

All Rights Reserved By HDM For This Digital Publication
Copyright 1998 Holiness Data Ministry

Duplication of this CD by any means is forbidden, and
copies of individual files must be made in accordance with
the restrictions stated in the B4Ucopy.txt file on this CD.

* * * * *

**SKETCHES FROM THE STUDY OF
A SUPERANNUATED ITINERANT
By Abel Stevens**

Author of
"Sketches And Incidents,
Or A Budget From The
Saddle-Bags Of A
Superannuated Itinerant."

SKETCH -- Dutch, schets; German, skizze; French, esquisse. -- We see the primary sense of the verb is, to throw, the sense of shoot, Italian, scatlare, Latin, scateo. An outline or general delineation of any thing; a first rough or incomplete draught of a plan or any design, as, the sketch of an essay. -- Noah Webster.

* * *

New York:
Published By Carlton & Phillips
200 Mulberry Street

1853

Printed Book Copyright Secured

* * * * *

Digital Edition 09/01/98
By Holiness Data Ministry

* * * * *

INTRODUCTION TO THE DIGITAL EDITION

In the printed edition from which this digital edition was created, there were 12 parts. However, because I felt that they were of little spiritual value, and expressed views with which I disagree, I have omitted the sixth part, entitled "The Old English Essayists," and the tenth part

entitled "Education -- Methodism." My opinion is that while Abel Stevens was both a good man and an excellent writer and historian, he, like many other Methodist leaders of his day, was too blind to the great evils that had already begun to fall upon Methodism as the result of their becoming enamored with higher education and paying too high regard to men of "degrees." Asbury, and the early Methodist itinerants planted Methodism on this continent, not because they knew Plato, Shakespeare, Latin, and all sorts of high-minded froth, but because they knew God.

After the death of Asbury, and after the passing of the first generation of humble, sacrificial Itinerants, Methodist leaders began to be ashamed of how little "Higher" (?) education they and their fellows had. Satan held out to them the apple of "Higher" (?) education as "a tree to be desired to make one wise." Forgetting that their power and success had come because they knew God, they fancied that if they could found many colleges, seminaries, and centers of higher education they could polish off their rudeness and become even mightier for God. Instead they polished off their knowledge of God, and like shorn Samsons they became powerless to change the world, and through the high-flown and unbelieving notions and teachings of their unregenerate college professors, the world changed them.

Job 32:22 says, "For I know not to give flattering titles; in so doing my Maker would soon take me away." Pride, instead of humility, became the hallmark of Methodism. In her heady, highminded centers of "Higher" (?) learning, degrees and "flattering titles" were coveted, labored for with great academic energy and perseverance, granted, and then placed ever so prominently after the names of their new generation of graduate-leaders: "Look at us now! Once we were an army of uneducated, backwoods hicks, but now we are an army of highly educated, elevated, and sophisticated D.D.s, LL.D.s, and Ph.D.s!" -- but "in so doing" their "Maker took them away" from their divinely given power and their divinely authorized call: "to spread scriptural holiness over these lands." Like Saul, who was exalted by God when he was "little in his own eyes," but cast off when he became crowned with pride," even so, Methodism was lowered through higher education, stripped of its power, and God raised up another people "to spread scriptural holiness over these lands."

The preceding is not an argument in favor of ignorance versus knowledge, per se, for one reason we have digitized so many Wesleyan and Holiness books is to spread knowledge. However, the preceding is to say that there is great danger in pursuing knowledge for the sake of personal aggrandizement, or apart from the will of God. That is what Eve did, and she fell. I believe that is what Methodism did, and I think that pursuit of knowledge to make themselves look wise in the eyes of the world helped bring about the greatest denominational fall and ecclesiastical apostasy that the world has yet seen. The admonition of Prov. 19:27 is: "Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge," -- an admonition that apparently scores, and probably thousands, of degree-seeking Methodists failed to hear and heed.

This much, and no more concerning why the parts titled "The Old English Essayists," and "Education -- Methodism." were omitted from this publication. While Abel Stevens did not call the "parts" of his book "chapters," they have been thus designated in this edition, the 10 remaining parts being numbered as chapters 1 through 10. The 10 chapters constituting this digital edition contain much good material which it is hoped will prove to be a blessing to all who read them. --
DVM

* * * * *

PREFACE

The writer of these pages was early honored with a place in the ranks of the itinerant ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church. His travels have afforded him the means of acquaintance with the denomination, from the interior of Maine to central Texas. He has enjoyed the personal friendship of many of the fathers of its ministry -- the "legio tonans of the American church," as he has dared to call them. His impressions of those men and their times are among the most vivid, and even romantic, of his memories. Secluded, almost, from his earlier and favorite spheres of public labor by infirmities, he has often occupied a leisure hour, or cheered a sad one, by recording some of these reminiscences; paying thus a humble tribute to men whose heroic characters, though rarely paralleled, have, through the circumstances of their day, failed of any other record, and whose friendship he expects to renew in heaven, though they have long been sleeping in their unhonored graves -- graves scattered through the length and breadth of the land.

Besides other works of the kind, he published, some years since, two volumes entitled, "Sketches and Incidents; or, a Budget from the Saddle-Bags of a Superannuated Itinerant." The following passages from the preface to the second of those volumes will convey a just view of the character and design of the present work.

"In preparing these pages, the writer has contemplated two designs: first, the preservation of some of the more interesting of those denominational incidents which are current in our church, and which strikingly illustrate the providence of God; and, secondly, the production of a work adapted to the advanced youth of the church -- a department of our denominational literature hitherto almost entirely vacant. During some years he has had an eye on these objects; and as, in hours of leisure or indisposition, he penned one after another of these fragments, they were placed in his old saddle-bags: one budget has already been taken thence and given to the public. Its reception has encouraged the appearance of another. Some of these articles present coincidences and denouements [denouement n. (also dénouement) the final unraveling of a plot or complicated situation. -- Oxford Dict.] so remarkable as to probably excite suspicion of their veracity. The reader will bear in mind that such singular incidents do occasionally occur in the current of common place events; that the present examples are not given as specimens of average events, but are professedly sought out as anomalous. Though the writer has discreetly (as he thinks) used his imagination, in a few instances, for the illustration of important subjects, yet most of the extraordinary cases referred to, so far as they are related on his own authority, he knows to be substantial facts; and those related on the authority of others are well authenticated."

One qualification is needed by these remarks; the writer has not availed himself, in the present volume, of even the "discreet" use of his "imagination" which they attribute to the former work. There is no fictitious character or incident in these pages, so far as his own authority for them is responsible. The plan of the work which -- as remarked in a former volume -- has been adopted in order to give to its articles a slight aspect of unity, will not, it is hoped, detract, in the most scrupulous estimation, from its general veracity.

These sketches, like their predecessors, have come forth from the "Old Saddle-Bags." A few of them have heretofore escaped from the budget, and may be recognized by the public; others may have partially disclosed themselves from their place of concealment, and others come forth now for the first time. They are all of pretensions too humble to deem necessary any ceremonious apology for their present modest attempt to take an "airing."

* * * * *

CONTENTS

- 01 -- Evangelical Heroism -- Zadok Priest
- 02 -- Pulpit Power -- Hezekiah Calvin Wooster
- 03 -- Woman -- Her Position in America
- 04 -- Methodism -- Its Discipline
- 05 -- The First Native Methodist Preacher of New England -- Enoch Mudge
- 06 -- Providential Preparations
- 07 -- An Old Pilgrim at the End of His Journey -- Carvosso
- 08 -- Happiness in Old Age
- 09 -- Anecdotes of Rev. John Collins
- 10 -- The Garrettson Homestead -- Catharine Garrettson

* * * * *

01 -- EVANGELICAL HEROISM -- ZADOK PRIEST

Faithful unto death. -- Rev. 2:10.

In the year 1793, two young men entered the Methodist Itinerancy, who are now remembered by only here and there a gray-headed remnant of the last century, but whose names deserve to be commemorated in our history. Bangs' History of the Church refers to them, and the Memorials of Methodism notices them, but very briefly. They Were Zadok Priest and Hezekiah Calvin Wooster*, -- names that shine on the Book of heaven, and ought not to be forgotten on earth. The former was but twenty-four, and the latter but twenty-three, years old, when they joined the Conference, and they both died young, -- the former before the completion of his twenty-seventh year, the latter before the completion of his twenty-eighth; yet both were marked men. Wooster was one of those "ministers" of God who are as "flaming fire" (Psalms 104:4), and Priest has the noble distinction of being the first Methodist preacher who fell at his post in New England, -- if not, indeed, the first, also, who was raised up in the Eastern States.

[*Hezekiah Calvin "Wooster," not "Worster" -- In this book, published in 1853, Abel Stevens had this last name as "Worster," but in Volume 3 of his M. E. History, published about 14 years later in 1867, Stevens repeatedly and uniformly has the name as "Wooster". Therefore, it appears likely to me that since Stevens repeatedly, and at a later date, set forth the name as "Wooster," that "Wooster" is the correct spelling of the name. Accordingly, I have changed all of the "Worster" spellings of the name in this publication to "Wooster". -- DVM]

Zadok Priest was born in Connecticut, but in what locality I have never been able to ascertain. He commenced his ministerial travels on Pittsfield (Mass.) circuit, -- an extensive field of labor, which required indefatigable traveling and preaching, and no little suffering, also, for Methodism was yet in its infancy, only about four years having passed since Jesse Lee first proclaimed its doctrines on the highway of Norwalk, Conn. Its members were few, and scattered, and poor, and the fare of its preachers exceedingly hard. The following year he labored on the New London circuit with Wilson Lee, David Abbott, and Enoch Mudge, -- "a noble quaternion," -- and rightly so called, for all of them possessed the genuine heroic character.

New London circuit presented formidable difficulties at that day. It was long, and included a great number of appointments; it had yet but two or three Methodist chapels. The itinerant evangelists had to proclaim their messages in school-houses, court-houses, and rustic kitchens. They were beset, also, with opposition, if not persecution, from the "standing order." The parish pastor denounced them from the pulpit, and the deacon, or village schoolmaster, often disputed their opinions in the course of their sermons. They passed on courageously, however, and won their way in all directions. They were peculiar men, fitted by God himself for their peculiar times; and the two hundred Methodists then scattered over the whole extent of New London circuit have, as the fruit of their labors, multiplied to thousands, and their two or three skeletons of chapels to scores of commodious and beautiful temples.

Young Priest passed, in 1795, to Warren circuit, Rhode Island. There was then but one other circuit, and no station, in Rhode Island. Warren circuit comprised a large part of the state, and all the towns of Massachusetts as far as Bridgewater. It was on this extensive field that the youthful hero fell. His incessant labors brought on a pulmonary hemorrhage, and, at last, consumption.

An impressive illustration of the evangelical heroism of his character occurred at this time, -- one that is worthy to be commemorated by the poet. He returned to his father's house in Connecticut, to recruit his failing health by repose and medical treatment; but his disease increased, and assumed a fatal aspect. Instead of laying down to die, the young evangelist again put on his armor, and went to his post, to fall there. [1]

He returned to Warren circuit, labored as he was able, and soon after sunk under his mortal infirmities, with all his armor on. There were in those days a few of the wealthy, -- the "noble," -- who embraced the new cause in the Eastern States, and whose hospitable mansions became at once sanctuaries for the preaching of the doctrines of Methodism, and asylums for its pilgrim preachers. The house of Bemis, of Waltham, Mass., -- whose daughter married Pickering, and whose homestead sheltered most of the veteran worthies of New England Methodism, -- and that of Gen. Lippitt, of Cranston, R. I., -- who built a chapel on his own estate, and whose ample mansion was always open for the preachers and members of the new "sect everywhere spoken against," accommodating fifty of them at dinner and thirty with lodging, on quarterly meeting occasions, -- were among those primitive "Methodist Hotels." The house of an excellent old Methodist, called Father "Newcomb," at Norton, Mass., was noted, in like manner, for its Christian hospitalities. It was consecrated by the ministrations and prayers of most of the pioneers of Eastern Methodism, -- of Asbury, Whatcoat, Lee, Pickering, Brodhead, &c., &c. [2]

The dying itinerant of Warren circuit betook himself not to his more distant home in Connecticut, but to this hospitable and sanctified asylum of his brethren. "I have come to die with you," he said, as the door opened to receive him. Three weeks he lingered there, receiving every sympathetic attention, and then died in the Lord, expressing "no doubt of his salvation." He was buried on the estate of Mr. Newcomb; and a Christian brother, who, it is said, loved him in life and requested to be buried by his side, now rests with him in the same solitude, -- "a beautiful exemplification of the endearment of Christian affection." [3]

He was, as we have intimated, the first Methodist preacher who ascended to heaven from New England; and it is not certain that he is not entitled to the honor generally given to the sainted Mudge, of being the first native Methodist preacher of New England. The facts of the question stand thus: They were both New England men. They both entered the itinerant ranks the same year, 1793. Enoch Mudge, however, joined the Conference at Lynn, August 1st. Zadok Priest joined it either at the Albany session, July 15th, thus preceding Mudge by about two weeks, or at the Tolland (Conn.) session, August 12th, thus giving Mudge the precedence of nearly two weeks.

The fact that Priest's paternal home was in Connecticut might seem to favor the latter supposition; but then his appointment for the year on Pittsfield circuit, which belonged to the Albany district, places him within the sphere of the Albany session. Were this certainly the case, there would still be a doubt on the claim of Priest, for it would then be probable that he had resided, not at his paternal home, but in the State of New York, where he joined the Conference; and that, though a native of New England, he was brought into the church, and into the ministry, beyond its limits. The question is not, who was the first native of New England who entered the Methodist ministry in the United States, but who was the first native Methodist preacher received into the ministry within New England.

We once stated the uncertainty of the question to our venerated friend, Enoch Mudge. It was a matter of little concern to him, for his thoughts were elsewhere; they were where it was befitting they should be, at his age, -- in heaven. He replied that he had never examined the subject, -- that Asbury, Lee, and the old preachers generally, used to consider him the first native member of the New England Itinerancy; and though it was known that Zadok Priest was born in Connecticut, yet it was the general impression that he had joined the connection while residing in New York.

Such are the facts. They leave the question undecided; but it is satisfactory to know that either of the men whose friends claim respectively for them this peculiar honor, -- and a signal honor it is, and will be, as our denominational history advances, -- were nobly worthy of the distinction. Instead of calling either of them the first, they may both be called the first two native Methodist preachers of the Eastern States; and the doubtfulness of the question may allow the church to feel herself doubly honored.

Such, then, was Zadok Priest. Should such men be forgotten? Can we, or our children, read the scanty reminiscences of their heroic devotion, without admiration and tears? And will not the day yet come, when the unhonored grave of Zadok Priest shall be marked by a monumental tribute of gratitude and reverence?

Let us return to the other saintly name with which we began this article.

* * * * *

02 -- HEZEKIAH CALVIN WOOSTER

In demonstration of the Spirit and power. -- Paul

Hezekiah Calvin Wooster left, at his death, on a fragment of paper, the following dates of his history: "Born, May 20, 1771; convinced of sin, Oct. 9, 1791; born again, Dec. 1, 1791; sanctified, Feb. 6, 1792." Religion with him "was in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." No vagueness attended the facts of his Christian experience, nor the presentation of experimental truth in his ministrations. He might preeminently be called "a flaming herald" of the word, for it was "in his heart as a burning fire."

He commenced his ministry in 1793, on the Granville circuit, in Massachusetts. As this circuit was within the limits of the Albany district, then superintended by the devoted Thomas Ware, I suppose he joined the Albany conference of that year. The two following years he spent in arduous labors on circuits in New Jersey and New York.

Methodist itinerants had already penetrated to the wilderness of Canada, and had begun to lay the foundations of that extended Wesleyan interest which now exists throughout the British Possessions in North America. James Coleman and Darius Dunham had been laboring successfully in Upper Canada. In 1796, Wooster, who was ready to suffer the loss of all things for Christ, volunteered, with Samuel Coate (a name dear to New Jersey Methodists), to join the pioneers beyond the line. His history, during that expedition, would form a romantic and almost incredible narrative. Three weeks were spent on their route, during which they lodged every night under the trees of the forest.

He traveled about three years in Canada, preaching almost daily, and with a power seldom equaled in the history of the Christian ministry. There was, indeed, in his word, an energy almost resistless. The dwellers in the wilderness, long destitute of the means of religion, heard with amazement his overwhelming eloquence, and often fell, in their forest congregations, like dead men, under his word.

Bangs, in his History of Methodism, says, "Such was the holy fervor of his soul, his deep devotion to God, his burning love for the souls of his fellow men, that he was the happy instrument of kindling up such a fire in the hearts of the people, wherever he went, particularly in Upper Canada, that all the waters of strife and opposition have not been able to quench it ... The grace of God wrought mightily in him." ... "O, what awful sensations," exclaims the same writer, "ran through the assemblies, while Calvin Wooster, and others of like spirit, were denouncing the just judgments of God against impenitent sinners, in such pointed language as made the 'ear to tingle,' and the heart to palpitate!"

He was a man of Abrahamic faith, and his prayers seemed directly to enter heaven, and prevail with God. He carried with him an unceasing spirit of prayer. Often at midnight would he

rise and call upon his God, while the inmates of the house where he made his temporary abode were awed by the solemn voice of his supplications ascending amidst the silence.

Such was the unction of his spirit, and the bold, resistless power of his appeals to the wicked, that few of them could stand before him; they would either rush out of the house, or fall to the floor, under his word. [4] He was not only habitual, but prevalent, in prayer. An anecdote is related in illustration of the power of his faith. A revival occurred under his labors, which was attended with overpowering effects among the people. His presiding elder, Darius Dunham, entering the assembly at a time when sinners were falling to the earth under the power of the truth, and the people of God were rejoicing in their victory, condemned the excitement as wild-fire, and knelt down to pray that God would allay it. The devout Wooster knelt by his side, and in a whispering tone prayed, "Lord, bless brother Dunham! Lord, bless brother Dunham!" He had not prayed thus many minutes, before the presiding elder was smitten down upon the floor, and was so filled with the Holy Spirit that his complaints were turned into grateful praise, and he went forth spreading the divine flame through the length and breadth of his district, "to the joy and salvation of hundreds of immortal souls." [5]

The rigors of the climate, and the excess of his labors, injured his health, and in 1798 he was seized with pulmonary consumption. Yet he did not immediately give up his indefatigable ministrations, and his marvelous power over his hearers continued even when he could no longer speak loud enough to be heard except by those who stood immediately around him. It is authentically recorded, that when so far reduced as not to be able to speak above a whisper, his whispered utterance, conveyed by another to the assembly, would thrill them like a trumpet, and fall with such power on the attention of the hearers that stout-hearted men were smitten down to the floor; and his very aspect is said to have so shone with "the divine glory that it struck conviction into the hearts of many who beheld it."

At last, hopeless of any further health, he returned to his parental home, to die amidst his kindred. I have discovered a single glimpse of him on his route homeward, in the journal of the quaint but earnest-minded Lorenzo Dow. That eccentric man had been laboring sturdily on extensive circuits in New England. Throughout all his wandering course, he carried with him a profound religious solicitude, not unmixed, perhaps, with the infirmities of partial insanity; and amidst apparent ebullitions of humor, his spirit hungered and thirsted after God. He writes, in his own unpolished but explicit style, as follows:

"When I was on the Orange circuit, I felt something within that wanted to be done away. I spoke to one and another concerning the pain which I felt in my happiest moments, but no guilt. Some said one thing and some another; yet none spake to my case, but seemed to be like physicians that did not understand the nature of my disorder. Thus the burthen [burden] continued, and sometimes seemed greater than the burthen of guilt for justification, until I fell in with T. Dewey, on Cambridge circuit. He told me about Calvin Wooster, in Upper Canada, -- that he enjoyed the blessing of sanctification. I felt a great desire arise in my heart to see the man, if it might be consistent with the divine will; and not long after, I heard he was passing through the circuit, and going home to die. I immediately rode five miles to the house, but found he was gone another five miles further. I went into the room where he was asleep; he appeared to me more like one from the

eternal world than like one of my fellow mortals. I told him, when he awoke, who I was, and what I had come for.

"Said he, God has convicted you for the blessing of sanctification, and that blessing is to be obtained by the simple act of faith, the same as the blessing of justification. I persuaded him to tarry in the neighborhood a few days; and a couple of evenings after the above, after I had done speaking one evening, he spoke, or rather whispered out an exhortation, as his voice was so broken, in consequence of praying, in the stir in Upper Canada, where from twenty to thirty were frequently blessed at a meeting. He told me that if he could get sinners under conviction, crying for mercy, they would kneel down, a dozen of them, and not rise till they found peace; for, said he, we did believe God would bless them, and it was according to our faith.

"At this time he was in a consumption, and, a few weeks after, expired. While whispering out the above exhortation, the power which attended the same reached the hearts of the people, and some who were standing and sitting fell like men shot in the field of battle; and I felt it like a tremor to run through my soul and every vein, so that it took away my limb power, so that I fell to the floor, and by faith saw a greater blessing than I had hitherto experienced, or, in other words, felt a divine conviction of the need of a deeper work of grace in my soul -- feeling some of the remains of the evil nature, the effect of Adam's fall, still remaining, and it my privilege to have it eradicated or done away. My soul was in an agony -- I could but groan out my desires to God.

"He [Hezekiah Calvin Wooster] came to me, and said, believe the blessing is now. No sooner had the words dropped from his lips, than I strove to believe the blessing mine now, with all the powers of my soul; then the burthen dropped or fell from my breast, and a solid joy and a gentle running peace filled my soul. From that time to this, I have not had the ecstasy of joy or a downcast spirit as formerly; but more of an inward, simple, sweet running peace, from day to day, so that prosperity or adversity doth not produce the ups and downs as formerly; but my soul is more like the ocean, whilst its surface is uneven by reason of the boisterous wind, the bottom is still calm; so that a man may be in the midst of outward difficulties, and yet the center of the soul may be calmly stayed on God."

Such was the influence of Wooster on this wayward but energetic man -- such the power of his eloquence, whispered from lips blanched with mortal disease, on the rustic assembly of Orange circuit.

He passed on to his home, and lay down to die; but before his spirit left the body, it seemed already in heaven. He was asked, when his power of utterance was almost gone, "If his confidence in God was still strong?" "Strong! strong!" was his whispered but exulting reply. When he was fast declining, and death was almost in view, he exclaimed that "the nearer he drew to eternity, the brighter heaven shined upon him." On the 6th of November, 1798, he passed into the heavens.

* * * * *

03 -- WOMAN -- HER POSITION IN AMERICA

Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou of women. -- Luke 1:28.

An eminent geographer remarks that the best indication of the progress of civilization in different nations is the condition of women therein. In the barbaric communities of the East, she is regarded as an inferior being, and her home is a prison. Mahometanism denies her the hope of heaven. Among the dissolute communities of southern Europe, her intellectual and moral position is of no importance -- she is beloved chiefly as an object of gaiety and gallantry. As we ascend into the severer society of northern Europe, she becomes, among the lower classes, a useful animal of labor, -- a drudge, working with cattle in the fields, -- but among the higher classes, a companion, yet an inferior one. Under the more Christian institutions of England, she occupies nearly her befitting place, especially in the middle and higher grades of life. In America her position is acknowledged to be still more exalted; and, if the geographer's criterion is true, we have reason to flatter ourselves that our civilization, though little embellished, and severely practical, as it necessarily must be under our national circumstances, is essentially more humane and more Christian than that of any other people.*

[*Sadly, much of the good related by Stevens about American women in the 1850s is not generally true of American women today. -- DVM]

It is indeed an interesting, and somewhat anomalous [irregular, unusual -- DVM] fact, that, amidst our devotion to mammon and politics, there should exist among us so much delicacy of sentiment toward the sex [women]. The fact is acknowledged almost unanimously by those foreign visitors who find little else in us to commend. In no land has woman a more effectual influence, though it is exerted chiefly within the quiet sphere of domestic life. In no land can ladies travel with greater security; among no other people are they more attentively accommodated in public conveyances and hotels, and among none other is their presence a more effectual check on the conduct of promiscuous companies. It is a significant fact, that the English custom, which requires ladies to retire from the table at the "removal of the cloth," has never obtained on this side of the Atlantic, and that few, if any, occasions of social festivity are considered compatible with the honor of well-bred gentlemen, if incompatible with the presence of women. An Englishman, in lecturing before his countrymen on the United States, lately, declared, amidst the plaudits of his audience, that if Prince Albert were traveling among us, and should occupy the best seat of the stage-coach, he would be compelled, by the universal respect for the sex, to resign it to any farmer's daughter who might enter the carriage. The lecturer was unquestionably correct in respect to most of the country.

This elevated social position of woman among us has, doubtless, contributed much to the extraordinary development of female intellect in our native literature -- extraordinary in ability, but especially in the promptness with which it has so early taken its place in our literary history. It has not found encouragement to attempt the higher efforts of genius, like Mesdames Dacier and de Stael, in France, or Mrs. Somerville and Joanna Baillie, in England. Such examples are rare in the maturest communities; but our country-women present, in their less pretending contributions to the national literature, points of very honorable comparison with the best literary women of England and France. They are more numerous than our writers of the hardier sex, and many of them display rare talents, that need but more exclusive devotion to literature to give them a permanent influence

on the public mind. The productions of nearly all our native writers are yet only the occupations, or rather recreations, of their leisure hours. Until they can be induced to isolate themselves more from the ordinary distractions and sordid aims of the national mind, the higher developments of genius will be rare among either sex. Our literary women have thus far shown, we think, more susceptible and versatile genius than our male writers, while their opportunities of self-culture, and studious application, have unquestionably been fewer than those of their literary brothers.

The moral position of woman in the United States is, undeniably, superior to what it is in any other nation. Female vice does exist among us, but it is less common than in any European community. It prevails almost exclusively among our denser populations, and is chiefly the result there of poverty and mis-education; but that fashionable and decorated vice, which exists among the more pretending classes in all European communities, has not yet dared to obtrude itself among the American people, however frequently instances of it may be detected under the deep concealments in which it is here compelled to shroud itself. Still, it cannot be disguised that the almost universal aping of European fashion and gaiety among us, and, above all, the imported literature and scenic drama which have of late years overspread the land, threaten to break down the hallowed barriers that have circled the domestic purity of American life, and to assimilate us to the gilded dissipation of transatlantic society. The women of America should not allow this conspiracy against their best interests and highest honor to succeed. From them should go forth a remonstrance, the most emphatic, against those abominations of the theater and the opera, the half-nude exposures of the ball-room, and the shameless corruption of the novel, with which the moral sentiment of the nation is menaced.

The religious influence of the sex in this country is one of their most ennobling characteristics. There is scarcely an interest of our churches that does not show their salutary agency. They form, doubtless, a large majority of our communicants; their piety is generally more uniform and elevated than that of the other sex; and though the great practical schemes of Christianity are ostensibly managed by their husbands and brothers, yet to their elevated zeal and generous sympathies are to be traced chiefly the life and vigor of those schemes. Few things could be more ridiculous than the attempts of flippant, shallow-brained satirists to ridicule this noble religious activity of American women. What do they not owe to religion? What is there in its benign virtues and ineffable destinies that should render it unfitting to the holiest sympathies of woman's nature? If it is matter of ridicule that women fill the temples of religion, what is implied in the contrasted fact that men fill our gambling saloons, groggeries and prisons, and that the sex so much interested in religion are so comparatively seldom found with them there? It is congruous that those who come the nearest to our idea of the angelic nature, on earth should sympathize most with those holy interests which engage angelic sympathies in heaven.

Much has been written about the physical condition of woman in this country. Foreigners accord to the American ladies a peculiar style of beauty -- an exquisite delicacy of structure and feature; but they pronounce it fragile and short-lived. I had often read this opinion, but, not having had the opportunity of a fair comparison, could not fully appreciate it till I returned from a tour in Europe. As I passed up Broadway, on my arrival home, I was startled at the sickly hue of the New York ladies. I looked almost in vain for an example of the vigorous forms and healthy-tinged faces I had been accustomed to meet in the streets of Europe. There was more sentiment, more refinement, expressed in the features and bearing of our country-women; but they looked, as they

thronged the fashionable promenade, like a procession of invalids from the city hospitals, who had turned out to enjoy a bland day. Every American who has returned from a visit to Europe will understand what I here say. Girlhood is in this country lovely beyond comparison; but by the time that European women are in the rich ripeness of health and beauty, ours fade and sink into a decrepitude, which not unusually extends through one half their lives, afflicting it with wretched debility and nervous ailments.

Why is this? I believe the primary cause of it is the peculiarity of our climate. Climate does not depend wholly on latitude, but, to a considerable extent, on local and topographical circumstances, -- the relative position of coasts, mountain ranges, rivers, lakes, and the cultivation of the soil, and even on geological conditions. Our national physique has certainly a peculiar and distinctly marked type. Few foreigners retain among us, through twenty years, their original appearance; and their children almost invariably take the native physical character. We are a lean, pallid, restless, nervous people, with lank limbs, sharp features, and intense eyes. Our nerves are too active; and, notwithstanding the means of comfortable living are more common among us than with any other people, yet we have a larger proportion of maniacs than any other.

The anxiety of the American physiognomy is a subject of general remark among foreigners. Moral causes, doubtless, have much to do with the fact; but climate, I think, has some connection with it also, and much more than is generally supposed. I believe it has an especial connection with the physical condition of American women. But let us not hold our climate, however inclement, responsible alone for our sufferings. Our great fault is, that we do not adapt ourselves to it; and I hesitate not to say, that American women have incurred more of the guilt of self-murder than is recorded in the book of Heaven against any other community on earth. I mean literally what I say. Millions of them have gone down prematurely to the grave, self-sacrificed.

Our climate demands peculiar (native) adaptations of dress, etc.; but if our women will wear French shoes and French "modes," or even English, they must pay the cost of them, not only at the expense of the purses of their husbands, but of their own attractions, health, and days. We flatter our national self-complacency for the invention of the steamboat and magnetic telegraph. There is one more improvement to be made among us, which can hardly be less intrinsically valuable, -- a graceful and healthy national costume for American women, which shall protect their beauty by protecting their health, and, at the same time, cast out from the land the expensive frivolities and abominations of foreign fashions, -- fashions contrived by Parisian mantua-makers and milliners, whose taste is about as wretched as their morals. [6]

American ladies neglect out-door exercise more than the women of any other people on the earth, -- I will not except the Icelanders, even. The changeableness of our climate, instead of being a reason for this negligence, is precisely the strongest reason for a contrary course. If we would have health in such a climate, we must habituate ourselves to its vicissitudes, not avoid them. The latter course befits the hopeless invalid alone. In most of our large cities, there are public squares, or beautiful commons; but how little are they resorted to by our women and youth! In the cities of Europe, such places are thronged, on pleasant afternoons, by mothers and their children. The wrinkled brow of care is relaxed in the refreshing zephyrs, the eye gains luster from the bright skies, the limbs agility from exercise, the spirits buoyancy from the balmy air and playful recreations. The bland effect reaches even the moral feelings; -- better tempers, more cordial

affections, spring up in the heart, and home becomes refreshed by a return to it from such healthful relaxations.

Let it not be urged that our ladies are too busy with household cares for such delightful leisure. I know it is a truth; but it is a most lamentable, a most intolerable, a most abominable truth. It is creditable to their industry, but as discreditable to their good sense; for what economy can there be in paying the doctor, apothecary, and nurse, instead of paying household servants? Or, if the latter be not practicable, still, all domestic labor could better be performed with such occasional relaxation than without it. I know the exceeding difficulty of arguing this point, but must be permitted to assume, absolutely, and despite all reply, that the leisure for out-door recreations is indispensable, and, therefore, not to be waived, any practical logic to the contrary notwithstanding.

Let our families turn out, then, more frequently into the public gardens, or the woodland walks; let them gladden their eyes with the charms of the landscape, and the glories of God's blessed heavens; let them "rejoice and be exceeding glad," amidst the exhilarating inspirations of the bright, benign air, and we, their husbands, shall be the happier men for it; our homes shall be healthier and more cheerful, and our expenses, in "the long run," none the more, if not less, than they are on the present miserable economy, by which our houses are made hospitals, and our dearest ones invalids.

There are three dispositions which I hope will ever and increasingly distinguish American women. The first is a devout interest for the religion of the land, -- the Protestant faith, for that we may consider the acknowledged, though not the "established," religion of our country, -- the religion of its history and of its destiny. Protestantism has had a freer and fuller development on this continent than anywhere else; and that pre-eminent civilization which we claim as our own, and the benigneest feature of which is the elevation of woman, is dependent upon it. Paganism brutalizes woman; Infidelity prostitutes her to the lowest demoralization; Popery converts her, religiously, into a bigot, or, socially, into an idol of gallantry, or a victim of drudgery, according to her high or low position in life. Protestantism, alone, has defined her true position, as an equal and companion of man, a child of God, and an heir of immortality. Let her, then, prize religion, and promote its influence in the land, as the best guaranty of her rights and happiness.

Another trait should characterize American women -- a hearty national sentiment -- a warm pride and love of their country. We are accused, as a nation, of an excessive self-content, if not self-admiration. Happy charge! -- may it long be applicable to us! "It stands to reason," as Jonathan says. I would not encourage the self-complacent tone of our Fourth of July oratory; there has been enough of that, unquestionably. But it is an assertion which no sober man will gainsay, that the American people ought to be the most devoutly grateful, and the most stoutly patriotic, on the earth. What land has received greater blessings? What land has more magnificent hopes? This pride of country is an ennobling sentiment, and the women of America have good reason to cherish it ardently; for here their sex has not only found its best condition recorded in the history of the world, but also its best hopes of the future.

It is to be regretted that in those matters of social life, -- of manners and modes, -- which, though small in themselves, have a great influence as "minor morals," -- our ladies defer so much

to foreign examples. Politics keep up strongly the nationality of the sentiments of the other sex among us; but our women are in danger of losing the stanch old American spirit of their mothers. Let them be too independent and self-respectful for such obsequiousness to foreign influence. Let them disdain to ape the hollow, aristocratic ostentations of transatlantic life, but endeavor to form native, pure, and simply elegant forms of conduct, such as befit the sincerity and dignity of our republican character.

Let us hope, in the third place, that American women will continue to appreciate justly the sphere of their sex. There are, doubtless, ameliorations of the laws yet to be made in their behalf; but any essential revolution of their relations to society will, I trust, ever be opposed by them, as a detraction from the dignity of their character and the purity of their influence. It is to be hoped there are but few of them who deem a participation in the tumults of the political canvass, or the legislative hall, a desirable substitute for the tranquil and powerful influences of domestic life. There are termagants [termagant = an overbearing or brawling woman; a virago or shrew. -- Oxford Dict.] who might make a figure amidst the storms of the public arena; but every delicate sentiment of womanhood must revolt at the idea. Genius, letters, and most of the better virtues, flee from such scenes to the calmer and more congenial walks of life. They seek and find their perfection in solitude, or in the sincerity of unostentatious duties. And the efforts of a life thus secluded and sacred are not only the most successful for self-culture, but in actual usefulness to others.

The great thoughts of a meditative man, the song of the true poet, sent forth over the land from the quiet of his studious retreat, tell more powerfully on the sentiments of a people than the utmost clamors of demagogues. Whittier's glorious shouts to liberty, from his retreat at Amesbury, will reverberate over the grave of John C. Calhoun, when that grave shall be forgotten; and the calm but mighty thoughts uttered to his guilty country by Channing, from the solitudes of Rhode Island, will palpitate in the national heart when the eloquence of our senators shall cease to be read. Woman's sphere, though retired and quiet, has a similar power. Her husband and her children may act on the open arena of life, but they act under her guidance, and according to the impulses of her tranquil but effective power. How preposterous, when compared with this influence, are the innovations proposed by the modern conventions in behalf of "woman's rights"!

* * * * *

04 -- METHODISM -- ITS DISCIPLINE

[In this chapter Abel Stevens compares Methodism in 1853 with Methodism at its commencement and early days in America. Readers who know something of where Methodism is today may find Stevens' comparisons and assessments quite interesting, being viewed from the perspective of now nearly a century and a half later, in 1998. -- DVM]

There are many who think they perceive something else than advancement in the changes which Methodism has undergone in late years. They recall, with melancholy pleasure, the "old and better times." It was my lot to know many of the first generation of American Methodists. I was acquainted with its earliest preachers, and have spent about a quarter of a century in official

relations to the church. It may not be presumptuous in me, therefore, to have an opinion upon the subject.

We have advanced in our educational provisions, in the commodiousness and elegance of our chapels, in our philanthropic schemes, and the agencies of the press; we preserve intact our theology -- it is one of the signal providences of our history, that no serious heresies, the usual means of religious corruption, have arisen among us; we hold as steadily as ever to the importance of personal conversions and revivals, and I think they are as extensive, proportionately to our numbers, as ever. There has also taken place, unquestionably, an improved moral sentiment in the Northern church on some important subjects, such as Temperance and Slavery. Meanwhile, we have, I think, lost some of our primitive simplicity -- our preachers have not as much of the heroic in their character as the earlier ministry had, nor have they, perhaps, occasions for it; our congregational singing, once a glory in the midst of us, has suffered some change; and in some traits of external piety, such as dress, kneeling in prayer, abstinence from questionable amusements, etc., we have declined. Above all, we have suffered from the relaxation of discipline. We have, then, both gained and lost; but whether our loss has been greater than our gain, -- whether we stand, as a church, more or less acceptable in the sight of God, I will not attempt to decide.

Our most serious danger is, I think, in our growing neglect of spiritual discipline, and I wish in this paper to utter an emphatic admonition in respect to it. Now, if ever, is the time to check this perilous tendency. Our primitive regimen is not yet entirely gone; it may yet be recovered; but beyond a certain point of declension, it will become irretrievable.

The moral discipline of the Methodist Episcopal church is peculiar for its minuteness and thoroughness. Its members are divided into Classes, which assemble weekly for examination by Leaders. The Leaders meet once a month, to make reports to the pastor. Both the pastor and his Leaders, with the other official members, are under the supervision of the Presiding Elder, who meets them once a quarter. At the Annual Conference, all the pastors and Presiding Elders are subjected to a personal examination of character, under the bishop, which is never omitted in any one case, however well established may be the Christian reputation of the man. At the General Conference, a committee investigates the conduct and administration of the bishops, not only when complaints or suspicions exist, but in every case. In most sects it is the custom, we believe, to take for granted the integrity of their members until it is questioned, and to examine them only when a formal prosecution is instituted; but the policy of our church is far more cautious: it is not only one of caution, but eminently of precaution; it waits not till delinquencies obtrude themselves on the attention of the church, but is ever searching for them, that they may be suppressed in the bud.

But while we have a discipline so specially thorough, we have also special need of it. --

First, from the character of our people. Methodism assimilates to itself all the popular elements: every variety of condition is reached by it. It has been its chief mission, however, to save the neglected, -- the poor, and the illiterate. This is its highest honor. Yet the most assiduous efforts are necessary to regulate and maintain under strict moral discipline a community so promiscuous.* [*Here Stevens used the word "promiscuous" in the sense of "mixedness and variety of composition," and not in the sense of "loose behavior" -- DVM]. Thorough discipline, under the divine blessing, is the only security for our a church; a large portion of our population,

received into other churches without the oversight of Class-meetings and the aid of our frequent social meetings, would soon slide away entirely from the recognition of the church; but among us, if our discipline is applied, their names and persons are ever passing in review.

But, secondly, this very social character of our system frequently increases occasions for the application of discipline. In most other sects the influence of an individual member is comparatively limited, unless he is more than usually active. He is seen in his pew on Sabbath, and at the Lord's table once a month, and perchance occasionally at the meeting for social worship. While the influence of his Christian character is thus limited, his faults, also, are but little contagious. Cliques and cabals [secret intrigues, factions] are not so easily formed, and the difficulties of individuals are not so liable to grow into party feuds. Among us, on the contrary, there is a perpetual contact and personal interchange among individuals, except in our largest societies. The members of the church usually become intimately acquainted, the faults of individuals are readily noticed, and are liable to be discussed by backbiters, or to infect the weak; and cases that in other churches would be adjusted merely by official care become, among us, subjects of common and frequently of partisan interest. Such evils exist more or less in all communions; but it is the natural tendency of what are, in fact, some of our peculiar advantages, to make them more common among us. A rigid maintenance of discipline is here, again, our great security. Let it be universally understood that it will be faithfully applied, and these disturbing influences will be held in check.

Third, there are strong temptations, on the part of the Methodist preacher, to neglect this part of his duty. Our Itinerancy, with all its unparalleled advantages, has its evils; and among the greatest of these are its bearings on this point. The preacher being changed every year or two, finds often, on his arrival at a new place, cases to adjust which began under his predecessor, or, perhaps, have been rankling for years, and exciting deep party feelings. He is anxious to begin his work in favor with all parties; and perhaps the circumstances are involved and difficult. How strong the temptation to evade his duty here! How easily can he frame apologies for postponing or utterly neglecting it! "His predecessor ought to have settled it, and he alone is responsible;" or, "Having occurred before his arrival, he cannot be sufficiently acquainted with it to judge rightly;" or, "It has been tolerated so long, it can be borne longer."

Such may be his reasonings. Some caution is doubtless proper; but the minister of God who acts thus degrades himself and his holy office. He consults his comfort more than his duty. He allows a viper to nestle on the very altar where he ministers, and one that will most probably bite the hand that thus protects it. A similar temptation also presents itself towards the close of his term of service. How easily may the near prospect of his removal induce him to pass over evils, which, with increased inveteracy, must devolve to and embarrass his successor! This is not only neglect -- it is cruelty; and a preacher who finds such cases transmitted to him, embarrassing his entrance on a new field, and perhaps making for him painful days and sleepless nights, must consider them not merely proofs of a want of generosity, but of a want of integrity, in his predecessor. It is not an incidental, but a most material part of the ministerial office, to apply moral discipline; and he is unfit for the function who affects not to have the ability to apply it.

It is to be feared that these peculiar temptations of our ministry are but too effectual. Not a few of our societies are actually suffering under such evils as I have described. Not a few of our

preachers find themselves perplexed with such difficulties. In some places, local customs of the most pernicious character have invaded the church, and become rooted there by the connivance of men who profess to watch for souls as they that must give account. Reader, bear you the vows of God's altar? Wash your hands, then, of this guilt. Maintain the honor of your Lord, and of his sanctuary. Prudence will be necessary, even the wisdom of the serpent; but be prudently resolute. The very considerations which we have mentioned as the reason, with many, for such neglect, should to you be an encouragement to fidelity. Your appointment will soon be changed. Though the people aggrieve you for your faithfulness, you will soon go elsewhere; and, while your term of service lasts, they cannot exclude you. Be, then, faithful, and be assured that a character for rigorous regard to your duty, once earned, will be of infinitely greater advantage to you than can be any time-serving arts.

These admonitions are applicable not to our ministry alone, but to all the officary of the church. If ever a cause was dear to its adherents, Methodism is dear to its people; severely as its rigid system operates, still they have learned to prize its unequalled blessings. Let them, then, maintain its integrity, even as the Hebrews guarded the ark of the covenant. Let them eschew the ruinous folly of seeking to gain numbers or influence by sacrificing disciplinary strictness for the sake of the worldly, the rich or the Laodicean. Let them maintain, next to their theology, their spiritual discipline, as a rampart around their cause.

* * * * *

05 -- THE FIRST NATIVE METHODIST PREACHER OF NEW ENGLAND -- ENOCH MUDGE

Enoch walked with God. -- Moses

I have been spending a few evening hours in looking over the letters addressed to me by Enoch Mudge, who is reputed the first native Methodist preacher raised up in New England. [7] These letters are numerous, and they are frank exhibitions of the pure and noble heart of the man, -- a man who, take him all in all, I never knew surpassed in the purity of his moral character. More than a year has elapsed since his death, and these mementos become more precious and more affecting to me with each additional day that passes over his grave. They are pervaded by a spirit that would have befitted St. John.

Besides these letters, I have also in my possession a document peculiarly precious, as it is not only from the pen of my beloved old friend, but records, though briefly, the narrative of his devoted life. It was not prepared for publication, but for the eye of private friendship alone. Yet, as I propose, in this paper, to pay a humble tribute to his memory, I shall not hesitate to quote from it.

He was born at Lynn, June 21, 1776, and was descended from one of the earliest settlers of that town. His boyhood was marked by healthful buoyancy, mental aptitude, and fine, generous, moral feelings. From the testimony of the few gray-headed men who were his early associates, and whose dim eyes moisten now as they recall their old and noble friend, I should estimate him as no ordinary boy, either intellectually or morally. He has given, in the brief record referred to, an

account of his early religious training, and his conversion. I cannot do better than give it in his own words:--

"O, what a mercy," he exclaims, "that I was born of parents who feared the Lord, and consecrated me early to him! If they did not fully know the way of the Lord when I was born, their hearts were imbued with his fear. I distinctly recollect, that among any first impressions were those made by their pious efforts to, give me just views of the goodness of my heavenly Father, and the great benevolence of my kind and gracious Redeemer. These are among my first reminiscences. Early as these impressions were made, I verily believe that they were never effaced. When alone, when afflicted by the small vexations and trials of childhood, these little lessons were the guardian angels of my life -- mingled with much childishness, and, doubtless, with some superstition, yet the seeds of truth were there. They germinated, they sprung up as tender blades; the feeble branches of good desire, childish hope, and infant devotion, were regarded by him who has said, 'I will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax.'

"Had my parents at this time known the way of truth perfectly, they doubtless had observed and cherished the fruits of their first pious efforts with such instruction and prayers as would have been peculiarly seasonable and useful. While truth and grace were thus struggling for an early existence, all that is natural to an unrenewed heart was working in their usual courses, checked, indeed, but not subdued.

"When I was in my fifteenth year, the Rev. Jesse Lee came to Lynn; my parents were among the first to hear and welcome the joyful tidings of a Gospel which they never before had known in such richness. They were both brought into the liberty of the truth. The fruits of piety in them were clearly discerned by me; I desired to taste and know that the Lord was good. Now pride, fear and shame, little suspected before, were felt to have the mastery. Mr. Lee's preaching was affecting, searching, humbling, soothing, and instructing. I longed to have him talk with me, but dared not put myself in his way. I resolved and reresolved to open my mind to him; but when the time came, my heart failed -- my natural diffidence seemed all at once to increase to an alarming degree -- yet I ventured to pray, to pray often and fervently, against all the sins of my heart. I begged for grace to conquer them, but the burden of my prayer was for conviction.

"I longed to feel and lament the sinfulness of sin, and to be pressed down with a sense of condemnation for its guilt. Under these feelings, I hardly dared to ask for pardon of sin, as I thought I had not sufficient sense of its evil, nor contrition for my ingratitude to God, and abuse of his mercy. About four months passed away in this manner. I heard preaching, went to class-meeting, and sought the company of serious persons -- read and prayed much, but was constantly saying,

"Here I repent and sin again,
Now I revive, and now am slain,' &c.

"I began seriously to fear I should never know the joys of pardoned sin, never have an evidence of acceptance with God. When fear, gloom and despair, began to hover over me, Mr. John Lee, who was truly a sun of consolation, seeing my case, at a class-meeting, was enabled to pour in the balm of divine truth, and lead my thirsty soul to the fountain of grace, opened in the atonement for poor, weary, and heavy-laden sinners. I left the meeting with a ray of hope, retired,

and poured out my soul before God. Access was granted, and encouragement dawned amid the darkness. I feared to go to sleep, lest I should lose the tender and encouraging views and feelings I had.

"I had little sleep, arose early, and went forth for prayer. My mind became calm, tranquil, and joyful. I was insensibly led forth in praise and gratitude to God. I drew a hymn-book from my pocket, and opened on the hymn that commences with

'O joyful sound of Gospel grace,
Christ shall in me appear!
I, even I, shall see his face;
I shall be holy here.'

"The whole hymn seemed more like an inspiration from heaven than anything of which I had a conception, except the word of God. I could only read a verse at a time, and then give vent to the gushing forth of joy and grateful praise. In this way I went through it. But I said to myself, What is this? Is it pardon? Is it acceptance with God? I cannot tell -- but I am unspeakably happy! I dared not to say, This is conversion. It is what I have sought and longed for; but oh that I could always be thus grateful to God, and have my heart flow forth in such a tide of love to my Saviour!

"During the day, which was the 16th of September, 1791, I often sought to be alone, to give vent to my feelings. At evening, I sought to unbosom myself to a young man with whom I was familiar, on these subjects. As soon as I had told him, he burst into tears, and said, 'O, Enoch, God has blest your soul! do pray for me, that I may partake of the love, peace and joy, God has given you.' And now, for the first time, my voice was heard in prayer with another. My faith became confirmed, and I went on with increasing consolation and strength.

"In this state of mind, I could not be content to enjoy such a heavenly feast alone; I took opportunity to speak to my young friends and acquaintances on the subject of religion, and recommend its ways as pleasant and delightful. When in prayer-meetings, I was pressed in Spirit to pray for and exhort them; God blessed the feeble efforts. A goodly number embraced the Saviour, and devoted their lives to his service.

"I heard Mr. Lee preach from this text: 2 Tim. 2:19, 'Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.' I felt the privilege and obligation of having been consecrated to God by parents, and of making a surrender of myself to him. It was with fear and trembling I went forward to the holy communion. But the Lord blessed his work and ordinance to me, and I found wisdom's ways pleasant, and all her paths peace. I felt the need of mental and moral cultivation, and applied my mind to it; but have reason to lament the want of a judicious instructor, and of such means as would be best adapted to my case.

"Under the parental roof, where prayer and praise was the delightful and daily custom of the family, when my father happened to be from home my older brother and myself led the family devotions. O, how I bless God for the privilege of thus early affording encouragement to the hearts of my pious parents, who had so often prayed for me and their children with tears and sighs!"

More attention was paid, among us, in those days than at present, to the development and availability of the lay talents of the church. Young men especially were induced to take an active part in prayer-meetings; their gifts for Christian exhortation were thus readily noticed, and they rose to be Class Leaders, licensed Exhorters (an office scarcely known among us now-a-days), Local Preachers, and at last Itinerant Preachers. Mr. Mudge passed through these gradations. Marblehead, Malden, Boston, and other places, were often visited by him, at the request of Mr. Lee. He began by "exhorting" at their social meetings, and, in time, expounded the Scriptures in their pulpits, applying himself, meanwhile, to his appropriate studies.

He was received into the New England Conference on the first of August, 1793, the second session ever held in the Eastern States. It was held that year at Lynn, and did not convene more members than there are now Methodist preachers in the city of Boston alone. "We have a call," said the veteran Asbury, who presided, "for seven or eight preachers; although our members are few, our hearers are many."

Mr. Mudge was appointed to Greenwich circuit, R. I. This field of labor has since been subdivided into scores of appointments. It comprised all the Methodist field of Rhode Island, and all the towns in Massachusetts as far east as Bridgewater. Of this appointment, and also several of his subsequent fields, he speaks as follows:--

"This was a most important crisis in my life. I was a youth in my eighteenth year, leaving my father's house, from which I had not been absent a week at a time, in the course of my life. The Methodists were a denomination little known -- opposed and disputed in almost every place they approached. Never had a preacher of this order been raised up in New England before. All eyes were opened, for good or for evil. Hopes, fears and reproaches, were alive on the subject. My friends felt and prayed much for me; but my own mind was keenly sensible of the importance of the undertaking. Anxiety and incessant application to duty brought on a distressing pain in my head, and finally threw me into a fever, within two weeks after leaving home. The Lord was gracious, and kept my mind in a state of resignation and peace. I felt that it was a chastening for reluctance to duty, and strove to be more entirely devoted to the work. I was very sick for a short time, but got out as soon as possible. It had been reported that I was dead, and one man, who felt an interest in my case, came to the house to make arrangements for my funeral.

"When I set out on my circuit again, I was scarce able to sit on my horse, and suffered much through weakness and distress, occasioned by riding. I met with much better acceptance than I feared. The youth, in almost every place, appeared serious and tender under the word, and probably much of my acceptance among the older class of my hearers was owing to the interest excited among the young. With feelings of unutterable gratitude, I returned, at the close of the year, to my father's house, in peace, health and gladness of heart, to see my friends and attend Conference. Never did my parents appear so dear; Never did the quiet and retired scenes of home appear so valuable.

"But I had no home now. I felt I was but a visitor. It would be as useless as impossible to try to describe my emotions. With a heart ready to burst with yearning for home, and the early attachments of my first Christian friendship, I left for my new appointment on New London circuit, which required about three hundred miles travel to compass it. I attended Conference at

Wilbraham, September 8th, 1794, and went thence, in company with Jesse Lee, to New London, and commenced my labors.

"Here was a very laborious field for three preachers. The senior preacher, Wilson Lee, was taken sick, and called off from his labors. I had daily renewed cause of gratitude for the abundant goodness of God to such a feeble, utterly unworthy instrument, as he graciously deigned to use for the good of precious souls. Riding, visiting, preaching, Class and prayer meetings, took up the time every day in the week. After the second quarter was past, which I felt was profitable to me, and, I hope, to many others, I went to supply the place of a preacher who had left Litchfield circuit, Mass., and after going once round, I passed to Granville, Conn.

"This was an extensive circuit, and required much labor. Here I had the happiness of having the Rev. Joshua Taylor as a fellow-laborer, He was a pious, discreet, exemplary, good preacher. [8] I derived instruction and profit by a brotherly association with him. On this circuit, also, I first became acquainted with Timothy Merritt, before he was a preacher. His piety and devotedness to God, and the cause of religion, gave an earnest of his future usefulness. He began to preach the next year.

"Our next Conference was held at New London. Here I received deacon's orders, and was appointed to Readfield circuit, in the then Province of Maine. Long rides and bad roads, crossing rivers without ferry-boats, buffeting storms, breaking roads, sleeping in open cabins and log huts, coarse and scanty fare, all served to call out the energies of the mind and body. I assure you this was a pleasant task, and a soul-satisfying scene of labor, because the people were hungry for the word. His heart must have been cold and unfeeling as stone, that could not thrill with delight at toil and privation, while received as an angel of mercy, and made welcome to such as those enjoyed who received him for his Master's sake. O, my blessed Master! may I not hope to meet many in thy kingdom who then first heard and embraced the word of truth! Preaching places multiplied; our borders were enlarged, the church increased -- God prospered his cause.

"Readfield was the first place in the State of Maine where a Methodist meeting-house was erected. A glorious work was commenced, that has, in its advancement, filled the land. It was on this circuit I formed an acquaintance with young Joshua Soule, now Bishop Soule. I had received his wife into society, on my first circuit, when she was only about twelve years old, and he was but about sixteen. He had a precocious mind -- a strong memory, a manly and dignified turn, although his appearance was exceedingly rustic. In mentioning Mrs. Soule, I am reminded of several pious young females who embraced religion on my first circuit, and who afterwards became the wives of several distinguished preachers. Among these were Mrs. Kent, Mrs. Soule, Mrs. Hill, Mrs. Ostrander, and Mrs. S. Hull. It is cheering to look over the scene, and recognize the children and children's children of those who then were brought into the church in its infancy.

"In 1796 our Conference was held at Thompson, Conn. Here I received elder's orders, although but just entering my twentieth year. I was stationed at Bath, Maine. Jesse Lee, our presiding elder, went to the south, and was absent about six months. I attended the quarterly meetings, and went around the circuits to administer the ordinances. This was a year of incessant labor, great exposure and toil, so that towards its close my health failed. Although stationed at Bath, I preached there but one or two Sabbaths. The work in Maine being under my charge, in the

absence of Brother Lee, I went to Penobscot, whither the appointed preacher declined going. He supplied Bath for me, and I went on to Penobscot, picked up some scattering appointments, and opened others; organized churches, sent for help, enlarged the field of labor, and had a prosperous year there.

"The Conference for 1797 was held in Wilbraham. The distance was so great, and the calls for labor so many, that I continued in the work at Penobscot. I was stationed at Pleasant River, to open a new circuit in that region. The calls, however, being many and great for preaching in the vicinity of Penobscot River, I opened many new fields of labor, in connection with the Penobscot circuit, and, Timothy Merritt being stationed there, we continued our labors together on this circuit, much enlarged, so that it was afterwards divided into several circuits and stations.

"In August, 1798, our Conference was held at Readfield, Me. I was now in poor health, but received a station on Penobscot circuit, with J. Finnegan as a helper. Divine goodness strengthened me to continue this year in the work with some success and much spiritual comfort. I had to be much abroad, to administer ordinances and attend to the care of the societies. My mind became much tried, towards the close of the year, on the necessity of locating. I felt all the attachment of former days to the work. But exposure and excessive labor had rendered it impossible for me to travel as extensively as formerly. The circuits were large; none were provided for receiving families. Our exchanges, in those days, were often from state to state, and from Conference to Conference. After much deliberation and prayer, I concluded to locate, and continue to labor in the region about home.

"Accordingly, in 1799, I was located. For several years we had young preachers stationed on the Penobscot and the neighboring places, and I made frequent visits abroad, to administer the ordinances, and assist the preachers. As many of the new settlements and societies had grown up since I made Orrington the place of my residence, I was called on to attend funerals, and on other occasions served in all the region round about.

"From the time of locating, 1799, I continued to reside in Orrington. During these years of residence there, it pleased God to grant us several seasons of spiritual refreshing, both in that and the neighboring towns. When I first went thither, there was no church of any denomination in the region, for many miles around; and when I organized the church, and administered the ordinances of the Gospel, there were young men and women present who had never seen a Gospel ordinance administered. With the rapid increase of population and improvements, religion revived, and churches were multiplied, and many added to the Lord in different denominations; and could we have been supplied with a sufficient number of able ministers, it appeared as if a large portion of the population would have united with us in public worship and Christian union. I had several attacks of sickness during that time, and finally my system became run down by a severe rheumatic affection, producing distressing spasmodic fits."

In "locating" at this time, Mr. Mudge but yielded to stern necessity -- a necessity that withdrew from their ministerial posts, for an interval at least, a large majority of his fellow-laborers of that early day. Celibacy was not only sanctioned by the episcopal example of Asbury, Whatcoat, and McKendree, but was rendered necessary by the general poverty of the church. Roberts, Brodhead, Taylor Merrit, Mudge, in fine, almost all the pioneers of our ministry,

had to retire at their marriage, at least, until they could make some provision for their families, when most of them again returned to their posts. Of six hundred and fifty itinerant ministers who were received into conferences in the United States in the last century, about five hundred died located, and many of the rest located, but afterwards resumed their labors. Mr. Mudge's ill health rendered this course the more necessary, but, like most of his located brethren, he continued to be abundant in labors in, and for miles around, the place of his residence.

During his ministry in Maine, Mr. Mudge, notwithstanding his characteristic amenity, had trials as well as labors in the cause of his Lord. He was twice involved in lawsuits. The first case was for consecrating a marriage. It was assumed that Methodist ministers had no legal right to join persons in marriage; our preachers had been threatened with prosecutions, and one or two left their circuits to avoid them. Mr. Mudge determined to take the first opportunity of having the question put to a legal decision, and, accordingly, not only performed the ceremony, but invited, or rather indicated that he was determined to stand, a suit for so doing. He was accordingly prosecuted, and brought before a justice's court. He employed no attorney, but being called upon to answer to the charge, addressed the court in a few words, stating that he had joined persons in marriage, but not as set forth in the writ; that he was a regularly ordained minister of the Gospel, proof of which he was ready to exhibit. He plead that the warrant ought to be quashed, and that he ought not to be holden to answer to it, because it was erroneous as to the names of the persons and places mentioned therein, and false in its averments that he was no minister, and had no legal right to consecrate marriage, &c.; but that, should his honor see fit to overrule these pleas, he reserved all other pleadings for a higher court.

After a short demur, the judge said: "Mr. Mudge, as you appeal to Caesar, to Caesar you must go." "He made out a bond for me," says Mr. Mudge, "to recognize my obligation to appear at the Supreme Judicial Court, but I replied, 'I have no bondsmen, nor shall I seek any.' This I did, because I did not believe he would be willing to take the responsibility of sending me to prison. He instantly turned to the clerk and to another justice, and said, 'Mr. S. and Esquire F., you are doubtless willing to become bondsmen for Mr. M.' As both of them were friendly to me, they replied 'yes,' not knowing my purpose. They probably thought my delicacy about asking any one to be my bondsman had occasioned my declining.

"However, all was done in apparent good feeling, and I determined to appear; and did so, at some cost and trouble, for I had to ride sixty miles over a new and bad road. Old Governor Sullivan was then state's attorney, and had, of course, to bring the cause against me, before the grand jury. The justice who was my bondsman was also a witness, as he had seen me marry persons. By him I got my certificates of ordination into the state's attorney's hand, and before the grand jury. They instantly pronounced it a malicious prosecution, and the action was dropped."

The other case involved the grave offense of defamation of character. He had occasion to reprove and exhort a company of young people who had assembled for a ball, or "frolic." He cautioned them against indulging in the excesses which, it had been reported, a similar party in a neighboring town had committed, "in making light of religious persons and ordinances." No names were mentioned, but a person present, who was bitterly opposed to the Methodists, proceeded to the neighboring village with such exaggerated reports as roused every enemy of Methodism within it. Such, however, was the coolness of the persecuted preacher, that the prosecution was soon

dropped; the justice, after hearing the case, said, "You have done perfectly right, Mr. Mudge;" and some of the persecutors were afterwards converted to God, and became the most steadfast friends of the preacher, and devoted members of the church. "Such instances of unreasonable persecution," writes Mr. Mudge "tended greatly to awaken the sympathies of the more considerate, and, by divine goodness and wisdom: led them to take a more decided stand for truth and righteousness; by them the Methodists became more known and respected, and those who at first opposed us sooner or later became ashamed of their hostility, and learned to esteem us."

I regret that no fuller record of his protracted and useful labors in Maine has been kept. His name is like ointment poured forth in that portion of the church. During his residence in Orrington, though often prostrated by severe illness, he was abundant in labors -- his "location" was, in fact, but a "stationed appointment" continued through some eight years. He preached habitually during this interval, as his health would allow; he also taught the town school, and was the moral and intellectual guide of the people. No man, perhaps, ever acquired a greater ascendancy in the esteem and affections of a village community. When he settled in the town, there was no church of any name in it, or within miles around it; he was the founder of the religious provisions of the people, and they respect, to this day, his memory as that of their chief benefactor. More than thirty years after his removal from them, the news of his death was received with general grief, and the inhabitants of the town called a public meeting in respect to his memory, at which the following resolutions were passed:--

"Resolved, That the intelligence of the death of our venerable father in the Gospel, Rev. Enoch Mudge, of Lynn, formerly a resident of this town for more than twenty years, has been received by us with deep emotions of sorrow and sympathy for his bereaved widow and family.

"Resolved, That as a tribute of respect for his memory, and an humble acknowledgment of his long and valuable labors in the early settlement of this town, in behalf of this church and people, in forming their literary, [9] moral, and religious character, the fruits whereof are abundantly manifest at the present day, in the temperate, orderly, and religious condition of the inhabitants -- that the Rev. Joshua Hall, of Frankfort, one of his co-laborers in this section in the early days of Methodism, be invited to deliver a discourse on the occasion."

The correspondent who furnishes the above adds, "His name in this place is almost a household word; it is handed down from parents to children, and quite a number of the younger portion of the community bear it as a title for life."

His attachment to Orrington was strong and lasting. He not only found there a people who ever treated him with all respectful and endearing marks of regard, but he married there the excellent partner of his long and laborious life, -- his companionship with whom, for more than half a century, was never ruffled by a single instance of irritated language; all his children were also born there, and one of them sleeps among its graves. The church at Orrington will ever owe a grateful obligation to that good Providence which identified the name and saintly memory of Enoch Mudge with its early fortunes.

It was during his residence in that town that he was honored with an election to the legislature of Massachusetts. [10] The ecclesiastical system of Massachusetts was still onerous on

the, dissenting religious bodies. The "standing order" was recognized as a sort of state church. Civil prosecutions were even resorted to, for obtaining tithes for the support of that religious party. Methodists, still living, had their cattle seized and sold at auction, and were themselves thrown into prison, for their refusal to support a creed at which their religious convictions revolted. The dissenting denominations joined in a general movement of opposition to this anti-Christian and anti-republican oppression.

With a view to the promotion of their object, Mr. Mudge was elected a member of the legislature, as were many other ministers of the Gospel, of all dissenting denominations. The speaker's table was loaded with petitions, and the result was, the passage of what has since been called the RELIGIOUS FREEDOM BILL. In 1815-16, he was again honored with an election to the legislature. In the latter year he concluded to remove from Maine, with a view, he writes,

"To recover my health, or rather to leave my family in a situation which I deemed more favorable for their comfort, in case of my decease, which appeared to be likely to take place at no distant period. The winter after moving to Lynn, I was more confined, and under the care of a physician, whose prescriptions, by the divine blessing, were rendered peculiarly beneficial; so that, by the time of the next Conference, I was able to take an appointment in Boston, where, by careful attention for two years (1817-18), although the duties of the station were arduous, I was much recruited in health. The Lord revived his work, and Brother Timothy Merritt and myself labored in much harmony, peace, and comfort."

At the Lynn Conference, 1819, he was stationed in Lynn, "where," he writes, "I found great pleasure in renewing my early acquaintance with those who were left of the first class of Methodists, with whom I united -- it being, also, the first in this region of the country." He was elected, at the same time, a member of the state convention for revising the constitution of Massachusetts.

"Towards the close of the year," he writes, "the Lord began to pour out his spirit. We had fasted, prayed, and struggled, against various discouragements; but a bright morning of hope dawned, and I was reappointed to Lynn, at the Nantucket Conference. During this revival, about one hundred were received into the church, many of whom live, as lights and ornaments of our Zion. Such reminiscences are cheering to the worn traveler. At the Barre Conference, 1821. I received my station at Portsmouth, N. H. Here, although nothing remarkable occurred, I spent two years in a pleasant and comfortable manner, and left the church in peace.

"At Providence Conference, 1823, I was stationed at Providence. This, on the account of previous difficulties and divisions, was an appointment of importance. Thanks to the God of all grace and peace, I was not only enabled to live in peace with all men, but was enabled to conduct the affairs of our church in a peaceful and prosperous course for two years, and left them in great harmony. At the Cambridge Conference, 1825, I was stationed at Newport. In 1827-28, I was stationed at East Cambridge, The next two years, 1829-30, I was stationed at Duxbury. These were pleasant and profitable years."

They were not only so to him, but eminently so to the societies themselves. His instructive discourses, pastoral fidelity, suavity and dignity, and the blameless purity of his fine character,

won universal affection. The aged found in him the ripened virtues and wisdom of congenial years; the young, a Christlike sympathy and simplicity, which attracted the love of childhood itself; the afflicted, a comforter, whose kindly tones and Christian grace relieved their hearts when overwhelmed with sorrow; and the prosperous and happy, an ever-welcome guest, whose spiritual cordiality and cheerfulness enhanced, and, as it were, sanctified, the pleasures of their circles.

In 1831 he was appointed to Ipswich, Mass., but labored there only about ten months, when he was called to the responsible charge of the Seamen's Chapel, New Bedford. I regret that no journal, or other consecutive record, of his useful labors in this field, has been kept. Such a record would have afforded a model for port chaplaincies. Few men ever won more thoroughly the generous sympathies of seamen. He located his home immediately among them, under the shadow of his "Bethel." He not only preached for them on Sabbaths, but provided them a reading-room, museum, &c. He became, not only their spiritual guide, but their well-trusted counselor in business transactions; the guardian of their families in their absence, the trustee of their property, the arbiter of their litigations, whether with each other or their employers; and such was the universal sense of his integrity, that his word, in such cases, was decisive and final.

His labors were not limited to the Bethel, and the homes of the seamen. He followed them with his correspondence into all the world; he wrote poems and printed sermons for them to carry to sea. He commemorated their disasters, or deaths, in special exercises in his chapel, and the walls of that humble building are studded with tablets, the affectionate memorials alike of their catastrophes and his sympathies. He was, in fine, among seamen what Oberlin was among his mountaineers. The Boston Christian Register, one of the editors of which knew him while in this sphere, spoke, at the time of his decease, as follows:--

"It was our privilege to know this excellent and devoted follower of Christ, for a period of ten or twelve years, when in the midst of his labors as a minister to seamen in New Bedford. No man ever carried into his duties more the humility of a Christian disciple, and the benignity of a Christian father. He looked on the seamen of the place as his children; he sought them out, invited them to his house', met them at their reading-room and at the church, preached to them, gave them lectures on temperance, wrote didactic poems for them, and sent them off on their long voyages with wise counsels and useful books, and followed them still with his paternal blessing and his prayers. His was the influence of love, reaching all around him through kind acts and sound words, and a steadfast adherence to his one great purpose. He was in simplicity a child, and yet remarkable for his prudence and sagacity. We seldom met him then, or think of him now, without the feeling, 'Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.' Death can have no terrors for such a man; and his presence may still go in their thoughts with those who knew him, as calm but powerful assurance of the blessedness and peace which God bestows on those who love and serve him."

While he shunned not the lowliest labors and most degraded resorts to which his office called him, he could ascend with ease from them to the most refined circles of intelligence and wealth. He was a favorite in such circles, for his Christian amenity threw a charm over them, and the opulent and the cultivated claimed, in friendly rivalry with the poorest tar, the refreshing sympathies of this good and rare man. Men felt that there was a fragrance of the divine Master's

presence circling about his heavenly-minded servant, and they were made better and comforted by his company. A citizen of New Bedford, who knew him well, writes as follows:--

"No clergyman who, since my acquaintance here, has presided in New Bedford, has ever, to so great an extent, won the respect of all classes as Mr. M.; he moved with equal ease and modest dignity in the higher and more lowly circles of society, beloved by all. While in his duties, he had frequent disputes to settle between seamen and their officers and crews; he had that most rare talent, of giving offense to, or losing the esteem of, neither party. Many have been the cases of litigation which he has thus prevented. To the welfare and interests of seamen he was deeply devoted; imparting admonition, reproof, consolation, instruction, and, not infrequently, pecuniary assistance, to relieve their present necessities.

"His spirit was always bland. and deportment gentle. During my very intimate acquaintance with him, I never saw him ruffled or unkind in manner to any one. He was of the most social turn, equally agreeable to the youngest, or to those advanced in life. He possessed, in a very eminent degree, a catholic spirit; the odious spirit of bigotry had no place in his bosom, and I have cause to know that anything of the kind from our pulpits or press was very mortifying to him. The Bethel in this city owes very much of its prosperity and favorable standing to the character and wise course of Mr. Mudge, who was the first pastor called to its service. By his demeanor and judicious course in all things relating to it, he succeeded in attaching to the institution the sympathy and affection of many of those who have since sustained it.

"Mr. M. had, to an unlimited extent, the confidence of seamen; in their difficulties with their officers and owners, they resorted to him, and were satisfied if he said it was all right, Many of the Canakers would not settle their voyages till Mr. Mudge had examined the account, and said it was right. I need not say, his attention to the poor, sick seaman, far from his home, was unceasing.

"He maintained a most friendly intercourse with the various clergy of the city, frequently occupying their pulpits. I cannot forbear speaking of, what all know, his unostentatious piety. The sacrament was not administered at the Bethel, and when his health would permit, Mr. M. would hasten, at the close of his service, to the Elm Street Church, to enjoy the privilege of communing there. At such seasons, I have beheld the venerable saint come up the aisle, as he entered the house, and kneel beside his brethren at the altar, as one who had not been anointed with oil, and on whose head holy hands had never been laid. I might fill many sheets with the subject, but desist; to all who knew him, his worth cannot be told."

About the end of 1841, he was attacked with paralysis. This illness rendered him incapable of continuing his labors, but he was too highly valued by the Port Society to be readily allowed to retreat from his post; they offered him a colleague, if he would remain. It pleased God to partially restore him, so that he was enabled to continue his labors until 1844, when a second attack admonished him that "his work was done." Amidst the general regrets of the city, he retired to Lynn, to await the summons of his Lord among the associations and old Christian companionships of his native village.

Such was Enoch Mudge. He has the signal honor of being the first native Methodist preacher of New England; the church has the signal honor of being able to point to his character as nobly befitting the peculiar distinction. It remains yet for us to notice his last days, and more fully his characteristic traits.

After his second attack of paralysis in New Bedford, Mr. Mudge took measures to retire from active life. The regrets and affections of the community of New Bedford followed him into private life at Lynn. So highly had his services in that city been prized, that its government -- "impressed with a deep sense of the advantages which the community had received from his elevated and judicious exertions, and with the conviction that his efforts had been highly effective in promoting the peace, quietness, and good order, of the town" -- sent him a formal address of thanks.

The five or six ensuing years of his life were spent in the enjoyment of his serene old age among the reminiscences and the few remaining Christian associates of his youth. He was reminded, by growing infirmities, of his approaching end; but the admonitions were so gradual and tranquil, so exempt from severe alarms or sufferings, as not to interfere with his enjoyment of life. He assisted his brethren in the village ministry occasionally, but even such occasional services soon became impracticable. I have received, from one of his family, an account of his last days, from which I learn, that on Thanksgiving day, Nov. 1849, he attended public worship for the last time. In the afternoon of the same day, at the request of a dying mother, he baptized her infant babe. Immediately on his return home, he experienced a third attack of palsy. For several days his illness was severe and critical; but he again rallied, so as to be able to write to his absent children, and to walk, though with tottering steps, about the house.

He continued in this comfortably sick state until within about ten days of his death, when he began to experience severe paroxysms of pain; but in the intervals he would say, "Now I am comfortable again. Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and forget not all his benefits! Goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life. Shall I receive good at the hand of the Lord, and not evil?"

He would say, "What blessings I enjoy! -- no anxiety about anything; and such friends to care for me!" To his wife and daughter, who constantly attended him, his thoughtful gratitude was incessant; his only care seemed to be lest they should get weary or sick by waiting upon him, In the early part of his last sickness, when questioned in regard to his expectations of recovery, he replied, "I do not feel any particular presentiment that I shall die immediately, although I feel that I am wearing out; but 'tis all well, whether I live or die; God's time will be right. I am ready -- waiting."

But about a week before his death, after having attended family prayer (which he always did when he was able to sit up, even after he became too weak to kneel), he said, "I shall not live to see R." (a son whom he knew was hastening, on his way from a distant city, to see him), and asked to have his writing-desk brought to him; he selected a paper, carefully enveloped it, and, with the utmost composure, directed it to be delivered to his son on his return, leaving also a verbal message for him. His friends could not believe this impression to be true, but it proved to be so, as he left the world a few hours before his son's arrival.

The last night of his life was one of great unrest and suffering. He did not appear to take much notice of surrounding objects, but was engaged in prayer most of the time. Several times he raised his voice aloud, saying, "Glory to God in the highest! In thee, oh Saviour, is my only trust." Whenever he wanted anything, he asked for it in a way which showed that he was sensible; but he did not answer when questioned, which indicated that his hearing, which had been failing him, had entirely gone. About five o'clock in the morning, he asked to be assisted to get up. He was led to a chair, where he sat in a dozing state, apparently much more comfortable, about an hour, when he was again assisted to the bed; immediately on lying down he was seized with a fit (probably congestion of the brain), in which he continued, unable to speak, and probably insensible, until his spirit passed away, April 2, 1850.

So ended the life of this excellent man, at the good old age of seventy-four. His talents were above mediocrity. In the pulpit he always sustained himself well; no marked failures, no awkward defects, marred his ministrations. His sermons were extempore, but thoroughly prepared; they were always well adjusted in their divisions, clothed in a style of great neatness, if not elegance, and delivered in a manner which combined a dignity that commanded immediate respect, and a facility, if not familiarity, which made all his hearers feel immediately at home with him.

An invariable Christian blandness formed, perhaps, the chief characteristic of his manners, and endeared him universally to the communities among which he labored. He had an extreme simplicity of character, which had in it, however, nothing of imbecility, but was associated with a sound discretion, that his friends felt to be perfectly reliable in almost any exigency or perplexity. In social life he always bore about with him a sort of religious charm. He never entered a circle without bringing into it a glow of good and buoyant feeling. His conversational powers were excellent. He was not disposed to confound wisdom with taciturnity, but kept conversation alive with an easy and felicitous flow of thought and anecdote, and yet without the irksomeness that usually accompanies loquacity. The friend from whom we have already quoted remarks that his enjoyment of life was remarkable, in a person so aged and infirm. The current news of the day, and changes wrought throughout the world, had, for him, an immediate interest. The plans of children and grandchildren were entered into and discussed with much feeling. His memory continued good, considering the nature of his disease. His mind was not equally affected with his body.

His benevolence was a discharge of a religious duty, as well as a gratification of the natural impulses of his heart. He had, by strict economy, appropriated from his limited income the several donations to the missionary cause which have been acknowledged from "a worn-out brother," in our treasurer's receipts, and amounted, at the time of his death, to \$1367; and, at the decease of his widow, this will be (by his request) increased to a sum the interest of which shall be sufficient to pay the annual salary of a single missionary. He was ambitious to have some one preach the Gospel in his stead, through all future time. Among his papers was found a memorandum, which recorded the several amounts paid, and which was prefaced with the following words:--

"God has blessed myself and family beyond my expectations and deserts; and as a token of my gratitude for being permitted to labor so long in the service of the church (to which, under God, I owe everything), and from a desire to labor forever in it, I have devoted the sum above named. I

trust all my children will rejoice more in the above bequest than to have shared it among them. Their faithful filial affection has endeared them to a parent's heart, whose love and prayers, I trust, they will esteem the richest legacy he can leave them."

The literary acquisitions of Mr. Mudge were very respectable, and the productions of his pen somewhat numerous. Among them were, Two Occasional Sermons, preached in Orrington; several sermons published in Zion's Herald; A System of Bible Class Instruction; A Series of Lectures to Young People, published in one volume, with a prayer appended to each; of these, two thousand were distributed gratuitously, mostly among seamen; Three Sermons, published in the first two volumes of the Methodist Preacher; A Doctrinal Catechism, published in Zion's Herald, in successive numbers; A Poem, entitled Lynn, published in 1830; A Poetical Temperance Address to Sailors, two thousand printed for gratuitous distribution among seamen; Several Tracts for Seamen, two thousand of which were circulated gratuitously; History of Methodist Missions, published in the History of American Missions, by Spooner and Howland; Farewell Sermon to the New Bedford Port Society, published by the Executive Board, and distributed among seamen; History of the American Methodist Missionary Society, published in Smith and Choules' History of Missions; A Small Volume, entitled the Parables of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ illustrated in a Concise Manner, published in 1831; The Juvenile Expositor, published in Zion's Herald and Gospel Balance, in about seventy numbers; also, numerous miscellaneous pieces of prose and poetry in the papers of the day, generally without his proper signature. There remain two bound manuscripts, containing over five hundred closely-written pages of poetry, a considerable portion of which was written for his grandchildren, in the last years of his life. In a letter to a friend, found among his papers, he says:--

"After being laid by from all attempts to speak in public, and prevented from much social contact, on account of loss of voice or oppression on my lungs, I find relief from the ennui common to old people, who have outlived their ability to perform accustomed duties, by writing letters to my friends, and poetry for my grandchildren."

I have thus put upon record a brief outline of this good man's history; had there been ampler materials, it would have been desirable to commemorate his useful life and rare character in another and more abiding form. This would have been due alike to himself and the church in whose annals he occupies so peculiar a place; but meager volumes of biography abound among us, and are usually a misfortune, rather than an honor, to their subjects. Mr. Mudge's records of his own life were quite limited; he was aware of their inadequacy for any considerable biographical use, and did not desire them to be so used. In a letter to a member of his family, when his illness first assumed a serious aspect, he said, "I have nothing to publish -- no, nothing. I may as well name these things now as ten years hence." His name will, however, be embalmed in the memory of the living for years to come, and must have a distinguished place in any future history of our cause. [11]

* * * * *

Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people, that God had prepared the people; for the thing was done suddenly. -- 2 Chron. 19:18

We are quite inclined, as a denomination, to perceive special providential interpositions in our history. The main epochs of our cause are certainly distinguished by very marked providences, and in many of the minuter and local facts of our history, the same divine intervention will be seen by the devout mind. I have been struck with the remarkable manner in which it pleased God to prepare the way for the establishment of our cause in many localities. Almost innumerable illustrations could be drawn from its history, and from the reminiscences still circulating among our aged preachers.

Our early itinerants needed such preliminary and special aids. They frequently went forth into distant and new sections of the moral field, hardly knowing whither they were going or what should befall them. They often suddenly appeared, with no other companions than their faithful circuit steeds, among utter strangers. They were, indeed, as Asbury exclaimed, when riding through New England, "a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men!" Amidst their many trials, however, they were cheered, ever and anon, by finding warm welcomes, like Paul's at Philippi, from those whose hearts the Lord had opened, and who, by some previous providential means, had been prepared to appreciate their decried mission, and to open their doors for them.

Lynn, where the first Methodist society of Massachusetts was formed, afforded an example. Jesse Lee had been contending with apparently insurmountable obstacles at Boston; attempt after attempt to introduce Methodism into that city failed. The prospect seemed hopeless; any ordinary man would have retreated in despair, but Lee held out till his pecuniary means were almost gone. In his extremity, he received a letter from Lynn, signed by Benjamin Johnson, a name now held in reverence among the Methodists of that town. Mr. Johnson invited him to Lynn, and opened his house for preaching, and it became the favorite home of the solitary and hard-pressed itinerant. "Bless the Lord," he exclaimed, as he retired to the new "prophet's chamber" that night, "bless the Lord, oh my soul, for bringing me among this people!"

The secret of this kindness was soon explained. Mr. Johnson had heard the Methodist preachers somewhere in the South, and believing them "men who showed the way of salvation," he welcomed them to the hospitalities of his house." His invitation to Lee came precisely at the critical time of his necessity. The Lord had thus prepared the way for his servant. Lee immediately turned his new home into a sanctuary; he preached there continually when not elsewhere engaged, and the results corresponded with the providential character of the opening; the first Methodist society of Massachusetts was formed there, with Mr. Johnson's name at the head of its roll, and in that village was erected the first Methodist chapel of the commonwealth; there, also, was held the first New England Conference; there was raised up the first native Methodist preacher of the Eastern States; and there, it is said, was formed the first Methodist missionary society of the United States. The ancient mansion of Benjamin Johnson has long since given place to another building, but its site is still remembered sacredly by the Methodists of Lynn, and the venerable Enoch Mudge, at the time it was taken down, secured that part of the floor on which Lee usually stood while preaching, as a precious relic.

Lee met with one of these "Providential Preparations" soon after his arrival in the Eastern States. He preached his first New England sermon at Norwalk, Connecticut, on the 17th of June, 1789. His subsequent reception in that state was such as could not have failed to drive from the field any less zealous man. He sometimes had to light the candles of the school-houses or court-rooms where he preached, and ring the bell to announce the service; he was quite generally opposed by the settled pastors and the village deacons; he was often denied the most ordinary hospitalities, and he records repeated visits to the same preaching-place without receiving a single invitation to a home, or even a word of salutation from any one of his hearers. Precious was it to him, under such circumstances, to find here and there a devout and sympathetic few, who were prepared to welcome him not only to their houses, but to their hearts.

Some years before his arrival, Mr. Black, a Wesleyan local preacher, noted as one of the founders of Methodism in the British provinces, visited Boston, and penetrated, with his message of salvation, into Connecticut. His excursion seems to have been brief, if not a casual one, but was remembered. In one place where he had preached, a few inquiring minds maintained, at the time of Lee's arrival, a weekly prayer-meeting. "This appeared to me," said Lee, when he heard of one of them at a distance, "to be an opening from the hand of the Lord." He called at the house of a Mr. Timothy Wheeler, a few miles from Fairfield, where he met a member of this little band, who welcomed him with a melting heart.

He records the interview in his journal. "She then began to tell me how it had been with them, and said there were a few of them that met once a week to sing and pray together; but they were much discouraged by their elder friends, and that they had been wishing and praying for someone to come and instruct them, and seemed to believe that God had sent me." At length she said she was so rejoiced that her strength had almost left her, and, sitting down, she began to weep. Mr. Black, one of our preachers, had been there a few years before, and some of the people had been wishing for the Methodists ever since. The news of his arrival was immediately spread abroad; he preached, and after the "meeting some of the people stayed to talk with him about religion, and wished to be instructed in the ways of the Lord." Five or six of them he thought "truly awakened," and one had "experienced a change of heart."

In 1785, Freeborn Garrettson was sent by Asbury to the British provinces, and was the first regular Methodist preacher who visited them. He went among them an utter stranger; his labors and travels were more extensive, if possible, than those of Lee in New England. He said, in his semi-centennial sermon before the New York Conference, "I traversed the mountains and valleys frequently on foot, with my knapsack on my back, guided by Indian paths in the wilderness, when it was not expedient to take a horse; and I had often to wade through morasses half leg deep in mud and water; frequently satisfying my hunger with a piece of bread and pork from my knapsack, quenching my thirst from a brook, and resting my weary limbs on the leaves of the trees. Thanks be to God, he compensated me for all my toil; for many precious souls were awakened and converted to God."

In these hard struggles he was refreshed to find the people often prepared to receive him by some such previous means as I have described. Mr. Black, who had preceded Lee in Connecticut, had also been in the provinces, especially in New Brunswick, and had scattered the good seed in his course. At the town of Liverpool, Nova Scotia, Garrettson found already a small band of

twenty Methodists, who received him with a grateful welcome, and were doubled in number during the first month he spent among them.

He gives an account of the origin of this infant church. "Captain D., since gone to heaven, some time before any of us came to this place, met with Mr. Wesley's tract, called 'The Character of a Methodist.'" This excited in him a desire to see and hear one of the new sect. He sent to Shelburn for "Brother John Man," who visited him, and thus laid the foundations of Methodism in Liverpool. Garrettson in this manner found the "way of the Lord prepared before him." He entered cheerfully and zealously the open door, and in short time wrote to Wesley:--

"Some weeks ago I left Halifax, and went to Liverpool, where the Lord is carrying on a blessed work: many precious souls of late have been set at liberty, to praise a sin-pardoning God. There is a lively society. The greater part of the town attend our ministry, and the first people have joined our society."

Methodism was introduced into the state of Vermont by a similar providence, Fletcher's "Fifth Check to Antinomianism" taking, in this case, the place of Wesley's "Character of a Methodist," in the last related. I am indebted to a letter from my venerable friend, Rev. Laban Clark, who was one of the earliest converts of our cause in that state, for an account of the fact. Mr. John Langdon, a native of South Wilbraham, Mass., settled in Vershire when the country was yet a wilderness. Being of a thoughtful turn of mind, and fond of reading, he became dissatisfied with the doctrines which had been taught him from his youth. The doctrine of fore-ordination was to him a stumbling-block, and totally at variance with the New Testament. After many fruitless efforts to find some people with whom he could agree in doctrine and unite in fellowship, he gave up the search in despair.

As he entered his house one day, his wife informed him that she had received a letter from her father (Deacon Ashley, of Springfield), and that he had sent them a book. John replied, "I am glad to have a letter from him; but I don't want his book, for I suppose it is some of his Calvinism." "No, I think not," she replied; "he writes something I do not understand;" and handed him the letter. John read the letter, and then took up the book and read, till, interrupted by tears of joy, he said, "This man writes just as I have believed!" He then turned again to the letter, which stated that a new sect of preachers had visited them, called Methodists; that they went out two and two, like the apostles, traveled circuits, and preached free salvation to all men. Taking up the book, he read again; and, after reading a while, he sprang upon his feet and exclaimed, "If there is such a people under heaven, I will find them!"

Shortly after this, he received information that there was to be a great meeting of the Methodists in Tolland, Connecticut, called a quarterly meeting. Although he had but four days' notice, and the distance was near two hundred miles, he set off, and arrived on Saturday, just after the meeting had closed for the afternoon; but learning that there was to be preaching in the evening, he put up for the night. At the time appointed he repaired to the meeting, which was in a private house, and took his seat in the congregation. After waiting a little while, a plain man stepped in, with his hymn-book in his hand. A short pause ensued, when the preacher gave out the hymn--

"O that I could repent!

O that I could believe!
Thou with thy voice the marble rent,
The rock in sunder cleave!"

This was the very language of his own heart, and he thought he never heard such a hymn before. After singing, the preacher kneeled down and prayed. The prayer was as extraordinary as the hymn, and John, having understood that the Methodists had bishops, concluded this must certainly be the bishop, for no common man could make such a prayer. He was a young man, who had just been licensed to preach. The sermon was equally satisfactory to him, and when the meeting was ended, he stepped forward and introduced himself to the preachers, informed them how far he had come, and for what purpose he came. He wished to learn their doctrines and form of discipline. The preachers received him kindly, and were ready to answer all his inquiries, and invited him to attend their love-feast the next morning.

That Sabbath was to him as the beginning of days. He had found a people with whom he could unite in doctrine, and whom he believed to be the people of God. Before he left, he obtained a promise that a preacher should be sent to Vermont. Accordingly, Joshua Hall was appointed, in 1794, to Vermont; but the frightful stories told of the Green Mountain boys deterred him from going.

Mr. Langdon went home with a full purpose to seek and serve the Lord. He was satisfied, not only that salvation was free for all, but that it was the privilege of all to know their sins forgiven; and he sought, by earnest prayer, and shortly experienced, the blessing of peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

He waited, with longing desire and fond expectation, for the preacher to come; but no preacher arrived that year. He wrote, and urged the Macedonian cry, "Come over and help us," and continued praying for the coming of the heralds of free salvation; but not until the fall of 1796 was another preacher appointed, when Rev. Nicholas Snethen was sent to Vershire.

Meanwhile, another providential circumstance had occurred, to aid in preparing the way for Methodism in that new state. This was the arrival of a Methodist family by the name of Peckett. Mrs. Peckett, whose maiden name was Margaret Appleton, was a lady of vigorous and devout character. She had belonged to the Wesleyans in England, and was John Wesley's house-keeper during three years in London, and sometime Band-mate of Miss Bosanquette, afterwards Mrs. Fletcher. She was, therefore, thoroughly familiar with Methodism. Her home in the wilderness became a sanctuary, and under her influence, Martin Ruter, Laban Clark, and others of our primitive ministry, were trained for the heroic achievements which have distinguished their lives.

Mr. Clark writes me, "I consider it of singular use to Martin Ruter, as it had been to me, to be favored with the counsel and instruction of this excellent woman and mother in Israel. We were not only advised and encouraged in our religious experience and duty, but we learned from her the peculiar forms and usages, not only of early Methodism, but of the founder of Methodism. Her intimate acquaintance with many of the early preachers in connection with Mr. Wesley -- her knowledge of their personal sufferings and trials, especially of young men who came to him to make known their experience and exercise of mind on the subject of preaching -- were topics of

frequent conversation, to which we listened with the most intense interest. In addition to this, she had a considerable collection of Mr. Wesley's books, which were well calculated to confirm and strengthen our minds in doctrinal views and Christian experience. At that time, such helps were of great use to us, as the novelty of Methodism had excited much opposition."

When Mr. Snethen arrived in the state, he found the families of Mr. Langdon and Mrs. Peckett awaiting him, and the way had already been partially prepared for him. Langdon became a local preacher, and was signally useful. He went out on preaching excursions into the state, and spread the truth with great energy. He was a man of courage and stout muscles, and they served to protect him and his brethren, on several occasions, in persecutions and mobs that beset the early progress of Methodism in Vermont. He removed, afterwards, to the West, and died, I believe, near Cincinnati. Methodism, thus introduced, spread through Vermont rapidly. Mr. Snethen made no return of members at the next Conference, but at the following session nearly three hundred were reported. At the session of 1799 more than six hundred were returned, and they were multiplied to nearly eleven hundred before the next Conference.

A very extraordinary example of these special providences is recorded by Dr. Bangs. He says:--

"The following account, so illustrative of the particular care which God exercises over his people, is related on the best authority, having been taken from the lips of those who were witnesses of the facts.

"In 1794 Methodism was brought into Southold, and the manner of its introduction is worthy to be recorded, as it will show the efficacy of prayer, and the peculiar agency of the Holy Spirit, in the spread of the Gospel. A Mrs. Moore, who had been converted to God through the instrumentality of the Methodists, removed to this place; and although there were churches and ministers not very remote from it, yet no very efficient means had been used to build up the cause of God, or to arrest the spread of iniquity.

"Living at too great a distance from that ministry which had been the means of her conversion, and finding in her village two females like-minded with herself, they agreed to meet together every Monday evening, to pray that God would send such a minister among them as would feed their own souls, and be made the means of awakening the wicked inhabitants of the place. They met, accordingly, two evenings, at the house of Mr. P. Vail, who, at that time, was not a member of any church, but so far favorable as to gratify his wife in bringing her female friends to his house for prayer-meeting. On the third night of their meeting, Mr. V., returning home weary from the business of the day, had retired about the time they usually met, which rendered it inconvenient to hold it that evening.

"This circumstance almost discouraged them, fearing that it arose from his dislike to the exercises, and that they should be deprived of this means of grace. However, they agreed to return home, and remember, individually, before God, the great object for which they had met together. During the exercises of this evening, they felt an unusual spirit of prayer, Mrs. Moore, in particular, who continued [in prayer] until near midnight. Her whole soul was drawn out to the Lord, nor could she be denied. The wickedness of the place, and the want of an engaged ministry,

were continually before her. At the close of this struggle, she felt an assurance that God had heard them, attended with these words, 'I have heard their cry, and I am come down to deliver them;' and so strong was this conviction, that she began to praise God for what she knew he would do.

"At this very time, Wilson Lee, a Methodist minister, was in New London, and had his trunk on board a vessel to go to his appointment in New York. Waiting for a passage over night, the wind being contrary, he felt an unusual struggle for the salvation of souls, attended with a constant impression to cross the sound to Long Island. Never having been there, and having his work in another direction, he endeavored, for some time, to dismiss it; but perceiving that it still followed him, he resolved, if his way were opened, to proceed.

"It should be observed, that his peculiar exercises in New London were on the same night, and almost at the same hour, in which these pious females were engaged in prayer on Long Island. Next morning, on going to the wharf, he found a sloop ready to sail for Southold, and believing his call now to be from the Lord, he immediately went on board. Making inquiry, on his landing, if there were any praying people in the place, he was immediately directed to the house of Mrs. Moore, who, seeing him coming, and knowing a Methodist minister from his appearance, without a personal acquaintance or previous introduction, came out to the door, and said, 'Thou blessed of the Lord, come in!'

"He then told her the end for which he came, and related the peculiar providence which had directed him on his way; and she, in turn, the circumstances of their prayer-meeting, and the assurance they received that God had heard them. A congregation was soon collected, and he who had felt such a desire for the salvation of souls found here a ready people, to whom the word of the Lord was attended with power. Shortly afterwards a class was formed, and from that period to this, Methodism has continued in this place."

I have referred to Garrettson's visit to the British provinces. Dr. Coke had intended to visit them, and to found the church there himself; but, while on his voyage, was driven by an extraordinary storm to the West Indies, where he discovered a very singular example of the kind of providential interpositions I have been noticing. I have recorded the fact elsewhere, but shall take the liberty of using it in illustration of my present subject.

On the 25th of December, 1786, the vessel took refuge in the harbor of Antigua. Actuated by that missionary zeal which allowed him no rest, he immediately began to traverse the islands, preaching wherever he could find opportunity. He arrived at last, with his companion, Mr. Hammet, at St. Eustatius, which belonged to the Dutch. As they landed they were addressed by two colored men, who inquired, with a cordiality unusual among strangers, 'if they belonged to the brethren.' The doctor, supposing they referred to the Moravians, said no, but remarked, that they belonged to the same great spiritual family.

The hospitable Negroes, however, had made no mistake. The doctor was surprised to learn that they had come to welcome him, having received word from the island of St. Christopher's that he designed to visit them. They were two of a number of free Negroes who had actually hired a house for his accommodation, which they called his home, and had also provided for the expense

of his journey. They conducted him to his new parsonage, where he was entertained with profuse hospitality.

The doctor was taken by surprise. No missionary had been there, and the island was destitute of the means of grace. These generous colored people were evidently children of God. His visit to them was received as that of an angel, and yet there was mingled with their joy signs of a common sorrow. With the utmost interest, he inquired into their history.

They informed him, in reply, that some months before, a slave, named Harry, had been brought to the island from the United States, who was converted, and had joined a Methodist class, before his removal. On arriving among them, Harry found himself without a religious associate, and with no means of religious improvement but his private devotions. The poor African nevertheless maintained his fidelity to his Lord. After much anxiety and prayer, he began publicly to proclaim to his fellow-servants the name of Christ.

Such an example was a great novelty in the island, and attracted much attention. His congregations were large; even the governor of the island deigned to hear him, and, by approving his course, indirectly protected him from the opposition to which his servile condition would otherwise have exposed him. God owned the labors of his humble servant, and at times the Holy Spirit descended in overwhelming influence upon the multitude. Such was the effect on many of the slaves, that they fell like dead men to the earth, and lay for hours insensible. At a meeting not long before the doctor's arrival, sixteen persons were thus struck down, under his exhortations.

Such an extraordinary circumstance excited a general sensation among the planters. They determined to suppress the meetings. They appealed to the governor, who immediately ordered the slave before him, and forbade his preaching, by severe penalties. So far had the planters succeeded in exciting the morose temper of the governor, that it was only by the intervention of the supreme judge that Harry was saved from being cruelly flogged. His faithful labors were now peremptorily stopped. It was a remarkable coincidence, that Dr. Coke arrived the very day on which Harry was silenced. Hence the mingled joy and sorrow of the "little flock" who so hospitably entertained him.

After giving the doctor this information, they insisted upon his preaching to them immediately, lest by delay the opportunity should be lost; but fearing, from the silence which had that day been imposed on Harry, that it might result in more evil than good, he declined until he should see the governor. Such, however, was their hunger for the bread of life, that he could not induce them to separate till they had twice sung, and he had thrice joined with them in prayer.

The doctor found, by his interview with the authorities, that it would be imprudent to tarry on the island. He therefore formed the little persecuted band into classes, under the most prudent men he could find among them, and, committing them to God, departed amid their tears and prayers. So amply had they supplied him with fruits and other provisions, that in a voyage of near three weeks, during which eight persons shared these bounties with him, they were not exhausted.

Poor Harry, suspected and watched, did not presume to preach again; but supposing, after a considerable interval, that the excitement against him had ceased, and that the prohibition only

extended to his preaching, he ventured to pray openly with his brethren. He was immediately summoned before the governor, and sentenced to be publicly whipped, then imprisoned, and afterwards banished from the island.

The sentence was executed with unrelenting cruelty, but the poor Negro felt himself honored in suffering for his Master. While the blood streamed from his back, his Christian fortitude was unshaken. From the whipping-post he was taken to prison, whence he was secretly removed, but whither, none of his little company could discover.

In 1789 Dr. Coke returned to the West Indies. After preaching at many other islands, he again visited St. Eustatius, to comfort its suffering society. The spirit of persecution still raged there, and the fate of Harry was still wrapped in impenetrable mystery. None of his associates had been able to obtain the slightest information respecting him since his disappearance. A cruel edict had been passed by the local government, inflicting thirty-nine lashes on any colored man who should be found praying. It seemed the determination of the authorities to banish religion from the island; yet the seed sown by Harry had sprung up, and nothing could uproot it.

During all these trials, the little society of St. Eustatius had been growing; its persecuted members had contrived, by some means, to preserve their union, and the doctor found them two hundred and fifty-eight strong, and privately baptized many before his departure. They had been, indeed, "hid with Christ in God." The government again drove him from the island.

After visiting the United States and England, this tireless man of God was, in 1790, again sounding the alarm among the West India Islands, and again he visited St. Eustatius. A new governor had been appointed, and he hoped for a better reception; but he was repelled as obstinately as before. Still the great Shepherd took care of the flock. The rigor of the laws against them had been somewhat relaxed, and, in the providence of God, eight Exhorters had arisen among them, who were extensively useful to the slaves. To these, and to the leaders, he gave private advice and comfort, and, committing them to God, who had hitherto so marvelously kept them, he again departed.

The chief care of the society devolved on a person named Ryley, who, about four years previously, had been converted under the labors of black Harry. Harry's fate was still involved in mysterious secrecy, and his friends were afflicted with the worst fears. But his "works followed him;" he had kindled a fire on St. Eustatius which many waters could not quench. On his return to England, Dr. Coke interested the Wesleyan churches in his behalf, and many were the prayers which ascended for him and the afflicted church which he had planted.

In 1792, the doctor again visited the island, but he was not allowed to preach. Nothing was yet known of the fate of poor Harry. The spirit of persecution still prevailed, and even feeble women had been dragged to the whipping-post for having met for prayer. But, in the good providence of God, religion still prospered secretly, and the classes met by stealth. The doctor left them, with a determination to go to Holland, and solicit the interposition of the parent government. This he did with his usual perseverance, but without success. The tyranny of the local government continued about twelve years longer; but the great Head of the church at last sent deliverance to his people.

In 1804, about eighteen years after Harry was silenced, a missionary was admitted to the island; a chapel was afterwards built, and Sunday Schools established, and St. Eustatius has since continued to be named among the successful missions of the West Indies. Dr. Coke lived to see this long-closed door opened, and the devoted missionary enter with the bread of life for the famishing but faithful little band of disciples. Thus was the way opened for the establishment of Methodism on that island. The germ planted amidst such storms of adversity has taken root, and sprung up into a vigorous growth.

But what became of poor Harry? During about ten years, his fate was unknown, and all hope of discerning it before the sea should give up its dead was abandoned. About this time the doctor again visited the states. One evening, after preaching, he was followed to his room by a colored man, deeply affected. It was poor black Harry!

Reader, what would you not have given to have witnessed that interview? He had been sent, in a cargo of slaves, to the States, but was now free. Through all these years and changes, he had "kept the faith," and was still exercising himself with continued usefulness in the sphere which he occupied.

The introduction of Methodism into the United States by Philip Embury, and the preparation thus made for the reception of Wesley's missionaries, is an example of our subject on a sublime scale. But we are now treating of less important instances. One of the most interesting posts of our cause in the north, during the latter part of the last century, was Ashgrove, New York. "This society," says Dr. Bangs, "may be considered as the center of Methodism in this northern part of the country." It has been the seat of annual Conferences, the source of evangelical influences to a large area of territory, and the headquarters of the old Cambridge circuit -- an extensive range of ministerial labor, reaching into Vermont.

When Rev. Lemuel Smith was sent to this region, in 1788, he found a society already organized. After the regular preachers from England had taken charge of the infant church of New York city, Philip Embury and a few other members of the society removed, it seems, to Ashgrove. They found there a Mr. Ashton, a Methodist emigrant from Ireland, and with him a few other Irish emigrants, who formed the new society. They struggled along in the wilderness by themselves during several years, -- for the Methodist itinerants had not penetrated further up the Hudson than Peekskill, about forty miles from New York, when they were organized. When Mr. Smith arrived, he was received as the messenger of God. An extended reformation resulted from his labors, and at the end of the year he returned one hundred and fifty-four members. A preacher of the circuit wrote in 1827, --

"After the coming of the Rev. Lemuel Smith to this place, order and organization were given to the societies in the north. In proportion to its permanency was the work extended, till it spread far and wide. The circuit was soon extended to Pittstown and Lansingburg in the south; the frontier towns in Vermont were taken in, and the same preachers, to encompass their circuit, traveled to old Fort Ann, and even to Scroon, in the county of Essex, over against Fort Ticonderoga, in the north."

Philip Embury, the founder of American Methodism, lived and labored for years in this region, and died at last, in the faith, at Salem, not far off, where his services are now commemorated by a monument.

Such illustrations might be gathered from almost all sections of the church; and when it is considered what an important mission Methodism has already achieved in the religious history of our country, it may not be deemed presumptuous in us to suppose them more than accidental -- the providential auspices of a great work, which, begun in humbleness, and feebleness, and reproach, has brought the blessings of the Gospel home to the hearts and dying beds of millions, and is now almost coextensive with our continent.

* * * * *

07 -- AN OLD PILGRIM AT THE END OF HIS JOURNEY -- CARVOSSO

Mnason of Cyprus, an old disciple. -- Act 21:16

Carvosso, when more than 80 years old, and almost at the end of his pilgrimage -- and what a pilgrimage was his! -- wrote:--

"I think I never felt my feeble frame so crushed with the infirmities of age as in the past week. But it is very pleasing to know; that while this earthly house of my tabernacle is dissolving, 'I have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.' Glory be to God, for such a knowledge as this! Amen and Amen."

This sounds like the shouting of an old wounded hero on the battlefield, in the midst of victory. He suffered excruciatingly at last from an incurable malady; but the path of his pilgrimage grew brighter even unto the perfect day. He writes, after a period of confinement:--

"Seeing that nature's ties are all dissolving, it affords me no small consolation to look forward to the building of God in the heavens, which I know is mine by the inward testimony of the spirit. Yes, for thee, my soul, for thee! Glory be to God! I feel my bodily weakness increasing more and more; but I bless God, he gives me fresh tokens of his love and approbation, to assure me that I am his. This morning, feeling much of the helpless worm, I wanted a stronger inward testimony of my sonship; and looking up to my Advocate with God, these words sweetly flowed into my mind:--

'Before the throne my Surety stands;
My name is written on his hands.'

This was enough; tears of joy overflowed my eyes, and my heart dissolved in love."

The end approached; eighty-three years had passed over him, and yet the brightness increases. He writes:--

"Yesterday I went to chapel, but was so poorly it was with difficulty I could return. At present I seem stripped of nearly all my bodily strength; but I bless the Lord, I feel my mind perfectly resigned. Christ is all in all. I want no other portion in earth or heaven. His presence makes my paradise. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given. Glory be to God!"

At last the veteran, in his 85th year, lays down to die. His disease was a local complaint, incident to old age, and inexpressibly painful -- one that destroys existence mostly by the effect of pain itself, exhausting the constitution, and gradually consuming life. I suppose that if Carvosso had died of fire, beginning with the hand and burning onward slowly, till the consuming process had invaded the vital functions, he could scarcely have suffered more; and yet his faith bore him up as on the pinions of an angel. One of the last scenes of his life is thus described by his son, a Wesleyan preacher:--

"This morning early I was sent for to attend my father, who had been taken much worse during the night. I found him in great bodily suffering. Since I saw him on Wednesday, he had drunk deep of the bitter cup. The sight was very distressing to those about him. At ten, A. M., he was seized with a convulsive fit. We then thought the mortal affliction was past; but, after lying in a state of insensibility about four hours, he again awoke up in a suffering world, but with a blessed increase of the earnest of heaven in his soul. For several successive hours he exhibited, in lively conversation, all the triumph of faith. With a countenance illuminated with holy joy, and in a tone and emphasis not to be described, he exclaimed, 'I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me in that day.' Never before did I hear this beautiful passage quoted and applied so appropriately and feelingly. Every clause seemed living truth, exhibiting all the freshness of 'the tender grass springing out of earth by the clear shining after rain.' 'I speak not boastingly,' says he; 'I am a sinner saved by grace' [Obviously here, "I am a sinner" and "the chief of sinners," applies to what he was before Christ redeemed, him and not to his present state. -- DVM] -- the chief of sinners, for whom Jesus died.

"Surety, who all my debt has paid,
For all my sins atonement made,
The Lord my righteousness."

I have no doubt, no fear, -- all is calm within; perfect love casteth out fear. I shall soon be with Jesus.

"Jesus, my all in all thou art:
My rest in toil, my ease in pain;
The medicine of my broken heart;
In war my peace, in loss my gain.
My smile beneath the tyrant's frown,
In shame my glory and my crown."

"He then adverted to the assurance of faith, and strongly insisted on the Christian's privilege to retain the indubitable evidence; observing that 'God's word says, "We know that all

things work together for good," &c.; and again, "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens;" not we hope -- we trust -- but "we know."

"Highly to our edification and joy, we now beheld the veteran Christian warrior in the bottom of the burning fiery furnace, clapping his hands amidst the flame, and triumphing and glorying in his great Deliverer. O, it was good to be there! I would not have been absent on any account. Truly it was a place 'privileged beyond the common walk of virtuous life, -- quite in the verge of heaven.' I had long seen my dear father 'doing,' I now saw him 'suffering,' the will of God. While we knelt, round his bed in prayer, we felt the presence of God in an extraordinary manner. Glory be to God!"

An old, fellow pilgrim calls on the dying hero: they never expect to see each other again in the flesh; their hearts melt, but "while they talked over past and present mercies, they seemed to mount high in the chariot of Aminadab, and "my father," says the son, "was 'lost in wonder, love, and praise!'"

The end was at hand. He had a prodigious strength of constitution, but the consuming agony shakes and baffles it; yet the song of deliverance was on his lips. His son writes:--

"My dear afflicted father is now evidently fast sinking in the outward man, but his confidence in Jehovah is steadfast, unmovable. The heat of the furnace still increases, and nothing short of an Abrahamic faith can support the 'strong, commanding evidence' of God's unchanging love. But he is unburned in fire, and appears to beholders a blessed monument of the power of religion. With tears, and his own indescribable emphasis, he repeated those beautiful verses, --

Though waves and storms go o'er my head;
Though strength, and health, and friends, be gone;
Though joys be withered all and dead,
And every comfort be withdrawn;
On this my steadfast soul relies, --
Father, thy mercy never dies.

'Fixed on this ground will I remain,
Though my heart fail and flesh decay;
This anchor shall my soul sustain
When earth's foundations melt away;
Mercy's full power I then shall prove,
Loved with an everlasting love.'

"Never, since the commencement of his affliction, have I seen him so exceedingly far lifted above himself. At times, for hours together, he is sustained in the highest Christian triumph; when no language of sacred poetry, or of the Scriptures, appears too strong to afford expression to the vivid feelings of his full heart."

At last the keen agony ends, -- the aged saint departs. He speaks of his funeral, -- he loses the power of speech, -- it returns again for a few minutes, -- his friends how around him in prayer, -- he responds with animation, -- he pronounces a benediction on them when they rise, and now "gathering up his feet" to go, he sings, with his expiring breath, the doxology, --

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!"

But his voice fails before the chorus is through. A friend at his bedside speaks of the uplifted hand as a not unusual signal of victory in death, when all other power of expression is gone. The arm of the dying hero rises, and he is gone. So triumphed in death William Carvosso, in the 85th year of his life, and the 64th of his religious pilgrimage. He was a man of humble life, extraordinary usefulness, entire consecration, and victorious faith.

I have described the conclusion of this aged saint's career, because it presents an impressive example of the strength and consolation of piety in old age.

Old age, more than any other stage of life, is dependent upon religion for its happiness. The sources of enjoyment from the physical appetites and active life fail under its decrepitude. That largest of all resources of human happiness, the hope of the future, daily diminishes, so far as this life is concerned; there is neither scope for much further exertion, nor energy for it, if there were. A revolution full of revulsion and sadness comes over life: hitherto its plans, its ambition, its joys even, have had reference chiefly to the future; now the retrospective takes the place of the prospective, and the future diminishes to a scarcely appreciable space, and is bounded by a termination from which the heart turns away. What, under such circumstances, must be the vacancy and wretchedness of existence to a human being who cannot throw the vision of the soul beyond the remaining interval of life and decay, on to the immortal prospects of religious hope? Religion may be more necessary, in earlier life, for the right direction and support of the duties of the man, but now it becomes more necessary for the support of the man himself.

Its sustaining grace and comfort at this period is often exemplified. Beautiful examples of serene and sanctified age adorn the ordinary walks of life; examples in which the hoary head is indeed a crown of glory. Doubtless the reader can recall such examples now existing within the circle of his Christian intercourse; but, in attempting to do so, how many cases may be enumerated, also, of fretful and repulsive age, in which a life of Christian profession is terminating with infirm tempers, as well as infirm powers! Such instances we can never witness without a deep sense of melancholy. Physical causes may sometimes account for and excuse them, but not always; they are seldom witnessed where there has been a previous life of profound and cordial piety; and too often it is to be feared that they are the result of a re-development of old characteristic dispositions, which were repressed under the self-restraint of less enervated faculties, but which would have been extinguished by a more thorough sanctification of early life. An ambiguous religious character, in early or middle life, seldom ends well; and men who, with a profession of religion, are nevertheless backsliders in heart, and continue so till advanced life, exhibit, as if by a retributive providence, the evidences of an inward and scarcely retrievable apostasy, while they still sullenly cling to the exterior of piety.

Comfortless and chilling cases are these, and sad monitions to all who have not yet reached the same lamentable condition. Our salvation is indeed "by grace, through faith;" and by being thus conditioned, it is placed within the reach of sick beds, capital culprits, and the eleventh hour of old age; but the laws of moral conduct still hold, and fear fully hold, against the delaying sinner; and he that, after having been purified unto God, loses his first love, and lives along through early and middle life with a depreciated, heartless regard for the cause of his Lord, will, when overtaken by the decay of old age, find his habitual negligence riveted like a fetter upon his debilitated soul; and if he is not permitted to live and die a solemn warning to others, it is because he is plucked as a brand from the burning. Look around you, and ask yourself how many you can enumerate, who, after a life of but partial interest in religion, attained in old age a consecrated character, and a comfortable, trustful piety? There is a solemn significance in that warning, "Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting."

Life is not only probationary to eternity, but its successive periods are probationary to each other. Old age is the last, we may almost say, the confirmed stage in the series; its facilities for the modification of character are almost, if not entirely, gone. Childhood entails the peculiarities of youth, but the pliability of character is yet such that it may readily retrieve itself from unfortunate biases; youth, with still more certainty, transmits its tendencies to manhood; still the work of self-recovery is practicable and common, but if now postponed, manhood indurates the moral defects of youth, -- the heart of flesh becomes the heart of stone, -- and rarely does even the Gospel, with its demonstration of the Spirit and of power, rescue the self-doomed man.

A chief reason of the unfavorable moral qualities of old age is, that men do not remind themselves of this, transmission and progressive development of moral characteristics through the successive periods of life. They indulge their characteristic defects for the present, believing that there will be time enough in the future to amend them; meanwhile the evil virus infects more radically the moral constitution, and what might have been readily overcome before is now irremediable.

Happy they, then, who early consecrate themselves to the true, the only befitting purpose of life, the sanctification of their souls; and who, like Carvosso, as they advance through the stages of their pilgrimage, ascend higher and higher on the mount of Christian vision, so that when, with weary step, they approach the end of their course, it shall not be with uncertainty of their position, or the despondent consciousness that they have lost their way, and are wandering among dark ravines and rocks, but with the assurance that the radiant summit is at hand, and that its brightness increases on every remaining step of the journey!

* * * * *

08 -- HAPPINESS IN OLD AGE

They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing. -- Psa. 92:14

The reflections of the preceding article naturally lead to the inquiry, "How may old age be most effectually rendered happy, so far as the moral conditions of its happiness are concerned?" Let us answer the question somewhat summarily.

1. It has already been answered, so far as it relates to the purely religious means of consolation. These too are always presupposed; in any reply to the question; yet, though it may be considered trite to dwell on a topic so manifest and so acknowledged, I must add to the preceding remarks, that not only is religion, at this period of life, as at all others, a chief support of the mind, but a very specific and determinate religious experience should be sought by the aged, -- by all, indeed, but by him especially. Let him not be satisfied with vagueness on so vital a question as his acceptance with God, for the growing weakness of his faculties may soon reduce him to a state where that question can no longer be intelligently examined.

Life, with him, is converging all its solemn probation to a termination -- it is about to evolve from that near point its great and irreversible issues. Let not, then, its supreme interest, its only security, be uncertain. The aged man, if any, should be the earnest Christian, the true saint. He should be religiously meditative; he should live by faith and by the day; he should be able to say, with the clear "witness of the spirit," "I know that my Redeemer liveth; and though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." Seek, aged believer, seek at once this determinate religious experience; and then, as you anticipate the decay of your faculties, you will not fear for the safety of your soul, for the great point of its responsibility will be secured.

2. Those who are verging on to old age should remind themselves that its infirmities will exasperate any characteristic defects they may have hitherto regarded with little concern, and may render such faults a source of annoyance, if not misery, to themselves and their families, the remainder of their lives. They should arrest themselves at this critical point, and subject themselves to a more than usual self-scrutiny and self-rectification. A querulous temper is especially liable to exasperation by age, and to embitter it. A sarcastic disposition is often confirmed by it into an habitual and venomous severity. The croaker of middle life becomes an insupportable grievance in old age. "The good old times" have gone, to him, and carried away with them most, if not all, the hopes of church and state; he often brings suspicion on his own virtues, by his heartless distrust of the goodness of all others. The frugal man is very liable to become covetous in his declining years. Wit, humor, and benevolence, on the other hand, often, like wines, become more genial by age, and, indeed, are less frequently, perhaps, than most other qualities, found marred by its decrepitude. Now these faulty traits are, to a greater degree than is usually supposed, subject to our self-control, if resolutely checked in season.

3. Employment of one's time is requisite to enjoyment. Happiness, a great man has said, consists not chiefly in possession, nor in hope, but in occupation. Retirement from active life, which is usual to old age, and is frequently rendered necessary by its loss of capacity, is one of its painful causes of unhappiness. But the leisure which results from it might be made a means of enjoyment, instead of misery. Nature designed it as a serene season of ease, the calm evening between the hard day's journey and the night sleep of the weary pilgrim. But it should not be spent in counting the wrinkles on his brow, or the lessening pulsations of his heart. He should have its leisure filled up with pleasant occupations, -- each day systematically divided and appropriated.

Happy old men will always be found addicted to uniform occupations of some kind, however trivial; and so dependent do they become on such means of enjoyment, that often the employments of their leisure acquire a quaint punctiliousness, as entertaining to their associates as it is relieving to themselves; for what is more characteristic and interesting than the conversation of happy-hearted old men, -- their staid attachment to old friends, old walks, accustomed places of the sitting-room, old books, and old routines of social visiting?

There are two employments of the leisure of old age which are especially relieving to it, namely, practical benevolence and literary entertainment. The former is always accompanied with a kindly and tranquil temper. Should his pecuniary means for it be small, still let the aged man have his regular rounds of visiting among the poor; and if he can carry but a loaf of bread a week to a suffering family, it will be a benediction on his own life, if not on theirs.

The entertainment of good books is peculiarly accordant with the quiet and retirement of old age, and he that has acquired a taste for reading will find in it an exhaustless resource of enjoyment, when almost every other has failed. That vacuity, or ennui, which is so common and insupportable to the declining years of men who have been addicted to active lives, has, perhaps, no better remedy than in interesting reading; for in books we can mentally pass, day by day, through scenes of interest and excitement such as our ordinary lives seldom equal. We can traverse the world with the traveler, or mingle in the strife of its great revolutions with the historian, or investigate its phenomena with the man of science, or enjoy its picturesque charms and idealizations with the poet.

The devoted student lives in books an infinitely more varied and more felicitous life than in the real world around him, and happy is that old age which is blessed with the bland light that literature sheds on the pathway, however lowly, of its faithful followers. Many men, in deep affliction, have found the continuous pursuit of a single study an efficacious relief to the mind; the remedy would be a good one for the afflictions of old age, and, if we may judge from some well-authenticated instances, it would also tend much to postpone that imbecility which often overtakes the mind so suddenly on retirement from active life.

Meanwhile, remind thyself, venerable man of God! that life is but a probation -- its chastisements are more important to thee than its pleasures. They test thee, -- they strengthen thee. Each stage of thy pilgrimage has its appropriate trials; and it is to be expected that the breaking up of thy chrysalis will have its pains, though it shall liberate thy imprisoned spirit for its flight into the freedom of the universe. Hold up thy hoary head, bravely though soberly, as thou movest towards the end of all things earthly; for then, remember, begin with thee all things heavenly and eternal!

* * * * *

09 -- ANECDOTES OF REV. JOHN COLLINS

I show marvellous things. -- Micah 7:15

The name of John Collins will hereafter have a distinguished place in the history of Methodism in the United States. It is yet precious in the memory of thousands of the Methodists of the West. Judge McLean, one of his most intimate friends, and, I believe, one of the converts of his early ministry, says, that as "a local and an itinerant minister, it is supposed that the Methodist church in the West has not had a more successful preacher than Mr. Collins." He was, in many respects, a notable man -- a worthy member of the legio tonans which fought the first battles of Methodism in the valley of the Mississippi and composed the old "Western Conference," when it comprehended the Mississippi, the Holston, the Cumberland, the Kentucky, and the Ohio "Districts."

When he joined it, all Ohio was under one Presiding Elder, and there were but nine appointments in the whole District; but these were far-extended circuits, and required labors and privations the record of which would be incredible in this day. There were some memorable men associated with him, in that glorious old Conference. McKendree, Young, Blackmore, Burke, Lakin, Quin, Cartwright, are the names of a few of them, which will not soon be forgotten by the elder Methodists of the great valley.

John Collins was a marked man in his person. He always wore the primitive, Quaker-like dress of our early ministry; his forehead was high, and nobly developed; his eyes small, but very expressive, and over all his features was spread an air of refinement, and a sort of intellectual and benevolent glow, that immediately won the interest of the spectator. And his spirit and manners corresponded with these indications.

The unction of divine grace abode upon his soul. The blandness and meekness of his temper, his gentle sympathy, the deeply spiritual and yet always prudent character of his conversation, made him a man to be loved by all who knew him. He was always interesting in the pulpit, and not infrequently overwhelmingly affecting. A very fountain of pathos welled up in his devout heart, and seldom did he preach without weeping himself, and constraining his audience to weep also. One who heard him several days in succession, at a quarterly meeting, said, "I came to the conclusion that the 'British Spy' only dreamed of a pulpit orator -- that it was left for me to behold one."

John Collins had the honor to preach the first Methodist sermon delivered in the city of Cincinnati. This was in 1804. He was wandering through the streets, seeking at the stores for an article which he wished to purchase. In one of them he inquired if there were any Methodists in the town. The store-keeper informed him that his wife was one, and that he himself had been brought up among Methodists. The preacher embraced him with a glad heart, and prepared immediately to preach to his family and neighbors. The service was held in an "upper chamber," and the congregation consisted of twelve persons. He preached from our Lord's commission to his apostles. His own heart, and the hearts of his audience, melted under the word.

That night was laid, in humility, but in faith, the corner-stone of the whole structure of that extended Methodist interest which now exists in the queen city of the West. One person was awakened on the spot, and became a local preacher. A class was soon after formed, of eight members, only one of whom survives, I believe, to our times.

Many interesting and even marvelous anecdotes are reported of this great and good man. Some of them would be incredible, were they not related on his own direct authority, or other unquestionable testimony. Those who are not willing to admit the fact of preternatural communications and interpositions in these days, will consider them accidental coincidences, or account for them on those new scientific theories by which Von Reichenbach and Mayo attempt to explain similar marvels. I offer no solution of them, but merely relate them as facts.

Before he left his native state, New Jersey, for the West, he labored extensively as a local preacher; his ministerial excursions brought him often into Quaker neighborhoods. Much religious interest prevailed, through his labors, in a certain place of this kind, and a number of Friends, sharing in it, became members of the Methodist church. Others, however, took offense at the conduct of their brethren, and opposed the excitement. Mr. Collins had an appointment, one evening. On the night preceding, a Friend, who had opposed his labors, had a dream, in which he saw the scenes of the last judgment, and imagined himself weighed in scales, and, to his consternation, found wanting. While expecting, in terror, his sentence, the judge said, "Weigh him again," when he suddenly awaked.

The next day, one of his neighbors invited him to attend Mr. Collins' preaching, and judge for himself of the man he was opposing; this he positively declined. His friend then urged him to accompany him in a short walk, for the purpose of some special conversation; he consented, and was led, unsuspectingly, towards the place of worship. When he found himself near it, he attempted to return, but was urged successfully to enter, and hear the preacher for once at least. He sat with his hat on, and no little hostility in his heart to the exercises passing under his eyes; but what was his astonishment, after the introductory devotions, to hear the preacher announce for his text, "Thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting." The appositeness of the fact to his appalling dream gave an irresistible interest and solemnity to the discourse. As it advanced, describing the Scriptural standard of experimental religion, he became convinced that he was indeed "wanting" in the essential qualities of sound and saving piety. The conviction of the fact became profound; he sought the religion described to him with all his heart, became a member of the church he had opposed, and a devoted friend of the preacher. The latter, in relating the anecdote, said, "He made one of the best class-leaders I ever knew in the church."

The anecdote of this dream suggests to me another fact which he used to relate. While attending one of his appointments in the West, he dreamed that he received at the post-office a letter bearing a black seal, and containing intelligence of the death of his father, then in New Jersey. He recorded the details of the dream in his memoranda, for they had made a profound impression on his mind. On his return home, two weeks afterwards, he received precisely such a letter as he had seen in his dream, and the date of his father's decease agreed with the record of the memoranda. Such facts may seem incredible and fanatical, but Mr. Collins was a man of sober and not credulous mind. The frequent occurrence of similar coincidences in his life had, however, struck his attention, and led him to note them with peculiar interest. It seems also to be a truth, that a certain class of minds have, through some unexplained psychological peculiarity, an extraordinary susceptibility of such impressions. Mayo has placed this fact almost beyond a question. [12]

Mr. Collins used to relate a similar dream which he had on a Saturday night, while absent at one of his appointments, respecting the death of his son. On his way home, two days afterwards, he met one of his fellow laborers, Rev. John. Sale, who brought him the intelligence that his son had indeed expired on the preceding Saturday night.

The above reference to the death of his father reminds me of an interesting anecdote which he often related respecting the conversion of his aged parent, who had been a rigid Quaker, and showed little regard for his son's thorough views of evangelical experience. While the latter was in Ohio, then the "far West," the spiritual condition of his father became a subject of much prayer and deep concern to him. So intense became this anxiety that he at last resolved to return to New Jersey, for the express purpose of securing, if possible, the conversion of the aged man. It was, in those days, a formidable journey; the roads were bad, the distance great; but he started on horseback, with resolute purpose. All the way on his tedious route, he lifted his soul in incessant prayer that it might please God to grant the desire of his heart. Another such journey, for such a purpose, has, perhaps, seldom, if ever, been performed; yet its extraordinary character shows the extraordinary faith which prompted and sustained it, and, according to the divine promise, secured its success.

He arrived, at last. Several days were spent in approaches to his purpose by religious conversations; but the old man found them irksome, and at last said to him, with an explicitness quite unexpected, "John, we are all glad to see thee, but I don't like thy religion." This damped his hope, but his faith was strong. He had given full proof of it, and he was determined to test the promise of his God. The time came near for his departure; the prospect of his success grew faint. He at last determined to spend a whole night in secret prayer for his parent; and, in order to avoid any disturbance, chose the barn for his sanctuary. Soon after tea, he went thither, and continued in fervent supplication, wrestling, like Jacob, with the Lord, till about ten o'clock, when he heard loud knockings and calls at the barn-door; but he gave no attention to them.

By and by they were repeated, and he recognized the voice of his sister, who said the family had been seeking him through the house and neighborhood. She entreated him to return immediately to the house, for their father was in insupportable agitation of mind. He hastened to the old man's chamber, where he found him calling upon God, with a broken and contrite heart. The conversations of his son had been troubling his conscience, and he could no longer rest without a clearer sense of spiritual safety; they continued together in prayer, joined by the daughter, who was a member of the church; hour after hour passed, when, as the day was about to dawn, the Sun of Righteousness rose upon his awakened spirit, and he emerged into the marvelous light of God. The design of the visit had been secured, and the devoted evangelist returned to his distant home in the West.

His early ministerial experience was marked by many extraordinary circumstances, one of which I will record. He resisted long the conviction that it was his duty to preach, and the subject occasioned a painful conflict in his mind. At last he consented to try once, with the understanding that if he should be successful in the awakening of a single soul, he would take the fact as conclusive evidence of his duty. An occasion offered suddenly. On his way to the place of worship, the text, "Many are called but few are chosen," occurred to his mind as a suitable theme for his discourse; but he could not find the passage. He stopped at a house where a youth was

reading the Scriptures as he entered. The text which he had been seeking was a part of the chapter read. He ascertained, from the young man, the place of the verse, and preached from it with such effect, that the latter, who heard him, was awakened under the discourse, and subsequently became one of the most eloquent preachers of Methodism. He was known, and is still lamented, in the West, as Learner Blackman. He proclaimed the word of life, for many years, from Ohio to Mississippi.

After a ministry seldom equaled in power and usefulness, he [Learner Blackman] was drowned in crossing the Ohio, while returning from the Cincinnati Conference of 1815. Young Blackman's conversion was not the only fruit of this first sermon; some ten or more of the family shared in like manner its good effects. Mr. Collins no longer hesitated; he devoted himself to the ministerial work, and similar success attended his whole course.

There was a sort of moral magnetism -- if I may so call it -- about him; his casual words often produced, not merely by their pertinency, but by a peculiar and indescribable power, an indelible impression. Notwithstanding his Quaker education, he held, at the time of his religious change, the office of major of militia; his new faith led him to renounce his commission. His successor purchased his uniform and arms; on coming to receive them, Mr. Collins said, in his peculiar manner, "My friend, when you put these on, think of the reason why I put them off." The remark sunk into the mind of his friend. It could not be forgotten. It induced a train of reflection which led him to renounce his new office. He became a praying man, and, following the example of his military predecessor, entered into the communion of the church.

I could record many similar marvels which occurred in the life of this veteran evangelist. Such facts were not uncommon in the history of our first ministry. The men who composed it lived near to God. Their travels were vast. Their intercourse among men extensive and ever varying; their adventures -- especially in the wildernesses of the West -- were extraordinary; and their personal histories could not fail to present many remarkable, if not incredible incidents. They are fast passing away. Their battles for the truth have been well fought; their last marches are ending; but their sanctified trophies remain in our sanctuaries, and their memories will be precious among us forever.

John Collins was faithful unto death. When a veteran of seventy-five years, he laid down to die; but he continued still to preach Christ, in his conversations on his sick bed, and at last departed to rejoin his old ministerial comrades in heaven, exclaiming, "Happy! happy! happy!" These were his last utterances.

* * * * *

10 -- THE GARRETTSON HOMESTEAD -- CATHERINE GARRETTSON

The elect lady. -- 2 John 1

I have lately visited the Garrettson Homestead, at Rhinebeck, New York. Many an old Methodist, as he journeys near it, still resorts thither as on a devout pilgrimage. It is a spot of rare, I may say sacred, interest, to the lovers of Methodism, and to its denominational associations are

superadded the charms of landscape prospects not often surpassed, even on the Hudson. The mansion is situated some three miles from the village, on high land, overlooking the river, and commanding an extended view of its banks to the south. You can sit at the windows of its parlor or library, or on rustic seats, under noble trees, that dot the lawn-like sward which extends from the house down to the shore, and notice the steamers and small sail that glide up and down the stream, and the shadows of the clouds as they move over the waters, and the landscapes of the opposite bank.

The river curves gracefully in the midst of the fine picture, and is the chief feature in this most beautiful and serene scenery. Few sights can be more lovely and tranquilizing than the view as observed from the rustic seats I have mentioned, at the close of the day, when the oblique and subdued rays of the sun suffuse the atmosphere with their mellow light, and gild the hill-tops and the clouds. I could comprehend how the good old saint [Freeborn Garrettson], who pitched here the tent of his last sojourn on earth, used to feel when, as I have heard, he was wont to seat himself in his chair beneath the trees, and praise God audibly and with tears, as he gazed on the enchanting prospect, reminding himself meanwhile of "those high and flowery plains," where

"Our spirits ne'er shall tire,
But in perpetual, joyful strains,
Redeeming love admire."

Freeborn Garrettson is one of the distinguished historical personages in our denominational annals -- a member of the primitive corps of our ministry. He was the first American Methodist preacher that proclaimed the doctrine of free, full, and immediate salvation in New England, and also in the British provinces. I have already referred to him. The "Memorials of Methodism" thus characterizes him:

"Garrettson was a native of the Middle States, -- a burning and a shining light in our early ministry, -- zealous, remarkably placable, always rejoicing in God; 'all meekness and love, and yet all activity,' said Coke; -- a man of property, who had emancipated his slaves for Christ's sake; had traveled in the South, in the Middle States, in the North, and even in the British provinces, to preach his 'glorious Gospel;' had suffered indescribable privations and fatigues as his ambassador; had been mobbed and imprisoned; had escaped attempts on his life, made with fire-arms and with poison; -- a man who had every domestic attraction to allure him from his work, and every susceptibility of the heart to feel such attractions, and yet declared, through a long and by a laborious career, that 'none of these things moved him, neither counted he his life dear unto himself, so that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God.'"

His ministerial excursions along the Hudson, as well as his social position, brought him into the society of the Livingstons, a family of historical note in the State of New York. Among them was a daughter of old Judge Livingston, and sister of the well-known chancellor, -- a lady of rare accomplishments, a correspondent of Martha Washington, Mrs. Warren, and other distinguished women of that period of preeminent women in America. She had enjoyed the personal acquaintance of Washington himself, and of many of the great personages of the times. She was a lady of remarkably vigorous faculties, a genuine example, in fine, of the characteristic

intellect and nobleness of her remarkable family. Her clear and sound judgment, and healthful moral feelings, led her, even in the gay sphere of her early life, to frequent and deep religious reflections.

The good providence of God guided her into the path of life by one of those humble instrumentalities which his spirit so often chooses for the accomplishment of his purposes. She had a devoted servant-maid, who had joined the infant Methodist society in New York, and whose conversation revealed to her mistress those Scriptural doctrines of experimental religion which alone could meet the demands of her strong but anxious mind. Through the same providential means she also obtained Wesley's sermons; these became her assiduous study, her companion to the Bible, and led her into those deep things of godliness by which her eminently holy life was always afterwards distinguished. She was enabled, one day, while receiving the holy communion at the altar, to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ unto salvation. The doctrine of faith, as taught in the Scriptures, and expounded by Wesley and his followers, was thenceforth the support and delight of her soul; and few among the holy women of Methodism have afforded through so protracted a life so conclusive a demonstration of that doctrine.

Her social position presented temptations full of danger to the state of mind to which she had attained, but a single trial soon taught her that to follow Christ was to "come out from the world" in such manner as to share with it no longer even the "appearance of iniquity." While visiting, for several days, a family in her own elevated walks of life, a ball was given within the mansion; she had been accustomed to attend such occasions, but her renewed mind, now "crucified to the world," and delicately sensitive to all danger, dreaded a recommencement of her former gay indulgences; yet she feared the unfavorable construction which the family and her friends generally would put upon her conduct, if she should seclude herself from the recreation of the evening. She resisted her scruples at last, but the occasion closed with the loss of that peaceful and spiritual frame of mind which she had enjoyed before it, and a deep sense of self-abasement and gloom spread over her spirit. She sought again the peace she had lost, and never afterwards periled it by participating in such worldly dissipations as are incompatible with the spirit of the Scriptures (even though they may not be specifically prohibited by their letter), and incongenial with the prayerful, the lowly, the consecrated temper of pure religion, one trait of which, St. James tells us, is to "keep ourselves unspotted from the world."

Mrs. Garrettson's strong good sense dictated the conclusion to which she came to break away at once and forever from such recreations as tended to worldly dissipation, such as it would not be well to be overtaken in by death; and most salutary was her course in this respect; she became the object of mingled endearment and reverence in the large circle of society in which she moved. Seldom, if ever, was there more of Christian propriety, good sense, and endearing forbearance and kindness, combined in a single character; and seldom, if ever, did a Christian lady command more profound esteem and love through such extended and exalted social relations. Her presence was as a rich fragrance wherever she moved among them; the gay, and the splendid in talent and reputation, sought her company as a source of instruction and refined social enjoyment; her beautiful residence was the resort incessantly of such, as well as of the devout, who came to it as to a sanctuary of all the best enjoyments of this life, and of the best hopes of the life to come. Even down to almost her hundredth year, she was as a ministering angel to the extensive branches of her distinguished family, and the remnants of her earlier circle of associates. She was

usually called by them, in their last days, if not earlier, to explain to them the faith which had so sanctified and blessed her life, and several of them were converted, through her instructions and prayers, on their dying beds. [13]

Such was the lady who, undazzled by the brilliancy of her sphere, chose the companionship of Garrettson in the way to heaven rather than to enjoy the pleasures of the gay world for a season.

President Olin, who had frequently shared the hospitalities of her house, and went thither to "mourn with those who mourned" her decease, said, in his discourse over her coffin, that "she had left an example of Christian piety as pure, beautiful, and attractive, as the church militant in these latter days is wont to exhibit. -- We may be allowed to express our belief, that within the memory of the present generation she has not been known to perform an action, or speak a word, or manifest a temper, not in harmony with her Christian profession. It is probably more than a half a century since Mrs. Garrettson laid aside every weight and the sins that easily beset us, and entered with an unreserved devotion upon the race set before her. Those who had the happiness of enjoying her intimate acquaintance, -- those who were accustomed to meet with her where the 'children of God spake often one to another,' -- know well that through these long years she has not rested from her labors as victor upon a conquered field. They will testify that, with no intermission, she has to the last been eminently active, watchful, and self-denying; that she, more than those around her, 'prayed without ceasing;' that she constantly 'hungered and thirsted after righteousness;' that her religious experience and utterances were ever fresh, edifying, and spiritual; that she was reverent, humble, grateful, trustful, filial, quite above the examples of our current Christianity. For myself, I seemed always, when in her presence, in what (for want of some more descriptive term) has often been denominated a religious atmosphere."

Of her interest for the salvation of others, he said:-- "But what has specially impressed me, in my long acquaintance with Mrs. Garrettson, was her unfaltering concern for the salvation of her very large circle of relatives. She seemed to possess peculiar strength of affection, and to extend it to all of her relatives. This is not very usual. Large family connections become split up by diverse interests, and tastes, and creeds. In my frequent and protracted visits at the hospitable house now so desolate, I always had occasion to remark the strong interest felt by its godly mistress in the family connections to the remotest degrees of relationship; in the young as well as the old; in the gay, thoughtless boys and girls, as well as the older and more sober-minded, who delighted so much to visit their venerable aunt, as so many affectionately called her. She always said something to them or about them; there was ever something in her look or tone which indicated her lively solicitude for their salvation. She has, for years, seemed to me to be eminently a family intercessor. And oh, what blessings has God already poured on many of them, and what greater may He now have in store for those favored ones in whose behalf this beloved servant has spent so many holy seasons in prayer! For myself, I confess it has been a source of joy and gratitude to me, that those most dear to me have been sharers in such a benefit."

Her vigorous mind was familiar with the political history of the country, and to the last took a patriotic interest in its public measures. Dr. Olin remarked on this subject that, "In everything that concerned her own country, her deepest feelings were enlisted. Hers was a patriotism born amid the stirring scenes and profound excitements of the War of Independence. She had been acquainted with Washington and Jay, and many of the ruling spirits of that day; and the

gallant Montgomery, whose blood flowed early in the great struggle for freedom, was a favorite brother-in-law. These circumstances had no doubt much influence in forming, if we may use such language in speaking of a woman, her political opinions and character. The strength, intensity, and dignity of these might be denominated Roman, but for the profounder Christian sentiment with which her thoughts and conversation were imbued, whenever her country and its interests were the theme."

This sainted lady died as she had lived, with a "lively hope" of immortality. "Her last intelligible utterances were made up of what made up her life -- earnest prayer, and triumphant assurance. 'Come, Lord Jesus, come, Lord Jesus, come quickly,' she cried, with eyes and hands raised toward heaven. Soon after, clapping her hands, in holy triumph, she three times exclaimed exultingly, 'He comes! -- He comes! -- He comes!'"

I have been the more minute in these details, because no memoir of Mrs. Garrettson has yet been published, though few, if any, of the early women of American Methodism have been more widely known. She died in 1849, aged ninety-six years. Her character was one of the finest that a biographer could portray, and as she has left records of her spiritual life and correspondence, it is to be hoped that they may be found sufficiently in detail to afford the materials of a memoir worthy of her. At least, I am sure that the many who knew and loved her will not deem tedious these cursory notes, suggested on the spot whose beauties were enhanced and consecrated by the sanctity of her life and the nobleness of her character.

After traveling as a Methodist preacher through all the Middle and Northern States for years, the growth of the church, and the consolidation of its sectional departments of labor, fixed Mr. Garrettson's sphere mostly on the Hudson; he had been the chief founder of our cause along that stream, and now became for many years its superintendent as a Presiding Elder. This led him at last to select the fine site I have described, at Rhinebeck, for the home of his declining days. It was not secured as a refuge from labor, but as an occasional retreat, and an asylum when he could no longer labor. Still, such were his scruples respecting the ministry -- as a divine vocation (and not a "profession"), that he felt no little anxiety about the propriety of making even this "provision for the flesh."

He made it a matter of anxious prayer, and the Lord gave him answers of peace. Dr. Bangs, his biographer, says:--

"The day on which the house was raised, while Mr. Garrettson stood admiring with what facility the frame went up, the power and goodness of God were so gloriously manifested, that he was constrained to retire to the lime-house, to give vent to his tears. After composing himself, he returned. While another part of the frame was going up, the Lord so smiled from heaven upon him, that he retired to give an expression of his joys, of glory and thanks to his Redeemer. On returning home, he related these things, with evident satisfaction, to Mrs. Garrettson, and they rejoiced together 'for the consolation.' The next day, they were visited by their much-beloved friend, Bishop Asbury ... The following is the account given by Mrs. Garrettson of the manner in which they took possession of their new house.

"Were all newly-married persons thus to enter on life, thus to dedicate themselves and their house to God, how many blessings, now unhappily lost, would be secured! 'Our house being nearly finished, in October, 1799, we moved into it; and the first night, in family prayer, while my blessed husband was dedicating it to the Lord, the place was filled with his presence, who in days of old filled the temple with his glory. Every heart rejoiced, and felt that God was with us of a truth. Such was our introduction into our new habitation; -- and had we not reason to say, with Joshua, As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord?' The pious order, great simplicity and regularity, ever after observed in this house, evince how sincerely it was thus dedicated to God's holy honor and service."

Having erected his house, he enjoyed its beautiful seclusion with the zest which his susceptible taste and very warm domestic affections could not fail to give to such a home. He labored, meanwhile, in the ministry, as his years and infirmities would admit. His mansion became, and continues to be, the resort of his ministerial brethren, and a large circle of relatives and friends. Its doors have always been open, and its hospitalities without restraint; and the Methodist itinerant meets in them a welcome which speaks unequivocally to his heart the benediction, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord!" That benediction glowed in every feature of Freeborn Garrettson, when a brother laborer approached his door; and the spirit of the father has descended in a double measure, if possible, to his only child, Mary Garrettson, who still maintains the old hospitality and sanctity of the homestead.

The house itself is not ostentatious, but commodious, with abundant apartments; a beautiful library-room -- consecrated as both a Sunday School and class-room -- connecting with a conservatory, and looking out upon the river; piazzas upon which the low windows open from the parlors and sitting-rooms; and groups of noble trees, which overshadow and shelter the building with an air of most comfortable protection. It is reached by a carriage-path from the main road, and is quite hid from the view of the latter. The lawn and flower-garden, and clumps of forest-trees around it, are arranged with the best taste, and render it, in fine, one of the most delightful, if not one of the most elegant, residences of the neighborhood.

While the exterior of this beautiful seat presents such real attractions, its interior is not without interest. I say nothing of its fine antique furniture, -- which the caprice or good sense of fashionable taste is now bringing into use again, -- the ample library, -- with its good stock of old Methodist works, -- or the exceedingly comfortable-looking and homelike construction and arrangement of the apartments; but the house is full of historical associations; many of its relics are precious, and if the visitor is so disposed, the conversation of its present intelligent and devoted proprietor can detail reminiscences of the old times -- the early characters and struggles of the Church -- of no little interest. The walls are adorned by busts and original portraits of the distinguished members of the Livingston family.

There is also a very fine original portrait of Asbury, and a good one of Freeborn Garrettson himself; the former has a characteristic expression about the eyes which the engraved likenesses of the great American evangelist have failed to represent. One of the most interesting of these paintings is a striking likeness of Mrs. Garrettson. Though taken when she had seen more than threescore years and ten, it presents a freshness and fullness of feature which may literally be pronounced beautiful. A moral beauty, still more striking, glows over the countenance; that

intellectual superiority and nobleness which so much characterized her family, and which speak from all these portraits and busts, predominate in this fine old face also, and are enhanced by an expression of Christian tenderness and dignity, which cannot fail to arrest and impress the attention of the most casual spectator. The image of that beautiful, that saintly countenance, will long linger in my memory.

The original correspondence and autographs of distinguished public characters form a numerous and interesting class of relics here. A large volume, substantially bound, and entitled, in gilt label, "Centenary Reminiscences," contains not merely autographs, but entire letters, from the most eminent men of early Methodism. Wesley, Asbury, and Coke, were correspondents of the family; the letters of the latter form quite a budget, and throw some light on the infant history of the Church. Most of the later leaders of our cause have left autographic relics in this volume. One of the most interesting is a letter addressed to Garrettson by Summerfield, when the latter was prostrated with sickness; it would have befitted the pen of St. John.

Among the other autographs -- many of them entire letters -- from public men, are those of Washington, La Fayette, Jefferson, Monroe, Madison, Pinckney, Generals Gates, Greene, Kosciusko, &c., George Canning, Count Rumford, Chalmers, Montgomery, Wirt, &c., &c. Among the autographs of females of distinction, are those of Madame de Stael, and the correspondence with Mrs. Garrettson of Mrs. Grant, Mrs. Warren, -- dated at Plymouth, and written in quite a negligent hand, -- and Martha Washington.

Martha Washington's letter was written after the death of her husband. It is full of those religious sentiments which characterized that greatest of modern men, and which he took good care to have maintained in the familiar relations of his household. It is brief, and presents no special points of information; but as it has never been published, I cannot resist the temptation to insert it:--

"Mount Vernon, March 25, 1800

"My Dear Madam:-- The kind sympathy which you express for my afflictive loss, and your fervent prayers for my present comfort and future happiness, impress my mind with gratitude. The precepts of our holy religion have long since taught me that, in the severe and trying scenes of life, our only sure rock of comfort and consolation is that of [the] Divine Being, who orders and directs all things for our good.

"Bowing with humble submission to the dispensations of his providence, and relying upon that support which he has promised to those who put their trust in him, I hope I have borne my late irreparable loss with Christian fortitude. To my feeling heart, the sympathy of friends, and the evidences of universal respect paid to the memory of the deceased, are truly grateful. But, while these alleviate our grief we find that the only source of comfort is from above.

"It gives me great pleasure to hear that your good mother yet retains her health and faculties unimpaired, and that you experience those comforts which the Scriptures promise to those who obey the laws of God. That you may continue to enjoy the blessings of this life, and receive hereafter the portion of the just, is the prayer of your sincere friend.

"With esteem and good wishes
for yourself and friends, I am
your affectionate and obedient,

"Martha Washington."

I must close this long sketch. I shall retain with warm interest the recollection of this very pleasant visit to Rhinebeck -- of its beautiful scenery -- its relics and reminiscences -- its bountiful entertainment -- its evening circle -- its pleasant Christian conversation about the old and the new times of our denominational cause -- a cause which is dear to all our hearts, but to none more than to those who have prayed or still pray for it in the old home of Freeborn Garrettson.

* * * * *

ENDNOTES

1 This fact is stated in the "Memorials of Methodism," -- not in that work's biographical sketch of him, but in its notice of the Thompson conference. It appears fairly construed from the obituary in the Minutes of 1795, though the latter record seems somewhat confused.

2 It became quite a proverbial remark, among such families and their neighbors, that their hospitalities, instead of injuring, enhanced their prosperity.

3 Memorials of Methodism.

4 Such marvelous demonstrations were not uncommon under the ministry of the great man of that day. Dr. Bangs says -- "At a quarterly meeting in the Bay of Quinte circuit, as the preacher commenced his sermon, a thoughtless man in the front gallery commenced, in a playful mood, to swear profanely, and otherwise to disturb the congregation. The preacher paid no attention to him until he was in the midst of his sermon, when, feeling strong in faith and the power of His might, suddenly stopping, he fixed his piercing eye upon the profane man; then, stamping with his foot, and pointing his linger at him with great energy, he cried out, 'My God! smite him!' He instantly fell, as if shot through the heart with a bullet. At this moment such a divine afflatus came down upon the congregation, that sinners were crying to God for mercy in every direction, while the saints of God burst forth in loud praises to His name. Similar instances of God's gracious presence were not uncommon in those days in that country, as they have been related to the writer on the most unquestionable authority."

5 Memorials of Methodism.

6 The accomplished editress of "The Lady's Book," Mrs. Sarah J. Hale, proposed a national costume, some years since. The suggestion is worth repeating, though almost hopeless. Two conditions might secure it partial success, at least: first, that it be unquestionably appropriate and tasteful; second, that a considerable number should courageously adopt it at once. Both these conditions might be secured.

7 The only doubt on this point is noticed in the article on Zadok Priest.

8 Mr. Taylor still lives, at Portland, Me., in a green and devoted old age.

9 He taught the Iowa school in winter, and probably most of the present oldest inhabitant, received from him all the school instruction they ever obtained.

10 Maine was then a District pertaining to Massachusetts.

11 Some account of Mr. Mudge will be found in the "Memorials of Methodism;" but, being published before his death, it is necessarily imperfect.

12 See Dr. Mayo's "Letters on Truths contained in Popular Superstitions," and Mrs. Crowe's "Night Side of Nature."

13 I have been informed that she was instrumental in leading her brother, Chancellor Livingston, to the cross; and such views and enjoyments of religion had that eminent man before he died, that he expressed a wish to live, only that he might lay aside his public honors, and become a preacher of the faith that had saved him.

* * * * *

THE END