There were many new members, some new churches, and prospects of portions of Jasper, Butts and Monroe county, where many farmers lived, being so impressed with our church as to lead to the erection of one soon among the people there. Richard Graham, P. E. of the Griffin District, reported a new church at Palmetto, under Elder Lester; also one at Senoia Circuit, Rev. D. Strickland, pastor, and one on Griffin Circuit by Rev. Joel Stevens. Six new churches at Dalton, Rome, East Rome, Douglasville, Stilesboro Circuit and Woodstock Circuit, respectively, were reported as the substantial improvement on the Marietta District under D. J. McGhee, P. E. Eight hundred and seventeen members were added, and a progression in all ways. Presiding Elder McGhee recommended the adding of a new mission to this district to be called the Cherokee County Mission, as Cherokee county, Ala., lay so near, and many members having removed there, desired this Conference to send them a minister. But the Conference decided that it had no dominion over Alabama territory.

Athens District presented a significant report. With a beginning at the opening of the Conference year of eighteen hundred and twelve members the number had rolled up to twenty-one hundred and sixteen—A. J. Miller its Presiding Elder. Athens Station, under Rev. Wm. D. Johnson, had done well,

as had other stations, circuits and missions. New work had been opened in Banks county. W. B. Anderson had been sent to it and had established one church and taken in forty members. Rev. Henry Mullin had established a church in the upper part of Madison county with thirteen members. In the lower part of Wilkes county a new mission known as Raytown had been established and a minister sent there. The increase of members was two hundred and eighty-four, and in dollar money two hundred and thirty.

The transfers this year took from North Georgia Conference to the Macon Conference M. E. Cox, D. J. McGhee, John H. Jackson and A. W. Lowe, to the Georgia Conference W. H. Mundy, to the South Carolina Conference W. H. Harrison, and brought to the work from Columbia Conference T. W. Haigler. Four of the ministers were awaiting work at the close. Georgia Conference sent to the North Georgia work Rev. C. Max Manning, to the Macon work Revs. S. H. Robertson and Peyton Stokes, while Rev. J. A. Wood was finally brought from the North Georgia Conference to the Georgia.

The work was in a transition stage again, owing, of course, to the newly formed Conference and the endeavor to equalize it.

When in 1868 the Georgia Conference held its first session, it could hardly have foreseen the result which would be reached in five years and require the division of Conference which was made in 1873; much less would it have been able to conceive of the proportions the work in the State would assume by

branching out into Alabama, and then in 1883 again calling for another division of the work in Georgia; so that at the end of eighteen years from the introduction of the A. M. E. Church into the South we should find three Conferences, with each in a prosperous condition.

The new Conference was called the Macon Conference and included in its work the Presiding Elder Districts of Americus, Augusta, Forsyth, Macon and Columbus. It held its first session, as already intimated, at Sandersville, Georgia, opening Jan. 31, 1883, immediately at the close of the Georgia Conference in Darien. Bishop Campbell was present to assist Bishop Dickerson in the opening of the new work, which began under most favorable auspices. The regular routine of business was taken up in earnest. Nothing was omitted, and had it been a veteran Conference in its special work it could have proceeded no more smoothly or systematically, but then it was composed of veterans.

Ten preachers were admitted on trial : Felix Foster, S. P. Thomas, J. B. Wright, E. D. Gorham, F. Cothorn, W. T. Morris, Jerry R. Moseley, J. C. Dean, Matthew W. Travers, John Seabrooks. The Deacons elected and ordained were Robert I. Bailey, Daniel K. Knight, Daniel Smith, Frank Boddie, Newrey Ellison, Lord Baltimore, Calvert Preston Johnson, Owen W. Daniels, Jesse B. Reese. C. Dean and John Seabrooks were re-obligated. The Elders were Lawrence G. Gary, Preston B. Peters, Andrew Griffin,

William Conwell Banton, Samuel G. Cross. Matthew W. Travers was re-obligated.

The new Conference held as Presiding Elders, Revs. W. C. Gaines, W. H. Harris, A. M. Lowe, S. B. Jones, S. W. Drayton. It started out with twelve thousand one hundred and sixty-three church members, and reported this year \$2,479.35 as dollar money, and a goodly subscription list was made up for the Atlanta College.

It occurred this year that the new Conference held its second session in this same year through a change of time, and was the first of the Conferences in the State to assemble in the winter following. It opened its session in Forsyth, Ga., Nov. 28, in St. Luke's Church, Bishop W. F. Dickerson presiding, and after the opening exercises he addressed the Conference, referring briefly to the near close of his labors in this work, thanking them for the pleasant memories he carried away with him.

The Secretary of the last Conference was re-elected—Rev. W. C. Banton. The annual sermon was preached by Rev. Lawrence Thomas, who spoke as an old and tried soldier, in glowing terms of the new birth and the blessed promises. The sermons of the entire session were notably powerful and interesting. Rev. W. H. Smith preached Sunday morning in St. Luke's A. M. E. Church. Rev. Y. Gould, the Business Manager of the Publication Department, preached the ordination sermon in the afternoon, and Dr. B. W. Arnett, Financial Secretary, in the evening. Bishop Dickerson, by special invitation, preached in the M.

E. Church South, of Forsyth, assisted in the services by Dr. B. W. Arnett, Revs. L. Smith, of Eatonton, and E. P. Holmes, of Columbus. The sermon was an able effort and was reported for the Minutes by L. E. Hall.

There was a large number of visitors present from both the North Georgia and Georgia Conferences, aside from the two General Officers of the Church mentioned above and friends in Forsyth. There was also quite a long list of transfers: Revs. Henry Porter, R. B. Bailey and C. P. Johnson to the Georgia Conference; also W. M. Garrison, G. D. Jordan, John Taliaferro and Milus Davis to the same; Revs. I. S. Hamilton, M. O. Boddie, H. C. Boyd, Peter McLain and R. Brooks to the North Georgia; Revs. S. G. Cross and G. M. Holland to South Carolina.

The preachers admitted on trial were, J. A. Jones, Elbert Brown, Franklin Battle, T. C. Lewis, C. Milton, R. M. S. Taylor, R. B. Sanford, San Francisco Andrews, J. A. Murphy, G. W. Hill. Warren R. Davis was elected and ordained deacon, and Lona Rice, Wm. Ross, Allen Cooper, Rabun Lawson, Wylie Christopher Shelton, George Washington and Lee Neal elders. A good report came up from the five districts, with promising mission work.

This year (1883) was to close the 17th quadrennium of the A. M. E. Church, lacking but three years of seven decades. It was also to see the end of Bishop Dickerson's four years of work over what was then the Sixth District, including the States of Georgia and South Carolina. The Conference year, however

did not come to a close until after the meeting of the two older Conferences in January following the Macon Conference, and before the assembling of the General Conference in May.

The year 1884 opened the first Conference in the State in Marietta, Ga.—the North Georgia—which convened in Turner's Chapel Jan. 9, and held until the 15th.* Two days later—the 17th—the Georgia Annual Conference held its session, assembling in St. Paul's A. M. E. Church, in Valdosta, Ga.

With almost prophetic utterance, Rt. Rev. W. F. Dickerson opened the former, singing the hymn, "Awake, my soul, stretch every nerve." The Bishop had been suffering much bodily affliction since his last meeting with us, but he affirmed, "It has been a healthful discipline. God wants to show that we cannot lean upon our own arm."

A large number was referred to the Conference for admission by that committee—so large that it led to hesitancy and considerable discussion, participated in by Andrew Brown, R. Graham, P. McLain and the writer. It seemed hardly advisable to admit so many men, unless there was a strong probability of their getting appointments, but at the suggestion of the Bishop that they be impressed with the idea of making work for themselves, there seemed no reason why the following should not be admitted on trial: A. W. Watson, J. C. Webb, H. M. Lofton, S. C.

* Rev. R. R. Downs, of the East Florida Conference, was transferred during the interval of the year and stationed at Athens, Ga., and from this Conference transferred to the Macon Conference and stationed at St. John's Church, Columbus, Ga.

Hendricks, Floyd Griffin, James Watts, Richard Fountain, N. L. Holmes, Alexander Pierce, L. Baxter, R. J. Hinton, C. W. Simon, Luke Allen, Simon Alexander, C. H. Fairfax, Jerry McGruder, J. R. Phillips, George Parks, L. Leonard and Charles Mallory.

The deacons of this year, newly ordained, were, Doctor Leak Durand, Wm. Hannabal Foster, Elijah Harrison Zeigler, John Wesley Lawrence and Henry Crittenden. The elders were Jordan Reese Gay, Henry Orange Mullen, William Upshaw, Charles Forrest and Henry Redding. The two latter received the vote of Conference as a compliment for long and effective service. Only one member had died this year—Albert Pace—one of the oldest members of the Georgia Conference. He had been identified with the North Georgia since the division in 1873, and had been a faithful laborer up to his death, which took place at his last place of appointment, Coosa Bend, June 9, 1883. So one by one the fathers of the Georgia work go down before the Reaper's blade. But how true it is, "God buries the workmen but the work goes on."

The election of delegates to the General Conference resulted in the following selection: Rev. W. J. Gaines, D. D., Rev. R. Graham, Rev. Andrew Brown, Rev. D. T. Green, Rev. W. D. Johnson, Rev. A. J. Miller, with Revs. W. H. Heard, J. B. Lofton, C. E. Bradwell, M. E. Cox, J. G. Yeiser, H. T. Cargile as alternates. The lay delegates to the

Electoral College were Harrison Harris and Alexander Hamilton.

As this was the last session of the presiding Bishop's official connection with the Conference, together with Rev. Andrew Brown, the writer had the pleasure of presenting him a purse of fifty dollars as evidence of its high regard for him. Bishop T. M. D. Ward was present at this session and preached a most stirring sermon. It was an appeal to the young men to rouse themselves to action, and he showed there was no reason for discouragement; they could mount high, if they so desired, by God's help. He also uttered a truth which all will do well to remember when the masterful Anglo-Saxon claims his vast superiority over the negro race: "But the fact stands upon the page of recent history that they have come from a degradation deeper even than that from which we have so lately been emancipated. A favoring providence and determined effort are the only causes to which they stand indebted for their present pitch of grandeur and enlightened civilization."

Bishop Ward preached the ordination sermon in the morning, while Bishop Dickerson officiated in the afternoon, and the writer in the evening. The parallel lines of thought were so striking in these three sermons that it is worthy of mention—Faith in and obedience to God and encouragement to go forward. The Bishop said, "The Britons were once so degraded that Cæsar said he would take a few of

them to Rome to see whether they were human beings or not."

Thank God, the gospel has made it possible for all the races upon God's foot-stool to unite in the one petition, "Our Father," which proves the common brotherhood of man in Christ Jesus.

Macon Conference, young as it was, had paid six hundred dollars toward Morris Brown College, and this Conference was urged to give nine hundred dollars. Finances, generally, were fair. Dollar money reached \$2,065.51, and the percentage of Conference was \$619.50; members reported, nine thousand three hundred and sixty-five.

Presiding Elder D. T. Green, of the Atlanta District, reported ten churches in process of building. The church at Bethel Station, W. J. Gaines, pastor, had been remodeled thoroughly. Madison, Georgia, under Elder Bradwell, and Shiloh, under M. D. Brookens, were points especially worthy of commendation. Griffin District, under Rev. R. Graham, gave an account of a prosperous state of things. Rev. J. G. Yeiser had done the work of building Allen Temple in Atlanta.

Revivals of religion and financial progress in church building, raising debts and dollar money were characteristically brought out in the report from the Marietta District, under Rev. W. D. Johnson. New work had been established on the Athens District—Union Point Mission, Woodstock and Jefferson Mission, as the extension of work under Presiding Elder

A. J. Miller. Altogether it was a most successful year.

The Georgia Conference of 1884 met at Valdosta on the 17th of January. W. H. Hamburg, W. D. Moore, B. W. Nelson, H. L. Weston, E. J. Bush, J. P. Mitchell, Stead Matchet and S. M. Adley were admitted on trial. W. H. Walton, R. V. Smith and George Kimboro were elected and ordained itinerant deacons, Joseph Wooten local, and J. S. Flipper, D. L. Jones, J. W. Tolliver, Joseph Collier and Daniel Duncan were elected and ordained elders. J. A. Perkins and F. S. Garrett had died within the year. The former had joined the Conference at Americus in 1870, under Bishop J. M. Brown, while Brother Thomas S. Garrett joined at Savannah in 1866, under Bishop D. A. Payne. The latter was a pioneer in the service and a great sufferer, long ill, and speechless two months before he died. But upon being asked by Bishop Turner as death approached, "Is there light in the valley?" his tongue was loosed and he cried out, "Victory!" as he passed away.

This Conference also showed its esteem for Bishop Dickerson by a present similar to that of the North Georgia—a purse of fifty dollars—and the body petitioned the General Conference to send him back to the work ; but He knew best.

It was remarked in the reports that the railroad accommodations for our people were improving, and the cause of education, private and State, encouraging to a high degree.

The Georgia Conference elected as its delegates to

the General Conference, Revs. M. B. Salters, Henry Strickland, George Washington, W. H. Powell, J. A. Wood and W. O. P. Sherman, with alternates in Revs. J. A. Cary, A. J. Johnson, S. M. Clark, H. M. Brookens, M. A. Pierce and C. H. Wilson. The transfers were Rev. J. B. Lofton from the North Georgia to this body; Revs. R. B. Bailey, C. P. Johnson and Henry Porter from Macon Conference to this; Rev. J. B. Warner from Georgia Conference to Arkansas Conference; and Rev. James Etheridge from Georgia Conference to East Florida. The dollar money reached \$2,416.54 from a membership of ten thousand seven hundred and ten; but the statistics of this body this year seem to have been rendered incomplete by a failure on the part of some of the brethren to make their reports.

CHAPTER XVI.

BEGINNING A NEW QUADRENNIUM.

The Seventeenth Quadrennial Session of the church was held in Baltimore, May 5th, 1884, in Bethel church, Saratoga street. The presentation of the work of the various departments was interesting, especially in relation to the increase of our preaching force, as well as membership.

In 1784, one hundred years before, there was one colored preacher, Henry Hosier; now we see 2,540 traveling preachers; 9,760 local preachers and exhorters, and a total membership 392,540 souls reported. This includes simply the work of the A. M. E. Church. The total of colored Methodist population in America reached 1,023,917, while the different Methodist churches, exclusively African, gave a total of 6,819 traveling preachers, and the entire Methodist population in America reached 4,092,068.

This year there were no additions to the Bishopric. Bishop Dickerson was assigned to the Second District, consisting of the States of Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina and the District of Columbia, and the Sixth received in his stead the supervision of Bishop James A. Shorter for the next four years. Little did the Convention think that before another

quadrennium should close these two would have gone the way of all the earth, dust to dust—these two and one other, Bishop R. H. Cain. Thus in one quadrennium the ranks were broken and three called hence.

The Dollar Money Law, passed in 1872, was amended at this session, allowing the Conferences to retain at home 40 per cent. instead of 30 per cent.* This year also saw a reorganization of the Educational Department, which had its origin in 1876. Endowment Day was established, and a Secretary of Education elected—Rev. Wm. D. Johnson, D.D., with a General Board, under whose special management the Department was to be conducted. This provided for the distribution of the Endowment Fund raised through certain legitimate channels, including the day set apart throughout the connection—the 3d Sabbath in each September. From this point on the Educational movement has been steadily forward. Of this we shall speak elsewhere at greater length, when we come to consider the rise and growth of Education in the South, which, like all else in this region, has been most marvelous.

It was in the November following that the Macon Annual Conference held its third session in St.

*This change was strongly advocated by Rev. G. L. Jackson and the writer. The opponents thought it would be detrimental to the support of the Bishops and the General Officers; but the writer believed that by leaving more money with the Conferences they would increase the amounts. This has been verified by the increase of Dollar Money over 50 per cent. We are confident that the Sixth Episcopal District alone will raise \$80,000 in this quadrennium.

James' Church, Columbus. It opened the 19th with our new Bishop, James A. Shorter, as the presiding Bishop—his first welcome to Georgia.

The Educational meeting received his hearty support and substantial aid in \$25 for the cause. Bishop Dickerson was also present and preached at the morning service of the Sabbath, upon "Christ our Evidence," from Hebrews ii:8-9. "But now we see not yet all things put under him, but we see Jesus." It was an eloquent outburst, logical and learned as well, from the lips of one who was so soon to see Jesus, "not in a glass darkly," but "face to face."

The session passed most pleasantly. Brother Levi L. Reynolds, Wm. T. Norris and Elias H. Miller were ordained to the office of deacon, and Thomas Williams, James H. Johnson, Hudson W. Whitaker, Jesse B. Reese, Lawson G. Burnett, Owen W. Daniels, Francis Boddie, Wm. Thornton and Emanuel Wimbish to, that of elder. Bishop Dickerson administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper at the conclusion of the ordination, and at the night service the writer conducted a Conference Love Feast with a densely crowded church. It was undeniably a season of "spiritual refreshing."

Brother Crawford Wimberly had died. The session closed with the adjuration from the Bishop to "go to your charges and do the very best you can."

The North Georgia Conference, having changed its time of meeting, convened before the close of the year, the 3d of December, (1884) in Pierce's Chapel,

Athens. In the opening remarks Bishop Shorter made some very just, practical remarks, saying among other things, "It does not matter so much what opinions the brethren have of my predecessors, if you only keep them to yourselves," also, "you can praise all the other Bishops just as much as you please, if you only do a greater work under my administration."

The Bishop announced the transfers of Revs. L. E. Hall, C. S. Green and Andrew Griffin, from the Macon Conference to the North Georgia Conference, and their names were placed on the roll at the opening.

Bishop Shorter was intensely interested in the Missionary cause, and he favored it and furthered it in every way possible. A Missionary Bishop in his early work of organizing Churches and Conferences, he knew the need of all the aid that could come from the various organizations of a church interested in the Missionary work at home and abroad. He knew, too, how to interest the Church when there seemed no spirit in the movement, which was best of all. At the anniversary of the Conference Missionary Society \$110.35 were raised.

The annual sermon was preached by the writer from II Timothy, iv: 5-8, and of it the Secretary of the Conference was pleased to say: "Our pen would fail us if we should attempt to follow him as he led us through trials and difficulties, clouds and darkness, and finally brought us out into the glorious liberty wherewith Christ has made us free. The

sermon is one that will not be forgotten by those who heard it for years to come; neither can the minister fail to fight harder and more bravely for the Master. He spoke of the advance made by the gospel of Christ; how men had been made to respect it and its ministers. He compared the Christian victory with that of the memorable Kimball House fire in Atlanta over the brave firemen whose labors cannot be forgotten, and the congregation was clothed in wonder at the power of God, as displayed in the preaching of His word."

At the hour set for fraternal greetings, the Conference received Rev. G. V. Clark, of the Congregational Church, who said that his object was to express his brotherly love, and one of his greatest desires was that "we may be one." He extended greeting and asked hearty cooperation in the grand and noble work of Education and Temperance.

Rev. J. G. Yeiser made a vigorous response and declared that in such a grand cause the A. M. E. Church would always be found with a shoulder to the wheel, shoving on her part. Bishop Turner was happily with us a portion of the session, glad to meet the brethren once more, and at the evening meeting of the third day he spoke at length of the incidents and circumstances which attended the origin and maturing of the literary organization of the A. M. E. Church, an organization he has done so much to forward. With speeches by Rev. Clark and the writer, who mentioned the difficul-

ties he encountered in founding Morris-Brown College, the evening's exercises, though according to no definite program, passed off, Bishop Turner, presiding.

C. C. Cargile, D. J. McGhee, Jr., A. J. Wilkerson, Cornelius White, S. B. Sims, F. R. Richardson, J. T. Riggins, H. J. Johnson and W. G. Smith were admitted on trial. L. A. Waddell, W. W. McCrary and Nathan Berry withdrew from the connection.

Bishop Shorter, assisted by Elders C. L. Bradwell, C. M. Manning, H. T. Cargile and A. S. Jackson, ordained the following brethren deacons: Revs. S. J. West, A. L. Shaw, W. B. Anderson, T. H. Mallory, L. E. Hall, N. L. Holmes, W. L. Russell, J. S. Hendricks, assisted by J. S. Hamilton, R. Graham, G. W. H. Williams and A. J. Miller. He also ordained the following for elders: Revs. Cosmos P. Jordan, Daniel Strickland, Samuel Floyd Prichard, Burgess Johnson, Alfred Emanuel Walker, Charles Henry Carter and Lewis McClaren.

Rev. Andrew Brown officiated at the sacrament, which was a solemn occasion.

The writer afterwards was called upon to state to the Conference the severe illness of Bishop Dickerson, who desired to go home. He also made the motion that Conference send Rev. E. A. Shepherd to accompany him. This was done, and the Bishop left us for the last time for his home in Columbia, S. C. There he died the 20th of December.*

*I can never forget his look as he bade me good-bye at the depot. It was good-bye until we meet in heaven. The last sermon I heard him

At this Conference the writer offered the following resolution, which was passed:

“WHEREAS, Father Peter McLain, on account of age, has almost become unable to travel, but does not desire to locate,

“*Resolved*, That the North Georgia Annual Conference make him Conference Missionary, with power to travel throughout the Conference, visiting any or all of the churches, giving his aid in mission work in whatever way he may be able, even to the starting of new work. Also that the brethren allow him to preach, if he desires, and give him one collection during the day.”

North Georgia stood at this Conference with 15,000 members, and \$1,991.90 of Dollar Money.

The Georgia Annual Conference met in Albany, Ga., January 14, 1885, and extended its session to the 20th. It was a Conference marked by tender feelings for the death that had so recently come home to us all—to the A. M. E. Church, and to the Georgia Conference in particular. Bishop Shorter was present to preside. Rev. M. B. Salter preached the Annual Sermon from the text, Acts xxvi:22; “Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day witnessing both to small and great saying, none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come.”

preach was a thanksgiving sermon in Atlanta, November, 1884. Psalms xxii:15; “As for me I will behold Thy face in righteousness, I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness.” He then said to me, “Gaines I have preached my last sermon, and I now advise you to preach a whole Christ.

The afternoon session of the second day was devoted to the memorial services upon Bishop Dickerson. Bishop Shorter presided. The services opened with Presiding Elder J. A. Wood singing the hymn, "What Though the Conquering Death;" prayer by Rev. Samuel Stewart; singing of hymn "O, Where Shall Rest be Found," by Rev. D. T. Green, North Georgia Conference; reading of 90th Psalm by Rev. H. B. Dowdell; singing of hymn "Nearer My God to Thee," by the writer; reading 15th chapter I. Corinthians, by Rev. M. B. Salter; singing by Rev. S. M. Clark of hymn "Hear What the Voice of Heaven Proclaims." The writer was introduced to the Conference, and spoke briefly of the birth, work and career of Bishop Dickerson, and was followed by remarks from Presiding Elder J. A. Wood, and Rev. J. H. Adams singing, then prayer by Presiding Elder Henry Strickland closed the exercises, aside from the resolutions of condolence, which were read and adopted, and now form a part of the Journal of the Georgia Conference.

Death had also claimed Revs. M. Dillard, J. M. Cox, A. J. Johnson, all of whom died in the faith and on the field of labor, leaving families to mourn their loss. Revs. W. H. Powell, Peyton Stokes and John McDougal spoke feelingly upon their deaths.

A committee was appointed to define the line between Savannah and Macon districts. W. H. Hammond, L. J. Lester, H. C. Hawk, R. Richards,

B. J. Shackelford, J. B. Epton, C. H. Williams, and W. M. Jefferson were admitted on trial. D. W. Moore, E. J. Bush, Boston Scott, F. H. Henderson, H. L. Watson, H. M. Lofton and Wm. Garrison were presented and ordained deacons. A. W. Walton was ordained a local deacon. J. H. Adams, J. R. Bennett, M. J. Ingraham, Alex. Glover, Wm. Askew, John Hayes, R. H. Stewart and C. P. Johnson were ordained elders.

Morris-Brown College received an apportionment this year of \$535.40. The Dollar Money reached a total of \$2,473.95, of which the percentage was \$989.58.

It was not until November that the Macon Conference held its fourth session. It then convened upon the 18th in St John's Church, Eatonton, Ga. Bishop Shorter presided, and in his appointment of committees remarked that no committee was more important than that on Admissions, especially as it had to do with third and fourth year studies. He said "The sun is now too high to admit the election of brothers to orders when they are unable to Read the ritual. God has not called every good man into the higher orders of the ministry. If brethren do not improve it is not God's fault nor the fault of the Conference. Any one who wants to learn how to read can learn. I do not wish any one recommended for orders who cannot read plainly." It was wise and timely for such a positive statement.

Bishop Campbell was present, as was also

Dr. B. T. Tanner—now (1890) Bishop B. T. Tanner—then editor of the A. M. E. Church Review; and at the missionary meeting both spoke with fervor. The annual sermon was preached by H. H. Taylor who spoke from Romans viii: 18, upon the experience, of the Christian, the minister's burdens and his hope, and enjoined them to be steadfast. Both the missionary and educational meetings were full of interest and of financial success.

Arrangements were made to comply with the request from the Secretary of the Financial Board of the church, who asked for aid in the embarrassed condition of the church to the extent of the Conferences retaining but thirty per cent. of the Dollar Money instead of forty. This aid was extended by a motion to loan the Financial Board ten per cent.

The Trustees of Morris-Brown College were allowed to further their work and settle debts by borrowing funds under legal advice, being restricted to five thousand dollars. The Conference Literary meeting was a success, showing considerable and growing enthusiasm in the essays and discussions.

The Sunday services consisted of a sermon by Bishop Campbell at 11 A. M. and by Bishop Shorter at 3 P. M. The former was a powerful discourse on "Grace," while the latter was a pithy, practical one upon the relationship of husband and wife, with Eph. v: 25, for a text. Dr. Tanner preached at night upon what our physical nature, our intellectual nature and our religious nature cost us—a feast of good things for one day.

Following the suggestion thrown out by the Bishop, but two were admitted on trial—B. L. Jackson and Claiborne H. Warren. The deacons ordained were, Andrew Bingham, Alfred Sapp, Elijah Fulls, Richard L. Butts, Austin Flewellen, Daniel Smith, Newry Ellison, W. J. Hall, Sylvester Wilder, Daniel K. Knight, Homer Shaw, Green York, Geo. Wesley Neal, Geo. Copeland, Robert J. Bailey, Levi L. Reynolds, Wm. T. Norris, Felix Foster, Robert M. S. Taylor, Simon Thomas, San Francisco Andrews.

Seven members had died: the veteran Samuel W. Drayton, James H. Johnson, Owen W. Daniels, Wm. Ross, Preston B. Peters, Eli R. Irby and Warren R. Davis. Revs. Andrew Griffin, R. R. Downs and Joshua F. Brown were transferred to North Georgia Conference, and J. T. Crayton from the Georgia Conference to Macon.

Bishop Shorter made a practical suggestion in calling the Presiding Elders' attention to the importance of employing those brethren who have been admitted to the Conference, but who were without appointments, instead of those who have not been received. Nearly all the points were filled by appointment, and but few changes in the District occurred. The Georgia Conference had desired to change some work from Macon Conference to its own work, but the request was declined and Macon and Savannah District remained as before.

The Dollar Money reached a total of \$2,848.05 and reported 17,162 members with \$2,300.89

raised for schools of the circuit, and a Children's Day collection of \$189.55. Endowment Day brought in \$621.20 and Morris-Brown College especially had raised \$208.75.

An interval of little more than one week and the North Georgia Conference assembled in Griffin, Ga., in St. Philip's Chapel, December 2, adjourning the 6th. The same Bishops were in attendance, and presiding, and C. P. Jordan was made Conference Secretary.

Dr. Tanner, Dr. B. F. Lee and others were present, and the educational meeting was greatly assisted by encouraging words from the Bishops and these visitors.

Rev. T. W. Haigler presented an essay this year, also a poem on Africa, both of which were highly creditable for this young man, and showed the trend of his thoughts which he has put into action. The Reports upon all subjects were concise and of a cheering nature.

E. W. Lee, Peter Williams, S. P. Cary and J. A. Wyatt were admitted on trial. Richard Fountain, Lewis Baxter, Floyd Griffin, Chas. W. Simmons, Chas. C. Cargile, Solomon Berry Lyons were elected and ordained deacons. George Towns, Matthew Wilkerson, Pryor and Nathan Price, local deacons, while Hilliard D. Canady, Elijah H. Zeigler, James Ricks, Joel Stevens, Wm. Harkness, Evans Davis were ordained elders.

The transfers this year were Rev. R. E. Wilson, from South Carolina Conference to North Georgia

Conference, Rev. Peyavia O'Connell, from Ohio Conference to the North Georgia, also Rev. R. R. Down from Macon to the same. Rev. T. H. Mallory took a transfer from the North Georgia to the Macon Conference.

The four Presiding Elder Districts reported fully. Atlanta District, under W. J. Gaines, had done well, with four stations, nine circuits and one mission. Griffin District, under A. Brown, showed an increase of nine hundred and fifty members and several small churches organized. Marietta, under C. L. Bradwell, exhibited an increase in both members and finances. Athens, under A. J. Miller, showed that this district had more than doubled its Dollar Money since 1881. There was new work at Athens and at Goose Pond, in Black Creek Mission, as well as at Carnesville and Hart County.

Edward Waters had died this year, doing good work at Cave Spring Circuit. So closed the year 1885.

CHAPTER XVII.

A TRIO OF CONFERENCES.

The first Conference of the year 1886 was that of the Georgia, held in Hawkinsville, Ga., Jan. 20-25. Bishop Shorter presided, with the sympathy of the Conference. He had been laboring under severe burdens which had served to render it impossible for him to make his visits as extended as he desired to make them. Bereavements in his household, and his wife's severe illness at the present time, distressed him greatly. But with the sympathy there were no complaints to make, and later, at the opening of the Macon Conference, Presiding Elder S. B. Jones gave voice to that sentiment, which dwelt in all hearts, that there was no fault to find, they only implored the help of the Divine One in his behalf.

The Secretary of the preceding year was elected. Rev. J. C. Embry, General Business Manager of the Book Concern, was one of the visitors and spoke pointedly on the subject of business. Dr. J. M. Townsend was also present as Missionary Secretary and emphasized the need of work in special fields.

The Conference had no special business of importance before it. The usual work went on. The sermons were good and well attended. The trans-

fers were Revs. J. S. Flipper, Geo. Washington and J. A. Cary to the North Georgia work, to be stationed respectively at Big Bethel, in Atlanta, Dalton and Washington, Ga. Rev. R. R. Downs and C. W. Warren from North Georgia to Georgia, and stationed at Dawson and Bainbridge, and M. R. Wilson from the Ohio Conference to the Georgia, and stationed at Boston, Ga.

The Conference followed the example of the North Georgia Conference at its last session, and loaned the Financial Board of the Church ten per cent. of the Dollar Money to help tide affairs over the embarrassment.

The preachers admitted on trial were J. B. Walker, G. H. Green, J. Griffin, John Hadley, G. W. Butler, S. B. Shaw, Enoch Roberts. C. C. Warren, L. Crawford, Z. Granderson, Wm. Jefferson, J. P. Mitchell, J. B. Epton, S. P. Jackson, W. H. Hamburg, S. M. Addy and S. M. Matchett were elected and ordained deacons, with J. H. Wilson and H. L. Pratt, local. The elders were R. V. Smith, W. H. Hamilton, R. W. Fickland, Abram Martin, S. H. Brown and J. H. Harris.

Resolutions were passed to the effect that a recurrence of a deficit in the sum necessary to pay the way of delegates to General Conference, as in 1884, might be prevented. Each pastor was, therefore, required to bring one cent per member to the ensuing Conference, and each Presiding Elder one dollar to prepare for the needed sum in 1888.

The appointments were made, and adjournment

took place after admonitory counsel to the preachers as to their work. The Dollar Money reached \$2,509.40 from the six Districts of the Georgia Conference in 1886.

November 17th was the date upon which the Macon Georgia Annual Conference convened in Barnesville this year. Rev. W. C. Banton, the Secretary of 1885, was again chosen for the office, and Revs. Andrew W. Lowe and Jordan R. Gay were made assistants by himself.

Rev. Wm. H. Smith preached the annual sermon from the text, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another," and in his discourse he dwelt upon this Christ-like love as a badge of liberty, of fidelity and union, emphasizing it by experiences in betrayed trusts and false friendships. It was a strong, practical sermon, and one to do much good.

The following preachers were admitted on trial: Allen R. Cooper, D. J. Lawrence, E. J. Knight, H. H. Johnson, G. W. Hill, A. Colbert, C. J. Jones, James Mitchell, Joshua Barnes, Peyton Burns and Geo. C. Davis. At the conclusion of the Sunday services, when Bishop Campbell had preached to a large congregation, Bishop Shorter proceeded to the ordination services. Rev. Andrew W. Lowe presented Wm. R. Gallius, Edward D. Gorman, Archibald B. Gibson, Robert B. Sanford and Daniel McGhee, Jr., to be ordained deacons. After this service was concluded Rev. S. H. Robertson presented Revs. Daniel K. Knight, George Wesley Neal and

Tarpley H. Mallory to be ordained elders, after which the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered first to the newly ordained ministers, and then to the others present.

Bishop Shorter brought up the necessity of help for the Metropolitan Church, at Washington, D. C., and upon consideration of the matter, the Conference voted \$100 to its assistance.

At this time the writer had the privilege of addressing the Conference concerning the interest of Morris-Brown College. An opportunity had been given by which the manufacturers of a brand of soap, known as the "Big Real," would contribute to the funds of the institution. As it was a perfectly legitimate and honorable way of gaining money for the College, he pressed the claims of this mode of obtaining funds by urging the brethren to recommend this brand to the people.

Cleanliness is next to godliness, and when cleanliness could be made an ally to godliness and education, as it would in this case, it seemed the right thing to uplift our work by its help.

The results have proved that we did not err. In a square, fair, business-like manner our College has been helped to the extent of \$1,600. At this time (1886) \$225 had been received.

Our people must use this necessary article in great abundance in the work of washing, to which so many of us owe a livelihood. It was a pleasure to them to know that even thus the poorest and humblest could have a hand in erecting the

walls of an institution which would bear a hand in raising future generations to planes of higher work. God blesses the smallest thing which is used in forwarding a good work. He blesses the humblest instrument and the poorest toiler engaged in it.

Dr. J. C. Embry, General Manager, and other General officers were present, as well as a number of brethren from other Conferences and churches. The statement from the Educational Department for the past year showed a good year's work; the District Secretary had sent in \$7,898.28, the Colleges and schools had raised \$28,163.58, which, added to the contributions from Annual Conferences of \$3,984.15 and other sources, including \$1,392.50 from the Financial Secretary, gave a total of \$43,164.49. From this \$42,733.58 had gone into the proper school channels, as provided for by law, and for legitimate expenses, leaving a balance on hand of \$852.33.

Conference appropriated \$500 to Morris-Brown College, and so the Educational work was well cared for. One of the most interesting reports was that of the Trustees of Morris-Brown College. Two teachers were in the school, but the circumstances forbade more than primary work at present. We had considered the efforts made by some of the ministers very feeble in making a success of the days set apart for raising of money for that purpose; but even then the total rolled up to \$3,776.15 upon the side of receipts, with \$3,898.43 to face it in disburse-

ments. This, with a debt of about \$4,000, was what the trustees had to face. But God was good, and the following years prosperous ones. Now (1890) the last dollar has been paid.

Rev. Wm. Thornton, Newrey Ellison, Wm. Parker, Rev. Henry Daniels (superannuated) and Rev. Peter C. Crews, (supernumerary), were reported in the death list this year.

The Electoral College of Laymen, within the Macon Conference, was voted to be held in Macon in July—first Wednesday.

The transfers were, Rev. S. H. Robertson and Rev. H. H. Taylor, to the Georgia Conference, Jesse B. Reese to the North Georgia, John W. Recks, Prince L. Jackson and Shannon R. Roberts, to the Alabama, while in return Elder Haley Hardy came from the Georgia, and Brothers Tarpley, Holt, Mallory and Daniel J. McGhee from the North Georgia.

The statistics reported \$2,831.30 for Dollar Money and 16,309 members.

The North Georgia Conference convened shortly after the close of the Macon Conference, which took place November 17th, the former meeting in Allen Temple, Atlanta, Ga., December 1. At the opening in the morning it became the writer's sad duty to communicate to Conference the receipt of a telegram from Bishop Shorter, informing him of the death of his wife. Bishop Campbell also sent a dispatch, and under its orders the writer organized

the Conference and then adjourned to await Bishop Campbell's arrival at 3 P. M.

Anxious to be at his post of Christian duty, Bishop Shorter had hoped to the last to attend this and the Carolina Conference, but the change summoned him to another sacred duty, and he had requested Bishop Campbell to assume these duties and act in his stead; so that, instead of being Associate Bishop this time, Bishop Campbell presided again over our work.

Bishop Shorter had already lost child after child, as it were—two daughters and grand children had recently died; his son-in-law, his mother-in-law—all had been borne out from his doorway in the short space of less than five years, and now, as his wife passed over the river, he was to be left alone indeed. Bishop Campbell had gone out of his way to see her for the last time, and, as he feelingly spoke of her and of the Bishop's loss, all felt with the speaker that Bishop Shorter was indeed plunged into such depths as prompted the Psalmist to say, "Deep calleth unto deep, at the noise of the waterspouts all thy waves and thy billows have gone over me."

But it was not to be long a parting, for in less than a twelve-month the Bishop himself was to join her on the other side.

The Missionary meeting, like that at all Conferences, was most interesting and important. The writer had lately met a missionary and his wife about to sail for Africa*—a man eminently compe-

*Thomas W. Haigler and wife.

tent and qualified for the work, and the fact that there was so much work to be done fired the souls of all present to aid in some way and have a part in the grand work. Dr. B. F. Lee, Editor of the *Christian Recorder*, gave a glowing account of those who had sacrificed themselves in the cause, and at last Bishop Campbell spoke in his characteristic manner:

Sixty years before he had sat at the feet of Bishop Allen. Then there were only about 2,600 members, counting those in Charleston, S. C., and from New York to New Orleans. Out of that number only Bishop Campbell and Father David Smith were then living.** Bishop Campbell was the only one living who joined the church under him. It is not strange that he should speak of himself as the one connecting link with the Church of that date, as mentioned elsewhere.

The ordination of deacons took place December 5th. Bishop Shorter, having returned from his sad journey, delivered the charge to the following class: A. Y. Pierce, R. E. Wilson, James Watts, Simon Alexander, Mack Parify, J. R. Phillips, R. H. Richards, A. J. Wilkerson, L. Leonard, J. T. Riggins, S. P. Cary, E. W. Lee and F. R. Richardson. He was assisted by Elders J. G. Yeiser, D. J. McGhee and H. D. Bush. Following this came the ordination of elders, and Elders E. A. Shepard, A. S. Jackson, M. E. Cox and the writer assisted in the ceremony

**Father David Smith died at his home in Xeina, Ohio, 1888, at the age of 104 years.

of ordaining to that office Henry Crittenden, J. A. Johnson, A. L. Shaw, N. L. Holmes, S. J. West and W. H. Shearwood from the C. M. E. Church. R. T. Matthews, G. W. Malone, R. H. Hayne, Robert Caloway, J. H. Heard and A. J. Carter were the newly admitted this year.

The Conference was called to mourn at this session not only the death of the wife of the presiding Bishop, but that of Rev. H. T. Cargle and of Rev. David Anderson, who had passed away, as had also one of the sisters—a woman full of Christian labors—Mrs. Mary V. E. Yeiser, the wife of Rev. John G. Yeiser, then pastor of Allen Temple, Atlanta, Ga.

It was at this session that the venerable Bishop Campbell took occasion to remark that which cannot be said too often.—that no brother should mark another for personal affairs; “all personal affairs may be personally settled, but public affairs must be publicly settled.” It is a rule which works well always, and much time consumed in our Conferences, together with much space that is occupied in our minutes, would be saved if it were followed.

The transfers this year were Deacon C. W. Foster from the Columbia to the North Georgia, Revs. M. W. Moore and J. L. Trigg, of the Tennessee Conference, Rev. Geo. Washington from the Georgia, Revs. W. C. Malone and P. W. Walls from the West Tennessee, Rev. J. S. Flipper from the Georgia—all to the North Georgia; Rev. E. W. Wilson from the North Georgia to the South Carolina Con-

ference, and Rev. Wm. Harkness from the North Georgia to the Macon.

The Bishop gave as his decision that the Conference had no right to transfer a brother to another Conference, neither did a Bishop have the prerogative to transfer a brother unless his character had been passed upon. Trouble having arisen from indiscreet acts and remarks of a brother, whose trial happily ending in acknowledgment of error and pardon, led to this decision.

The Report from the Publication Department of the Church, under Rev. J. C. Embry, as Business Manager, was encouraging this year, and as the "cash plan" was now a feature of the work, there was every reason to hope for increased success with the support the Conferences should give. The body was asked to furnish some historical facts concerning the temperance cause. The request came through a communication from Prof. H. A. Scomp, of Emory College, to furnish these for a History of Temperance to aid in giving the position of the A. M. E. Church in regard to this matter. Temperance was an exciting theme in Georgia at that time, and the A. M. E. Church in the South showed, through the movements of some of its leaders in vigorous defense of the cause of prohibition, its position upon the subject during the years of 1885-86-87.

The Presiding Elders presented most encouraging features in their reports. Griffin District, under P. E. Andrew Brown reported six new churches built,

and 660 new members added, with many improvements.

This District sent \$357.15 in Dollar Money. Marietta, under Rev. C. L. Bradwell, reported increase of membership as 1,053 with improvement at nearly every point. It brought up \$587.80 in Dollar Money. Athens District, under Rev. R. Graham, reported good work and extension by sending three local preachers to Hart county, Lincoln county and Franklin county respectively, each one of whom had now land for a church. The Dollar Money was \$437.50. The writer's own work, as Presiding Elder of the Atlanta District, had decided marks of improvement financially and at most circuits and stations spiritually, as well. Allen Temple, which Rev. J. G. Yeiser had lifted from a wooden frame to a magnificent brick, spoke for itself to the body. Rev. J. T. Belsaw had built up our church in Covington from the weakest to the strongest congregation in the place; Rev. Zeigler, of St. James' Mission, had built two churches in Atlanta suburbs, while Revs. D. T. Green, Thomas W. Haigler, M. E. Cox, N. J. McCombs, H. H. Silas, S. B. Sims, S. J. West, N. L. Holmes, C. C. Cargile, S. C. Hendrix, Matthew Taylor, G. H. Holmes, A. L. Shaw, S. P. Cary, Lewis McClaren, H. C. Boyd, P. O'Connel and J. S. Flipper, had one and all done well at their posts. This P. E. District raised \$1,452.75 for its Dollar Money.

The Conference had as a total \$2,835.20 in Dollar Money and a membership reported as 16,000.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE CENTENNIAL YEAR OF AFRICAN METHODISM.

The first Conference to convene in the State this year—1887, was the Georgia Annual Conference, which opened its session in Quitman, Ga., January 14, in the Bethel A. M. E. Church.

Bishop James Shorter presided, with Rev. W. O. P. Sherman made chief Secretary.

The missionary meeting held on the evening of the second day's session was a success, with stimulating addresses by Rev. E. Lowry, Dr. W. D. Johnson, the writer's efforts being added to the others. A collection of \$124.94 was taken up at the close.

The work passed off very smoothly. E. L. Martin, J. T. Smith, — Crittenden, W. H. Holmes, W. H. Randall were admitted on trial. T. S. Wood, E. B. Brown, P. D. Davis, D. G. Wilson, Henry Wells, W. H. Walton, D. W. Moore, John Austin, O. N. Finegan were elected and ordained elders, with James Delbrough, James H. Holmes and W. H. Randal, local, the latter being reobligated.

Henry Nails was the only one whose death had occurred in the year.

The Sunday services consisted of three sermons, preached respectively by Bishop J. A. Shorter, the writer, and Rev. W. D. Johnson, D. D., Secretary

of Education, in the morning, afternoon and evening. The services drew out many of the best citizens, both colored and white.

The Conference was shocked to receive a telegram from Bishop J. M. Brown, bearing the news of Bishop R. H. Cain's severe illness. Bishop Cain was then presiding Bishop of the First Episcopal District. Ere the month had ended he was numbered with the dead having succumbed to that fatal malady, "Bright Disease," Janaury 24.

The members of the Georgia Conference at this session recognized the approaching anniversary of the rise and progress of the A. M. E. Church by resolutions to join themselves in a working order to be known as the "Ministers Centennial Union for the Promotion of Education." This finally resulted in the Quarto-Centennial held in Georgia and South Carolina, in 1890.

The six districts of the Conference presented a good showing in the statistical table. Savannah District, under Presiding Elder J. A. Woods, sent up \$1,327.61; Thomasville District, under Presiding Elder Henry Strickland, \$319.75; Cuthbert District, under Presiding Elder H. B. Dowdell, \$414.35; Valdosta District, under Presiding Elder W. H. Powell, \$392.85; Albany District under Presiding Elder S. M. Clarke, \$299.75, and Brunswick District, under Presiding Elder Peyton Stokes, \$291.50—a total of \$2,948.31 of Dollar Money from a membership reported as 20,000.

By petition of the Conference, it was decided by

the Bishop that the Conference should be held in December instead of January. As a consequence, when the appointment was made for the next Annual Conference to be held at Savannah, it was set for December 14 of the same year (1887).

It was upon the 9th of November preceding this that the next Conference in the State was held—the North Georgia Conference—at Rome, Ga., in the A. M. E. Church.

All that was mortal of our Presiding Bishop J. A. Shorter had been laid to rest in July, and the work of this Conference was in the hands of Bishop A. W. Wayman.

It had been nearly twenty years since he had presided over a Conference in the State—from 1868 to 1887—a long period, but the welcome given him was proportionately warm and heartfelt.

The class for admission consisted of E. J. Holland, Wm. P. Bradley, H. H. Silas, M. W. Pryor, W. A. Gillam, Wm. Flagg, W. H. Mance, L. G. Trigg, J. R. Pace, H. F. Chunn, Andrew Finch, J. J. Wilson. The deacons ordained were H. Pitts, W. G. Smith, E. W. Lee, S. P. Cary, Peter Williams, R. H. Haynes, Jerry McGruder, H. J. Johnson, P. O'Connell, S. M. Alexander, J. L. Trigg; the local deacons, Wm. P. Bradley and Jefferson Thomas, of the Atlanta District, Robert Caloway, B. J. Arnold, Robert Parks, J. B. Dukes, of the Athens District. The Elders' class ordained consisted of S. B. Sims, Wm. Stansel, Wm. J. Russell, C. W. Simons, F. Griffin, R. Fountain, L. Baxter,

C. C. Cargile, W. J. Lawrence, L. E. Hall, Y. D. Donnell, Isaac Young, Benjamin Shepard and A. D. Blossomgan were also elected to deacon's orders.

The election of seven delegates to General Conference, with alternates, took place on the third and fourth days, resulting in the following list: Revs. W. J. Gaines, R. Graham, J. G. Yeiser, C. L. Bradwell, J. A. Cary, D. J. McGhee, D. T. Green; alternates, Revs. C. P. Jordan, I. S. Hamilton, J. S. Flipper, A. W. Watson, C. M. Manning, H. D. Bush and J. H. Hillson.

The feature of the memorial services was that two Bishops were to be commemorated and one pioneer of the Conference. As we devote space elsewhere to one of the Bishops and this aged brother—Rev. Andrew Brown—because of their connection with the work in Georgia, we omit further mention of them here, save to say that the body did honor to both in all ways possible in the addresses delivered upon the occasion. Bishop R. A. Cain, is the one of whom we would now speak.

Dr. B. T. Tanner's tribute to him, as found recorded in the minutes of this session, also the report of the Committee upon memoirs for the Macon Conference, which met November 30—the same month—contain the sentiments of the Conferences of the State. Dr. Tanner spoke of him as a man of singular greatness, which he assuredly was; a man who had brought himself from a Virginia hovel to the halls of Congress and to the Episcopacy. He

was a religious man—always ready to preach; a man of most brilliant oratory and a lover of his race. The statement by the Committee that, like Bishop Shorter, he was strongly imbued with the missionary spirit was true, for his early work in South Carolina is proof of this. He was a zealous man even to over-enthusiasm. His dreams of the coming greatness of the race caused him to be perhaps too visionary, and, basing too much upon what he conceived to be our present greatness, to plan more largely for the immediate future than we could hope to accomplish, but it was to build up the race. He was to have organized the church in Africa, but God knew best.

As Bishop Tanner said, “No man ever brought to the church as many members as R. H. Cain, for all of South Carolina was his contribution.”

The Presiding Elder reports were satisfactory in a high degree. The Griffin district, under Rev. D. J. McGhee, with its sixteen appointments was moving on successfully. Marietta, under Rev. C. L. Bradwell, made its third annual report of its five stations and nineteen appointments, which showed over 373 members added, \$802.20 of Dollar Money raised and over \$9,533.01 as a total of all the money collected for various purposes. Athens District gave a very pleasing report of its twenty-one points, stating that all were in a prosperous condition. On the writer's own district all had done well—some of the younger ministers surprisingly so, financially and spiritually. Allen Temple

had received an addition of 300 souls in a marvelous revival under Rev. A. S. Jackson. There was some new mission work in Rutledge and McDonough and Locust Grove, which seemed to promise well. This was the only new work of the year in our Conference borders. Our aim in the Atlanta District was to enlarge our work and gather in the people, believing, like Joshua of old, that there was yet much land to possess.

The Macon, Ga. Conference held its next session in Talbotton A. M. E. Chapel, Nov. 30. Bishop J. M. Brown, D. D., was to preside but was absent at the opening, and the Secretary of the last session, Wm. C. Banton, called the ministers to order, and a temporary chairman was elected in the person of Presiding Elder R. A. Hall. The opening exercises were conducted and the Conference proceeded to business. Upon vote, the usual committees were appointed by the chairman, and that evening the annual sermon was preached by Rev. Wesley G. Gaines from the text found in Psalm xlvii : 11 "The Lord of hosts is with us ; the God of Jacob is our refuge," in which he spoke most feelingly of the trials of the ministerial office, the spread of religious truth and the extension of the A. M. E. Church.

Upon the second day, Bishop Disney, of what was, in 1887, the Tenth Episcopal District, including Ontario, Nova Scotia and West Indies, reached the Conference. He had come to preside over its deliberations in the absence of Bishop Brown, who was detained at home by severe illness. Bishop

Disney was warmly welcomed, and spoke graciously concerning his coming to the Conference. Bishop Turner, of the Fifth Episcopal District, was also present, and upon introduction to the body, spoke of this work with the old fervor, as being the result of "constant endeavor to spread abroad the church of God on the earth."

The reports of the Committees were unusually interesting, stirring speeches being made upon the subject of Temperance, which question, as mentioned before, had been agitating the State, and especially the city of Atlanta. A triumph had been scored for Prohibition, and it was a season of rejoicing that so hurtful an influence had been suppressed in this battle of wrong *versus* right. As it was most truthfully said in Conference: "Intemperance is sending our young men and women to the chain-gangs of earth and hell, where they are tormented day and night." The writer was especially moved to urge the saving of men, women and children from hunger, nakedness, sickness and death. Intemperance has wrought such fearful wretchedness that every minister of the gospel should lift his voice against it, and do his part toward crushing it—destroying it—blotting it out from the face of the earth.

The church was again warned by this Conference as to the dangers to the church in too great readiness to receive into "full membership" on profession of faith, without strict adherence to the benefits of Methodist usage, which provides for a probation of six months. It was set forth clearly in the follow-

ing statement in the report of Committee on State of the Church: "We believe that a too ready admission to full membership cannot be productive of obedient followers of church rule; for those who, on entering the organization, observe the rules of discipline set aside by ministers in charge, may, in time, come to disregard the more weighty matters of the law, and the ministers who, on the ground of expediency, with a view to out-distancing other religious bodies, disregard the correct rules of Methodist probation."

The election of delegates to the General Conference of 1888 took place upon the third day, resulting in the following list: Revs. Elias P. Holmes, Wright Newman, Lewis H. Smith, Lawrence Thomas, Richard A. Hall, Andrew W. Lowe, Wesley C. Gaines, with Revs. T. N. M. Smith, Henry Lester, John A. Davis, Wm. H. Smith, Wm. C. Burton, Allen Cooper, George Linder as alternates. The credentials of Thomas S. Price and J. W. Brooks, with Van J. Jones and J. H. Kimbrough, as alternates—all elected as lay delegates to the General Conference by the Electoral College at Macon, July 6, 1887—were presented, and their names were added to the list of delegates to assemble in the city of Indianapolis, Ind., May 1st, 1888.

The annual meetings of the Literary and Historical Society, also of the Missionary Society, were productive of much benefit in every way, as interest was re-awakened and pockets, as well as hearts,

were touched to respond to the appeal for the good of the cause represented.

The following brethren were admitted on trial: J. O. Iverson, J. C. Hill, Wm. Jones, James Y. Rogers, F. C. Crayton, J. H. Hall, S. E. Perry, J. B. Upshaw, T. J. Lewis, R. N. Fairfax, J. Seabrooks, J. R. Stroud, H. D. Gorman, G. W. Linder, C. G. Linder, S. M. Zeigler, D. S. Wells, C. T. Thornton, Thomas Mitchell, Elias H. Miller, Henry L. Davis.

The ordination sermon was preached on the 4th of December by Bishop Disney from Matthewix ; 16. "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves." At the close of the sermon, the following were ordained deacons: Jerry Moseley, Claiborne H. Warren and Charles J. Jones, with Revs. James R. Strong and G. F. Battle re-obligated to the same office; the elders were as follows: Revs. Robert M. S. Taylor, San Francisco Andrews, Robert Jay Bailey, Richard L. Butts, Levi L. Reynolds, Homer Shaw, Daniel Smith, Simon P. Thomas, and Revs. Thomas Mitchell, Charles Thornton and Daniel S. Wells, re-obligated.

Revs. Felix Foster and Augustus Colbert had died during the year. Those who took transfers from the Macon Conference this year were Edward D. Gorman, Brister Griggs, John Seabrooks, Thos. Mitchell, Wm. T. Norris, Samuel George and Wm. Harkness—all to the Georgia Conference, while Macon Conference received from the North Georgia,

Revs. Milton W. Moore, Henry C. Boyd, Wm. Harkness and George Washington.

The year 1887 had been a memorable one. It was the Centennial year of the existence of the A. M. E. Church, and in November there was a general celebration of this event in the different parts of the connection, centering principally in Bethel Church—the mother church of all—in Philadelphia.

To these meetings the church in future will owe much, for here for the first time we find something like a systematized effort to formulate the history of the church in a few sections in the addresses delivered. The *Centennial Budget*—the work of our Financial Secretary, Dr. B. W. Arnett—now Bishop B. W. Arnett, D. D.,—was compiled in 1888 and is a masterpiece of work and a mine of information to which all future historians must resort. Here we find what the church has done in one hundred years from its conception in seventy-one years from its organization. Twenty years before this American Methodism held its Centennial. To be sure, we, too, had here a part as Methodists, but it was not to the Negro race what this year of 1887 was with its outlook on the past and future. These Centennial addresses were inspiring, they were full of suggestions which are already being put into practice.

In this Centennial year we find one Bishop over a church of 16 preachers increased to eleven Bishops over 2,270 itinerant preachers. Supporting these

we find 5,022 local preachers and 2,600 exhorters. With 17,009 stewards and 14,190 stewardesses, whose labors are helped by 17,778 class leaders, we have under the care of all these 47,817 probationers and 344,953 members.

There is nothing in such a showing for one hundred years—years of toil and struggle under most harrowing afflictions—and as the church turned its face to the General Conference of 1888, it was with a heart full of love and gratitude to God that He had thus strengthened the weak and paved the way for a future, for which every member of the A. M. E. Church will bless Him and Richard Allen.

CHAPTER XIX.

WORK ASSIGNED IN 1888.

There was still another Conference to be held before the close of 1887. The Georgia Annual Conference, at its meeting in January, changed the time of its session to December, thus two sessions of this Conference met in one year, as in the case of the Macon Conference in 1883. The Georgia Conference convened in St. James Tabernacle, Savannah, Ga., December 14th, and continued to the 20th inclusive.

It had been twenty-one years since the church in the South first held a session of Conference in the State of Georgia. Savannah had twice before entertained the Georgia Conference since the separation of the State work in 1873. At this date there were but five men left who had attended its first meeting—Rev. Henry Strickland, Rev. J. A. Wood, Rev. S. B. Jones, Rev. Thomas J. Crayton and the writer.

St. James Tabernacle in Savannah was then on leased land, but since then Rev. R. B. Bailey has bought a lot and is now (1890) erecting a fine building upon it—a fitting edifice for the city in which Georgia African Methodism was first organized and the city which holds the Wesley Monumental

Church as well, in which we, too, have a share as a church.*

Bishop Brown not having arrived, Elder S. H. Robertson called the Conference to order, and a Chairman was elected in the person of Rev. J. A. Woods, pending the arrival of the Bishop, who had informed Dr. B. W. Arnett that he would be present despite illness during the session. Bishop Disney was also expected the following morning. The work went briskly on. The Annual Sermon fell, by appointment, to Rev. C. McDowell, who delivered it the first evening from Romans i:16. Dr. W. B. Derrick was one of the welcome guests of the Conference, he having accompanied Bishop Brown, in order to care for him in his afflicted state.

The preachers admitted on trial were H. C. Hawk, E. J. Knight, S. S. Swinson, Jerry Griffin, E. L. Martin. The deacons elected and ordained were Revs. J. A. Hadley, Perry Davis, L. B. Shaw, Reuben Richard, G. W. Butler, G. H. Greene, Enoch Roberts, J. W. Hagans, C. H. Williams, Peter Jones, B. J. Shackelford, with Brothers A. Underwood, Wm Daniel, Anthony Jackson, Moses Ross, Jacob Seabrooks, Cyrus Griffin and H. C. Brown as local deacons. Revs.

*The General Conference of 1876 voted to give \$1,000 to this Monumental Church to Wesley. The Committee appointed to raise the money failed. But the Bishop's Council and Financial Board said it must be paid, and it was paid by the Secretary and Treasurer, Dr. B. W. Arnett. The agent, J. O. A. Clark, in acknowledging the sum said: "Your church is the only one which, voting us a like sum, has paid the full amount pledged."

Russel Young, H. M. Lofton, J. B. Epton, C. C. Warren, G. W. Kimbrough, E. J. Bush, Willis Lane, Marshall Stephen, J. W. Williams, P. S. Smith, W. H. Hammonds, Tobie McIver, H. L. Weston, Frank C. Mitchell and R. B. Greene were the elders; the last named being reobligated.

Samuel Steward and Joseph Wooden, local deacons, died this year.

The Conference Missionary Convention was set to meet at Brunswick, August 15th, and the delegates elected to General Conference were Revs. J. B. Lofton, S. H. Robertson, J. A. Woods, W. O. P. Sherman, W. H. Powell, S. D. Roseborough, S. C. Powell, J. H. Adams and R. R. Downs. The alternates were Revs. G. H. M. Brookens, D. H. Porter, M. J. Ingraham, S. M. Clarke, Henry Strickland, R. W. Fickland, M. R. Wilson, R. V. Smith. J. F. Gilling and G. W. Shaw, of Savannah, were the lay delegates elected in August and their names were added. Rev. Samuel D. George was transferred from the Macon Conference to this, as was also Rev. Wm. Harkness.

The Hawkinsville District raised \$307.25 of Dollar Money; Brunswick, \$260.75; Albany, \$328.05; Valdosta, \$245.57; Cuthbert, \$426.15 and Thomasville, \$524.20.

Conference closed the twentieth of the month—the last Conference to meet in the State until after the General Conference of the following May.

This body met in Indianapolis May —, 1888, and elected four Bishops to the work of the Episcopal

Bench in the following order of selection: Dr. W. J. Gaines, Dr. B. W. Arnett, Dr. B. T. Tanner, and Dr. Abram Grant. The writer and Bishop Grant were from the South—a recognition of the extent and strength of Southern work. The General Conference laid off the work of the church at this session into eleven Episcopal Districts. This was done by the Episcopal Committee, which committee also makes the appointments of the Bishops, an arrangement no more than fair, as it would seem that the brethren should have the opportunity of making appointments for the Bishops once in four years, as the latter make theirs every year.

The appointments of the Episcopal Bench were as follows for the quadrennium of 1888-1892, together with all Conferences as they now stand (1890):

First District—Bishop H. M. Turner, New Jersey, Philadelphia, New York, New England.

Second District—Bishop J. P. Campbell, North Carolina, Virginia, Baltimore.

Third District—Bishop D. A. Payne, Ohio, North Ohio, Pittsburgh.

Fourth District—Bishop J. M. Brown, Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, Michigan.

Fifth District—Bishop T. M. D. Ward, Rocky Mountain, Missouri, North Missouri, Kansas, Indian Territory.

Sixth District—Bishop W. J. Gaines, North Georgia, Macon, Ga., Georgia, North Alabama, Alabama.

Seventh District—Bishop B. W. Arnett, Columbia, South Carolina, Florida, East Florida.

Eighth District—Bishop R. R. Disney, Arkansas, West Arkansas, South Arkansas, Mississippi, North Mississippi.

Ninth District—Bishop A. Grant, California, Texas, Northeast Texas, Texas, Central, West Texas, North Louisiana, Louisiana.

Tenth District—Bishop A. W. Wayman, Kentucky, West Kentucky, Tennessee, West Tennessee.

Eleventh District—Bishop B. T. Tanner, Ontario, Nova Scotia, Bermuda, Hayti.

As we see, the newly elected Bishops from the South were assigned to Southern work, and Georgia and Alabama were assigned, as the Sixth District, to the writer. So Georgia again had a newly made Bishop to preside over its work.*

The first Conference over which I was called to preside in my new office was the North Georgia Conference, held at Dalton, Nov. 7th, 1888. In order to lay before my readers the state of mind with which I approached my new duties I can do no better than humbly present the heart-felt words which rose to my lips when I addressed this Conference for the first time in my new relations to it. It was a serious undertaking—to go back to the work as Bishop where I had labored from the itinerant

*At this point the writer feels it best to drop the impersonal form in reference to himself for the remainder of the work of the Conference, as being both awkward and inconvenient to use, where of necessity he must so frequently refer to himself.

ranks, and the fear was that my friends might expect too much of me, and that they and life-long acquaintances might cause me embarrassment by asking much of me as friends and acquaintances. This will explain my words, as well as the course I then determined to pursue, as I spoke to the brethren as follows :

BRETHREN:—I appear before you as the Presiding Bishop of this Conference. I do not come as a stranger to you, nor to the people of Georgia. I have been a member of the African Methodist Church since its organization in this State. You can imagine my feelings when you consider the gravity of the responsibility resting upon me in the responsible office to which I have recently been elevated by your suffrage and that of the membership of the General Conference of the entire Church. You can imagine how anxious I feel about the success of my work in the Sixth Episcopal District. When I think of my election to this office by the members of the General Conference, and especially those of the Georgia delegation, and then of my return to this State to preside over the Conference in which I have spent a great deal of service, I can assure you that I am deeply anxious to discharge with success the arduous duties. The responsibilities are great, and I need the full co-operation of every minister, every member and every friend of the North Georgia Conference. No man liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself; and whether we be living or dead, we are the Lord's. We need each other's help and

sympathy in bearing the burdens of life. None of us ever advance so high in position in this life, that we do not need the sympathy of those who are around us. It is the common people of this country who hold up this great government under which we live. The men who build the railroads, mix the mortar burn the bricks and perform other necessary toil, are the ones who constitute the life blood of our material organization. The engineer who runs the train is entrusted with the responsibility of human lives, but he could not succeed without the co-operation of the general manager, and neither could the general manager succeed without the men who built the railroads and have the ability to run them.

Our interests are so closely connected together that it would be unwise to say, that I do not need the assistance of others. I am aware that a man must make his own mark in life. We can help him occasionally; but the great responsibility for success rests upon the man's own shoulders. Therefore, I propose to allow every man a chance in the struggle for polemic success.

There are three qualities, however, that every minister needs in order to succeed in this life. There may be more, but I speak of three. The first is a Christian character; the second is the will to work for God, humanity and the Church; and the third is education in order to put into action the works, especially by our Christian character. Brethren, I have the same appointments under my supervision that have been given to you by the

Bishops that have preceded me. I have no better places but the same, unless they have grown better under your labors during the past year. Every man cannot get such an appointment as he would like to have, for there are not enough such places to distribute among our brethren. I wish most earnestly that I had one hundred choice appointments that I might be able to satisfy the brethren who desire them. Pardon me, members of the Conference, for requesting you not to ask me for special appointments. I confess that it is very embarrassing to be thus approached. While I am not a stranger to you, I feel just as every Bishop would under the circumstances. I am perfectly willing that you should tell me your difficulties and trials; and I assure you that the sympathy of my heart will go out toward you, and in the name of God and the Church I promise to do the best I can for every man in the Conference.

I trust that every minister's report will be better this year than it was last year, both spiritually and temporally. The men who work the hardest and accomplish the best results will be sure to come to the front. I can say without egotism that I have worked hard for the church, therefore I am in sympathy with those who work in their respective fields of labor. The ministers throughout the Sixth District have promised to assist me in my administration as best they could, for more reasons than I will state now. Those who make themselves useful shall be put into positions where they can be more

useful. Whatever the appointment is, try to improve it. My prayer to God is, that the churches committed to your care may prosper and grow under your pastorship. This cannot be general unless we work together. I pray you, brethren, to help me make this work a success. I implore you to let us have order, especially while business is being transacted. I ask each minister to do the best he can to assist me in this direction, and I will have no trouble in preserving order during the sessions of the Conference. I cannot do it unless you respect the chair. I shall respect the rights of every one on the floor; and it is expected that when the chair decides a brother is out of order, that he will take his seat. Let our department be such as becometh ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ, so that when we shall have closed this session, the people of this community will say, the conduct of the ministers has been grand and creditable to the church. You will excuse me, dear brethren, for urging you to be respectful to each other. There is nothing which brings disorder into the sessions of a Conference or in any general assembly, whether it is in the House of Representatives or in the General Conference, than a want of respect for each other.

Ministers ought to be more respectful to one another than other persons, for we occupy higher positions than any other class on earth. You all know how I revered the lamented Bishop James A. Shorter as a friend and as a father, but he would rebuke me just as quickly as he would any man in

the Conference if he thought I did not do my duty. I always felt he was honest, and, therefore, I could take his rebuke because he did it conscientiously. And yet, with all respect for the memory of Bishop Shorter, I am ambitious to down him in gathering in souls for Christ, and in advancing the standard of Christianity.

I want to surpass Bishop Shorter's record in this respect, and I want the brethren to aid me in doing so. When Bishop Shorter succeed Bishop Dickerson in this work, he praised his predecessor's efforts, but he said he intended to surpass what he had done. I never went to Conference as a pastor but that I meant to beat my previous record. I made that the rule of my ministerial life; and I feel equally anxious now, insucceeding other Bishops who have been successful in their great office, to surpass their creditable records. You know how a minister feels in following one that has been successful. It is my purpose to distance my predecessor in all respects. I have passed through every grade of ministerial experience in our church, and I thank God that there are witnesses present to the fact. I feel anxious over your results, because I am interested in them. As your reports are my reports, I naturally feel very solicitous for your success. A failure would kill me. It is my earnest prayer that the Lord may bless you in all your ministerial labors. I stand here with my hand raised before God, and I pledge myself in the presence of the brethren that I am going to do the best I can for the church that has honored me with

its great commission. I mean to deal tenderly but firmly with you. I shall be plain and tender in my intercourse with you. A man can say anything to me in a courteous manner but when he speaks otherwise he is likely to defeat the very purpose he aims to serve. I never mean to be vindictive, but I prefer to meet such a spirit with good-will toward all men. I once knew one of the best men in the Georgia Conference who had charge of a certain church and desired to bring about certain results. He was positive, but somewhat harsh in his manner of dealing with his congregation. He desired to bring his membership up to certain duties, and informed them in a severe tone that they must comply or suffer the consequences. He partially succeeded, but in very bad grace. I afterwards had charge of the same church, and I appealed tenderly to the people's respect for the law, and their obligation to comply with it. I meant to do just what he aimed to do; I succeeded by approaching the people pleasantly to have them co-operate with me. I attained the desired results, but in a different way. The office does not make the man. Brethren, I tell you in the fear of God that I want you to aid me. I appreciate and feel for the ministers in their efforts to advance the banners of our church. Your value is determined by your worth and influence.

What makes me feel proud of my position is that I was elected as a Bishop ought to be elected, from all parts of the country. I feel honored in being blessed with such an experience. It was indeed a

gratifying spectacle to see the brethren from the North, the South, the East and the West, standing side by side with the Georgia delegation in their efforts to give the South a representation on the Bench of Bishops. I appeal to you to do your duty so as to prove yourselves worthy of the consideration that the General Conference extended to us. I desire you to be men in the fullest sense—respectful and dignified, with no disposition to servility. I would be sorry to see in any of you anything like a disposition to fawn. I have a dog at home that appears glad to see me when I return home after an absence by various manifestations; but when he lies at my feet I am inclined to kick him away; and if any of the brethren should approach me in any other bearing than becomes a Christian minister and a gentleman, I would not be pleased with it.

Whatever faults I may have, I promise you that I will not use the Episcopal office that God and the church have given me, to stab a brother, whatever he may do to me. I do not think any man who knows me considers me a coward. I have always had the courage to say openly and plainly whatever I deem right and expedient. While I have honestly opposed the positions of others, I have never helped to expel but one man from the church in my life. Elder Robertson knows to whom I refer. I may have marked men, but I never did it to injure a brother; and if I did an injustice to any one, it was with the intention of doing good. I frequently asked God, upon my knees, to decide the contest for

the Bishopric, as far as I was concerned, in the interest of the church; and I promised God that if I were successful, I would aim to advance the Church of Christ.

This morning my hand is extended and my heart is open in Christian fellowship to every being here and elsewhere; and if I make any mistakes in my office, they will be mistakes of the "head and not the heart."

I had determined to treat every man according to his character, ability and intelligence, and in this line I have striven ever since. I have also worked upon the principle in our Conferences that the men who come *in* must work to come *up*, feeling that thus our strength has been used to the best advantage. To-day (1890) I can truly say that the brethren have helped me by preventing any such embarrassment as I at first feared, and as would have resulted, had any other course been followed than the one I desired them to follow.

In this North Georgia Conference, Rev. D. T. Green preached the annual sermon—a grand discourse upon "The predomination of light over darkness."

The visitors to Conference were from various sections, and the progress of our people in twenty years was strikingly noted. At Sabbath services the audience heard from Rev. L. J. Coppin, D. D., Editor of the A. M. E. Church Review, also Rev. James H. Handy, D. D., Financial Secretary, and Rev. A. W. Upshaw, in sermons doctrinal, eloquent, logical and oratorical.

The following were ordained deacons: Wm. Flagg, Jr., Wade H. Mance, James A. Lindsey, John Cooper, Abraham L. Gaines, L. G. Brookens, also Geo. N. Henry and C. M. Pinkleton, local. The elders ordained were Revs. Edward W. Lee, Simon M. Alexander, Andrew J. Wilkerson, Madersod M. Pryor, James Watts, Z. Pierce, Floyd R. Richardson and Joseph R. Biggins. The preachers admitted on trial were J. W. Fincher, T. Porter, J. J. Williams, A. J. Carey, E. P. Russell, Nathan Price, Burrel Battle, M. E. Cawthorne, P. S. Simmons, Wm. Bailey, S. R. Lowe, B. F. Franklin, A. L. Gaines, L. C. Rolling, J. A. Lindsey, J. W. Walker, R. M. King, Samuel Givens, J. B. McAlpine, Grant Hawkins and R. W. Gibson.

The Atlanta District report from S. H. Robertson, P. E., for five months (he having been transferred from the Georgia Conference) showed good work at every one of its twenty-three points—new churches, improvements and added members. Presiding Elder D. J. McGhee reported similarly from the twenty points on Griffin District, as did Presiding Elder R. Graham from the twenty-five on Athens District. C. L. Bradwell, P. E., of Marietta, gave a most encouraging detailed account of these twenty-one points and a probable extension of work to Tallapoosa.

The transfers from the Conference this year were Rev. J. G. Yeiser, Rev. D. T. Green, Rev. Peter McLain, (now grown old and feeble) and Rev. Washington Campbell, Rev. J. S. Hamilton and

Rev. G. W. H. Williams—all to the Macon Conference, and Rev. F. R. Richardson to the North Alabama Conference. Revs. C. S. Greene and W. L. Russell had fallen by the wayside this year. The memorial services were very touching. During the session the news of the victory of Harrison and Morton reached us and Conference cheered it to the echo. The Endowment Day money for September, 1887, was reported at \$2,707.89, while the Dollar Money of the four Presiding Elder Districts was \$3,183. So closed my first Conference as Bishop of the A. M. E. Church—a delightful session.

The Macon Conference was held in 1888, in Campbell Chapel, Americus, Ga., opening November 14. Here, too, my work was equally pleasant, my welcome equally warm and the session a profitable one.

Eight preachers were admitted on trial: Warren Rabon, Chas. J. Perry, Geo. W. Coady, Perry Johnson, Felix O'Neal, Robert J. Jones, Henry Zimmerman, George W. Smith. The deacons elected and ordained were Revs. Daniel J. Lawrence, Henry H. Johnson, George Wesley Hill, Allen R. Hooper, James Mitchell; the elders, Revs. Archibald B. B. Wilson, Wm. B. Gallius, Daniel J. McGhee.

The transfers to Conference were B. R. Glass from East Florida, ("taken up" as he could not return to his Florida work because of the yellow fever scourge) Brister Griggs and John Seabrooks from

the Georgia Conference, D. L. Durand, D. T. Green, J. G. Yeiser, G. W. H. Williams and Peter McLain from the North Georgia. Levi Walker, Wm. H. Smith and R. A. Hall took transfers to the North Georgia.

This session closed the 19th inst., and I proceeded to my work in Alabama to meet the North Alabama Conference at Florence. This new work was in excellent condition, coming from the hands of Bishop D. A. Payne, and I left to enter upon it courageously, knowing by experience that my brethren in this neighboring State would do even as I had asked my Georgia friends. No one could have asked for a more cordial welcome than that they vouchsafed me. Truly I felt that my lines had fallen in pleasant places, and, as at the close of the session in Florence I turned toward Mobile to hold the Alabama Conference, it was with the feeling that all my experiences here were also to be pleasant. Nor was I disappointed, for the same warmth and hearty regard were found in that city as well, and continued throughout the entire session. The year's work in Alabama pleased me as shown by the Conference, the men, their characters and their labors there.

From Mobile my steps were turned to Georgia again to hold the Georgia Conference in Cuthbert, December 12th, having made with this Conference the circuit of the Conference work in the Sixth Episcopal District. To my appeal, as in the other Conferences of my native State, that they should

help me to raise still higher the work left by Bishop, Shorter, I was assured that the Georgia "Invincibles" would be true and lead the Sixth district to victory in 1892. As in the other Conferences a harmonious session was passed. The preachers seemed determined to work hand in hand with their new Bishop and the Presiding Elders.

The following were ordained deacons: Revs. Henry M. Crittenden, J. T. Smith, G. W. C. Jones, J. W. Nixon, Jerry Brown, (local); elders, Revs. Judge D. Glenn and Cyrus J. Pettigrew, re-obligated.

E. D. Garman and local deacons, Jacob Seabrooks and J. Rastick, also E. J. Knight, had died.

The editor of the *Southern Christian Recorder*, located at Selma, Alabama, was present and indicated that as soon as the financial condition would allow, this organ of the Church would be printed in Atlanta. The Conference was strongly urged to use its own literature. Bishop Arnett was also with us and had the pleasure of introducing Rev. S. J. Campbell, a native African, who gave his plans for our successful Missionary operations in that country.

The coming Sabbath brought invitations from the M. E. Church South, for appointments from the Conference, which were filled to the glory of His name and the honor of the race by Bishop B. W. Arnett, D. D., and Rev. W. G. Alexander.

A commission was formed, looking toward uniting the Alabama Conferences with the Georgia Confer-

ences in the obligations for the support of Morris-Brown College. Later the Alabama Conferences carried out a plan to inaugurate a school of their own, which is now in operation. (1890.)*

The P. E. Districts stood well in all ways. The Dollar Money reached \$3,915.77.

*Payne Institute.

CHAPTER XX.

EVE OF THE QUARTO-CENTENNIAL.

With experience which comes from holding the five Annual Conferences of Georgia and Alabama, I opened up the Georgia Work for 1889, with the North Georgia Conference at Washington, Ga., Nov. 6. It was an especial pleasure to me to come back to Washington, Ga.—my birthplace—as I met many old friends and acquaintances of years gone by, and I was led to think more seriously than ever of the goodness of my Creator—led to ponder deeply upon the wondrous power with which He has guided my footsteps—yes, the footsteps of the whole race.

Rev. D. J. McGhee, Presiding Elder of the Griffin District, preached the annual sermon with reverence and truth from Acts iv: 20., "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

Among the General Officers present were Dr. J. C. Embry, Dr. W. D. Johnson. Dr. L. H. Coppin, of the Review was also with us, and each and all spoke cheering words to us as well as persuasive ones for the causes they represented.

The new Principal of Morris-Brown College, Professor A. St. George Richardson, gave a strong

report of this school which was growing so rapidly, having six teachers and 320 pupils with three courses of study entered upon—English, Normal and Academic. The Treasurer's Report was equally encouraging.

The finances of the Conference also were in most excellent condition. Contingent, Missionary, Endowment Day and Children's Day Money, each rolled up beyond past sums in a most gratifying manner.

Two of the superannuated elders had fallen asleep in Christ this past year—Rev. C. R. Edwards and Æsop Smith, while the wives of Elder S. H. Robertson and Elder J. McGhee had also been called home to a peaceful rest.

Griffin District, under Presiding Elder D. J. McGhee, had brought to the fold 1,006 souls through the faithful ministers, and interest was growing.

Marietta, under Presiding Elder R. A. Hall reported average work as a whole. Richard Graham, Presiding Elder of Athens District, reported strong work in the ministry under his eye with few exceptions, while Atlanta, under Elder S. H. Robertson, had been a success both spiritually and financially. The Dollar Money from all the districts reached a total of \$3,515.16.

The preachers admitted on trial were, T. W. Steele, James M. Lee, C. Sappington, G. W. Moreland, G. W. Gholston, G. C. Summerlin, R. D. Stinson, J. R. Fleming, J. H. M. Brown, Marcus J. Greene. James J. Wilson, John H. Heard,

Patrick W. Greatheart, Elijah J. Holland, Luther C. Rollins, Matthew E. Cawthron, Henry F. Chunn, Archibald J. Carey, Perry G. Simmons, James M. Lee were elected and ordained itinerant deacons, and Geo. W. Moreland, Shandy Parrott, Cyrus Wilkerson, local deacons.

Elder Bradwell's caution to the Conference against ordaining so many men under the missionary rule was heartily endorsed by the Bishop, six of the above having been so recommended.

Revs. C. W. Simons, A. W. Watson, J. A. Cary, B. F. Franklin, H. B. Bush were transferred to the Macon Conference, and P. W. Greatheart from the South Carolina to this, also M. C. Riley from the South Arkansas Conference. J. B. McAlpine took a transfer to the North Alabama, and M. N. Nelson to the Tennessee Conference.

We closed the session upon the 12th and proceeded directly to the Macon, Georgia Conference, which was held in Wesley Chapel, Milledgeville, Ga., opening the following day, Nov. 13.

Elder Wright Newman, Presiding Elder of the Macon District preached the annual sermon on "The Light of Faith." Rev. Seymour B. Jones preached the annual missionary sermon in which he referred most appropriately to the missionary field as presented to the gathered ministers at Savannah in 1866, and the trials of these men who were sent east, west, north and south throughout the State. His description was of a lot such as all who have helped to spread African Methodism have experienced in

the pioneer work, and many of us could sympathize as he said, "my lot was up and down the Chattahoochee River. While on that circuit we were some times up against the steamer's boiler trying to keep warm. Sometimes we would have to take it afoot across the country, sometimes a friend would have compassion and give us a ride on the back of a mule or on a wagon."

The time was approaching for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the A. M. E. Church in the South, and the committee reported in favor of co-operation with the other Georgia Conferences for local programs, with the double aim of commemorating the establishment of the church and raising a large amount for Morris-Brown College. In this commemoration, it was agreed that the Conference in Georgia and South Carolina should arrange this program; the co-operation of all States represented in the first Conference in Charleston, 1865, was also to be secured, while the church in general was to be invited to assist in the joyful occasion. *

One of the old veterans of the service, Rev. Peter McLain, now aged and feeble, was offered superannuated relationship, which was reluctantly accepted.†

* While the Georgia Conference had spoken of celebrating this Quarto-Centennial at its session January 18, 1887, at Quitman, after my election to the Bishopric, Rev. T. G. Steward, D. D., wrote me a strong letter calling my attention to the importance of such a celebration of our Southern work. I would give honor to whom honor is due. He deserves great credit for calling my attention to it. Had he not done so, the effort made by the Georgia Conference, as mentioned above, might have failed.

† He had been superannuated at North Georgia Conference held in Rome, Ga., 1887, and asked at the same Conference held in Dalton, 1888, that his superannuation be raised. It was granted and he was transferred to the Macon Conference where he accepted the superannuation.

A goodly number of preachers were admitted on trial: Doctor H. Powell, Samuel H. Charleston, Augustus S. Martin, Charles W. Maxwell, Frank L. Fleming, Riley W. McNeal, Thomas Howard, Robert A. Whitfield, Charles P. Baker, Alonzo L. Field, Jefferson L. Green, G. D. Walker, Wm. F. Swindole, Robert W. Miller, T. T. Turner, W. T. Harris, Richard Bigham. The deacons ordained were R. H. Fairfax, F. C. Crayton, H. L. Davis, J. B. Upshaw, S. E. Berry, B. Griggs, J. Barnes, H. G. Graham, J. C. Hill, J. H. Hall, J. Lewis, J. Y. Rogers, S. M. Zeigler, J. O. Iverson, C. J. Linder, G. W. Linder, W. Jones, G. W. Smith, and J. Seabrooks and J. R. Stroud re-obligated. Claiborne H. Warren, Robert B. Sanford, Taylor Cothran, Alfred Sapp were the elders ordained, with Daniel S. Wells re-obligated. Elder George W. H. Williams had died.

The Dollar Money raised was \$5,009.09 and the membership about 24,000. The transfers were as follows: Revs. C. W. Simon, J. A. Cary and Levi Walker came to the Macon Conference from the North Georgia Conference, while Revs. Lawrence Thomas, S. B. Jones and Cassie Milton were sent to that Conference, and Revs. Hadson W. Whitaker and Haley Hardy to the Georgia Conference. The 102 appointments of the Macon work were all filled.

From the Macon Conference I proceeded directly to Wilmington, N. C., to hold the N. C. Conference for Bishop Campbell on Wednesday, November 20th. Bishop Campbell was ill and

could not meet the Conference. The session thus coming into my hands was pleasant and profitable. The Dollar Money was over \$1,300.00. Bishop Arnett was present and assisted us. Bishop Turner also looked in upon us; he gave some helpful advice and left us, taking two ministers with him, one to Bridge Street, N. Y., and the other to Albany.

We went next to Greensboro, Ala., to hold the North Alabama Conference, November 27, 1889. We missed connection at the junction of the East Tennessee and Western railroad. We saw there was no chance to reach our work in time without going through the country. I proceeded to Uniontown in company with Dr. James A. Handy, Financial Secretary, Dr. Levi Coppin, Revs. J. S. Shaw, W. H. Nixon, and others, where we hired buggies and hacks and drove twenty miles through the country, reaching the seat of the Conference in three hours. The novelty of the drive through the prairies of Alabama was pleasing. One hundred preachers were awaiting us, wondering where their Bishop could be. This was one of the most interesting Conferences that has ever been held in the State of Alabama. The white citizens paid especial attention to our sessions and did much toward helping the people support the assembled ministers.

Drs. Handy and Coppin did everything in their power to encourage me while we were struggling to reach our destination. The session was a pleasant one in every particular. The Dollar Money raised was \$1,545.00, being an increase of over half the

amount the preceding year. The ordination services on Sunday were interesting. The mayor, with a number of councilmen and aldermen, were present at the morning service. Dr. Handy made more reputation as a preacher at this Conference than any other preacher. The President of the College of the M. E. Church South, with all his students, was out to hear him, and his sermon created quite a discussion among these students at their supper table, so we were told later. One young minister said if making him black would enable him to preach the gospel like Dr. Handy they might blacken him now. Rev. McGhee of the M. E. Church, South, in Greensboro, said that he never expected to hear again the gospel preached with so much power and beauty until the Archangel warbled upon the harps in glory. Dr. Handy's imagination is wonderful.*

Dr. Derrick preached at night an eloquent sermon. The white people said Handy was a Georgian and Southerner, and out preached New York—they having conceived this idea concerning the former through pride in the South, but both of these acquitted themselves grandly.

From the North Alabama Conference we proceeded directly to Union Spring, Alabama in company with Drs. Handy and Derrick to hold the Alabama Conference. The ministers met us

*Dr. Handy was chairman of the committee that examined me in 1866 for admission into the Conference. This and many other things connected with our ministerial life caused me to hold Dr. Handy in great respect.

promptly at nine o'clock, December 4. This session was intensely interesting, as the North Alabama Conference had sent a committee to confer with the Alabama in establishing the Payne Institute at Selma, Alabama. This was the first material work that the Conferences of this State had ever done in the way of establishing an educational institution under the auspices of the A. M. E. Church. The committee after consultation agreed upon a plan of uniting the two Conferences in the effort and brought their report before the Conference. It was unanimously and enthusiastically adopted. We now have a valuable piece of property located in Selma, and known as Payne Institute, with over two hundred pupils and three competent teachers.

The financial success of this Conference proved to be the best in its history. The Dollar Money that had been from \$500.00 to \$800.00 increased to \$2,440.30. This unusual success brought the ministers of the Conference to their feet with cheers and shouts of victory. The Rev. Laryus Gardner, Lewis Hillery, and other old members of Conference, declared that the day star was shining brightly. Many such expressions as these made the writer feel like weeping silently at the signal blessing of God upon our effort to build up our work in Alabama.

I left Union Spring in company with Dr. Handy (all the General Officers but himself having left me). We stopped at St. James parsonage, Columbus, Ga.; with Rev. D. T. Green and his excellent wife, who did all in her power to make our stay pleasant. We

visited the Merchant's Bank there, and Mr. Brannan, the President, kindly gave us exchange on New York for all of the Conference money on hand, amounting to \$3,500.00, and charged us no exchange as it was Church money.

We left Columbus at 3 p. m., reached Macon at 6 p. m., and were soon domiciled with Rev. L. H. Smith, pastor of Cotton Avenue church, and left the next evening at 3 P. M. for Brunswick, Ga., the seat of the Georgia Conference. On Thursday morning, December 12th, the Conference opened with nearly all the ministers present. This Conference was exceedingly anxious about the amount of Dollar Money that would be raised, as the Macon Conference had already raised \$5,009.00. This, the mother Conference felt that it must lead. It did raise \$5,090.00, with its membership reported as 26,000.

The presence of Revs. E. P. Holmes, Newman, W. C. Gaines and L. H. Smith made the struggle more intense. But when the money had been counted and the amount stated, it moved the Conference into almost unprecedented excitement. The visitors from Macon Conference surrendered, acknowledging that they were beaten till next Conference. This was a glorious session held in the little city by the sea—a beautiful city and most pleasant for a winter resort.

The South Carolina Conference, through Bishop Arnett, sent greeting with the announcement of \$4,150.00 raised in Dollar Money. A telegram was also received from Bishop Campbell, thanking the Con-

ference for one sent him, tendering sympathy in his afflicted state.

Schools, points—all were in a prosperous condition. Rev. Henry Porter asked for superannuated relations. Preparations were entered into for the Quarto-Centennial, and a grand time anticipated.

The preachers admitted on trial were W. D. Johnson, Howard Bunts, S. R. Foster, Robert Evans, Wm. Daniels, G. B. Davis, J. W. Smith, Benjamin Roberts, A. Parker, J. R. Thornton, W. E. Shaw, and J. H. McNatt. The elders ordained were C. H. Williams, S. M. Matchett, F. H. Henderson and S. P. Jackson. But one, Rev. Marshall Stephens, had died.

The session was closed, appointments read out, and general satisfaction given. This pleasing feature has so far characterized all the Conferences I have so far held. It is my earnest prayer that the Lord will continue this in the future as in the past

CHAPTER XXI.

THE SIXTH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT.

A brief review of the work in Georgia will best show the condition of the work in that State. It has been that of the most rapid growth. The Macon Conference was organized 1883 by Bishop Wm. F. Dickerson, and this last Conference has shown the most astonishing increase. It is the youngest, but is now almost, if not quite, as strong as the Mother Conference (Georgia). It has five Presiding Elder Districts, while the North Georgia has five and the Georgia seven. The Georgia Conference has for its leading appointments, Macon, Augusta, Columbus, Milledgeville, Americus and many other smaller towns.

In the beautiful, healthful city of Macon, the Cotton Avenue Church, a splendid brick affair, owes its erection to Rev. T. G. Steward, who labored in that city long and faithfully. St. James Church, in Columbus, and Bethel Church, in Atlanta, were the results of the efforts of the writer, who, by these means, has been enabled to glorify God and uphold the ability of the race.

In this Conference some of the leading men who have worked and fought the good fight for years

are Revs. J. A. Wood, Henry Strickland, J. B. Lofton, W. O. P. Sherman, S. D. Roseborough, I. S. Hamilton, A. W. Lowe, W. H. Powell, S. M. Clark, H. H. Taylor, E. Lowry, H. B. Dowdell, J. H. Adams, S. C. Powell, R. R. Downs. North Georgia furnishes us from its ranks, such men as Elder S. H. Robertson, C. L. Bradwell, R. A. Hall, Richard Graham, Lawrence Thomas, D. J. McGhee, J. L. Flipper, A. S. Jackson, E. W. Lee, J. H. Hillsom, S. B. Jones, E. A. Shepherd; and the youthful Macon Conference gives to the cause, E. P. Holmes, Wright Newman, L. H. Smith, W. C. Banton, Henry Lester, D. T. Green, J. T. Yeiser, W. C. Gaines, Allen Cooper, J. A. Cary, Francis Bodie.

There have been forty-eight annual Conferences held within the State up to date, not counting the S. C. Conference held in Savannah in 1866 while Georgia was yet a mission work. These have been under the supervision of seven regularly appointed Bishops during as many quadrenniums, and of whose work we speak elsewhere. In these forty-eight we include the separate Conferences held after the first division in 1873, which gave us the Georgia and North Georgia, and also after the second division in 1883, adding the Macon Conference to the above.*

West of Georgia lies the State of Alabama, which in its church work has been very closely con-

*For list of the Georgia Conferences, also all previous to 1867, see Appendix.

ned with the former State, and separated physically only in part by the waters of the Chattahoochee as they flow southward to the Gulf of Mexico. It is a State that contains a large colored population—a State of great interest to the A. M. E. Church, and one to which the Southern Mission work of our church reached out its arms first of all, as soon as the work had begun in that section. A few facts concerning this State, which has taken such wonderful strides in its industries of late, will be all that the writer will attempt to give here.*

African Methodism was known to exist in the city of Mobile as early as 1820, but according to our authority, "the walls of slavery were towering high, therefore the little band had to bow low again." Again in 1864, Rev. J. P. Campbell and Rev. M. M. Clark came to that city, meeting with quite a cool reception, owing to misunderstandings, but the "old white college" threw open her doors, and these two preached the Gospel in the name of African Methodism.

In 1867 the Georgia Conference spread its mission work into that State upon its eastern borders, and Bishop Wayman gave appointments to Alabama when he gave them to Louisiana. The first mission work for African Methodism, as far as can be ascertained, was undertaken in 1867 and 1868 by

* The facts given here, are upon the authority of statement recorded in the Alabama Conference Journal of 1868, in a short sketch upon the rise of African Methodism in Alabama.

Rev. Lazarus Gardner, Cain Rogers, Peter Lipscomb, Henry Stubbs, R. B. Bailey, Ferdinand Smith, Godfrey B. Taylor, Lewis Hillery and Jacob F. Crozier. In 1868 the General Conference set apart a separate Conference for Alabama, and Bishop J. M. Brown, assigned at that date to the Seventh Episcopal District as it then stood, organized the Alabama Conference at Selma, July 25, with a total membership, reported from the thirty-one points then in the State, as being 5,617, with six churches valued at \$5,350.00.

Of this first Alabama Conference Lewis Hillery and R. B. Bailey were the first Secretaries, and the members consisted of five traveling elders, ten traveling deacons, and seven local licensed preachers. Three of the elders and nine deacons were transferred from the Georgia Conference and two elders and one deacon from the Louisiana Conference.

The work was laid off into four Districts: Union Springs, Montgomery, Selma and Mobile. When Bishop J. M. Brown turned over the field to his successor, Bishop T. M. D. Ward, in 1872, there were eight districts and ninety-five circuits, stations and missions, nearly all supplied, while the membership had reached 10,558, and the number of churches increased to sixty-six, valued, with other church property, at \$44,600.53. At the close of the year 1875, we find a report of 9,135 members, (a falling off, but whether due to the Dollar Money Law or not, we are unable to say). The same record gives that money this year as \$1,283.55; there

were also 134 churches valued at \$68,000.00, and 233 local preachers.

Bishop J. P. Campbell was next called to preside over the district, and entered upon the work at the session of the Alabama Conference held in Selma, December 14, 1876. In 1877 a committee on "Division of Conference" reported, and the line was agreed upon which should separate the Alabama from the North Alabama Conference. The latter met at Florence, December 10, 1878, for its first session. In 1880 Bishop Wayman took up the work of this Episcopal District, and after a successful four years turned it over in 1884, with its increase, to Bishop D. A. Payne, in whose hands it saw four prosperous years, when the writer took charge of it (1888).

The work in Alabama is growing rapidly, more rapidly now than at any other time past in the history of the Conference. At the close of the year 1889 the North Alabama work included four districts and seventy-three points, and the Alabama six districts and ninety-two points. In the latter Conference the important appointments now are Mobile, Montgomery, Eufaula, Union Springs, Opelika, Camden, Clayton, Troy and Ozark. There are four points that may well be mentioned.

St. John's Church, at Montgomery, was organized in the house of Brother Thorp Williams by Richard B. Bailey. This was on the south side of what was then Market street, now called Dexter

avenue.* The church was organized with about five or six members, who worshipped in that place for sometime. At length they removed to North Court street, near the Alabama river, occupying an old work shop owned by Mr. Frazier. This had the advantage of being at least a public building.

They continued here until they were able to purchase the beautiful lot on the north side of Madison avenue, between Jackson and Ripley streets. At this point there is now a beautiful building improved and repaired by Rev. W. G. Alexander and said to be the finest in the State. This church has grown until it now numbers four hundred members, but those who labored for its organization have all passed over to the other side—all except Richard Bailey. Brother Thorp Williams departed this life May 23, 1890, a true devoted Christian and a lover to the last of the A. M. E. Church.

The church in Prattville, Alabama, was organized by R. B. Bailey also. It was given to us by Mr. Daniel Pratt for church and school purposes. It is a two-story frame building and a day school is taught on the first floor, while the chapel worship is conducted on the second. Gaines Chapel, at Girard, was organized by Professor Allen in 1888. It now numbers seventy-four members and has a very pretty building in the edifice which bears this name. This field will be an excellent one as the future

*This avenue took its name from Mr. Dexter, who donated to the city a piece of ground prophesying that at some future day the capitol of the State would be located there. According to this prophecy the capitol has since been built upon this very plat of land.

opens up before us, if we properly care for it and keep good, strong young men in it.

The first church (St. Luke's) in Opelika was built by the A. M. E. Church. Its trustees have now purchased the St. John's Church, which was built by the C. M. E. Church. There are only four men in active service now who were at the organization of the Conference by Bishop Brown in 1868—Rev. Lazarus Gardner, Lewis Hillery, Andrew James and Richard Bailey.

In the North Alabama work the most important points are Selma, Birmingham, Greensboro, Uniontown, Demopolis, Tuscaloosa, Florence, Tusculumbia, Decatur and Huntsville. It has strong, earnest workers in it, with remarkably fair prospects ahead. We can only name a few of those who are laboring with well-directed zeal and with sanctified energy in this promising vineyard of the Master, and who will, God willing, make African Methodism in Alabama a strong power. Among these are E. H. Dixon, C. H. Calhoun, S. L. Mimms, A. W. Atwater, C. E. Harris, I. N. Fitzpatrick, W. G. Alexander, R. D. Brooks, J. Brazier, W. H. Mixon, R. M. Cheeks, F. B. Moreland, J. M. Gerdloe, F. H. Smith, G. W. Watson, T. W. Coffee.

The Sixth Episcopal District—Georgia and Alabama—shows for the past year, 1889, the following statistics in full for its work and status: Among its ministers it has 322 traveling elders, 177 traveling deacons, 131 traveling preachers, 21 superannuated preachers, 44 local elders, 47 local deacons; the

number of presiding elders is 27, the number of appointments 516, for pastor's support \$112,277.00, for presiding elders' support \$22,888.00; there are 1,386 local preachers, 451 exhorters, 9,616 probationers and 95,754 full members, making a total of 107,207; the stewards number 4,136, stewardesses 5,249, class leaders 4,240, official boards 892, trustees 4,280; there are 828 Sunday-schools with 3,627 officers, 4,052 teachers and 37,425 pupils, having 46,281 volumes in their libraries and raising \$8,518.58 as a total of Sunday-school moneys; the number of churches is 892, valued at \$737,134.00, and the number of parsonages 160, valued at \$56,376.00. The grand total of moneys raised for all purposes in the Sixth District last year is \$226,403.*

*The writer is indebted to Bishop B. W. Arnett for the above statistics.

CHAPTER XXII.

AFRICAN METHODISM EAST AND WEST.

African Methodism was conceived in the North. The State of William Penn, and the city of Brotherly Love—Philadelphia—sheltered it in its birth.

In 1787, through some of the fiercest trials that ever befell a people, it took its rise. A little band tired and weary of caste and prejudice that made the people of color an ostracized sect, to be shut out, neglected and kept within control, galling to their fervent spirits, resolved to assert their manhood rights. They desired most of all free religion, thought, action and worship.

It was a day ever to be remembered in our land when Richard Allen, with the few who were to stand by his side in this great movement, shook off these shackles and dared to take the steps that has given us the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

It was a brave deed and one that only men of strong nerve, strong belief in the right, and a courage upheld by faith in God, could undertake at a period when oppression was so cruel and so severe. They dared much that we might be free.

The little seed grew, watered by divine favor and

protected by friendly hands, under His guidance. Richard Allen, the first colored minister to be set apart for especial work such as this, was ordained by Bishop Asbury in 1799—twelve years later—and was placed in charge of what is now known as the “Mother Church (Bethel) in Philadelphia. Out through many difficulties—at last, the Convention, which meant so much for us, was called in April, 1816, and from the surrounding country the colored people assembled.

Then and there the A. M. E. Church was born, its history as a church began and from that day it has spread its branches far and wide.

Out of its first General Conference in that year with the one Bishop, Richard Allen, it has grown until it touches both oceans and the gulf and extends beyond the great lakes. It has taken root in the isles of the sea and the land of our fathers.

If we take the grouping arranged at the Centennial of African Methodism, held at Bethel Church, Philadelphia, in 1887, we find the Eastern Annual Conferences to be four in number.

The work extended first eastward. To-day there is a total of 49,925 colored people in the six States that compose the New England Conference, geographically considered, Massachusetts leading with 18,697 of these members. The Philadelphia Conference has within its bounds 90,000 colored people; the New York Conference 65,104 and the New Jersey Conference 38,853. With a total colored population of 243,882 in this the First Epis-

copal District, the A. M. E. Church has 85,000 enrolled in its membership.*

Churches were established under the New York Annual Conference (in what became the New England Conference in 1852) in New Haven, Conn., as early as 1837 by Rev. Charles Burch; in Boston in 1839, by Rev. Noah C. W. Canon, who also established one (Bethel church) in Providence in 1842. In New Bedford, Mass., another was established by the Rev. Eli N. Hall, in 1843. Allen Chapel, Providence, R. I., was established in 1816 by the Rev. John T. Haylett. African Methodist Episcopal Churches are to be found in Springfield, Chelsea, Plymouth, Worcester and other places in Massachusetts, as also in Connecticut, with various missions.

The western work was growing at the same time. Societies had already sprung up here and there. The A. M. E. Church was organized in Cincinnati, O., in 1844, Feb. 4, by the Rev. Moses Freeman, who was one of the first to go to Africa under the Colonization Society, a veritable pioneer in African Methodism.

George Boler went to Chillicothe in 1822, and established a church there. In 1823, one was established at Steubenville, and others followed, scouring the west; but up to 1830, all the work west of Pittsburgh and the Ohio river, was attached to the Philadelphia Conference. At this date the district

* Centennial Budget.

became too large, and the Ohio or Western Conference was organized. The ground gone over in a circuit was equal to the Southern work in its infancy, for we find Columbus, Urbana, Lancaster, Circleville and Springfield, as a specimen of the itinerant preacher's work in the early days. To-day Ohio has two conferences instead of the scattered work of nearly seventy years ago. Then came first, work in what might be called the foreign field proper, and the Canada Annual Conference was organized in the North, at Toronto, July 21, 1840, by Bishop Morris Brown with eleven persons present and 256 members reported as eligible to the Conference.

As the separation of the Methodist church, North and South took place soon, there was a continual drift to African Methodism, growing out of all that which was to follow from the events which led to the civil war, and the final bursting of every fetter from the bondsmen. Another Conference was added to the list in 1840, as the banner had been planted long enough in Indiana soil to demand organized work, and the Indiana Conference came into existence at Blue River, Oct. 2d, under Bishop Morris Brown. The western work was an astonishment. Six Conferences with a total membership as reported of 16,396 souls out of the one in 1816 met the church in three decades.

That was well for a people hardly out of slavery we might say. The New York Conference work had so grown, that over its large area it was im-

possible to travel and do the work as one Conference. So in 1852 Bishop J. A. Payne organized the New England Conference at New Bedford, in June following the General Conference, his first organization of new work as the general conference had elected him and Willis Nazrey to the office of Bishop; and henceforth the A. M. E. Church was to have its work laid off into districts. The first included Baltimore and the New York Conferences; the second Philadelphia and New England; the third Ohio, Indiana and Canada.

The Southwest had opened up when the next General Conference met in Cincinnati in 1856. The Missouri Conference had been organized in 1855 with 2,249 members at the end of the first year, and a total of forty-eight ministers. The disturbing years of the preliminary throes of the revolution which was upon the country had its effect upon all things. The unrest and out-breaks here and there necessarily affected the churches; but in spite of this the work was extended. After the opening of the Southern field, in which the deceased Bishop R. H. Cain, labored long as a missionary before the harvest was ripe for garnering into organization, it was only a matter of time before the increase came.

With the close of the war of the rebellion, that wonderful new life and energy which seemed tossing forth, vanished and strengthened, as it were, by the blood of the slave, freely expended its vitality to extend our fields of labor. It is impossible in a brief chapter to note the progress of the various

Conferences as the boundaries widened until nearly every State in the Union finds African Methodism planted on its soil.

To-day, according to the most accurate statistics—to-day, a little over one-hundred years from the conception of our church—we find that we have reached the work that requires eleven Bishops and a corresponding number of districts, including our foreign field and forty-four Conferences, exclusive of foreign work, as the total,—the A. M. E. Church presents to the world for the actual work for the Master in the United States. In this work, if we follow the facts presented at the Centennial of the church in 1887, we find the Eastern group of four Annual Conferences takes in 156 traveling preachers, 14,998 members and probationers. The Northern group of three has 110 traveling preachers, 9,770 members and probationers. The Western group of nine has 307 traveling preachers, 21,785 members and probationers. The Southern group of twenty-eight has 1,697 traveling preachers, 228,541 members and probationers.

This shows where the future field of African Methodism lies, as, according to the same authority, the three Annual Conferences of Georgia have as many members as the Eastern, Northern and Western groups combined. This the writer can fully corroborate from personal knowledge of the membership in Georgia alone which is now over 100,000, and we are sure that if the proper returns were made, we should find our membership everywhere

increasing. There is a fear that some of the brethren withhold the membership on account of the Dollar Money. This should not be so, for the sake of the Church generally. Every member should be reported honestly by every minister, regardless of any inability, from whatever cause, to collect this money. We need accurate statistics, and all these things help to make them—and so to weave a history of which we may well feel proud.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE SOUTHWEST AND OTHER SOUTHERN STATES.

African Methodism has spread, as we have said, all over this broad land. Commencing in the east it moved eastward and westward; over into the great Northwest Territory it found foothold,—in the states beyond the Alleghany mountains, and on beyond the Mississippi, as noted elsewhere. From Kansas on to the Rocky Mountains, and to the Pacific States beyond it spread.

It also stretched out into the States of Arkansas, Texas, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi and Louisiana, and extended downward into North Carolina and Virginia, as Southern States, aside from the three clustered about Georgia.

Bishop Shorter's first work included Arkansas, Tennessee, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas. He organized the Texas Conference in November, 1868. We are told that in 1872 there were but four A. M. E. Churches in this State.* These were located in Galveston, Houston, Bryan and Corsicana. Out of three Presiding Elder Districts thirty-five appointments were possible, while the Presiding Elders were also pastors. Some of them could not write to any extent, and, as in the early days of the

*"African Methodism in Texas,"—Centennial address by Rev. W. R. Carson, to which we are indebted for these facts.

Church, when young Richard Allen was carried from point to point to do the writing for the Conference, it is said that H. Kealing has accompanied the Texas ministers for the same purpose; but the work was done and the foundations laid. Bishop Brown was assigned the work in 1872, and under him it began anew. He found there an area of 237,504 square miles, and a population of 253,475 colored people belonging to six different churches—the A. M. E. Church, Catholic, Baptist, Campbel-lites, colored M. E. Church of America, and M. E. Church, South. This scattered work led him to make six Presiding Elder Districts, and R. Haywood was placed over San Antonio, Wm. Leak over Chapel Hill, E. Hammitte over Galveston, H. Wilhite over Spring Hill, J. Goins over Dallas, F. Green over Corpus Christi.

The work increased until December, 1874, when the Conference was divided into Texas and West Texas, with the Brazos river as the boundary line and three Presiding Elder Districts in each. Some trouble arose, but it was easily settled. Then the educational spirit became ripe here, too, and even at the first Conference it was agreed to have a Conference High School, and one was established at Austin. Then the Conference took hold of the project, which resulted later in Paul Quinn College at Waco.

Those who endured the hardships of early work in Texas say that the early preachers and bishops had many of them up to 1876. But the work was

established with a college, a number of handsome churches, four Conferences set for 1890—the third being the Texas Central and the fourth the North-east Texas—a good church membership with a growing number of influential preachers, all under the present leadership of Bishop Abram Grant, in himself a power.

The Pacific coast was struggling for a long time with a few scattered members and innumerable difficulties. Rev. J. H. Hubbard, Presiding Elder, and a member of the Colorado Conference in 1887, himself a pioneer preacher, has said they could boast with Paul, "These hands have ministered to my necessities and of those who were with me." Twelve churches and three hundred members from the north to the south of the Pacific slope could but struggle, but it is praiseworthy that the work was established through such difficulties. Bishop Ward, when still an elder, was appointed to this region as missionary, and to him is due the first organization of churches. True to his first work, and so well adapted to it from early experiences, he was returned to it upon his election to the Bishopric in 1868. The work of the A. M. E. Church now dots the coast over a stretch of country most creditable to our Home Mission enterprise.

Bishop Shorter's first work upon entering the Bishopric was to organize the Tennessee Annual Conference at Nashville. There are now two Conferences. The Mississippi Conference was also

organized by Bishop Shorter in 1868, and the Arkansas Conference, at Little Rock, was organized by him as well. Bishop Brown followed his footsteps in 1872 in what was then the Second District—Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas, Tennessee—and under his planning Paul Quinn College took shape, while he organized the West Texas, South Arkansas, West Tennessee and Columbia, S. C., Conferences, the last named during his first quadrennium—1868-72. The Alabama Conference was organized by him July 25, 1868, out of which has grown the North Alabama Conference. Bishop Brown superintended the organization of the A. M. E. Churches in Virginia and North Carolina. The work in Louisiana was begun in 1848, when the A. M. E. Church was organized in New Orleans. Of the forty-four Conferences in the connection, Virginia has one; North Carolina one; South Carolina two; Florida two; Arkansas two; Mississippi two; Texas four; Louisiana two; Kentucky two; Tennessee two; the others are located in the North and West.

Stepping eastward over the Georgia boundary we find the Palmetto State with its twenty-five years' record doing grandly for Christ's kingdom, a work of which we shall soon hear from a pen well fitted to prepare it, and therefore pass it by with no further entering into detail concerning it, save to prophesy that it will still continue to prosper under Bishop C. W. Arnett's guiding hand, the present quadrennium. *

*Bishop Arnett has in preparation a history of South Carolina and Florida.

In 1866, when Bishop Payne held the South Carolina Conference in Savannah, Ga., Rev. Chas. H. Pierce, an elder, Rev. Wm. Bradwell and others were sent to Florida to establish the A. M. E. Church, They met with great success. Rev. C. H. Pierce fully deserves to be called the father of the Florida Conference. He should be regarded in history as bearing the same relation to the Florida work as Bishop R. H. Cain to South Carolina and Bishop H. M. Turner to Georgia.

There is a grand set of ministerial workers in that Land of Fowers, men with whom the writer hopes to be better acquainted in the future.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE BISHOPS OF THE WORK IN GEORGIA.

As Bishop Payne has told us in his "Recollections" he arrived in the city of Charleston, S. C., early in May, 1865, after an enforced exile of thirty years. When he left he was a young man of thirty-four years, full of the fire of ambition and earnest desire for the education of the race—abundantly testified to by the strong work done for Christ and humanity and the race even then, and later an inspiring monument to all who may be fired with similar zeal. Now, after that long absence he returns, a man of fifty-four years of matured experience and wisdom, to take the step which has opened up a vast amount of territory to the Mother Church and spread wide her dominions.

It was but one of the many steps that this wise and venerable prelate has taken for the extension of the connection eastward and westward. He had traveled far and wide ere this in the interest of the church, not only as Bishop, but as the historiographer of the church, appointed by the General Conference.

But it is not in his "Recollections" that is found the record of his work done in the organization of

the A .M. E. Church in the South. That he has left, with characteristic modesty, for some one else to record, and the full account of that work can only be given when the history of our church in South Carolina shall be written as a complement to these pages upon its sister State.

In the opening chapters is given a survey of the rise of our church in the South, and of our Senior Bishop's connection with it. Here it is but our purpose to review this connection with our work as well as the connection of all the Bishops who have presided over the work in Georgia.

As Bishop D. A. Payne was the first Bishop of the South Carolina Conference, he was also the first of the Georgia Conference, but sent Bishop Wayman to hold it in his stead, as he was on the eve of a journey to Europe. It was Bishop Payne, also, who presided over the first session of the Conference held in the State, in Savannah, 1866. The work of his Episcopacy devolved upon Bishop Wayman during his absence in Europe, which accounts for the presence of that distinguished prelate in our Southern work at that time, the only time, in fact, that he has as yet had charge of the work in Georgia.*

To Bishop Daniel Alexander Payne then, belongs the honor of being our first Southern Bishop. It was to his formative hand that so many owed their

*Bishop Wayman, therefore, was not one of the regular Bishops in that State, but as one of the workers then, we would say that he was one of the most popular preachers in the Church, possessing, too, a most amiable and kindly disposition.

first intellectual training in the early private school in Charleston, and it was appropriate that his should be the formative hand laid upon the work of the Church in the South in 1865.

As a man among men, a Christian scholar, a devout disciple of the lowly Jesus, and a leader of the young in paths of education, the writer has known him from his own youth. His hands were the ones laid upon his head in solemn ordination as a deacon, in Savannah, in 1866, and again his hands were the ones which consecrated him to the work of the Bishopric in 1888.

The elevation of the race has been Bishop Payne's one steadfast aim, and he has been father and teacher and benefactor to all who have come within his reach, and who have been filled with high aspirations. He has sown most beautifully to this end of the goods which the Lord has vouchsafed him in this life, and he is reaping already the fruit of his hands in the cultured youth all over the land. Today Bishop Daniel A. Payne stands a landmark for all who desire the true success in life with all that it means. Now, at the ripe age of seventy-nine, passing on grandly and triumphantly into his four-score years, by reason of his strength, supported by God's grace, yet are his days not only days of "pleasantness and peace," but of labor still; for he meets his regular duties as Bishop, bearing, in addition, the responsibilities of Dean of Wilberforce University, (the intellectual child of his love) and President of the Board of Trustees of the Combined

Normal and Industrial Department recently opened up there through the generosity of the State of Ohio. Though venerable, Bishop Payne is remarkable for sparkling wit, elegant manners and solid talents, yet as amiable as the tenderest woman. His home, made desolate by the death of his beloved wife in 1889—a gentle lady whom all now miss—is a model for comfort, and for decorum is grand,

The General Conference of 1868 elected as Bishops, James A. Shorter, T. M. D. Ward and J. M. Brown, and the last named was assigned to the Southern work, coming to Georgia to meet the Annual Conference, which assembled in Columbus, Ga., February 6, 1869, at its second session. For four years he presided over the Conference until 1872, with the even justice and courtly bearing for which he is still so noted.

Bishop J. M. Brown, too, has been long connected with the important movements of the A. M. E. Church. In the North, where he was born, he was one of the early workers in every good cause. He was really the first colored President of a colored school, having been made such of the Union Seminary, situated near Columbus, O., a school that was in truth the mother school of all. Not a success financially it still gave birth to the next movement which established Wilberforce University in 1856, under the M. E. Church in Ohio, and which passed to us in 1863. Bishop Brown's genial manners and cultured grace betoken the true gentleman of innate refinement, while his wide knowledge of men and

books give him that powerful hold that learning always bestows for good or evil, but add to this the Christian, as we find him in our tenth Bishop, and we have a combination that nothing can resist. Then if we add still that fearless aggressiveness which dares anything for what he conceives to be right, we feel that then we have but feebly expressed the strength reposing in this one of the pillars of African Methodism.

Pages might be filled with the reminiscences of this Bishop, as he has labored to perform the duties of his office—labors which are simply the extended efforts of those he has ever put forth throughout the South for years previous, as Missionary Secretary; but they must give way here to find their place in the individual histories of what these men have wrought for the A. M. E. Church wherever they have been sent.

We had been favored for two succeeding quadrenniums with a newly elected Bishop to preside over our Southern work, by reason of Bishop Payne's absence,* and now, the General Conference meeting in Nashville, Tenn., in 1872, sent us Bishop T. M. D. Ward, who had been elected⁹ to the Bench of Bishops in 1868. It may have been because there were no new Bishops made at that session that such an one was not sent Southward, still the Southern cause was enriched by this method, as the bold, pushing work done in the early years of the existence of our church in the South shows.

*Bishop Wayman was elected in 1864, and was called to take Bishop Payne's place in the Southern work during the latter's absence.

Bishop Ward has been from the first of his ministry a missionary. The work upon the Pacific coast is an indication of this. He was a Pennsylvanian by birth, and early turned to the A. M. E. Church. He had seen four years of service as Bishop in his old missionary field when he was assigned to Georgia, Alabama, Florida and Mississippi. He is one of those unique men of whom but few are made in a generation, one born to command by his very presence and yet with such dignity and impartiality that the sense of obedience is lost in the admiration of that unconscious power one perceives him to wield. Under his direction the General Conference reached the limit which saw its first division. He has ever been a worker and of such ability that the mother college, Wilberforce, has honored him with a degree. A man now venerable, yet so fatherly, this battle-scarred veteran always brings with him a blessed gospel message in his look and an experience rich in divine love.

In 1876 the venerable Bishop Campbell came to the Southern field as presiding Bishop. His hair was then white with the snows of over fifty years. Like Bishop Ward he had early entered the ranks of the A. M. E. Church, and was a missionary, but while Bishop Ward went westward, he was sent eastward. Up to 1865 the California Church had never seen one of its Bishops. He then visited the Pacific coast and organized the California Conference. This self-same year of taking charge of the work in the South he visited England as a del-

legate from the General Conference to the Wesleyan General Conference. He has been a man of study and encouraged all things pertaining to an education, urging both cultivation of head and heart. His gift of \$1,000 to Wilberforce is but one of many gifts he has made. Many a young man and woman who may read these lines will recall the kind words and substantial aid rendered in time of need when acquiring an education. As he has said, he now forms the only link between the founders of the A. M. E. Church and his generation. He was the first man who ever moved to publish a periodical in the A. M. E. Church, and he has been fully identified with all the great educational interests of the widespread connection. His four years were characterized by growth in the work and pleasing companionship, which was intensified by the personal attributes of this gracious man of God. Now he, too, is in his declining years, sorely afflicted; but the writer has been only too happy to assist him by taking charge of his work in the N. C. Conference for 1889.

Again a newly elected Bishop was assigned to the Southern field, Bishop Wm. F. Dickerson, the thirteenth Bishop of the A. M. E. Church, elected to that office in 1880, shortly after he had attained his thirty-sixth year. He was a graduate of Lincoln University, Pennsylvania, and was a man of classical mold who brought to his work not only his learning, but a zeal and enthusiasm that wore him out. Life certainly was with him a "fitful fever." He was fired to overwork whenever work presented

itself, and as a pulpit orator, he burned with eloquence whenever he arose to speak for the Master. He was, as has been said, "aggressive and progressive," a man full to the brim of epigrammatic speech, terse and forceful in all his utterances, and one whom his friends cannot soon forget, of whom the writer was one of the nearest. Among some of his sayings we take a few. In speaking relative to preaching, especially when seeking to convince the hearers, "Let all preachers especially prepare carefully every sermon which has that definite aim. I believe that a preacher should always preach to those in front rather than to the amen corner." Again, "A man who rose by merit alone was like one who ascends a vast height by regular and appointed steps, but one who had been too hasty and had risen by improper methods, was like a crazy man who had climbed to the top of a lofty steeple, whose brain began to totter and whirl for the tremendous fall that awaited him." He said at the Georgia Conference of 1883, when commenting on the lesson in Proverbs which he read, "I have been looking at the brethren to see what is killing them, and I find it is not the bullet, but the friction of life—the wear and tear—but if you can manage to keep life sweet and temper even, you will enjoy life better." On the subject of speaking, the Bishop said: "A speaker must begin on a low key. If a man violates this rule to an extreme—not too long, not too loud—he will soon die in the Lord, but he had

better live in the Lord and do the work assigned him. ”

He was allowed to spend four earnest working years with us and to graciously introduce his successor, when almost immediately the Lord called him to “rest.” When Bishop Wm. Fisher Dickerson died the church lost one of its foremost leaders, the race one of its most brilliant pulpit orators and advocates and humanity at large a friend, for he was a large-souled, warm-hearted man to whom narrow views and prejudices were strangers. The appreciation of his labors in Georgia is shown by the resolutions and speeches mentioned elsewhere.

In 1884 another veteran soldier entered the work in Georgia and South Carolina in the person of Bishop James A. Shorter, who had then spent sixteen years in the Episcopacy. For three years he was allowed by Providence to exercise the authority of his office and then he, too, was called hence (July 1, 1887), the third Bishop who had fallen within the short space of less than three years.*

Bishop Shorter was a man of strong personality; a man of few words, but glorying in deeds; he was frank and outspoken when he did speak, and withal generous and progressive, a man who won many friends by his unswerving walk when once fixed upon the path he deemed right to tread. He, too, was a strong friend of all educational movements and a free giver of his money to all needful enter-

*Bishop R. H. Cain, the fourteenth Bishop of the A. M. E. Church, was elected to the Episcopacy 1880, and died January, 1886.

prises. His gifts to Wilberforce were indicative of the man and of his kindly disposition to those things which were dear to his heart. As a friend, he was unalterable, unchanging with time or circumstances.

The messenger of death came for him most suddenly one pleasant summer morning and he was called to answer the summons at once. His dear wife had already preceded him to that better land and both are now in glory. His unexpired term was filled by Bishops Wayman and Brown, in Georgia, and Bishops Campbell and Ward, in South Carolina. Thus twice in close succession the Georgia Conferences have been called to mourn a loss touching them more closely than under other circumstances.

There is still one more Bishop who has had charge of the work in Georgia, the present Bishop of the Sixth Episcopal District, Bishop Wesley J. Gaines. Concerning him and his work, the following from the *Budget* of the A. M. E. Church, 1881-84, is a biographical sketch:*

“Wesley J. Gaines was born in Wilkes county, Georgia, near Washington, October 4, 1840. He is the seventh son and youngest child of fourteen children that were born to William and Louisa Gaines. His father was a member of the M. E. Church,

*This sketch of the writer has been corrected and revised with such additions as may be of interest to the reader and due the church as biography. It is because of this latter reason that he has been induced to insert it here.

South, and his mother was a Baptist. They were a devoted couple and lived in unity for fifty-eight years, until the death of the husband October 30, 1865. The Christian wife and mother died February 12, 1870.

“Wesley J. Gaines was converted at the age of nine years. His first serious impression of the Holy Ghost was at the early age of three and a half years. His mother was at this time praying for him under a fig tree, gathering vegetables. Her prayer was: ‘Oh God, make this, my boy Wesley, such a man as thou wouldst have him be. Make him thy son for Jesus’ sake.’ The solemn impression made by his mother’s prayer was never forgotten.

“He was a slave, and his boyhood was spent upon a plantation. In early life he was of very delicate physique, and this seemed to be the opportunity that God had given him to learn to read. At the age of eleven years he commenced to study the alphabet, and by divine help, and some instructions from a white boy, George Daniels, he mastered it in one week’s time. He learned to write without aid, simply by studying and imitating the copies in his book. While sick he would lie at home and read, though his books had to be kept concealed from the white people. One night during the civil war, the ‘patrollers’ called at his father’s house in search of books and weapons. Wesley hid his books out in an ash hopper, and much to his sorrow a heavy rain fell and the lie thus formed ruined his books.

His grief over his loss was so great that his father gave him all the money he had (\$3.50) to purchase other books. With this he bought an English grammar, geography, 'Peter Parley's' history, a copy book, pen and ink. The first letter he ever wrote was addressed to his brother, Stephen; he, having no money, dropped the letter without stamping it and ran from the office as fast as he could. The postmaster notified his brother at Washington, who forwarded the postage and received the letter. Stephen's reply to this letter inspired him to study.

"In 1855 he moved to Steward county, Georgia, where he remained one year. Having a severe spell of sickness, for three or four years he improved the time by applying his mind to the study of the Bible and other books. In 1856, he removed to Muscogee county.

"His call to the ministry dates back to early boyhood. He always preached the funeral sermons of all the birds, dogs and chickens that died on the place, and always felt seriously inclined to preach. When he felt most deeply impressed and desired to go at the work he, at the same, time felt an inclination to shun it; a sickening thought of dread and awe overcame him; he fasted and prayed and thus found the 'yoke easy and the burden light.' The first impression that he was called to preach was made at the age of six years, in 1846, after listening to an able sermon preached by the late Bishop George F. Pierce, of the M. E. Church South.

"At the old plantation, in Muscogee county,

August 20th, 1863, he was married to Miss Julia A. Camper, an amiable young lady of charming face and figure, but whose virtues, Christian life, wifely wisdom, succor, character and mind were more noble and lasting than her face was beautiful. She has been one of the few wives who has made her husband's love for her, and of which she is so worthy, rush on in the same current with all the great aims of his life. And to-day, as Bishop Gaines looks back over the past, he says with pride, 'through the efforts of my wife I am what I am.' The only child which has blessed their union is Mary Louisa, born December 1st, 1872.

"In 1865, Wesley J. Gaines applied for a license to preach, which was granted in June of the same year by Rev. J. L. Davies, of the M. E. Church South. His older brother, Rev. Wm. Gaines, was ordained in the same month by Bishop D. A. Payne, at Hilton Head, South Carolina, and appointed missionary of the State of Georgia. He visited Columbus and established the first A. M. E. church, and meeting his brother, Wesley, on St. Clair street, was the means of his joining the church then and there. A few months after his brother died, and H. M. Turner, now Bishop, succeeded him as Presiding Elder of Georgia.

"Wesley J. Gaines was admitted by Bishop Payne to the then South Carolina Conference, at Savannah, Georgia, in 1866, ordained deacon by Bishop Payne at that Conference and elder at Wilmington,

North Carolina, by Bishop A. W. Wayman, in 1867.

“His first appointment was to the Florence Mission, Georgia, in 1866. He was stationed at Atlanta, Georgia, in 1867, '68 and '69; Athens, 1870; at Macon, Georgia, 1871, '72, and '73; at Columbus, Georgia, in 1874, '75, '76, and '77. He was returned to Macon in 1878, '79 and 80. He then went back to Atlanta in 1881, '82, '83 and '84. During his first appointment at Atlanta he built Bethel A. M. E. Church, located on Wheat street, which church they are now rebuilding at a cost of \$30,000, by Rev. Lawrence Thomas.

“During his first appointment at Macon, Georgia, he did a telling work. His predecessor, Rev. T. G. Steward, had laid the foundation of Cotton Avenue A. M. E. Church. Elder Gaines raised an indebtedness of \$4,500, and during his second term completed the church. During his four years at Columbus, Georgia, he built St. James now worth \$20,000.

“In 1870 he studied theology at Athens, Georgia, under Rector Henderson, a very religious and liberal minded minister of the Protestant Episcopal church, going to his church to recite twice a week, From 1875 to 1878 he read theology with the Rev. Joseph S. Key, now Bishop Key, at the same time he studied rhetoric under Rev. B. H. Sasnatt, of Oxford College.

“He received the degree of D. D. at Wilberforce

in June, 1883. He has raised for the A. M. E. Church, during his ministerial labors, over \$200,000. Whatever success his work may have been blessed with, he attributed it directly to the goodness of the All Wise One. He often wonders why God so feebly blessed his efforts in the pulpit.

“Dr. Gaines has held the offices of Book Steward of the North Georgia Conference, member of the A. M. E. Financial Board, Treasurer and President of Board of Trustees of the Morris-Brown College, and also Trustee of the Wilberforce University. In 1888 he was elected Bishop of the church on the first ballot, with the largest majority any Bishop had ever received in the A. M. E. Church.

“When he was freed at emancipation, he was in feeble health, with care of his wife and aged father and mother and not a dollar he could call his own. In 1865 he buried his father and two brothers, Rev. Wm. H. Gaines and Reuben Gaines. The funeral expenses of all these were upon him in his state of poverty.

“Mr. Gabriel Toombs, his former owner, requested him to go to Washington, Georgia, and live with him, but he informed Mr. Toombs that he was called to preach the gospel, and since a door had been opened to fulfil that call he felt it was his duty to go. Mr. Toombs spoke encouraging words to him, and asked God to bless him, for he himself had been a Steward of M. E. Church for over thirty-five years, and he is a Steward of the church until this

day at the age of seventy-seven. Bishop Gaines had the pleasure of holding the Annual Conference in Washington in 1889. Mr. Toombs, though in feeble health, visited the Conference in order to see him and introduced him as "our Bishop Gaines and my friend."

"He told him he always knew that he would succeed in whatever he undertook. He sent for him to visit him and the visit at his house was very cordial and pleasant. Every man is what he makes himself in this life. If we respect ourselves and elevate ourselves in a position to command respect, it will inevitably be given us."

"Stephen Gaines, his oldest brother, seventy-six years old, is living in Atlanta, Georgia. Augustus Gaines is a successful farmer in Muscogee county, owning a plantation worth \$5,000; he has a wife, and thirteen children in an honorable living. Therefore, honest work is no disgrace.

"We have in the life of Bishop Gaines an illustration of what study and religion can do for a man, and also what the possibilities are in the A. M. E. Church for a man who will do his duty. He may be a power and a strong tower if he will but trust in God. He may be unknown, but by work he will be known from Maine to Georgia."

So, from 1868 until 1890, the Georgia work has been presided over regularly for six quadrenniums by the six last named Bishops, and Bishop Payne, who had charge of the work in 1865, '66, '67, gives

us seven in all. Two of the seven have fallen; two are aged and descending the hill of life; one has long been bearing infirmities; one is long past middle age, but bearing well his years.

One, the sixteenth Bishop and the youngest of all, still thanks God for life, health and strength, though he may be the first of these remaining to be called away. God in his wisdom alone knows. May he so live that he will be ready whenever the summons comes to enter triumphantly upon the Life that is to come.

CHAPTER XXV.

GENERAL GROWTH AND FINANCE.

With the close of the war the negro race was thrown upon its own resources or the kindness of its friends, North and South, for substantial aid in assuming its new responsibilities. Very few individuals of the race possessed any means and these exceptions were not wealthy. We had to exert ourselves in order to become adapted to the new state of things, and endeavor to arrange our plans so that the future might have for us better advantages—more luminous prospects. We were worse than poor—we had not been trained in the school of economy, for poverty and economy do not by any means necessarily go hand-in-hand. We were destitute of all else except the brawn and muscle, which the labors of centuries had developed, and the virtue of patient waiting which had become a part of the race—one of its most noted characteristics.

There is an old saying that all things come to those who wait. Freedom had come, after a bondage of two hundred and fifty years. We had learned to work and we had learned to wait. They were two admirable qualities, and our sole stock, when the Emancipation Proclamation made us free. What could we do but continue to use them? This we have done. Gradually returning prosperity has scattered its be-

neficient gifts upon the southland, and among those who have been blessed with rewards for the earnest, faithful toil of industrious hands, are the colored people; and, as a people, they have fulfilled well their money obligations to the churches, according as the Lord has blessed them.

The greatest numbers are in the South, and there greatest poverty and distress exist; yet, with all this, there too the greatest prosperity has attended the race, and there has been a steady increase in the financial growth of the Southern work as connected with the Church.

From the first, church edifices and parsonages were sought for, and every effort put forth for such as would be a credit to us, so that the property the Church owns now in the one State of Georgia alone amounts by a rough estimate to \$400,000. This has been accumulated while keeping up the regular collections, which go to support the Church work, and this, too, has been well done from the first. Without any special plan, except to follow the laws as laid down in the Discipline, the workers brought in their mites. In 1872 the dollar system was adopted, and the first year of which we have a record for the Georgia Conference (1868), before this was in operation, showed us by rough estimate as contingent fund raised, \$156.50; ministers' support, \$82,000; Sunday school, \$207.00; Book Concern, \$97.00; bishops' support, \$228.00. The year after the first division took place, in 1873, the two Conferences made record that the contingent fund was \$207.67; pastors' support, \$35,328.64; missions, \$17.10; dollar money, \$2,041.25. In 1883, nearly a decade later, when growth

demanded another division, we find the monies from the Georgia Conference alone to be : contingent fund, \$81.70 ; pastors' support, \$18,347.38 ; presiding elders' salary, \$4,449.69 ; expenses, \$113.15 ; missions, \$42.44 ; educational, \$178.70 ; college, \$26.00 ; dollar money, \$2,054.40, aside from some minor sums.

It is now less than ten years since this last report, and in the year of 1889 the Sixth Episcopal District raised a total of \$17,536.06 dollar money, and \$126,000 for all purposes, while as stated elsewhere the entire total of the monies raised in the Sixth Episcopal District last year was \$226,403.

There has been a steady gain in every line, year by year, decade by decade, but the last year has been almost phenomenal in its successful increase. Our statistics, when put fully before the world, will show that the A. M. E. Church helps largely to swell the Christian membership of the world, and our growth compares favorably with other denominations, the general statistics of which are given by reliable authority,* and from which we take the following :

“The growth in Protestant membership during the year has been 668,000. The Methodists gained more than 256,000, the Baptists more than 213,000, the Lutherans 98,000, the Congregationalists more than 16,000, and the Episcopalians about 9,500.” The gain in Catholic communicants is also given as over 238,000. According to this authority the Methodist membership outnumbers the Catholic, whose communicants are estimated to reach 4,676,000. “Then come the Methodists with, in round numbers, 4,980,000 ; Baptists, 4,292,000 ; Presbyterians, 1,229,000 ; Luther-

*The Independent.

ans, 1,086,000 ; Congregationalists, 491,000 ; Episcopalians, 480,000."

An analysis of the work of the A. M. E. Church shows that we have eleven bishops, seven general departments of the Church, as follows : The Publication Department, under Dr. J. C. Embry ; Missionary Department, under Dr. W. B. Derrick ; Financial Department, under Dr. James A. Handy ; Educational Department, under Dr. Wm. D. Johnson ; Sunday-school Department, under Dr. C. S. Smith ; Literary Department, under Bishop H. M. Turner, and the Church Extension. The last four departments have received their greatest development in the last four years, dating from 1866, and all are well supported in the South.

Our statistics have not been the fullest nor in the best possible shape for entire accuracy, but no one will deny even then that we have gone forward with astonishing rapidity.

The South is a wonderful land of itself. It has proven itself possessed of most unusual recuperative powers in its struggles to arise from the ruins of the civil war. It has been said by many who are looking it over to-day that, without doubt, it is to be the richest country upon the globe. Be this as it may, it certainly combines advantages possessed by no other section. It has a most genial climate, a rich, productive soil, yielding readily and bountifully to tillage ; it has mineral wealth which is as yet hardly known or understood, and, aside from its abundance of coal and iron, other minerals are by no means scarce ; it has timber as an unlimited source of wealth, including as it does the best of woods, from the noted Georgia

pine to nearly every variety of hard woods that the wood-worker may find a use for. Its water-ways are numerous and easily reached, both the ocean which skirts the long coasts of a number of the Southern States and the numerous rivers, large and small, which flow from the inland heights in all directions to the gulf and sea.

Cardinal Gibbons has well said: "With its coal fields and iron lying side by side, with its cotton on the coast and its wheat in the interior, with its great crops of tobacco and sugar-cane, I can see no reason why it should not become one of the greatest industrial centres in America." There is no reason why this should not be so, and such being the case, there must be an increase in financial prosperity for all but the thriftless and lazy. Since the census of ten years ago, fifteen thousand new manufacturing enterprises have been established in the South, we are told, and they cover nearly all the branches of industry. The same statistics show that the capital for new undertakings in one year alone exceeded sixty millions of dollars. Then, too, since that date, over ten thousand miles of railway have been built, and thus every species of work is greatly facilitated by these more rapid means of travel. With this last outlay, which has been estimated at over \$200,000,000, we find the assessed value of property has increased nearly \$1,000,000,000.

If we glance at all this to see how it affects the colored race we shall instantly see that our prosperity in every way has increased with the growth of the South. In 1883 the negroes in Georgia paid taxes on \$6,000,000 worth of property which, in 1884, had in

creased to more than \$7,000,000, and is now (1890) far in excess of the latter figures.

If we look at two cities of this Empire State of the South we shall have an idea of what is going on upon varying scales in other cities throughout this region. Atlanta, the empire city of the Empire State, is not the ghost, even, of the Atlanta which lay smoking in ruins twenty-six years ago, with all its industries swept out of existence in a few short hours by the relentless hand of war; and yet, like that wonderful bird, the Phœnix, it has arisen from its own ashes, more beautiful, more fair, greater and more magnificent in every way—its returned prosperity so far outshining that of the past that it aids in creating the era of better feeling between the sections. Here we find a large number of the race engaged in business prospering in many ways. It is the great negro educational centre of the South, with its public schools in which thirty-two teachers have charge of over two thousand pupils, and the institutions of learning supported by denominations or general philanthropy, among which are Atlanta University, Clark University, Spellman Seminary, Gammon Theological School and our own Morris Brown College.

One hundred miles to the south lies Macon, the beautiful city named after its founder, Nathaniel Macon, and lying upon both sides of the Ocmulgee river. It was fortunate in escaping destruction in the civil war, and to-day stands with its past and present beauty united to make a lovely spot. It is an important railway centre and an educational feeder as well to the higher institutions of learning through its excellent public schools and the Ballard Institute, known

and carried on for so many years as the Lewis High School, supported by Northern generosity. Here, too, we find such prosperity for the negro that we are led to make from good authority a statement showing how the race is flourishing in this city.*

A few years ago the city directory gave the population as 9,673 colored, 10,619 whites, with the colored people paying taxes on \$86,550 in city real estate, while outside the city limits they also paid taxes on land valued at \$141,094, which was one-ninth of the entire valuation of farming lands in Bibb County. There were 37 colored shoemakers, 17 retail grocers, 45 draymen, 55 bricklayers, 80 carpenters, 1 dentist, 42 blacksmiths, 9 harness-makers, 39 barbers, 2 mattress-makers, 4 machinists, 2 gas fitters, 10 puddlers, 11 clerks, 1 keepers of wood-yards, 1 pressman, 65 railroad employes, 4 United States mail agents, 2 chair-makers, 3 candy-makers, 3 coopers, 55 gardeners, 23 painters, 2 upholsterers, 5 tailors, 2 bakers, 5 stone-cutters, 2 letter-carriers, 1 cabinet-maker, 11 ministers and 9 school teachers. These, with others, made up 1,556 as a total of the people engaged in some honorable and useful business.

There were also 14 churches, with a total membership of about 3,700, two of them numbering over 1,200; 13 Sunday-schools, with 2,000 members, 2 public schools, with seven teachers and 400 scholars, and sustained by the city. This is not counting in the Lewis High School and the various private schools, which would enroll a total of over 700 pupils.

This has now (1890) increased far above what is

*The "Helping Hand," a little sheet published by the pastor of the Congregational Church,

given here. And now what does this mean for our people, I ask again. It means that the statistical glimpse which has been given, and the glance we we have taken of the growth in various ways, shows us that we have shot far ahead on the way along with our white brethren. It shows us that if a country comes up—is brought up by whatever means—that we, too, whose lot may be cast there must have risen also. It proves the possession of wealth, also, and if this be true of the race (and it is, throughout the South where prosperity is stretching out its beneficent wings) then it affects the A. M. E. Church—the Church which is by far the strongest of negro Methodist Churches in the South. It means thereby a strengthening all along the line for the present, and as wonderful, if not more wonderful progress for the future.

This is what our present status is, financial and otherwise. If we, as a Church in Georgia alone can raise in one year \$30,536.12 in excess of the past year, what can we not do, God helping us to further on all the causes placed in our keeping? It would seem that there could be no limit if the Church would do its whole duty in the matter of collection of monies under the Dollar Law, and if the pastors and presiding elders would wisely guide the extension of the work into new fields, see to the improving of Churches and parsonages, and throw into the cause of Christ's kingdom the same hearty interest and close business tact that so many are exhibiting in the management of their personal affairs.

The South is destined to be the great field of African Methodism ; we repeat that here the numbers lie

here the opportunities for getting wealth are greater, here the increase by natural growth is more rapid. We are destined to be a wonderful Church in the future. We have wonderful interests committed to our care. Our home work is enormous; but there lie before us our mission fields in other lands as well—broad work stretching out before us with all the great possibilities for us in those fields. We cannot cease to push forward, and though we rely on the faith in the Omnipotent arm of God to aid us in all good works, we well know that God requires of us our honest industry in the cause we would forward, and that in this work one of the great forces which will aid in uplifting these, enlightening and evangelizing the world, is money.

The African Methodist Episcopal Church must strengthen itself financially in every honorable way, and the Southern portion is forging ahead as it recognizes this fact. Since the General Conference of 1888, the Dollar Collection has been nearly doubled throughout the South. This is accepted as the gauge of strength. Then what shall be said of the Sixth, Seventh and Ninth Episcopal Districts under the writer, Bishop B. W. Arnett and Bishop A. Grant, respectively, which three have in this time gone ahead almost one hundred per cent? Whatever may be the cause, it is gratifying to all concerned, and proves at least that the Southern section is not made up of idlers.

But close in connection with this financial growth we need to speak further of missions. If the natives of the Madagascar Church could contribute \$200,000 for this cause, what a lesson it is for us! "God loves

the cheerful giver," and he blesses such giving with increase. We are shown by authoritative statements that in 1883 there were 47 missionary societies at work in Africa, having in that land 250,000 converts. We, too, have a place there and must occupy it. "God uses the enterprises of the men of avarice to open a pathway for the missionaries of the cross," has been most truthfully said, and we cannot afford to lose sight of the fact that the work in Africa has been made possible for us by these very means.

To-day, missionary work anywhere is not the terrible thing of yesterday. Advance in general civilization is such that ways and means are more numerous, and consequently, the work is lightened of many hardships everywhere, which the early pioneers had to endure. May African Methodism produce both sons and daughters for the cause in heathen lands. It is true without question that "the Church which does not possess the missionary spirit cannot prosper," and the Church of our fathers should be a grand leader in the grand work.*

*In the opinion of the writer, in order to continue to succeed in the Southern States as a race, and as a Church, our ministers should cultivate a spirit of peace with the white people of the South. They own the lands largely, the money as well, and possess the culture in addition, and we should quietly work and bide our time till we have grown rich and cultured as they. In that lies our future strength.

CHAPTER XXVI.

EDUCATION IN THE SOUTH.

There is much in life generally which must always remain unwritten history. This is especially true of the life of the negro race. Were all things told, the events would be so startling that they would bear upon their very face the seal of improbability to most of the world. Yet it has been proven again and again that truth is stranger than fiction, and the truth as portrayed in the unwritten history of the lives of the negroes in America is the strangest of all strange truth.

But God's hand has been over all, and as Bishop Campbell once said, "When the slaves arrived at Jamestown, Va., simultaneously with the Mayflower at Plymouth Rock, God saw colleges and universities for our people in this land and for the millions now in Africa."

For years our people had toiled in rice swamps and cotton fields as servants in every menial capacity, as tried and trusty friends as well as during the days of bloodshed and battle where men's souls were tried to the utmost. But they knew of something better and higher than the slave life they led then. There were summits to which many an aspiring mind would climb were but the slightest opportunity given. Yea, more, these would climb without the opportunity—rather,

would make the opportunity. We do not mean to infer that amidst our deprivations and in our bondage we were shut off from spiritual things ; as one of our Bishops has said, we can truly repeat, ‘ There never was a time when the white Christians as a body either North or South were opposed to the spiritual interests of our people. But all comprehended more or less dimly the truth which Bishop Payne so well illustrates in his “ Recollections of Seventy Years,” when he tells us of that step in his life which so largely determined his future ; when he refused the offer to accompany a wealthy gentleman to the West Indies as his servant. The gentleman asks him what makes the difference between the master and the slave, and answers for him, “ *Nothing but superior knowledge.*” There were thousands who felt this truth in their hearts even then, and there were thousands who resolved as did the one who stands Senior Bishop of the A. M. E. Church to-day—Bishop Daniel Alexander Payne—they determined to seek that superior knowledge.

But ways were dark. Here and there a little help came from friendly quarters, and, in secret, the alphabet was learned under circumstances many times partaking of as much adventurous romance as the wildest flights of imagination could conceive—when the few tattered leaves must seek strange hiding places, when they were lost again and again, and when the lash was the penalty if one sought that knowledge. But it was precious, and nothing daunted by discouragement, loss and even terror, the hungry, thirsty ones delved and groped until they could read.

What that simple phrase meant to the slave, hardly

a white person in existence can conceive. What joy! what gladness! what visions were opened up when the printed page was no longer a sealed book! All this few can imagine, but it is a sorrowful as well as joyous reality to thousands of mature years in the days preceding the Civil War. Thank God, our children and our children's children can never know the ways through which their fathers and mothers have passed.

But these learned to read. It was a spark, fanning to a flame here and there as group after group drew near to the light. The masters little knew of the amount of knowledge in their slaves' possession for years, so secretly was it kept, and yet not once was it turned for harm against those who held them captive.

I have said the race had learned to labor and to wait. But when the bonds were burst asunder and their acquirements could be openly used, it is the wonder of the age that so soon should we have the learning that we find in our midst. But even if we could not boast of much of that heredity which our masters claimed, and the white race claim to-day as being its especial gift of superiority, it must be remembered that upon similar scientific principles, the longing for learning, the secret toil to acquire a little, the patient waiting in hope of more—all must have made its impress upon the coming generations, and gone far toward supplying the race with that which the white race's years of intelligence and learning claim as its own superior possession. Labor and yearning are hereditary as well and do their work as well as that other possession.

With the first opening up of the South as the war drew to a close, the teacher came with the preacher

from the North to the "freedmen," and both were heartily welcomed. And here we would pause to pay a passing tribute to those in the South, once before mentioned, who, feeling the wrong of slavery, but weighted down by the incubus of the system and so surrounded by it that to them it seemed impossible to deal justly by all concerned, but who endeavored to ameliorate the condition as much as possible. They are those to whom so many of us in the prime of life to-day remember gratefully for the aid to a higher life, bestowed though it was, as it had to be, in secrecy and in part.

We have said, with the preacher came the teacher, and this is literally true, for upon the very gun-boats that bore these there came men and women to minister to our intellectual needs. They came from pleasant homes, from the midst of refinement, comfort and even luxury, and braved ostracism, privation, insult, danger, that they might lend their aid in lifting up the negro race. There were missionaries among these teachers who were such in the truest and most devoted sense; and when the writer sees some of our girls and boys to-day hesitating and declining to serve the Master's cause and the race because this service will take them where coarse food, rude lodgings and inadequate accommodation of any kind face them, together with loneliness from a lack of cultured society and companionship, he feels like exclaiming, "Oh, if you could have seen what we have seen, what others have suffered for us and for you, you would feel the blush of guilty shame that you could for an instant hesitate when your work is so much needed!"

We need the missionary spirit in our hearts and

we need to develop it in our schools, for there is work to be done, which as the years go on must be done by the race or remain undone. May God raise up thousands of such young men and women among the negro youth of the land who shall set the example for future generations.

The North occupied the educational field first of all, and if space would allow, the writer would wish to bear personal testimony to the work of a few devoted followers of Christ, well-known to him, who have so nobly administered to a needy race. The churches were early in the field; the American Missionary Association covered as much territory as possible for the Congregational church, and the Methodists as well. The Baptists and Presbyterians followed closely, and soon State after State held here and there points of light which were to shed their beams into the surrounding darkness—points around which so many hopes were clustering. Even the islands lying along the South Atlantic coast had the school house in operation upon their deserted plantations before the guns of war were silenced. Edisto Island, Hilton Head and others saw many a gathering in the cabins where by the “lightwood” torches the first mysteries of learning were revealed.

Little by little, schools were established in the large cities, and then to the surprise of all it was found there were many of the young who had secretly learned from the forbidden books, and were soon made ready for more advanced work which in turn was provided for them. Our schools—the negro schools—as a whole were excellent; they were, in fact, the best in the State where located, and it is true that the

wonderful strides made by the negro in these years when Northern philanthropy was aiding the race, had a strong influence throughout the South, causing a step toward the public school system which later took its rise.

Our Northern friends have given much from their wealth both in a public and private way, and the Peabody, Arthington, Slater and Hand funds, with others, have aided much, for all of which we give grateful acknowledgment. In due time the States assisted in the higher education as well as in the public school system, Georgia granting \$8,000 to the Atlanta University for its work. The day of illiteracy is waning. Give the negro race twenty-five years more—nay, let us round out the century and the census of 1900 A. D., will show a marvellous increase throughout the South.

Among some of the schools which are maintained wholly or in part by friends of the race, we find seven chartered institutions, twelve Normal Schools and Seminaries, the Gammon Theological School, the Centenary Biblical Institute, and the Meharry Medical College—a total of twenty-two, supported by the M. E. Church, as reported in 1888, with an attendance of 4,506 pupils under a teaching force numbering 124. The Presbyterian Church (according to the report of the U. S. Commissioner of Education, 1884-'85), supports the Brainerd Institute, Chester, S. C.; Fairfield Normal Institute, Wainsborough, S. C.; Yadkin Academy, Mebanesville, N. C.; Wellingford Academy, Charleston, S. C.; Biddle University, Charlotte, N. C.; Institute for Ministers at Tuscaloosa, Ala.; also, Concord Seminary, Concord, N. C. The American

Missionary Association also supports wholly or in part a large number of schools. We find by the report of 1889 that their work for the forty-third year of its existence, in the South alone, has demanded an outlay of \$255,083.84, and it reports 113 missionary workers, 136 churches, 5 chartered institutions of learning, 18 normal and graded schools and 37 common schools, with 260 teachers. Fisk University, in Texas, Talladega College, and Tugaloo University, in Alabama, Straight University, in Louisiana, Tillotson Institute, Texas, with Shaw University, and Livingston College, in North Carolina, Atlanta University and Clark University, in Georgia, are some of the leading institutions for higher learning, in addition to those already named, supported by various denominations. These are a few examples of what others have been and are still doing for the race.

But while friends have worked, the negro himself has not been idle, and the A. M. E. Church has taken upon herself the great work of education in the South with a most creditable showing. Wilberforce University, the mother school in our Church, was founded in 1856, passing into our hands in 1863. To this school the South has sent hundreds of its sons and daughters, but the demands of the times called for efforts nearer home. We had had small schools taught in our own churches from an early period, and among the early workers we mention Mr. Lewis Williams (spoken of elsewhere), and Mrs. M. E. F. Smith, a lady of culture from Connecticut, who did an excellent work at the A. M. E. Church in Macon and Columbus, Georgia. The writer owes her more for instruction in the English branches than any other

living person, and takes this method of gratefully acknowledging it. In addition to the above, we make special mention of Mrs. S. C. B. Scarborough. Prof. E. A. Ware, Prof. E. M. Cravath, Misses Chases from Massachusetts, and a host of others.

But organized effort for schools was not put forth until later. To-day we have for higher education the Kittrell Industrial School, which was founded as Johnson School in 1866, now situated thirty miles from Raleigh, N. C., with an efficient corps of teachers. There are several buildings upon the property of sixty acres, and the school is destined to do a good and great work for the State.

Southward, in Columbia, S. C., is situated Allen University, named after the first Bishop of our Church. It is located in a beautiful spot, a mile and a half from the center of the city, and once the home of a wealthy family of the Southern aristocracy who little thought one day their home would be one of the centers of education for the slaves they had once owned. There are four acres of land and five buildings, with four departments in working order. It promises well for the future. It first opened its doors in 1881, and has thus seen hardly a decade, but its progress has been onward with instructors from Howard University, Hampton, Boston and Wilberforce.*

Down in the southwest, the Texas Conference projected a school in 1874 under many discouragements. Ground was purchased in the city of Waco, but financial disaster came near overtaking it, when a banker of the city (Mr. Seeley) assisted them out ; but they

*Payne Institute, formerly located at Cokesbury, S. C., was sold and its proceeds applied to the purchase of Allen University.

were still unable to build. In 1881 they changed their location and purchased twenty acres of land on the east side of Brazos River, and a brick building of comfortable dimensions was erected. Since then the school has been steadily growing under the presidency of a graduate of the mother university, Wilberforce.

Following this in point of time, we have the Divinity and Industrial School, located at Jacksonville, Fla., with a large brick building, commodious and elegant. Then the State of Georgia followed with Morris-Brown College in Atlanta, which was founded in 1884, and opened with one hundred pupils in 1885, October 15, with the writer, whose whole heart was in the work, as President of its Board of Trustees.

It was in 1880 that the ministers of the A. M. E. Church in Georgia began to fully realize the necessity of such an institution for our young men and women, and in the February following the site was purchased at a cost of \$3,500.00 and paid for. Through the providence of God and the earnest labors of man, our prayers were realized in the dedication of the first school of the Church for higher education in Georgia, and Nov. 26th, with one wing completed, it was formally dedicated. When its doors were swung open in October, there were admitted 107 pupils, increased now (1890) to 336, with seven teachers.

We might mention, in addition to these, several schools scattered through the South and doing well. The Church is now looking after the following schools already begun, and several others not mentioned, which it has in view to develop in future: Ward Normal and Collegiate Institute, Huntsville, Texas; Turner College, Hernando, Miss.; Dickerson Memo-

rial Seminary, Portsmouth, Va.—all looking forward to the day when they shall come out of their chrysalis state and do honor to the names they bear. This is aside from the Mission Schools in Hayti, our work in Africa and the British Dominions, and the following District Schools : The Normal and Preparatory School, Cartersville, Ga. ; Payne High School, Cuthbert, Ga. ; Sumter District School, Sumter, S. C. ; the Abbeville School, Abbeville, S. C. These last show that Georgia and South Carolina are leading the van in the educational line in the Southern part of the Church.

Of these schools, Dr. Wm. D. Johnson, Secretary of Education in our Church, says in the Centennial Budget :

“These schools have been originated and sustained by action of the Conferences. The money for their support has come chiefly through the liberality of the members of the A. M. E. Church, and, to a surprising extent, several of them will compare favorably with the better sustained schools of a similar grade.

“Together they have a property of nearly \$300,000 ; have sent forth two hundred graduates, besides thousands who prepared themselves for immediate service in the great fields of preaching and teaching. They now have upwards of fifty professors and assistants, with from 2,000 to 3,000 students.”

A full list of all our schools gives us twenty-two in all, and for their support the sum total expended in one quadrennium (1880–1884) reached \$77,000.00.

A separate Department created by the General Conference of 1884, for Education,* has also brought

*This was upon the principle that “organization is life.” It was, in short the reorganization of what first took form in 1876.

under its control the Connectional Literary, Historical and Educational Association, with the Annual Conference and Local Societies of the same name, and we can but look for more systematic efforts in the future.

Aside from this work done at home, several students have been supported by various Southern Conferences at Wilberforce through the past ten years.

The most reliable statistics concerning the education of the race are those from the last census, and out of that we find that the negro race in the United States has 17,822 schools, with 16,865 teachers. There has been great increase since then, as the census of the present year will show.

There is to be a day of deliverance from ignorance ; the outlook is grand, and our hopes the brightest. Upon the education of the race, Dr. McCosh once said : "I do not believe, however, that the North or the South can elevate the negro ; it must be done by themselves." To this Dr. Tanner (now Bishop Tanner) made answer : "Of course it must. No man or community of men, can elevate another. Elevation must always come from within. What the North and the South, however, can do is to cease their injustice, direct and indirect, and allow the negro to elevate himself. If, however, they had continued their opposition, it would have been impossible for him to have acquitted himself as he has done, is doing, and gives promise of. Things, however, are moving on all right. The little remaining opposition can be overcome, and another generation will make croaking more nonsensical than it is now."

We expect to do this work if left alone to do it, and

a Church that can raise in one quadrennium \$13,170.80 for education, aside from the monies raised by the Educational Secretary and the schools themselves, as the A. M. E. Church has done, need not fear for the future. Yet one thing must be borne in mind; as one has said in pressing the claims of education: "Christian money must lay the foundation." No truer words were ever uttered. This must be the principle of action throughout our Connection. It will be the principle of action, henceforth, in the South.

CHAPTER XXVII.

TEMPERANCE.

This volume would be incomplete without a chapter on Temperance, especially since the liquor traffic has reached such a stage in our country's history as to threaten the subversion of the entire fabric of our civil and ecclesiastical forms of government. Intemperance stalks about the face of the earth like some hungry beast seeking whom it may devour. It boldly enters the sacred precincts of the Church and defies resistance of its power. Disguised in most respectable garb it often sits enthroned in high places, sapping the life blood of the people from its seat of power like an enormous vampire.

Again, in its wretched nakedness, it enters the home and breaks up the family—driving fathers to crime, mother and children to lowest depths of vice and misery, shame and degradation, substituting want for plenty, squalor for cleanliness, finally wrecking life and ending in a hopeless death.

The great king, Solomon, the wisest man of his times, to whom God gave wealth and power in addition to wisdom, has truly expressed it in Proverbs when he says: "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek

mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth its color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder."

It is not a matter of choice with us whether or not we sit quietly by, while men are bartering away their souls for a mess of pottage. It is not a matter of choice whether or not we contribute of our strength and means to aid in checking vice and sin in any form. It is our duty, we are bound by the eternal law of ages, the law of our own conscience and the law of God, as much so as were Martin Luther, Wickliffe, John Wesley and Richard Allen to go forth as missionaries of the cross, spreading our benedictions over the length and breadth of the world, sowing seed that shall spring up into "harvests of blessings." Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, commands us not only to love our neighbor but to help him as well.

There is a great deal of indifference exhibited upon the part of many who ought to be interested in the prohibition movement. There may be differences of opinion as to the methods to be employed, yet there should be no hesitancy as to the decided advantage of total abstinence. As sure as God is just we believe that this terrible evil of rum-selling and rum-drinking must come to an end. The recent campaign in one of the chief cities of Georgia, the fierce contest which took place between "wet and dry," and the interest manifested by the better class of citizens, both white and black, are positive proof that the cause is not to lag in the future.

Both Church and State are threatened, and for that reason both Church and State should be aroused to

the necessity for action, feeling the responsibility resting upon them and discharge this as it should be, not relinquishing any effort until the victory be won. That we are by no means unmindful of the importance of this question, is shown by the fact that among the subjects which regularly recur in our Conferences and are made the basis of reports considered as touching upon matters connected with our welfare, we find that of Temperance.

A few forcible facts will show how great a hold the destroyer—rum or intoxicating drinks in all form—has upon this country alone, when for the degrading stimulant we see such enormous sums yearly expended. We are told upon good authority that every year this country spends in the liquor traffic alone a sum exceeding half the national debt. We are also told that the great wars of the *world*, from 1852 to 1877, cost less than the intoxicants used in the United States in the same period by \$3,000,000,000. There is here a terrible fact to face: that unless prohibition puts an end to this, as it has the power to do, there will be an increase in this cost far exceeding the increase in population, and that consequent want must follow.

But liquor is not the only evil to be shunned. The voice of warning is raised against tobacco as well, against narcotics in any form, for one and all are included under the intemperate habits of one. May civilization not see this too late.

There is no doubt that the rush of life has much to do with these dangers. Every one is anxious for something, money, fame or position, and this ambition presses the world forward in an exciting race to see who shall win that which is coveted most. The cares

and demands of life also enter into the matter, and are borne down as well as along; there is a craving for anything which will stimulate and keep up a fictitious show of strength at least.

The rush of civilization has brought with it the spirit which is characteristic of all Americans—the spirit of “Hurry,” and it in turn has developed the spirit of general intemperance, we may say. We eat as well as drink intemperately; we dress, we live, we enjoy ourselves in the same extravagant manner. As a result we sacrifice life at last to the demands of fashion in all these ways. We make of ourselves slaves to these things, as much fettered and bound as the drunkard to his cups. And from this, too, we need relief. If the negro race, if the A. M. E. Church is to become what we all desire—a mighty power in the future—it has to stop and consider these things that are confronting the most powerful and most wealthy of races, of churches.

The voice of every preacher must be raised against the liquor power in every form, against the tendency to feast the appetite, thus making the coarser, grosser part master of the higher. Plain living and high thinking are two things we need to keep in view, even if luxury be within our reach. The spiritual and intellectual man must be adorned, rather than the case, the human body. The sums expended for mere amusement are enormous, and these, too, need regulation. It is not the true aim of life to enjoy it like a butterfly, but it is to make the most of ourselves—fit temples in every way for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and such a use of time and opportunities as will make us acceptable in every way in His sight..

We need to learn economy, not to be parsimonious, neither to be extravagant. We need, in short, to know just how to live.

The Anglo-Saxons claim for themselves that they are

“The heirs of all the ages in the foremost files of time.”

This may and may not be. It depends upon the standpoint from which we view the statement. But there is a statement which the poet makes that we would do well to consider as a strong encouragement :

“Time’s noblest offspring is the last.”

Let the negro race, the A. M. E. Church especially, keep in mind to be that “noblest offspring.” Let every one of us remember, amidst the perils which surround the whole American nation, that our safety, and our prosperity as a people, each is to be largely determined by our temperate living.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

IN MEMORIAM.

There is no sadder task falling to the lot of any man than that of preaching the funeral sermon of the dead—sad because of the selfish desires of the human heart, which would keep all loved ones here on earth amid its toils and dangers to battle on for years longer, even when the flesh is too weary and the spirit too worn for further conflict.

But there comes a time when we feel that we can see that God truly knoweth best, even when he bereaves us, and so there comes a time when we can look back over the ranks of the church militant and say that God knew best when he selected young and old, hale and strong, as well as weak and feeble, for the unerring aim of the marksman—Death.

They are scattered all along the years of our work in Georgia from 1865—these men in their prime and these old veterans, until but few, very few, are left with us who saw the rise of the A. M. E. church in the South. We have watched the others as they have passed over Jordan's flood and only calmly wonder whose name will next be called. But there is a satisfaction mixed with the sadness and tempering it when we think of the lives of some of these veterans of the cross, these fathers in Israel—of their self-sac-

rificing spirit which braved so much for the church and to these pioneers we owe a passing word of respect.

Almost the first to fall was Rev. Wm. Gaines—the writer's brother—who died October 20, in 1865, at Columbus, Ga. As a brother he was affectionate and tender; as a Christian he was zealous and helpful. He was not allowed to live long enough to win great honor in his chosen calling, but those who knew him, knew him but to love him, and knew that he did strong work up to his death. We have mentioned his work in Georgia in these first chapters, and here would pay the tribute that the ties of nature and of Christian brotherhood call forth. May we meet in heaven.

Among the first old men to fall was Thomas K. Brown, who died in 1874, aged 93, after a successful and active ministry of seventy-three years. He was on his way to his work when the messenger overtook him at Macon, Ga., March 26. What those 73 years meant, very few who are laboring to-day can understand. To preach Christ and Him crucified under the stress of the days of slavery at the opening of this century, and to keep a strong heart and an earnest faith alive and glowing through all that distracting period is something marvelous, even to those who have felt the bitterness of bondage and the lash. But he died as we would wish—with his face to the foe, battling against Satan to the last—the triumphant death of the righteous.

Zechariah Armstrong followed him closely to the grave in July following. He was an evangelist who had done good work. There was no doubt of his

being a Methodist. That was decided by his works. He was ever ready to preach, and his loss was deeply felt. He was in the prime of life—rounding out his forty-five years.

Gabriel Clark was another who gave up the struggle in 1879, December 18, at the age of 60. For forty-five years he had been a member of the church and had preached the gospel for thirty years. He joined us at the Georgia Conference in Columbus in 1869. He, too, was one of the workers who had seen a glorious battle successfully waged with sin; but his strength had failed, and at the time of his death he was upon the superannuated list. His last words were that he had fought a good fight.

Albert McGhee, of the North Georgia Conference, died August 8, 1882, at his home in Cartersville, Ga., in the sixty-first year of his age. He was born in Abbeville District, S. C., in 1822. Rev. Andrew Brown, who departed this life four years later, spoke of meeting him in 1847, a young convert at a camp-meeting in South Carolina, and said that he was then impressed by his bearing. He was a great revivalist, and labored many years before he became identified with the Georgia Conference. Bishop Wayman ordained him in 1867 and assigned him to Griffin Station. He was ordained Elder by Bishop J. M. Brown in 1868. He remained in Griffin until 1870, when he was sent to Washington, Wilkes county. In 1871-72 he was Presiding Elder of the Americus District; he was appointed to Cartersville in 1874, in 1875 to Putnam County Circuit No. 1, again in 1876-77 to Washington, 1878-79 to Greensboro, and 1880 to Rome. In 1882 he was sent to Kingston. He was one of the

pioneer workers in Georgia, traveling all over the State. He was poor in this world's goods at death, but rich in faith, for when found sick, penniless and suffering, he said: "Tell the Bishop and brethren if I die in my chair or bed, I went straight to heaven."

The next old pioneer to pass away was Rev. Samuel W. Drayton, who died in January, 1885. He was one of the grandest and most effective workers in the cause of early African Methodism in Georgia. He united with the A. M. E. Church at the Conference held in Savannah, Ga., in 1866. It was he, as mentioned elsewhere, who brought into the denomination Bethel Church and its membership in Augusta, Ga. He was a native of the State, and had been ordained both deacon and elder in days of slavery, and held the distinction of being the longest ordained minister of African descent in the State of Georgia. He was regarded in slavery days as one of the best preachers, white or colored, in the city of Augusta. He was a natural born gentleman, and honored as a prince among his brethren. Most of the societies now constituting the circuits in the vicinity of the station at Sparta were organized by him. He held the office of Presiding Elder for eight years, and was the Macon Conference Missionary Agent when he died. He was one of those rare men whom the world can ill afford to lose. He was progressive, and had an eye on all the younger men of promise. "Why did God take such a man?" he sorrowfully asked at Bishop Dickerson's death.

In the same year the same Conference was called to mourn the death of Rev. Preston Brooks Peters, a young man of thirty-three, who died October 7th.

He had joined the North Georgia Conference at its session in the city of Macon in 1880, and was ordained Elder at the first session of the Macon Conference held in Sandersville in 1883. His talents were such that he was released from the pastorate by Bishop Dickerson in 1881, that he might employ them in the public schools of Columbus, Ga., when he became principal. So death mows down young and old, side by side.

In 1886 two other veterans were called to eternal rest—Rev. Henry Daniels and Rev. Andrew Brown. The former was a member of the Macon Conference at the time of his death. He was an aged man, who was one of the most faithful among ministers. His life was filled with that firm trust in Jesus' promises which give so much peace and joy here below and an eternal life in heaven. His works follow him.

Of Rev. Andrew Brown it may be said that he was one of the oldest Presiding Elders in the State of Georgia. He was a pioneer, and a member of the North Georgia Conference, but first began preaching in the M. E. Church at Union, S. C. He preached throughout the State of Tennessee as well. When the first Conference of the Church met in Georgia he was present and a member, and was a power in that Conference. He was not an educated man; on the contrary he was crude and unlettered, but he was filled with ripe judgment and the learning that comes from long experience and earnest endeavor. His life was one of great interest. No man among us who entered that first Conference needs to be eulogized more than Andrew Brown. He left an ineffaceable impression upon the hearts of the people, and we

might truthfully say, the imprints of his feet upon the rocks of the mountains, for he would walk forty miles to an appointment.

No man in Georgia has established so many churches as he. He was a man who would preach in peace if he could; in war, if not. There was but one Andrew Brown, and he was a father and a friend. He and the writer differed but he would always end by saying, "Gaines, I can't help but love you." His record in our church stands as follows: He was admitted, ordained both deacon and elder by Bishop Payne in 1866. His first appointment was in 1866, at Dalton. He was presiding elder of the Marietta District in 1867, of the Atlanta District in 1868-69-70-71, of the Macon District in 1872, of the Columbus District in 1873, of the Macon District again in 1874-75-76-77 and of the Atlanta for the second time in 1878. His next work was at Eatonton, Ga., in 1879-80, in Lexington in 1881, St. Paul's Circuit in 1882, White Plains in 1883-84. His last appointment was at Jonesboro, Ga., for he would not locate, and here he died triumphant. His remains were taken by the writer to Madison, Ga., and there buried at his dying request.

Among the last to leave us for the better land was Rev. G. W. H. Williams, who died Oct. 22, 1889, as a faithful soldier dies, at his post, with the words, "All is well, I am ready to go," upon his lips.

FortuneRoberson is one whom we would not omit from the list; tried and true, he did valiant service in the field.

These are but a few of the many Christian ministers who have gone on before from the Southern fields of Georgia, and mentioned because their works and

lives are intimately known to the writer. Death has taken from the oldest and the youngest—the preachers in the itinerant ranks and the Bishops from their presiding seats, yet the work goes on. Thank God for that—that though we may die, the A. M. E. Church banner will not trail in the dust, for there are hosts of true, brave souls left ready to uphold it, and to toil on through morning sun and noontide heat until the cool dews of evening of life bid them to lay down their work and enter into that rest which abideth forever for the faithful soldiers of the Cross.

CHAPTER XXIX.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF FREEDOM.

Upon May 15, 16-18, 1890, the Sixth Episcopal District celebrated its Quarto-Centennial—twenty-five years since the work of the A. M. E. Church began in the South—twenty-five years of freedom to the colored race.

As we close this volume we wish to glance at these two events in retrospect, and see what has been done in the South. It has been said that we “cannot tell the outcome of an individual nor of a company of men who are working for God and humanity.” This is as true as when Barbara Heck and Philip Embury set foot on American shores to be the pioneers of American Methodism. It is also true that individuals and companies themselves hardly have defined ideas of what will be the outcome of their work any more than have the lookers on. We work out our own destinies by the force of pressure from surrounding circumstances. It was so with the A. M. E. Church.

Bishop Campbell once said that Richard Allen did not intend to withdraw from the M. E. Church in America, when in 1786 he formed his band, as Wesley had done in 1739, but it was the outgrowth of environment in both cases. Wesley could accomplish more for Methodism by a formal separation from the

Established Church in England (which took place in 1784) just as we could do more by Allen's organization in 1816.

But it was nearly fifty years before the A. M. E. Church could thrive as it ought below the belt which separated the North and South—1816 to 1865.

When in 1865 Bishop Payne came to the South again, after his exile, no one could have foreseen the work that would follow, as the result of that planting in Charleston, in one-quarter of a century. No one would have dared to prophesy such a work as we see flourishing to-day—that from the one Conference organized May 15th, in that city, twenty-three should spring into existence, making twenty-four in the Southern States—nearly one for each year of the twenty-five, or that the appointments in the one State of Georgia alone would have increased to four hundred; and the wildest flight of hopeful imagining would not have seen in prospective within that time the sixteen Church schools which dot the South now, where then not one was in existence.

It is a most pleasing retrospect for the Church, and for the South, as seen over one-half of its work now lying in the Southern sections, and by far its largest membership.

The band of sixteen, in 1816, duplicated so singularly by coincidence when Bishop Payne called the Church together, in 1865, for another beginning, has multiplied wonderfully; and there is not the least doubt in the mind of one of our ministers to-day that as an A. M. E. Church we were then (1816) in a better condition to do more for the brethren, so long oppressed and suffering, than we would have been had

we still clung to the Church that ostracized and pressed us so grievously that we were compelled to break the bonds.

Under no such condition as was ours prior to that period could we have risen in manhood's strength and pushed the spiritual warfare into the dense depths of South Carolina's rice swamps, upon its low islands skirting its southern-most coasts, into the broad cotton fields of proud old Georgia and Mississippi, into the hidden glades of the flowery land of Florida and the tall canebrakes of Alabama and Louisiana, and finally into the southwest Lone Star State, Texas. It was the way the Lord had led us, and He has been leading us all the way till now.

It is not possible for the North to look upon the work as we of the South look upon it. Perhaps it is not possible for either section to change its standpoint. The A. M. E. Church entered the South as a mission field, having abandoned it over forty years before, when the threatened insurrection made it unsafe for its apostles to occupy it longer. What has it brought us in these twenty-five years of freedom, which came to us in such a dual form—freedom from bodily oppression, freedom from religious oppression? Is the A. M. E. Church the Church for the negro race in the South? Has it proven itself one that meets the needs of the masses? Have twenty-five years of negro ruling in these matters been of any avail in proving his capacities? What has it done for the South?

All these are questions that are to be answered by what this quarter of a century has revealed to friends and foes alike. The A. M. E. Church is the Church

for the negro race ; the facts prove it. Without proselyting it has grown far beyond any other negro Methodist Church. The people have felt first the all-persuasive power of Methodism. Those who formerly had been members of the M. E. Church South bore the love of Methodism in their breasts as they came to us. Those without the pale of Methodism were drawn by the warmth of the fire within—the brotherly, Christian spirit we by grace possessed—by the doctrines represented through our organization, and by the love of race. There are countless other reasons we might bring forth to prove that this Church does indeed meet the needs of the race. There is freedom of thought and expression with no undue repression of the emotions which possess us—emotions so long repressed by the spirit that ruled over us that it was a glad day when they could find a time and a place in the A. M. E. Church to give full voice to them—free to burst forth in song and hallelujahs to God from the thousands of overflowing hearts of the poorest and the lowest and the darkest child among us.

Then, too, it is the negro's own Church—though, thank God, no one of any race or color is excluded. It is free throughout its length and breadth, but it is the Redeemer's Church nevertheless, and it is a triumphant proof of what may be accomplished by the race in the way of organization or temporal rulings. Look at our churches and parsonages dotting the South ; look at our institutions of learning with our own accomplished instructors, and all will make answer in clarion tones that will ring down the ages that the A. M. E. Church has done more than any other to prove the capacity of the negro to rule and yet to be ruled.

Look at the masses of the people which this Church alone has reached. With the true primitive Methodist missionary spirit it has emulated the missionary heroes of all ages, and penetrated wilds where there seemed no promise for harvest, nursed the least promising seed until it germinated, took firm root and finally sent up its branches to see the light of day that the world might see another tree of African Methodism. Many of these plants have had slow growth in their struggles for existence, but we can safely say that scarcely one has died out where it was once placed, and instead of barrenness we have had fruit, as well as countless seedlings, again and again, from the most vigorous and hardy.

African Methodism has done its share, too, in these twenty-five years in carrying on the education of the race. It has been as broad as its name indicates, and within its doors no narrow sectarian policy has been allowed. It has worked hand-in-hand with other denominations as well to free this fairest section of our common country from the blot that the accursed system of slavery had placed upon it. A. M. E. sons and daughters have been pioneers in every nook and corner, and, true to their Methodistic principles, they have been of the people that they might win and work for the people.

Twenty-five years of freedom and twenty-five years of African Methodism in the Southern States have worked wonders. It is true that others have aided in all these things, that the white race, with its riches and broad philanthropic ideas through all Christian denominations outside our own, has helped us largely in accomplishing these wonderful results ; but while

we give our thanks for what has been done through the labors of others, we cannot be blamed if we exclaim "Not that I love Cæsar less, but that I love Rome more!" when we claim that the A. M. E. Church has done more for the race than has any other denomination, white or colored. It has done those things that cannot be counted by dollars and cents ; it has preached the freedom of manhood, the rights of the negro, sobriety and industry ; it has lived near to the race and worked from within ; it has practiced what it preached, and then has affirmed that practice by all the substantial aid necessary to carry out its claims, even through courts of justice. It has been a Church aggressive in all things pertaining to truth and justice in a section where we have needed to manfully assert our manhood, even as Christ would have us do.

With twenty-five years behind us and such marvelous progress—agreed to by friends and enemies alike, hailed and exulted in by the former, feared and opposed by the latter—what have we to look forward to in the coming future ?

That the past shows that we have a great destiny to accomplish as a Church in this very South is undeniable ; that we are on the highway toward accomplishing it is equally true. The bulk of our numbers as a race will, doubtless, remain in this section for years to come, and here, as Bishop Tanner (then Rev. B. T. Tanner) said when in 1867 it was seen that the new Conference in the South alone had reached a membership nearly equal to the whole Church elsewhere—fifty thousand.—"Here," said he, "is to be the heart of our Church, that is to throw through the

whole body the vitalizing blood." It is our land, our home—a land watered by the tears and sweat and even blood of our fathers and mothers, stirred to its fertility by the labors of their hands, and we love it. We love the South despite the faults that the enemies of right have made seem so general. We know that we have friends here as well, and we know that whatever God allows is right for the day, and He will bring all thing to a righteous end; if we but put our whole trust in Him, His arm will not fail to be outstretched over us in care and protection.

We are linked to this section by these and other strong fetters, and we are anxious to see it prosper in every way; and the A. M. E. Church is to be one of the agents in the coming tide of prosperity, which is destined to include us in its onward sweep. We have a mighty future before us as one of the most sturdy branches of Methodism in any country, and it remains for pastor and people to keep before their mind's eye the common interests of Church, race and the South. We cannot divide them. Were we to try we should only weaken ourselves and threaten the peace and prosperity of all; so we must rise to the measure of our responsibilities in every way. To the end of bringing about this future not a single opportunity must be allowed to escape us—not a single means at our command must be left unutilized.

We have great educational possibilities. Our colleges are to be made the first in the land. They are to be provided with men and means necessary to make them such. It is true that philanthropy is not to go on forever. In time the great work of education in the South is to fall upon the States with their school

systems and upon the people of that section. We are not always to be receiving as in the past; we are to help ourselves as a race, and to the A. M. E. Church as the largest body of workers in it, the world will look for correspondingly large results. Upon us as such devolve then these responsibilities, and we say emphatically we are to meet them. We can, we will, for the Church of our fathers is to stand. As Bishop Dickerson once said: "African Methodism had to be, it therefore came into being with the attributes of permanency."

It has been progress from the start without one retrograding step, and our mission is not yet done. As the Church is gradually reaching out to the islands and continents beyond, it will find its glowing center—the South—alive to further every good work and aid in redeeming the world for the Master's coming Kingdom.

When the nations have become one and the kingdoms of this world have become the Kingdom of His Son, then, and not till then, will the mission of the African Methodist Episcopal Church be fulfilled. God bless, strengthen, purify and exalt her to that end.

APPENDIX.

The following are the Conferences in Georgia in order from the first Conference in the South, together with the place of assembly, date of the same and the names of the Bishops appointed to preside over the work ; although absence and death, as mentioned in the foregoing chapters, caused other Bishops to take charge at different times, as has been stated :

BISHOP D. A. PAYNE.

- 1865—Charleston, May 15.
- 1866—Savannah, May 15.
- 1867—Wilmington, March 30.

BISHOP J. M. BROWN.

- 1868—Georgia, Macon, March 12.
- 1869— “ Columbus, February 6.
- 1870— “ Americus, January 28.
- 1871— “ Atlanta, January 14.
- 1872— “ Savannah, January 5.
- 1873— “ Macon, January 11.

BISHOP T. M. D. WARD.

- 1874—North Georgia, Augusta, January 8.
- 1874—Georgia, Thomasville, January 22.
- 1875—North Georgia, Athens, January 7.
- 1875—Georgia, Albany, January 21.
- 1875—North Georgia, Cartersville, December 16.
- 1876—Georgia, Savannah, January 29.

BISHOP J. P. CAMPBELL.

- 1876—North Georgia, Griffin, December 1.
 1877—Georgia, Bainbridge, January 18.
 1877—North Georgia, Eatonton, December 5.
 1878—Georgia, Columbus, January 30.
 1879—North Georgia, Madison, January 8.
 1879—Georgia, Cuthbert, January 22.
 1880—North Georgia, Macon, January 7.
 1880—Georgia, Americus, January 21.
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BISHOP W. F. DICKERSON.

- 1881—North Georgia, Atlanta, January 5.
 1881—Georgia, Savannah, January 19.
 1882—North Georgia, Augusta, January 11.
 1882—Georgia, Thomasville, January 26.
 1883—North Georgia, Washington, January 10.
 1883—Georgia, Darien, January 24.
 1883—Macon, Georgia, Sandersville, January 30.
 1883—Macon, Georgia, Forsyth, November 28.
 1884—North Georgia, Marietta, January 9.
 1884—Georgia, Valdosta, January 17.
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BISHOP J. A. SHORTER.

- 1884—Macon, Georgia, Columbus, November 19.
 1884—North Georgia, Athens, December 3.
 1885—Georgia, Albany, January 14.
 1885—Macon, Georgia, Eatonton, November 18.
 1885—North Georgia, Griffin, December 2.
 1886—Georgia, Hawkinsville, January 20.
 1886—Macon, Georgia, Barnesville, November 17.
 1886—North Georgia, Atlanta, December 1.

- 1887—Georgia, Quitman, January 14.
 1887—North Georgia, Rome, November 15.
 1887—Macon, Georgia, Talbotton, November 30.
 1887—Georgia, Savannah, December 14.

BISHOP W. J. GAINES.

- 1888—North Georgia, Dalton, November 7.
 1888—Macon, Georgia, Americus, November 14.
 1888—North Alabama, Florence, November 21.*
 1888—Alabama, Mobile, December 5.*
 1888—Georgia, Cuthbert, December 12.
 1889—North Georgia, Washington, November 4.
 1889—Macon, Georgia, Milledgeville, November 13.
 1889—North Alabama, Greensboro, November 27.*
 1889—Alabama, Union Springs, December 4.*
 1889—Georgia, Brunswick, December 12.

BISHOP W. J. GAINES.

- 1890—North Georgia, Cartersville, November 5.
 1890—Macon, Georgia, Columbus, November 12.
 1890—Georgia, Dawson, December 10.
 1890—North Alabama, Birmingham, November 26.
 1890—Alabama, Opelika, December 3.

*These are placed here simply as a part of the writer's work in the Sixth Episcopal District during these years.









