



REV. L. B. STABLER.

LIFE OF REV. L. B. STATELER

A STORY OF LIFE ON THE OLD FRONTIER

CONTAINING INCIDENTS, ANECDOTES, AND SKETCHES OF
METHODIST HISTORY IN THE WEST AND
NORTHWEST

BY

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E. J. STANLEY.

PREFACE.

PERHAPS no part of our great country has moved forward with such rapid strides during the past generation or two as the West and Northwest. Instead of being regarded as an out-of-the-way sort of place, consisting of "interminable deserts" and endless and impassable mountains, containing the "scrapings of creation," and "not worth a pinch of snuff" (as it was characterized by famous statesmen and honorable Senators in the halls of Congress in bygone years), it is rapidly coming to the front and bids fair at no distant day to become the center of activities and influences world-wide in their extent.

Among the thousands who are coming from all lands and from all parts of our own land to behold its attractions, enjoy its luxuries, and possess its treasures there are comparatively few who stop to think of the labor performed, the obstacles encountered, and the hardships endured by those who went before and laid the foundations of the commercial, the civil, the social, and the religious life that abounds there to-day. A desire to contribute something toward a higher appreciation of the efforts put forth by those who wrought in the conquest and Christianization of this vast domain, especially the latter, is the apology for the appearance of this volume. At the call of the Master they forsook all and went forth into the wilderness, performing heroic tasks and enduring untold privations, not a few laying down their

lives in the noble work, and without thought of compensation except that which comes from a sense of duty performed, the joy of ministering to the spiritual welfare of their fellow-men, and the promise of a crown of life in the world to come. The country owes them a debt of gratitude that it can never pay. It has been well said that they "deserve a monument higher than man can build."

Mr. Stateler's career possesses a special interest on account of the time in our country's history in which he lived and labored, the long years of service rendered, and the field he occupied—the ever-shifting frontier line, extending from Kentucky across the Mississippi Valley and over the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Coast. There were scores of noble men and women associated with him whose names are in the book of life and of whom it would be a pleasure to write more in detail but for the limited space in this volume, which is already much larger than was at first contemplated. If the reader finds half as much pleasure and profit in the perusal of these pages as the writer did in their preparation, there will be no cause for regret on either side.

Many thanks are extended to Bishop Hendrix for his kind words of introduction; to Mr. E. S. Paxson, the popular Montana artist, for the excellent drawings he has prepared especially for this book; to Rev. Joab Spencer, of Slater, Mo., for assistance in procuring portraits and other illustrations connected with mission work in Kansas; and to many other friends for encouraging words and for favors received.

E. J. S.

WHITEHALL, MONT., March 21, 1907.

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

WITH devout gratitude for the cordial reception extended and the many kind words of appreciation in behalf of this humble volume, the first edition of which is exhausted, and in response to many earnest calls, the second edition is sent forth with a fervent prayer that it may be helpful to very many people. E. J. S.

WHITEHALL, MONT., December 12, 1915.

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION.	XV
CHAPTER I.	
Date and Place of Birth—Of German Stock—Grandfather a Fort Builder—His Father a Pioneer—Thrilling Experience—Mother a Pioneer—Preacher's Daughter—Boyish Sports—A Wrestling Match.....	I
CHAPTER II.	
Manner of Living in Those Early Times—Log Cabins—Looms—Spinning Wheels—Self-Reliance—Early Religious Training—Revivals of Religion Common—State-ler's Own Story—Joined Church at the Age of Seven—Licensed to Exhort, Then to Preach—Old Bethel Church—A Sore Temptation—A Signal Victory.....	9
CHAPTER III.	
Goes to Conference—Departure from Home—An Affect- ing Scene—Joins the Kentucky Conference—On Trial— Volunteers for the Work in Missouri—Starts at Once— Long Journey on Horseback—Personal Sketch—First Circuit—Attends Conference at Pilot Grove—A Nota- ble Gathering—Indian Missions.....	17
CHAPTER IV.	
Goes to Bowling Green Circuit—A Gracious Time—Two Camp Meetings—A Wonderful Revival—Andrew Mon- roe—Notable Conversions—Conference at Cane Hill, Ark.—Long Journey—A Great Meeting—Ordained Deacon and Admitted into Full Connection—Sent among the Indians—A Trying Time—"Black Mammy" —A Vile Old Fellow—Raising the Puncheons—Family Prayers Kept Up under Difficulties.....	27

CHAPTER V.

- Another Camp Meeting Conference—Bishop Roberts—
Stateler Goes to St. Louis—Changed to Canton Cir-
cuit—Great Hardships—Very Successful—Extracts from
Journal—Temperance Work..... 38

CHAPTER VI.

- In Labors Abundant—A Presiding Elder Immersed—A
Missouri Mustang—Preacher Takes a Tumble—Gets
Bled—In Perils on Land and Water—An Unsatisfac-
tory Service—Crossing a Prairie—Set Afoot—Feeling
“Mighty Hollow”—“Cooning” a Log—Andrew Monroe
—The Presiding Eldership—Interviews Keokuk, the
Indian Chief..... 47

CHAPTER VII.

- Conference at Arrow Rock—Mr. Stateler Ordained
Elder—Returns to Canton Circuit—Reminiscences—
William Hunter’s Popular Hymn..... 58

CHAPTER VIII.

- “Murder Will Out”—“Important Business” at Bowling
Green—Repeated Visits Thither—Gets Married—Is Op-
posed, but without Avail—Anecdote of James Axley... 63

CHAPTER IX.

- Conference at St. Louis—First Session Held in a Town
or City—Liberal Collections—But Few Conversions—
Sent to Cape Girardeau—A Visit to the Old Home—
Watch Night Service—Has a Home of His Own—In-
cessant Labors—Camp Meeting—Protracted Meetings
—Starts to Conference—A Night in the Wilderness.... 68

CHAPTER X.

- Conference Again at St. Louis—Bishop Soule Present—
Among the Delaware Indians—Historical Sketch—Mis-
sion Work—Difficulties Encountered—The Heathen
Party—Tragic End of Two Drunken Characters..... 79

CONTENTS

ix

CHAPTER XI.

	PAGE
Continues among the Delawares—Building a New Meetinghouse—Extracts from Journal—A Moravian Missionary—Feasting the People—Arrival of Missionaries for Oregon—A Macedonian Call—Offers Himself for the Oregon Work—Marcus Whitman—Rattlesnake Bite—The Indian Doctor—Sorcery Practiced—Drunken Indians—A Visit to Des Moines Rapids.....	86

CHAPTER XII.

From 1838 to 1840—Conference at Boonville—Still among the Delawares—Work Prospers—The Establishment of the Great Central Manual Labor School—Its Object—Thrilling Incidents—A Noble Chief—Story of "Aunt Barbara"—Wonderful Providence—Charles and James Ketchum.....	96
---	----

CHAPTER XIII.

Among the Shawnees—From 1840 to 1844—Builds Another Meetinghouse—The Missionary Takes Part—The Heathens at Work—The House Defiled—A Great Camp Meeting—Death of William Johnson—Bishop Roberts—The School a Success—Attends a Council—A Native Preacher, Ma-she-la-Bose-man—A Singular Providence—Ministry of a Bear.....	104
---	-----

CHAPTER XIV.

Indian Mission Conference Organized—Journey Thither—Mr. Stateler a Charter Member—Bishop Morris—Wonderful Growth—Success of Missions—A Destructive Tornado—On Choctaw District—Conference at Shawnee—Mr. Stateler on Kansas River District.....	113
---	-----

CHAPTER XV.

Peculiarities of Indian Mission Work—Success—Owing to Settled Condition—Adjacent to Wild Tribes—Thrilling Incident—Sixteen Delawares Slain—Mode of Worship—Indian Hymns.....	121
--	-----

CHAPTER XVI.

	PAGE
Sketch of Colaborers—N. M. Talbot—N. T. Shaler—Edward T. Peery—J. T. Peery—Thomas and William Johnson—Jerome C. Berryman—Nathan Scarritt—David Kinnear—A. Millice—Charles Boles—J. H. Slavens.	127

CHAPTER XVII.

Double Work—Some Native Men—Not Appreciated—Kansas Mission Conference Organized—Indians Sell Their Lands—White Settlers—Churches Formed among Them—Partisan Spirit—Extensive Revivals—Stateler and Hedgepeth.....	136
---	-----

CHAPTER XVIII.

Some Observations Concerning the Division of the Church.	145
---	-----

CHAPTER XIX.

Last Session of the Kansas Mission Conference—Increasing Excitement—Threats of Violence—Appointed to Denver—Preparation for the Journey—The Departure—Described by an Eyewitness—Scene Worthy of Remembrance—Mysterious Providence—Thrust into the Wilderness.....	160
--	-----

CHAPTER XX.

Arrival at Denver—Great Disappointment—Church Had Been Sold—Prepares to Return Home—Startling News from His Wife—Their Home Destroyed by Fire—Stateler Warned Not to Return—Family Starts to Join Him—Meeting at Kearney—Thrilling Experience—A Vast Snowy Wilderness—Wearing the Winter Out—Intense Sufferings.....	166
--	-----

CONTENTS.

xi

CHAPTER XXI.

	PAGE
Hard Times—Keeping Hotel—"China" Clarke—A Friend Indeed—Travels a Circuit—Martial Law—Starts Northward—A Large Train—Mode of Travel—Build Their Own Bridges—Preaching Every Sunday—Wagon Tips Over—Narrow Escape—Broken Axle—Indian Scare—A Glad Surprise—Old Friends Meet—Big Feast—Chief Washakie—Jim Bridger.....	172

CHAPTER XXII.

A Famous Passway—The Home of the Sioux and Absarokees—Scene of Many Tragedies—Wonderful Preservation—Arrival at Yellowstone—One Thousand People in the Train—Bozeman Pass—Gallatin Valley—Norwegian Gulch Gold-Mining—Preaching under an Arbor—Camping among Rattlesnakes—Trip to Virginia City—Extreme Isolation—High Prices—Removal to Jefferson Valley—Living on "Meat Straight"—A Remarkable Incident—Kills a Deer—Plenty of Meat...	182
--	-----

CHAPTER XXIII.

Religious Conditions in Virginia City—The "Log Church" Built—Stateler Preaches at Willow Creek—Organizes the First Society—Preaches in Virginia City—Travels Two Hundred Miles Each Month—Receives Nothing for His Services—Reign of Lawlessness—Trial and Execution of Ives—Vigilantes—Hanging of Road Agents—New Discoveries of Gold—New Settlements—Departure for Oregon—Chopping His Way through the Cœur d'Alenes—A Pack Train—Whitman's Grave—Visits the Columbia Conference—A Surprise—Takes Work—Plans Thwarted—Resolves to Return.....	190
---	-----

CHAPTER XXIV.

Stateler Appointed Superintendent of Missions in Montana and Colorado—Returns to Montana—Anomalous Position—Plans for Enlargement of the Work—Church	
--	--

	PAGE
Organized in Gallatin Valley—B. R. Baxter at Helena a Short Time—Stateler Alone Again—Settlements Ex- tending—Appeals for Help—Western Conference Or- ganized—Three Men Sent—Stateler Pays Their Way— Preachers Well Received—A Great Revival—The Work Prospers.....	204

CHAPTER XXV.

Stateler at the Western Conference—The First for Ten Years—Interest Awakened—Ten New Men Secured— The Journey to Montana—Trials Encountered—Inci- dents of Frontier Work—Playing Poker to Pay the Preacher—Hog-Killing and Preaching on Sunday— Escape from a Disagreeable Drenching—Indians Mur- der Two Men—Two Men Licensed to Preach.....	215
---	-----

CHAPTER XXVI.

Bishop Marvin Visits Montana—Makes a Tour of the Territory—Visits the Stateler Home—Holds an "Ir- formal Conference"—Stateler Called to Account—A Grave Charge—Acquitted—A Good Joke at Stateler's Expense—A Preacher's "Skeleton"—Mistaken Official —Much Trouble for Nothing—Stateler Attends Con- ference Again—A Great Meeting at Corvallis—A Church Secured at Deer Lodge.....	229
--	-----

CHAPTER XXVII.

Preachers Meet at Deer Lodge—A Crisis—Montana Con- ference Created—Then "Stricken Out"—A Trying Or- deal—Conference at Denver—Bishop Marvin's Second Visit—Conference at Helena—Revival at Willow Creek —An Episode—"Uncle Dick's" Speech—Conference at Denver—David Morton's Arrival.....	241
---	-----

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Rev. David Morton's Work in Montana—His Presence Inspires Confidence—Traveling the District—Work at	
--	--

CONTENTS.

xiii

	PAGE
Helena—Assists the Preachers—A Capital Joke—Montana Beef—Caught in His Own Trap—Called Home—Conference at Denver—Montana Conference Organized—Appropriation Cut Down—Trying Times.....	251

CHAPTER XXIX.

First Session of the Montana Conference—Bishop Wightman Presides—Had Opposed the Organization—State of the Church—Difficulties Encountered—Determination to Go Forward—District Divided—Next Conference at Willow Creek—Bishop Keener Present—A Profitable Session—An Interesting Colloquy—Road Running Out—Sanford Locates—"Stateler Chapel" Dedicated—A Bishop Surprised—Liberal Collection—Fording the River—An Exciting Time.....	261
---	-----

CHAPTER XXX.

Third Session—Bishop Doggett Absent—Dr. A. W. Wilson Attends—Mr. Stateler Presides—Fourth Session at Helena—Bishop Kavanaugh—The "Old Man Eloquent"—An Affecting Scene—A Congregation Convulsed—The Bishop "Converted"—Conference at Butte—Bishop Hargrove—A Friend of the West—Accompanied by His Wife—Church Dedication—Trying Times—Bishop Tuttle—Amusing Episode—"Rich Methodist Parsons"—"One-Horse Preachers".....	272
--	-----

CHAPTER XXXI.

A Notable Event—Completion of the Northern Pacific Railway—Conference at Stateler Chapel in 1877—Small Beginning, but Good Ending—Stateler Again at the Front—Conference at Stevensville—Rev. David Morton Present—A Great Meeting—"Delaware Jim"—Another Session at Willow Creek—First Parsonage Society Organized.....	283
--	-----

CHAPTER XXXII.

	PAGE
Conference at Bozeman—Trials of the Preachers—Stateler at Stevensville—Moves a Parsonage—Stricken Down with Paralysis—Conference at Helena—Affecting Scene—Bishop Hendrix Present—Conference at Butte—Bishop Galloway—The Superannuated Preachers' Benefit Fund.....	294

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Again Appointed Presiding Elder—Interest in Young Men—Mrs. Stateler Passes Away—Bishop Galloway's Noble Tribute—Conference at Stevensville—Stateler Relieved of Active Work—General Conference at St. Louis—More Interest in Montana—Conference at Deer Lodge—Bishop Hendrix Present—Stateler Active Again—An Ideal Preachers' Home—Montana Hospitality Remembered.	302
--	-----

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Memoir of Mrs. Stateler—Born in North Carolina—Her House the Preachers' Home—Struggles with Poverty—Life on the Frontier—Love of Humor—A Good Joke—Devotion to Principle—Pent-Up Patriotism—Voice from a Rocky Cliff—Amusing Incident—A Valued Souvenir—Devotion to the Church—Triumphant Culmination of an Eventful Career.....	310
--	-----

CHAPTER XXXV.

Closing the Gaps—Work in Flathead County—Church Built at Wallace—East Columbia Conference Organized—Montana Represented—Gratifying Progress—Stateler Attends Ecumenical Conference—Donation to Church Extension Fund.....	319
---	-----

CONTENTS.

XV

CHAPTER XXXVI.

	PAGE
Conference at Bozeman—Mr. Stateler Retires—Sends a Missionary to Japan—Conference at Butte—Bishop Fitzgerald Presides—Conference at Corvallis—New Church Dedicated—Conference at Helena—Last Attended by Stateler—Goes on His "Last Round"—Visits Corvallis—Unusually Cheerful—Appointment to Preach—Taken Sick—Last Hours—Memorial Services—Funeral at Stateler Chapel—Last Resting Place.....	326

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Mr. Stateler's General Character—A Remarkable Career—Thoroughly Converted—Strictly Orthodox—A Good Preacher—Full of Sympathy—A Man of Simple Habits—True Benevolence—Dr. Hoss's Tribute.....	338
--	-----

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Tribute to the Memory of L. B. Stateler by Rev. David Morton, D.D.—Early Life—In His Mountain Home—Lifelong Friends—Working in Shafts—A Good Parrot Story—Munificent Gifts—His Departure Deeply Mourned.	346
---	-----

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Tribute to Mr. Stateler's Memory—Rev. D. B. Price— <i>Central Methodist</i> and <i>Courier-Journal</i> —Rev. W. O. Waggener in <i>Alabama Christian Advocate</i> —Rev. R. S. Clark in Funeral Discourse.....	352
--	-----

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ILLUSTRATIONS.

	PAGE
Rev. L. B. Stateler.....	<i>Frontispiece</i>
Bishops Robert Paine, William McKendree, Joshua Soule, Thomas A. Morris, James O. Andrew.....	10
The Itinerant Leaving Home.....	18
An Old-Fashioned Camp Meeting.....	30
Bishops Doggett, H. H. Kavanaugh, Robert R. Roberts, E. M. Marvin, H. N. McTyeire.....	40
Bishops R. K. Hargrove, J. B. McFerrin, J. C. Keener, O. P. Fitzgerald, A. W. Wilson.....	48
Indian Camp Meeting.....	60
Mrs. L. B. Stateler.....	64
Bishops E. R. Hendrix, Charles B. Galloway, W. W. Dun- can, H. C. Morrison.....	74
Old Shawnee Mission.....	80
Main School Building, Indian Manual Labor School.....	90
Girls' Boarding House, Indian Manual Labor School.....	100
Rev. James Ketchum.....	102
Shawnee Indian Church.....	110
Jefferson Davis.....	112
Inscription on Back of Photograph Sent to Mrs. L. B. Stateler	113
Home of Missionary and Teachers at Shawnee Mission as It Now Appears.....	118
Rev. Thomas Johnson, Rev. Jesse Greene, Rev. J. C. Ber- ryman, Rev. J. T. Perry, Mrs. Mary Greene, Rev. Joab Spencer, Mrs. J. T. Perry.....	132
Bishop E. E. Hoss, Bishop W. R. Lambuth, W. F. Mc- Murry, D.D., Bishop R. G. Waterhouse, Bishop W. A. Candler	136
Rev. H. H. Hedgepeth, Rev. Joseph King, Rev. J. W. Compton, Rev. E. G. Michael.....	142
Wearing the Winter Out.....	170
Stateler Preaching in Camp.....	174
Jim Bridger.....	178

	PAGE
Washakie	180
Custer's Last Battle.....	182
A Montana Gold Mine.....	184
Getting a Supply of Meat.....	188
Colonel Sanders Prosecuting George Ives, the Road Agent.	192
Scene at "Hangman's Tree" in the Early Days of Helena, Mont.	196
Scene at Foot of Cœur d'Alene Lake, Idaho.....	198
Pack Train Crossing the Mountains.....	200
Methodist Church and Parsonage, Corvallis, Mont., with the Bitter Root Mountain in the Background.....	202
City of Bozeman, Mont.....	224
Rev. R. S. Clark, Rev. T. W. Flowers, Rev. H. W. Currin, J. W. Kemper, Esq.....	238
Rev. David Morton, D.D.....	250
A. G. Clarke, Esq., Mrs. A. G. Clarke, E. G. Brooke, Mrs. E. G. Brooke.....	268
St. Paul's M. E. Church, South, Butte, Mont.....	274
M. E. Church, South, at Stevensville, Mont.....	278
"Perhaps You Are One-Horse Preachers," etc.....	286
Driving the Golden Spike at the Completion of the North- ern Pacific Railway, Near Golden Creek, Mont.....	286
Some Montana Home Mission Workers.....	292
Rev. D. B. Price, Rev. R. H. Shaffer, Rev. R. B. Swift, Rev. W. M. Britt, Rev. A. C. Couey, Rev. C. W. San- ford	298
Rev. E. J. Stanley.....	304
The Montana Conference at Deer Lodge, Mont., 1890....	308
Columbia Conference at Albany, Oregon, 1892.....	322
Rev. S. B. Tabor, Rev. W. O. Waggener, Rev. J. E. Squires, Rev. J. B. Parnall.....	328
Stateler Chapel, at Willow Creek, Mont.....	332
The Stateler Tomb.....	336

INTRODUCTION.

It is narrated of the writer of this book that on one occasion in one of the mountain fastnesses of the great Northwest he knocked at the door of a monastery seeking information. As the monk cautiously opened the door a large, tall, muscular, and bronzed traveler said: "My name is Stanley." "What!" exclaimed the monk; "the great African explorer!" No; but the only reason was that E. J. Stanley had never been to Africa, or he would have rivaled his namesake by his spirit of adventure and discovery.

This book is the story of a heroic life by a hero worshiper. It was no less the voice of Stateler than the appointment of Bishop Marvin that transplanted young Stanley from the great bend of the Missouri to its source. There the young itinerant became the intimate associate and fellow worker of Rev. Learner Blackman Stateler. He was more than presiding elder and senior to the young preacher; he was his steadfast counselor, his lifelong friend, his Elijah whose mantle fell to a young Elisha with short locks looking heavenward, where the venerable prophet of more than fourscore winters had entered. Never was there a more beautiful friendship between age and youth as the old man told into a listening and eager ear the simple story of his unconsciously heroic life as an itinerant. What though a half century had passed since the events had taken place which the old hero narrated? The spirit was still young within him, and he stood ready to repeat amid the mountains of Montana the ex-

periences amid the wilds of early Kentucky or the untutored savages of the Indian Territory. The story fired the heart of the young preacher, and not a word was lost of the inspiring and pulse-quickenng narrative. It was to him as "the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." The old prophet found a historian in his junior preacher; and a ministry extended from Kentucky through Missouri, Kansas, and Colorado to Montana was to find place in the annals of Methodism by the industrious pen of the enthusiastic listener and scribe.

Thus is preserved to us the story of another "sky pilot," who touched many lives in many parallels, inspiring confidence everywhere and winning men by his courage and his love of souls. The hardy mountaineers know a true man of God when they have tested him. When they listen to a sermon, their stern eyes look a preacher through and through. They will contribute as eagerly to get a craven or "tenderfoot" out of the country as to get a lion heart into the mountains. They respect religion for what it puts into a man, not for what it leaves out. A preacher who has lived with them among the blizzards and hardships of many winters, never complaining, but rather putting his heroic spirit into the faint-hearted, is the man they believe in and will listen to. Such was Stateler, who won men as neighbor and friend of man and God. Seconded by his equally courageous wife, he knew no fear and quailed before no hardship. When stricken by paralysis and supposed to be dying, I drove seventy miles over the mountains to receive his blessing and counsel

when the old hero insisted that he would join me on my journey to the seat of the Conference, which he did, and was hailed with tears of glad welcome by the little band he so long had led. When he died, it was discovered that all he had belonged to the Church he had so long loved and served. With abundance of pasture land, his flocks and herds multiplied about him, neighbors guarding them in his absence; and when the end came, it was all theirs for the building of churches and the extension of the kingdom of Christ.

It makes our pulses beat quicker to read a life like this. Gideon, the farmer, little knew what was in him when an angel called him "a mighty man of valor." It is devotion of one's life to God, cheerful trust in the divine promises rather than in visible human resources, and complete self-surrender to do the will of God that tell what God can do with a life that is wholly his. The world is not worthy of such a prophet of God, and all the gold in the Montana mountains cannot pull down the scales when Stateler is in the other balance. In God's "Hall of Fame" are inscribed names and epitaphs that never need revision. "He shall be great in the sight of the Lord."

E. R. HENDRIX.

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LIFE OF REV. L. B. STATELER.

CHAPTER I.

Date and Place of Birth—Of German Stock—Grandfather a Fort Builder—His Father a Pioneer—Thrilling Experience—Mother a Pioneer—Preacher's Daughter—Boyish Sports—A Wrestling Match.

REV. LEARNER BLACKMAN STATELER, son of Steven and Rhoda Stateler, was born near Hartford, in Ohio County, Ky., the 7th of July, 1811. His father was of German blood and lived on the Monongahela River in what was then the State of Virginia, but which, when the line was finally established, fell in the State of Pennsylvania.

Mr. Stateler's grandfather had a fort at the mouth of Dunkard Creek, where Steven was born and reared, and at a time when the country was new and wild and the Indians were troublesome.

When yet a young man, Steven left that country on what was known as an emigrant boat for New Orleans. Almost the entire country along the river below Louisville, Ky., was occupied by Indians. Near where the town of Evansville now stands, the boat stopped and Steven, in company with two other men, was sent ashore to capture wild meat for the long journey. Game was very plentiful, and two of the men soon began firing, when the other man, who was a cowardly fellow, took fright, ran back to the boat, and reported

that the Indians were upon them, when the remainder of the boat's crew cut cable and pulled out, leaving their two faithful hunters to their fate.

Upon returning to the river bank, and realizing their situation, the two men improvised a raft made of dry logs bound together with grapevines on which they started to follow the boat, taking their guns along and using poles for paddles with which to guide the frail craft. They had gone but a short distance when the raft struck a snag, began to sink, then righted up, turned around, and floated away with the other man on it until it was out of sight, leaving Stateler clinging to the log in the midst of the river, from which he escaped by swimming to the shore, losing his gun in the operation.

Left thus alone in an unbroken forest full of hostile Indians, without means of defense, without food or means of taking the wild game, his condition was anything but pleasant. He bound some logs together on which he recrossed the Ohio River to the Kentucky side, landing at the mouth of Green River. Pressing his way through the canebrakes, passing the falls of the Ohio where Louisville now stands, after about ten days he found himself on the opposite bank of the river from a town or fort called Hartford, in a famishing condition. It was nearly dark, and a man by the name of Rhodes crossed him over in a canoe, took him to his house, and cared for him until he was strong again.

He was an excellent marksman and good hunter, but the people were so closely pressed by the savages and so fearful of treachery that they would al-

low him only a few balls at a time, with powder in proportion, for the muzzle-loading gun that they furnished him to capture game for them. He soon proved to them that he was a true man, and rendered valuable assistance in the defense of the place and in pursuit of savage foes, and the stories of some of his heroic acts are still rehearsed by the people of that country, although these occurrences were more than one hundred years ago.

Says Mr. Stateler, in narrating these thrilling events:

“My father remained at Hartford about three years, in which time he was often engaged with others in conflicts with the Indians. In those days, in order to have bread, the laborers, in preparing the ground for cultivation, and also in cultivating it, found it necessary to have placed around them a guard to watch the Indians and defend them against their attacks.

“My father spent his time in hunting and dressing skins for clothing and for other purposes for the space of about three years, by which time he had accumulated sufficient means to purchase a horse and traveling outfit, with which he started, in company with others, over the trail across the country back to his home. They received him with expressions of surprise and gladness, having for years believed that he was dead. He did not tarry long there, but took boat and returned to his new-found home in Kentucky.

“Not long after my father’s return there arrived in the settlement Rev. Ignatius Pigman, from Baltimore, Md., who had for many years previous been a regular itinerant preacher in the Baltimore Confer-

ence, having commenced his labors as a traveling preacher in 1780—four years before the regular organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America—that is, before the famous ‘Christmas Conference’ in 1784. There my parents first became acquainted with each other, in that wilderness country. That acquaintance ripened into affection which resulted in their happy union—my mother being the daughter of Ignatius Pigman—and there they lived together for half a century, and now slumber side by side in the cemetery on the old farm.”

In a sketch of his early life and labors and of his associates in the ministry, Rev. J. C. Berryman, of Caledonia, Mo., says of L. B. Stateler: “His father, Steven Stateler, was among the earliest settlers of the Green River country, as that part of the country was called by the settlers of the blue grass portion of Kentucky. Steven Stateler, in person, was a noble specimen of the best type of frontiersman, measuring about six feet in stature, with broad shoulders and a well-developed physical nature every way. His features were rough and pockmarked. A man of strong mind and will, he was determined to succeed in whatever he believed he ought to do. In common with others, he had some trouble with the hostile natives, who still occasionally visited the white settlement for the purpose of plunder, and he could tell of some very interesting incidents of his early life in that connection. It was in good part, no doubt, that which made him an expert woodsman and one of the best marksmen with rifle or shotgun. The wild game of that region was abundant, even up to my day, and ‘Father Stateler’

took special delight in a deer hunt, and, as a rule, always returned from the chase well laden with venison. Mr. Stateler was of German descent. His wife, a noble woman, was the daughter of Rev. Ignatius Pigman, one of the pioneer preachers of the then Western country. He left the savor of a good influence which abides to this day; in this sense such men never die. As a farmer, a citizen, and a Christian gentleman, Mr. S. was, by all who knew him, looked to as one worthy of imitation. Such, in brief, were the progenitors of Rev. L. B. Stateler, a worthy son of a worthy sire. His early life was that of a farmer's son. Laboring in the field side by side with his father's servants, he learned habits of industry which have never forsaken him. His education was such as was to be acquired in those days in a round-log schoolhouse, during the winter season mostly. His social and religious training were good, and his personal choice made him an exemplary Christian, beginning with his earliest development of character. We were schoolmates and classmates in the school and in the Church, and we always met and parted in the best of good fellowship."

Brother Stateler never talked much to the writer concerning his youthful days. Not that this portion of his life was not happy. Possibly it was because he was not called out on the subject, and then since he became a man, like one of old, he was disposed to "put away childish things." His boyhood was spent, doubtless, in performing the tasks and enjoying the sports common to boys—sober-minded, good-natured, well-disposed boys—of his time and country, for "boys will be boys" the world over; and while they al-

ways have tasks to perform—and they would never amount to much if they did not—yet I have never known a boy with any spirit in him who did not manage some way to have his full share of fun as he passed along.

The country boy, especially if he is on the frontier, has luxuries in the way of pastime to which his city cousin and his successor of the next decade or two are strangers. To him "there is a pleasure in the pathless woods" where rabbits, squirrels, quails, wild turkeys, raccoons, opossums, and deer are just waiting to be hunted, and the interest in the sport is intensified, rather than lessened, at the prospect of an occasional encounter with a wild cat, a wolf, or a bear. There are "bee trees" to find and "cut" and rob of their treasure, speckled trophies in sparkling streams that invite and encourage the amateur angler, swimming holes of varied size and delightful depth that wait to be fathomed, creeks and caverns to explore, and a thousand other things to do, for all of which ample time is found. Add to these the games of "prisoner's base," "bull pen," "roll in the hole," "cat," football, and such like, and the pleasure of wrestling, foot-racing, attending spelling schools (where the old blue-backed elementary speller was used), cotton- and wool-pickings, corn-shuckings, and you have, in part, the recreations of the average country boy on the frontier a half century or more ago.

While such a boy may not have become very familiar with books (for his school days were generally limited to the winter term, extending from the close of corn-gathering in the fall to the time for cutting

cornstalks and clearing the ground for plowing in the spring, during which time he would get to compound numbers, or possibly to common fractions in Ray's arithmetic—about the same place each term—and make the same advancement in proportion in reading and spelling), yet he was brought into close contact with nature, and gained a vast fund of information in the school of experience; breathed pure air, was blessed with wholesome diet and plenty of good exercise, which gave him a strong, robust body. He learned how to endure hardships, meet and overcome difficulties, practice self-reliance, patience, and perseverance, and thus contribute in after life so largely to that class who constitute the bone and sinew of our country.

Brother Stateler related an incident just a few days before his death which is in place here. He had just been telling me that he and Rev. J. C. Berryman were boys together—a fact that I had not known before—that they lived in hallooing distance of each other, that their parents were members of the same Church, and that they were always the best of friends. He said:

“Berryman was my senior by two years in age, and in the ministry three years. One day when we were boys, 'Sene (that was what he was called then, his full name being James Carsene) and his brother rode up to where I was at work, and I bantered him for a wrestle, saying: 'Sene, I can throw you down.'

“‘No, you can't,' he replied good-naturedly and with some emphasis.

“He dismounted, and at it we went with a vim; and,

sure enough, I flung him to the ground. He got up, and we tried again, and I flopped him that time also. He was not a little taken back to think that I, his junior by two years, could fling him to the ground two times in succession, and as he started home he remarked: 'I will see you again.'

"Sure enough, after some time had elapsed, he came by our place one day leading a ram by a rope. He tied the ram to the fence and got over to where I was in the meadow and said to me: 'Lonner, I'm going to throw you down.' We clinched and tugged away for full two hours or more. Sometimes I was the victor and sometimes he was. When we quit, he rather claimed that he had the best of it; but I thought he had nothing to boast of, and that it was about a stand off. We were about equally matched in physical strength."

His face brightened and his entire frame was convulsed with laughter as he related the above incident, showing how heartily he enjoyed this reference to his youthful experiences.

CHAPTER II.

Manner of Living in Those Early Times—Log Cabins—Looms—Spinning Wheels—Self-Reliance—Early Religious Training—Revivals of Religion Common—Stateler's Own Story—Joined Church at the Age of Seven—Licensed to Exhort, Then to Preach—Old Bethel Church—A Sore Temptation—A Signal Victory.

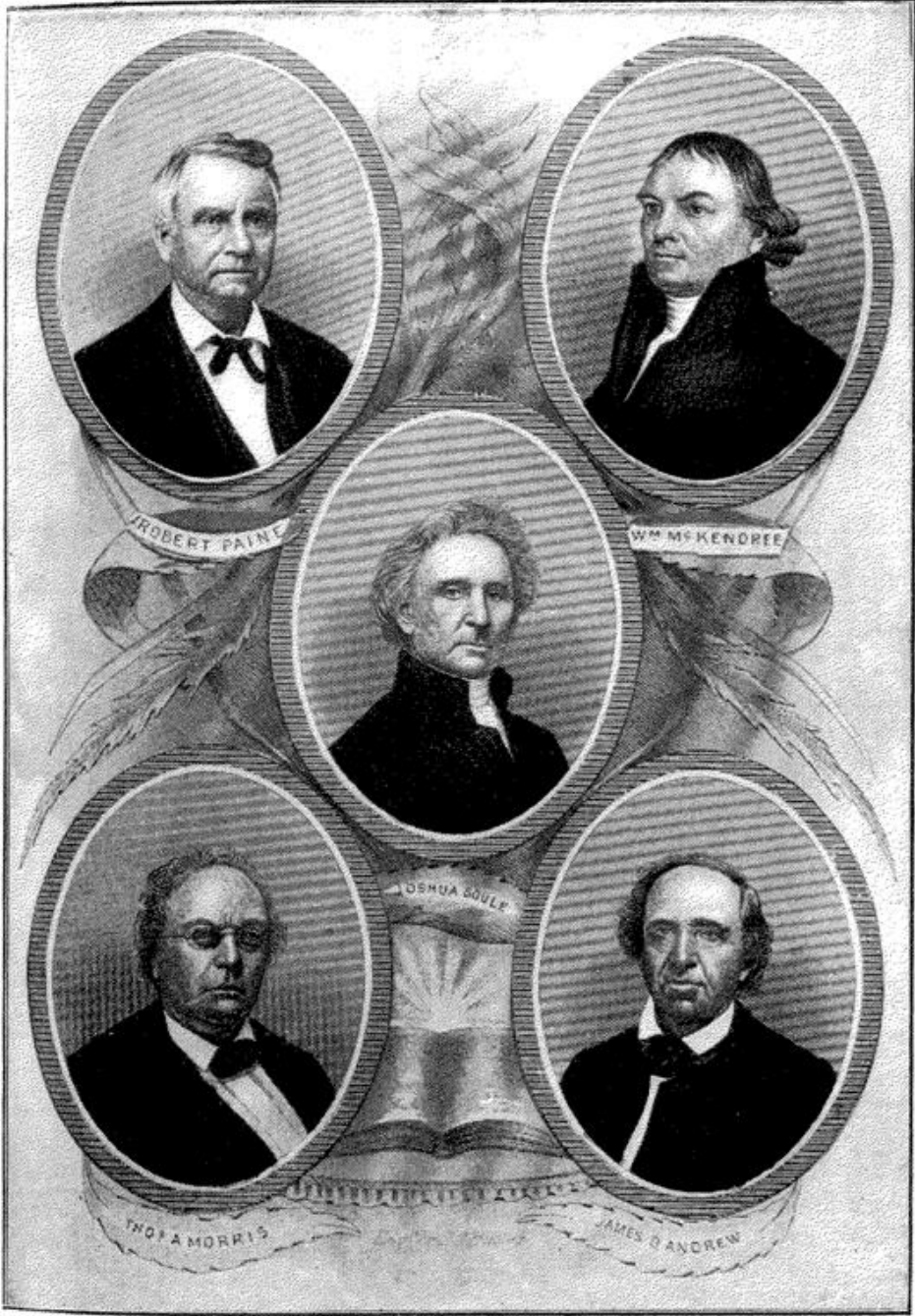
THE people in those early times lived mostly in log houses, the cracks chinked and daubed with clay, the floor made of puncheons—large, slabs of wood split out and one side hewed and smoothed with an ax—and the roof covered with clapboards, sometimes called "shakes," which were held in place by weight poles laid on top. The plan was frequently that of a double cabin—two separate rooms with an open space, called an "entry" or "passage," between—all under the same roof. The doors hung on wooden hinges, and were fastened by a wooden latch which was worked by a buckskin string and which proverbially hung outside, and thus originated a phrase that has become expressive of a cordial and generous hospitality which as a rule is always found among Western pioneers.

It was a timbered country, and the land had to be cleared, which required much time and labor to prepare and to secure even a small patch for cultivation. The distance to market was so great that but few articles were produced beyond what was used at home, and every family sought to become self-supporting, as nearly as possible, by producing what was necessary

both for food and raiment. Mills were scarce, and much of the meal was prepared by hand by means of a "pestle and mortar." Stoves were not heard of, and the cooking was done by the large fireplace with which every home was provided. The home of every well-to-do farmer was furnished with a loom and a spinning wheel, where the flax and the cotton raised in the "clearing" and the wool sheared from the small flock of sheep that ran in the pasture were manufactured into yarn, jeans, and linseys and afterwards, often by the same hands, into clothing for men, women, and children.

Every one on the place, whether black or white, from the six-year-old boy or girl to the dear old grandfather or grandmother who sat in the corner, had something to do each day, whether it were getting the wood, carrying the water from the spring, picking the seed from the cotton or burs from the wool, carding so many rolls, spinning so many broaches, knitting so many "finger lengths" on the stocking, or weaving so many "handbreadths" on the piece in the loom, or even the boy holding the "hank" of yarn on his two hands to keep it straight while grandmother wound it on a ball—by no means the easiest of the tasks named; and each was made to feel that he or she was an essential factor in the affairs of the household.

The table was furnished with sugar and sirup made from the maple tree, to which was often added a bountiful supply of wild honey. There was wild fruit enough to make preserves to last the year round. The wild animals not only furnished a supply of meat, but their skins, the dressing of which neatly was quite



ROBERT FAINE



WM M. KENDREE



JOSHUA GOULET



THOS A. MORRIS



JAMES D. ANDREW

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an accomplishment, were largely used for clothing. (Brother Stateler often wore a pair of buckskin pants made by his wife after the writer came to Montana.) It is easy to see how such a mode of life develops habits of industry, economy, self-reliance, patience, and perseverance and prepares the way for success in after life.

Brother Berryman speaks of Stateler as laboring side by side with his father's servants, from which one would infer that his father owned slaves, which I suppose is correct; but I never heard Mr. Stateler allude to the fact in the remotest way, and surely his manner of life was never, in any sense, such as to make the impression that he had ever been accustomed to being "waited upon." After he was eighty years old, and an invalid, he would say that he felt ashamed to have a friend blacken his boots for him, and on the last day of his life he persistently refused to have his food brought to his bedside, saying: "I am not that bad off yet." That he was an industrious, affectionate, and obedient son, there is no doubt. He never referred to his parents, whom he visited as often in after life as circumstances would permit, only in the tenderest manner, and he spoke with much feeling of the first visit he made to the neighborhood after the old home had passed into other hands.

But it is to his religious life that I desire to refer more especially; for while in his veins flowed the pioneer blood and in his heart burned the pioneer spirit, inherited from both branches of the parental tree, and in his strong, well-built frame there was the consciousness of physical strength to go forth and per-

form heroic service on the world's great battlefield, yet it is in his spiritual life that we are to find the secret force that gave direction to his energies and fitted him for such distinguished service in the Lord's vineyard.

He says that his parents became religious in early life. Nothing is known of the early religious training of his father, though we would infer that it was religious; but as his mother was the daughter of a successful Methodist preacher, we know that she had pious training and was probably a devout Christian from her childhood. The influence of Christian parents, particularly that of a Christian mother, upon the home and the future character and life of the children is greater than we think. It has been aptly said that the time to commence the religious education of a child is to begin with the mother before the child is born. There is truth in the doctrine of heredity. If the Lord visits the iniquities of the fathers and mothers upon the children to the third and fourth generation, there is no reason why, under proper conditions, he will not also transmit their virtues. Religion is not mere teaching, culture, or form, but life, a quality of our very being; and where this life does not exist, it cannot be transmitted.

Then, the influence of a Christian home—a home where God is believed in, acknowledged, loved, worshiped, communed with, honored, and served day by day; where the inmates "live as seeing him who is invisible," and have the faith that is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen"—who can describe it? It meant more in some respects to be religious, especially a Methodist, in those

days than at the present time. True, the people on the frontier had not so much to lead them away from the truth. There was not the greed for gold, the din of business, and the clamor for fame and wealth such as we have to-day. The preachers, who were devout men, moved freely among the people singing, praying, talking, preaching, exhorting, distributing books and papers among them, and emphasizing the vital doctrines of Scripture. The private homes were often used as preaching places. Prayer and class meetings were frequent. Every home was a miniature church, and religion—its doctrines, experiences, and practice—was more a theme in common conversation than with many of us to-day. Religion and the Church were supreme in the minds of professors of religion, and the ministry was looked upon—and truly—as the most sacred and honorable vocation possible for a young man. Protracted meetings, revivals of religion were common, where, in answer to united and fervent prayer, the Holy Spirit descended in mighty power, awakening, convicting, converting, and sanctifying men and women, whose hearts were thrilled and made happy in a Saviour's love, and who lived consistent lives and afterwards died in holy triumph.

It is no wonder that under these conditions the children, as well as the older people, were impressed with the truths of religion, and were not only converted, but many of them called to the ministry.

But I will let Mr. Stateler tell his own story. He says:

“My parents early became religious, and were among the first members of the Methodist Church

where they lived. This was the old Bethel Church, where scores and hundreds of persons have been converted and saved, who have gone up to swell the hosts of the redeemed. Their house was for half a century or more a home for the itinerant. Their children were all consecrated to God by holy baptism in infancy. I was the youngest of six children. I joined the Church at seven years of age under the ministry of Jesse Greene, and very early in life experienced what I now believe to have been the power of divine grace in my soul, renewing my nature and causing me to rejoice in God my Saviour.

"I was first licensed, after the old-fashioned way, as an exhorter by John Denham in 1829, and began exercising my gifts. Not long after, I was licensed to preach by William Adams at the quarterly meeting held at old Bethel Church, near where I was born. That was in the year 1830.

"A sore temptation came upon me in regard to my call to the ministry, which wrung my spirit and cast me into deepest gloom. This temptation, which I now believe to have been directly from the enemy of my soul, was a fear that I had entered upon this work without being called—that I had run without having been sent. So fierce was the temptation that, like Jonah, I would gladly have fled to the uttermost ends of the earth and hid me from any eye that had ever beheld me. At a late hour on the last night of the meeting, while I stood thus cast down, there was at the altar a young woman who during that year had been converted and joined the Church, but had been banished by her father from her home for Christ's

sake. He had made but one condition: that she should give up her religion or leave his house. She chose the latter, and went to live with a Christian family not far away. She was at the meeting, and had been singing and rejoicing. Her face shone with the presence and glory of God while she repeated these lines:

‘Shall angels have their songs to sing
And we no tune to raise?
O may we lose these useless tongues
When we forget to praise!’

And before I was aware of it I said in a loud and earnest manner, ‘Amen!’ when the glory of God shone about, and a glorious, gleaming light blazed all around me. My eyes were turned heavenward, and I attempted to praise God, but could only utter the words, ‘My God! My God!’

“My mouth went wide open; I broke out into a loud, ecstatic, religious laugh; the power of the Holy Spirit came from above and filled my very being. To have refrained from this exercise would have destroyed my physical being; my soul would have fled away.

“The exercise continued for hours. A flood of life and glory from the fount of God continued to pour into my soul. The moment I would try to give utterance to words I would break forth into that laugh.

“Somehow a feeling came over me, an overwhelming consciousness, that a dispensation of the gospel was committed unto me, and I said, ‘I’ll go.’ Then the last doubt fled forever from me in regard to preaching the gospel.

“I then started with a full consciousness that I was sent by the great Head of the Church to proclaim his

precious truth, and I have been going ever since, and this consciousness has sustained me in every trial, and touching this great question Satan has ever been behind my back and never confronts me any more."

Mr. Stateler believed in an inward "experience of grace," renewing his nature, and did not rest until he obtained it. He preached it all his life. He knew, and therefore with confidence he told, of the power of divine grace in his heart, and others heard and believed, sought and obtained the same gracious experience.

The incident just narrated shows the sacredness with which the ministerial office was regarded, the firm faith in a divine call to this holy office, and the sensitive conscience of this young man, who hesitated to act until the last doubt was removed. He was unwilling to "go up" unless assured that the Divine Presence would accompany him. It was a Marathon in his religious experience. Like Jacob he wrestled with God and prevailed, and his victory was the key to his future success in his long and eventful career.

CHAPTER III.

Goes to Conference—Departure from Home—An Affecting Scene—Joins the Kentucky Conference—On Trial—Volunteers for the Work in Missouri—Starts at Once—Long Journey on Horseback—Personal Sketch—First Circuit—Attends Conference at Pilot Grove—A Notable Gathering—Indian Missions.

HAVING settled the great question as to his duty, young Stateler was not long in deciding what to do. He was engaged in farm labor; but when the call came for him to "go," he stopped the plow, took out the horse, laid aside the plow harness, put on the saddle, and, with a pair of saddlebags containing his Bible, hymn book, Discipline, and a few articles of clothing, he started to the session of the Kentucky Annual Conference, to be held at Louisville, and which was attended by Bishops Roberts and Hedding, commencing October 13, 1831.

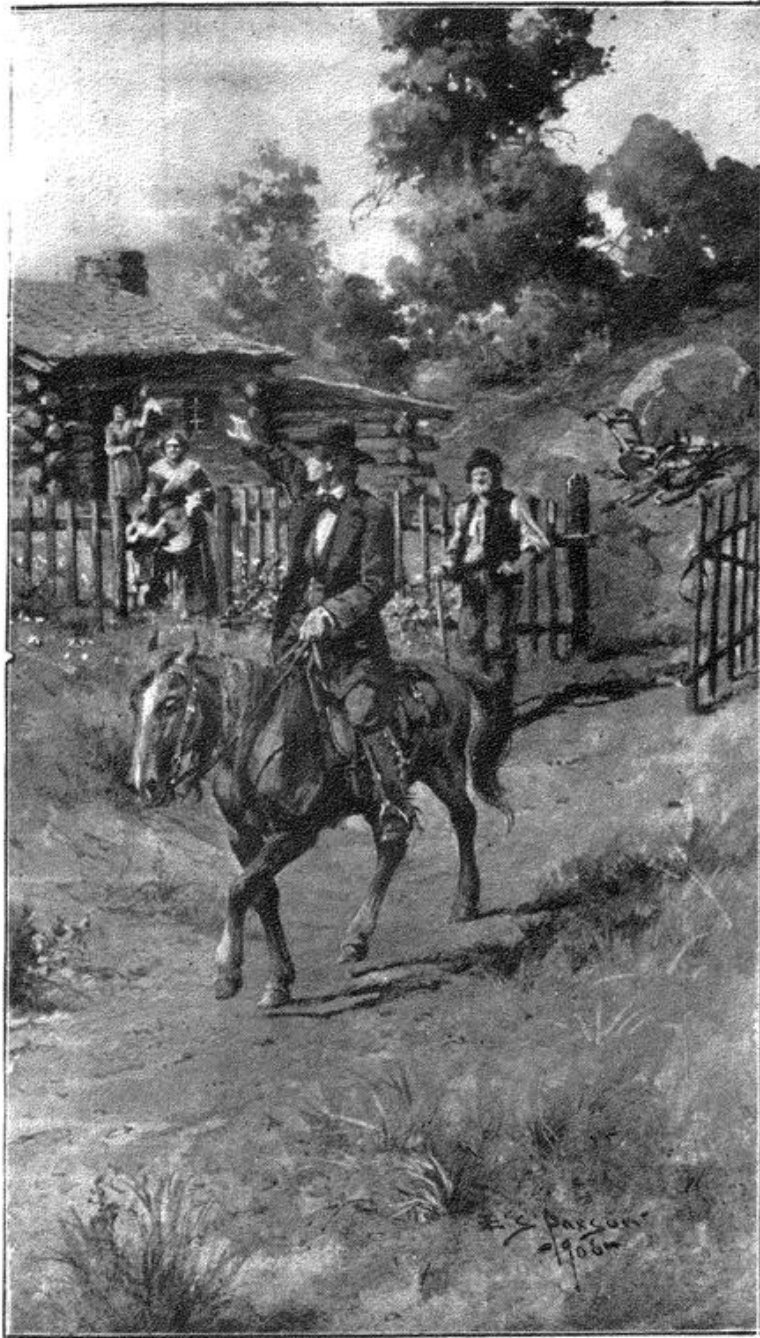
It is a memorable occasion in the history of a family and in the career of a promising young man when he thus tears himself loose from the world, gives up cherished ambitions, bids farewell to the endearments of home, and goes forth to battle for the Lord. We admire the courage of David when, only a youth, strong and ruddy, a mere stripling, he goes out in shepherd's attire with only a sling and a stone, but with an unconquerable faith in the righteousness and power of his God to meet the giant who is defying the armies of Israel. But the scene is reënacted every time a young man like Stateler departs from a quiet,

comfortable Christian home, and, scarce twenty years old, clad in homespun made by his mother's hands, without culture (as the world esteems it), and with scarce enough money to pay for a night's lodging, goes forth to "wrestle against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places," with nothing to sustain him but his faith in One who has said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

His brethren are ready to deride him and suggest that he had better stay with the few sheep in the wilderness (they unwittingly give him credit for excellence in his calling hitherto), and the worshipers at Mammon's shrine weep over his folly and predict failure and disaster. This has been the experience of many a young man who went forth to be a preacher of the gospel.

But we shall see how young Stateler came out. We shall not describe the scene in the home, at the family altar, the last morning that father and mother, brothers and sisters bow together where so often they have worshiped before. They have prayed for the spirit of self-sacrifice and of submission to the divine will, but now that it comes to the test and they are called upon to answer their own prayer and give up their own favorite son and send him into the wilderness, how keenly do they feel the pang!

The boy is to go out into a new world, where he will meet with strangers; will not receive the sympathy nor have the benefit of the mantle of charity that loving friends and kind-hearted neighbors would be ready to cast over his faults and failures, but where he is to



THE ITINERANT LEAVING HOME.
(See page 19.)

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stand alone before its critical gaze and be judged by his merits and by the strength and skill of the blows that he is able to give and take in the great conflict before him.

It is wonderful how little baggage a young itinerant has when he first leaves home—three or four books and a change of raiment, not enough to fill one side of the old-fashioned leathern saddlebags he has borrowed or traded for—but that little is moistened with a sister's or a mother's tears as the small bundles are carefully folded and packed away. The parting time arrives, the handshakes and caresses have been given; the hearty "God bless you's" have been uttered with choked voices and amid blinding tears, because it is almost sure to be a final farewell to some members of that little circle, and the departing form of the boy-preacher is followed by the tear-dimmed gaze of the little group still lingering about the front stile until it fades from view.

It is like entering a new world when a young man who has been rather closely confined to the work of tilling the soil and helping to support the family first leaves home to be a traveling preacher. He finds himself suddenly released from innumerable little cares and tasks that devolved upon him at home, and he hardly knows what to do with himself mornings and evenings. He comes into contact with people whose manners and modes of life in the home and everywhere are entirely new and strange; and the manner in which he is addressed and treated is new, often awkward, even ridiculous, to him. How varied his emotions! How serious his misgivings! Has he been really

called to this responsible work? Will he pass his examination at Conference? Will the brethren admit him, and will such an awkward, inexperienced youth be received by the people as their spiritual adviser and teacher?

These and other questions have been asked by many who will read these lines. But as Stateler had settled the question as to his call to the ministry so decisively before he started, he was never troubled on that score; and as the plan in those early times was to take young men of any promise whatever and put them to studying and also to preaching and exercising their gifts, without waiting to take a regular course at college before they commenced work; and as the good old preachers were ever ready to encourage the young man who felt specially impressed to "go right into the work," often urging that when the Lord calls a man to preach he doesn't call him to go to school (the truth of which is doubted very seriously now—a call to preach evidently implying a call to get ready to preach)—it is reasonable to suppose that a man of Stateler's good use of language, common sense, deep piety, grave demeanor, and studious habits would not have any serious misgivings concerning his admission into the Conference.

He was admitted on trial, together with E. L. Southgate, M. M. Crosby, William Phillips, L. Campbell, Carlisle Babbitt, Thomas Hall, Elijah Sutton, and Joseph D. Barnett, who have served their generation and long since rested from their labors. Rev. Alexander McAllister, who had come all the way from Missouri to get preachers for the work there, was present

at the Louisville Conference. He made an urgent call for volunteers for the then distant Western field. This was too much for young Stateler, in whose veins the blood of two distinguished grandsires, the one a fort builder and an Indian fighter and the other a faithful frontier preacher, was commingled, and which was now purified and intensified by contact with the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ, who pioneered the way from heaven to earth to rescue a perishing world. He could not resist the call, and did not try. Although he had scarcely a cent of money and was doubtless poorly prepared for such a trip, yet he was now on God's altar and was ready for his work wherever and whatever it might be. He was accepted, and at the close of the Conference session started directly from Louisville to St. Louis, traveling on horseback in company with Brother McAllister, from whom he borrowed the money (about six dollars) with which to pay his traveling expenses. He did not wait for any missionary boards (for there were none) or even for his friends to provide the means, but borrowed it on his own responsibility, and paid it back, every cent of it, though it was several years before he could save enough out of his very scanty receipts to do so.

Missouri had been admitted into the Union, after a long and heated controversy on the question of permitting slavery in its territory, in 1821; and a stream of immigration, largely from Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia, was pouring in to possess its fertile soil and enjoy its varied resources. Methodism, always at the front, was determined to supply the masses with the gospel. John Travis had been sent by the Western

Conference, held at Ebenezer Church in Tennessee, to Missouri Circuit—rather it was “the understanding that he was to make the circuit”—in 1806. And the work had grown until the Missouri Conference was organized in 1816. A heavy draft was made upon the older Conferences for preachers, a number of whom were transferred thither in 1831.

Of his trip and his experience, in part, the first year in his new field, Mr. Stateler says:

“The journey from Louisville to St. Louis was a long and fatiguing one, and required about two weeks to make it. From St. Louis to where I was sent, in the middle of the State, it took another week. I then found myself some six or seven hundred miles away from my father’s house, alone and among entire strangers, with just fifty cents in my pocket, and that was borrowed.

“The circuit to which I was sent was Cedar Creek. I arrived at the lower end of the circuit, on which there was another preacher who was in charge; but he happened to be right on the opposite end, just two days’ ride away. I started to go and join him, traveled all day without stopping to eat anything myself or to feed my horse, hoping to reach a place to which I had been directed where I could spend the night with friends, but failed to get there. At dark I stopped at a farmhouse for the night. The man took my horse away to care for him. I went into the house, thinking how I would manage with my somewhat limited exchequer to meet the expenses for my night’s lodging. When the man returned to the house he asked: ‘Won’t you have supper prepared?’

“‘No, thank you ; I wouldn’t choose anything,’ I replied, though I was very hungry.

“I rose early the following morning, called for my horse, and asked what my bill was. ‘Fifty cents,’ was the answer. I handed over my last half dollar and went on my journey. Though I had neither dinner, supper, nor breakfast, yet I went away with a cheerful feeling, rejoicing that I was able to get along without contracting any debt on the way.

“I spent that year with a colleague whose name was George W. Teas. Our labors were greatly blessed. Many were converted and added to the Church, the number, if I remember correctly, being about one hundred and fifty. The people were exceedingly kind, and received their ministers as brethren beloved. There was abundance of everything there but money. There was but little of that. We received, each of us, as ‘quarterage’ for the year’s labor, the sum of thirty-eight dollars.

“But we bade farewell to our friends at the end of the year with prayers and tears, not expecting to be returned ; for in those days it was seldom that a preacher remained more than one year on one charge.

“That year the Conference was held at a camp ground at Pilot Grove, Cooper County, Mo., Bishop Soule presiding. The Missouri Conference at that time embraced all the country west of the Mississippi River, including the State of Missouri, the Territory of Arkansas, and all the country westward to the Rocky Mountains—yes, to the Pacific Ocean.

“The number of preachers with whom to supply this vast field was small. I do not now recollect it, neither

the number of those who were converted that year, though there was quite an ingathering.

"The brethren who attended the Conference from Arkansas had provided themselves with wagons and camping outfits, and came the long journey over prairies, through forests, and across mountains in companies, camping out on the way.

"The camp ground had been regularly laid out, and was provided with log cabins, according to the custom of those days, and large numbers of seats arranged in the shady grove. Crowds attended from all parts of the country. The people in those days would come for miles. Many who had not tents would camp in their wagons. Provision was made for feeding all who came. There was no such thing as 'boarding tents' where charges were made for meals. Everything was free. Bishop Soule was then in the strength of his manhood and could preach for two hours or more, if occasion required, though even then he began to look quite venerable. His text on Sunday was, 'Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life,' and the sermon was two hours long. The Conference session continued from Wednesday till the following Tuesday. Prominence was given to religious services. Many were converted and joined the Church. On Tuesday morning the appointments were read out, and the preachers started for their fields of labor."

From the published statistics it appears that this year was the most prosperous up to that time of any in the history of the Conference. Forty-two preachers had been stationed the previous year, and forty-three appointed to work for the ensuing year.

The numbers in society were: Whites, six thousand one hundred and three; colored, seven hundred and fifty-six; Indians, three hundred and thirty-nine. Total, seven thousand one hundred and ninety-eight, showing an increase that year of eight hundred and seventy-seven whites, three hundred and eight colored, and two hundred and eighty-four Indians. "A very gratifying result," says D. R. McAnally, in his "Life of Patton," speaking as to the labors of the year, particularly as to the Indians, among whom missions had been so recently established.

The leaders of Methodism at that early day, though exceedingly straitened in their finances, often suffering for the necessaries of life, and in labors abundant, trying to supply the white settlers with the gospel, sought out the colored people who had accompanied their masters to this new country and gathered them into the Church, and were zealous in carrying the bread of life also to the Indians in "the regions beyond." The large tribes—Cherokees, Creeks, Chickasaws, Choctaws, and others—who had sold their lands in the South, were just settling in their new home in what is now Indian Territory, west of Arkansas. The missionaries followed them to their new home, and in 1831 John Harrell and A. M. Scott were sent by the Missouri Conference to the Cherokees, and Alvan Beard to the Creeks; while Thomas and William Johnson were sent as missionaries to the Indians of the Northwest, in Kansas. The field was so extensive and so promising that at this Conference (1832) three new districts were formed in the Indian country alone: one called "Indian Missionary District," in Kansas, and

the other two were simply designated "Creek Missions and Schools," with seven appointments, and "Cherokee Mission and Schools," with four appointments. These facts are mentioned here because they will be useful to the reader in showing the beginning of the work in a field to which the subject of this sketch devoted much earnest and faithful labor.

This was the first Conference that Mr. Stateler attended in the West. He was yet on trial, had no vote, and nothing special to do but pass his examination before the committee (and this is an ordeal that the average young preacher dreads until it is past and the committee has made a favorable report in his case), listen to the reports and discussions, hear the best preachers, and make observations. How closely he studies the men before him, from the Bishop, who is always the central figure in such a body, down to the latest applicant for admission! With Bishop Soule in the chair, his wise counsels, dignified manner, and venerable appearance, and such men as McAllister, Monroe, Jesse Green, Ketron, and others mighty in word and deed as leaders; with a goodly company of the rank and file clad in homespun and fresh from far-distant and victorious fields, together with the great hosts of people from far and near who attended the services and sessions of the Conference, where the presence of God was manifested in such mighty power—no wonder the young preacher's heart was thrilled and encouraged to go forth to what was considered one of the best charges in the Conference, thus showing the good impression that he had made upon the appointing power.

CHAPTER IV.

Goes to Bowling Green Circuit—A Gracious Time—Two Camp Meetings—A Wonderful Revival—Andrew Monroe—Notable Conversions—Conference at Cane Hill, Ark.—Long Journey—A Great Meeting—Ordained Deacon and Admitted into Full Connection—Sent among the Indians—A Trying Time—"Black Mammy"—A Vile Old Fellow—Raising the Puncheons—Family Prayers Kept Up under Difficulties.

At the Conference of 1832 Mr. Stateler was appointed to the Bowling Green Circuit, with Robert Jordan preacher in charge and Andrew Monroe presiding elder.

In those days the preachers, particularly the single men, had but little baggage, and when they went to Conference were prepared at its close to start without delay to the new charge. Mr. Stateler had no relatives in that new country to visit; and as vacations for preachers had not yet become fashionable, he soon found himself on his new charge.

It was a large circuit, occupying Pike, Rawles, and part of Lincoln Counties, and embracing the towns of Bowling Green, Louisiana, Clarksville, Franklin (in Pike County), New London (the county seat of Rawles County), and Auburn (in Lincoln County). But it could not be too large for this zealous young itinerant, if he only had the time and strength to meet his appointments. In speaking of his work this year he says:

"We preached on week days regularly, so that we had some twenty-six appointments, which were filled

every four weeks. There was not in that work a single chapel except one that was called 'Republican Meeting-house,' which was open to all denominations. The preaching, both on week days and Sundays, was at private houses.

"My colleague, Brother Jordan, went to Baltimore, where he spent most of the year; so that I was alone on the work the greater portion of the time. We had a gracious work in progress most of the year. We had two camp meetings, at which there were many precious souls converted and much people were added to the Lord.

"Brother Monroe, our presiding elder, was very constant and regular at his quarterly meetings, preaching with great power. Rev. Jacob Lanneus had traveled that circuit the year previous and was with us at our camp meeting in Pike County, which was a time of great power.

"There were fifty conversions at the meeting. What a time it was! People actually forgot to eat. There was no preaching on Monday, and no dinner either. The people sang and prayed, and shouted the praises of God. It was a bright Monday. Andrew Monroe was a great camp-meeting preacher. He could preach for two solid hours, and his sermons were earnest, practical, and godly. In those days you didn't have to ask people, 'How do you feel?' or 'Do you think the Lord has blessed you now?' No, no; the people were powerfully converted and praised God aloud, and often would turn preachers themselves and go out and bring others to the mercy seat.

"Dr. Leach lived in the bounds of that circuit, and

had labored there for several years; but was then in a local capacity, he having been driven to locate because of the limited support he received. He lived many years in that part of the country, practicing medicine and preaching as a local preacher. He died at last, in hope of eternal life, having fought a good fight and kept the faith.

"There were within the bounds of that circuit a number of experienced Christians, pillars in the Church of God. The circuit was one of the oldest in the Conference, having formerly been called 'Buffalo Knob.' Looking back now at this late date, and calling to mind those who were converted during that year, there is hardly one remaining, nearly all having passed away to their happy homes above.

"The young woman who afterwards became my wife, whose father's house was one of the preaching places, was converted that year. Her father had emigrated from Kentucky and had lived in the Danville Circuit. At the great camp meeting at Salem Camp Ground most of his remaining children were converted. His name was Elijah Purdom, and he was familiarly known as 'Uncle Lige.' There was in the bounds of that circuit a Sister Paxton, who lived near Auburn, and whose daughter Elizabeth was converted and joined the Church that year. She afterwards became the wife of Rev. Samuel G. Patterson, who was for many years a missionary to Mexico, and who died of yellow fever a few years ago in South America while engaged in Bible work there.

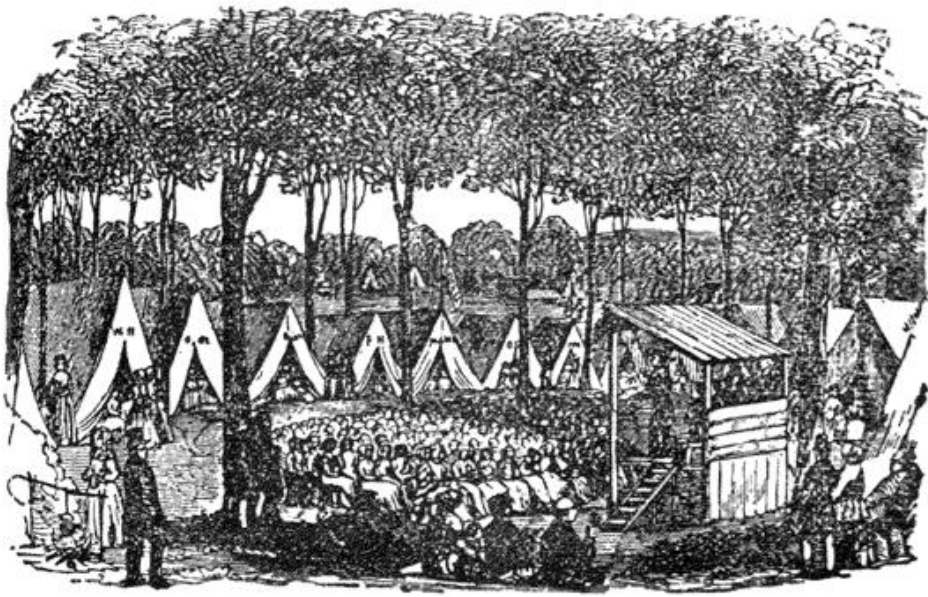
"I continued in the work until the Annual Conference, which was held that year at Mountain Springs

Camp Ground, Washington County, Ark., many hundred miles away."

There was always something peculiarly tender and touching in Brother Stateler's manner and in the tone of his voice when he referred to the great revival held this year, and to those converted there. His face would light up with a smile, the tears would start from his eyes, and his whole frame would tremble with emotion, showing how deeply his heart was stirred by the precious memories of his early labors, when God so graciously placed the seal of approval upon his ministry. It was a red-letter year in his ministerial life, and the memory of it refreshed and thrilled his spirit till the day that he too was called to join the happy throng that had gone before.

Rev. S. G. Patterson, who traveled this circuit in 1835-36, says: "Besides good pay, the Bowling Green Circuit furnished wives for some of the Missouri preachers; among whom were Miss Sarah Davis, who married Thomas Johnson, Miss M. Purdom, who married Learner B. Stateler, and my own Elizabeth Ellen Paxton—all of whom were eminently qualified to fill the responsible position of Methodist preachers' wives. These noble women all served the Church with their husbands, in the itinerancy and as missionaries among the Indians, for many years, immortalizing themselves by lives of usefulness, toil, and sacrifice for the Master."

Two of these faithful women, and possibly the third, were converted under Mr. Stateler's ministry. No wonder his spirit was thrilled and he rejoiced at such recollections, for an angel might well covet the



AN OLD-FASHIONED CAMP MEETING.

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trophies won upon such victorious fields. Thank God that it is the privilege of the faithful minister to reap in some measure the fruits of his labor, even here on earth!

Mr. Stateler made the long journey to the seat of the Conference on horseback. On his way he stopped at the home of the Widow Robinson, the mother of Edwin Robinson, who afterwards became a useful minister of the Methodist Church in Missouri. This was near where Springfield now stands. He says: "I remember that I paid no bill there. That country was comparatively new and wild then. I usually got up early and traveled till nine or ten o'clock, when I would get breakfast, feed my horse, and then travel until night."

In summing up the year's work, recorded in a small book now before me, he reports: "Sermons preached, 223; members received, 80; quarterage received, \$74; gifts received, \$10; money expended, \$48."

In speaking of how the preachers fared in those days, he says: "I remember at some of our Conferences the preachers would report \$10, \$17, and \$30 as amounts that they had received on circuits. But they were true and faithful men. They were not afraid to preach the terrors of the law. Jack Harris, although his text was, 'Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life,' would wind up with the subject of hell and damnation. But they did a heap of good. The people were converted by hundreds. The preachers dressed mostly in jeans. I first went to Conference dressed from head to foot in jeans made by my mother's hands.

“On one occasion the preacher’s coat was worn out at the elbows. A local preacher, old Brother Bennett, managed to get him a new suit. The material was bought at M. U. Payne’s store, and was snuff-colored cloth. The preacher put in \$12, all the money he had, leaving out \$6 with which to pay his expenses to Conference. Friends paid the balance, and he went up to Conference feeling quite spruce. We had to practice economy in those days. But our wants were met, our labors were blessed, and we were happy in the work to which we were assured our God had called us.”

While Stateler had fared better this year than he did the one previous, yet the finances of the Conference at large are reported in a wretched condition. The Chartered Fund furnished each Annual Conference with about seventy-five dollars, and the Book Concern something more than that. Then what was called a Conference collection was taken up by the preachers. All this together constituted a fund which was applied to the superannuated preachers, the widows and orphans of deceased preachers, and toward making up the deficiencies in the salaries of the traveling preachers. The claim of single preachers at that time was one hundred dollars; that of a married preacher two hundred dollars, with a small amount additional for each child. The Conference stewards summed up what had been received from all sources, and divided the amount among those who had received the least in their charges, settling with them on a basis of thirty-four cents on the dollar. That is, those who had received less than thirty-four dollars for a

single man, or sixty-eight for a married man, were paid enough to make up that amount; while those who had received more than that kept what they had, but received no more.

The Conference convened September 9, 1833, at the place above mentioned. Rev. J. C. Berryman says it was at a camp meeting at Cane Hill, Washington County, Ark. Doubtless this was the name of the town or post office, while the former was the name given to the camp ground.

Bishop Soule was present and presided. L. B. State-ler was ordained deacon and received into full connection in the Conference, together with Jacob Lanneus, Richard Overby, Alvan Baird, William G. Duke, James M. Jamison, and John L. Hammill, and eight others were admitted on trial. Brother Berryman says: "Bishop Soule had, on his way to the Conference, visited our Indian Mission among the Shawnees and Delawares, on Kansas River, where Thomas and William Johnson were then laying the foundation for mission work among the several tribes that occupied that portion of our Western border." As a result of this visit, two new missions were established: one among the Peories on the Osage River, to which Nathaniel M. Talbot was appointed; the other among the Kickapoos just above Fort Leavenworth, on the Missouri River, with J. C. Berryman in charge.

This indicates the interest felt in the Western work by that great and good man. He saw the crying need for more laborers, and sought to supply it by securing efficient men. He could doubtless see the vast resources and the wonderful development and growth

that was bound to come in time, and he endeavored to lay the foundations of the Church broad and deep.

Of this Conference Rev. Jacob Lanneus says: "The preachers were punctual in attendance, and all seemed to enjoy good health, though several of them took sick at Conference. We had a good meeting in the encampment during the session, at which about fifty were converted. There were about thirty campers, one hundred and thirty families, seventy wagons, and two or three thousand persons on the ground. On Sunday a collection of fifty dollars was taken for the benefit of the Conference. On Monday the Missionary Society held its anniversary, and about one hundred and seventy-five dollars was raised."

No wonder that Methodism took such deep root in Arkansas soil, and has become such a mighty force in that great State. When people attend Methodist Conferences in such vast numbers, and preachers are not so engrossed with Conference business as to prevent their entering fully into the devotional services, great good is bound to follow. Would that there could be in all our Conference gatherings a return to the simplicity and spirituality that characterized those gatherings in "God's first temples!"

Stateler was selected by the good Bishop for the Indian mission work. Of his appointment and his work this year he says:

"From the Conference at Mountain Springs I was sent to labor in the Creek Nation, Indian Territory, and placed in charge of the Hardridge School. Brother Joplin had preceded me. His wife was the daughter of old Brother Henry, who was a preacher. She

and her little infant had fallen victims to disease, and both had died and were buried there. In my loneliness I frequently visited the grave of our departed sister and gave vent to my feelings in weeping. I did not know how soon I might rest there too, for it was very sickly. I suffered much with the regular old-fashioned ague.

“At the place where I boarded there was a typical ‘black mammy.’ She was an African woman, and had a grown daughter by the name of Phœbe. The daughter’s father was an Indian man whose name was Parryman. He was a vile old fellow, and had a heap of wives. The daughter was a right pretty girl, and was married to a white man. ‘Granny,’ as we called her, did the cooking, and brought my meals to my room. Altogether, we made quite a family. We had prayers regularly. The cabin was built upon posts set in the ground. The hogs would pile up under the floor and groan and grunt at a great rate. They would often raise the puncheons on the floor, which lay loose on the sleepers or joists. I would borrow ‘black mammy’s’ pony and drag up wood for the fire. Sometimes she would imagine that I worked him too hard and would get mad and break out vehemently with such expressions as ‘I won’t *linctum* for you any more,’ meaning that she would not interpret for me any more. But she would get in a good humor again. I could speak to the greater portion of the Indians only through an interpreter. I would utter a sentence in English, and then the interpreter, whoever he was, would give the sense in the Indian tongue. These Indians, many of them, were quite well-to-do, and owned many slaves.

"The missionaries appointed to the various stations would fail to come, and I was kept going from one school to another. The Little Rock District then embraced the Indian country and half of Arkansas, and all that territory was in the Missouri Conference.

"The Creek mission schools and also the Cherokee mission schools, each large enough for a district, were connected with the Little Rock District, the presiding elder of which was also superintendent of the mission."

In the above sketch we see some of the difficulties and trials of the missionary among a foreign people, also some of the striking characteristics of this particular missionary and his particular fitness for this kind of work. Last year he was among people of refinement, and whose society was congenial and elevating; now his surroundings are just the opposite. Yet we see how he accommodates himself to the situation, makes himself at home among people whose habits are most repulsive and whose fare is very coarse, obtains their good will and respect, maintains Christian worship in their homes, and preserves that purity and tenderness of soul and devotion to the cause of God that attended him all through life.

Doubtless much of his work consisted of teaching and superintending the schools in his charge, which, with the difficulty of getting interpreters and the condition of his health in that malarial atmosphere, accounts for his reporting only eighty sermons preached: He received \$100 "quarterage," and reports \$75 expended, leaving hardly enough to provide him with a new suit of clothes—one of the indispensables to a

young preacher going to Conference—and to pay his way thither.

On his way to Conference that fall he attended a camp meeting at Cave Spring, at which Edwin Robinson, then a young man just grown, who afterwards met such a tragic death by being shot down in cold blood near Glasgow, Mo., was converted.

It was quite customary for the preachers in those times to meet and travel together in groups on their way to Conference. Sometimes they would procure a conveyance, but as the roads were so rough, they would more frequently go on horseback. The preachers whose charges were in the way would often make appointments, and sometimes arrange for a protracted or a camp meeting where a number of visiting brethren would be present. These were frequently times of great refreshing to both preachers and people. It was not uncommon, either, when the preacher in his journey would arrive at a Methodist home in the after part of the day and would consent to preach, for a boy to mount a horse and “norate” the word around the neighborhood, and a houseful of attentive listeners would be treated to an excellent sermon. The Saviour’s words, “As ye go, preach,” found literal fulfillment, and no wonder that the word of God “mightily grew and prevailed.”

CHAPTER V.

Another Camp Meeting Conference—Bishop Roberts—Stateler Goes to St. Louis—Changed to Canton Circuit—Great Hardships—Very Successful—Extracts from Journal—Temperance Work.

IN the year 1834 the Missouri Conference was held at Belleview Camp Ground, not far from where the town of Caledonia, in Missouri, now stands. The preachers in those days, like some in more modern times, were partial to these great convocations in the country. This was quite natural. In the country there is nothing to divide the attention of the people, and the Conference and its services become the topic of conversation and the center of attraction for the people far and wide. It makes a profound impression, and hundreds attend who would not think of doing so if it were in a town or city. Bishop Roberts was present and presided. He was a very plain, devout, modest, sensible man, and greatly beloved by the Church.

Mr. Stateler was appointed assistant preacher to Fourth Street Church, St. Louis—the only Methodist Church there then. Thomas Drummond, who had just been transferred from the Pittsburg Conference, and a man of more than ordinary ability as a preacher, was in charge. Stateler remained there, laboring faithfully and efficiently, until February, when he was changed to Canton Circuit. Mr. Drummond died the next July of cholera. He preached on Sunday morning, and expected to preach again at night, but was seized with

that dread disease, which proved fatal. When dying, he exclaimed: "All is well. Tell my brethren of the Pittsburg Conference that I die at my post."

Of his work during this year Mr. Stateler says: "James M. Jamison was appointed to Canton Circuit, but did not go to it. He went to Pennsylvania for the purpose of getting married, and did not return. I was sent to take his place. The circuit lay in the northern part of Missouri, embracing part of Marion, all of Clarke, Lewis, Shelby, Knox, and Scotland Counties, in Missouri, and extended into Iowa northward along the Mississippi River, embracing Burlington, to Fort Madison, nearly to the Iowa River; then westward up the Desmoines River to Farmington and Clark's Point, on Skunk River. That country was called Michigan then. The circuit was one hundred and twenty-five miles up and down the Mississippi, and extended fifty miles westward. It was three hundred miles around it. There were about twenty-five appointments, which were filled every four weeks. The settlements were often so far apart, and the rides so long, that I could not preach every day. People were flocking into the country. There were many additions and great gatherings to the Church, so that the numbers mightily increased. During the year more than one hundred were added. I organized Churches at the following places: Fort Madison, Burlington, Yellow Springs, and Clark's Point, in Kirkpatrick's neighborhood."

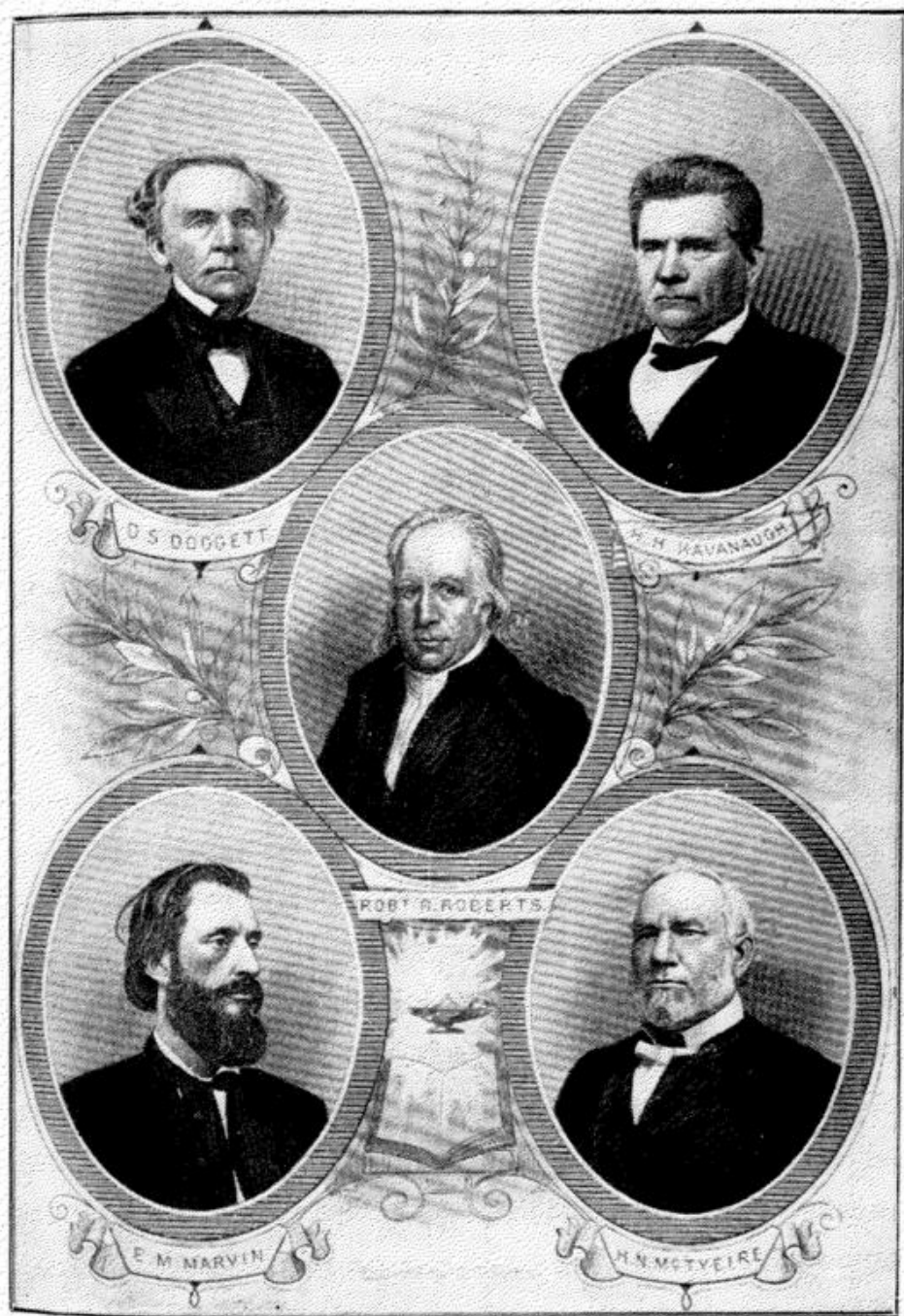
Mr. Stateler kept a journal extending from January 4, 1835, to January 1, 1846. As it contains many items revealing the inner life of the man, and relates incidents showing the difficulties under which the preach-

ers of that time performed their herculean tasks, the reader will be favored with some extracts from it.

On Sunday, January 4, the date mentioned above, he writes: "This day preached in the morning as usual. At three o'clock preached to a solemn congregation from the parable of the barren fig tree. Hope that the word did not fall to the ground."

"Wednesday, 7th. This day I received a communication from A. Monroe, my presiding elder, telling me to prepare myself to leave my station [St. Louis] and go and take charge of Canton Circuit, lying on the north boundary of the State. The removal was very unexpected [it seems to have been as much so to the presiding elder also], and caused me considerable trouble, as I had sold my horse and saddle on credit and was not prepared to purchase another."

Think of a young preacher by hard study and self-denying and successful labor winning his way in three years to a place in the leading station of the Conference where he is comfortably situated, well satisfied, and laboring efficiently, though with his system still full of the malaria brought from the sickly climate of his previous charge, now receiving orders to break up and march forth into a wilderness bordering on the north pole—as it were—in the dead of stern winter. No horse, no saddle, no supply of heavy clothing, no traveling outfit, and no money with which to buy, yet he is to start at once, for a brother minister has failed to go to his charge, and the work must not suffer. While this picture reveals some of the hardships of the itinerant system, yet it exhibits the spirit of the men who, not counting their own lives dear unto them, have



D. S. DOGGETT



W. H. KAVANAUGH



ROBT. B. ROBERTS



E. M. MARVIN



H. V. METVEIRE

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maintained, and maintain it still, as Heaven ordained and the most effective yet adopted for the extension of God's kingdom throughout the earth. Though greatly disappointed and sorely tried, L. B. Stateler was not the man to hesitate, or even murmur, at his lot. He procured an outfit—he does not tell us where or how—and says: "By the 13th I had settled all my business and set out on my journey."

"Saturday, 16th. Reached Bowling Green, where I had traveled one year and was acquainted. Preached Saturday night and Sunday, and spent several days with my friends. Preached several times, though very feeble."

"Sunday, February 1. Heard a sermon delivered by Dr. F. B. Leach. Preached at night to an attentive congregation. At the time of preaching had a very hard chill, followed by fever."

"Wednesday, 4th. Set forward on my way toward Canton; traveled till dark; reached F. Ford's; had a very hard ague and fever. Set out in the morning. Traveled to New London; stayed all night at L. Tracey's. Set out next morning; traveled ten miles and put up for the night; almost perished with cold. Stayed from Friday night until Monday morning, it being as cold apparently as any weather I ever experienced, so much so that water would freeze in a vessel sitting close to the fire. The family with whom I stayed was a Baptist one. They treated me with great kindness, for which they would receive no pay. Their name was Withers. Here I had a chill and fever again."

"Monday, 9th. Set out again and arrived safe at William Lahuson's (a preaching place on the Canton

Circuit) in the evening; found a kind family; spent the week with them; had several chills with fever. On Sunday, the 15th, went to a Brother Turner's; preached to an attentive congregation. I feel great weakness (in body) after labor. Still hope that my health will improve. My mind still runs in the work, and it still is the delight of my heart to hold forth a crucified Saviour to fallen sinners. O God of my salvation, be my guide, even until death! Amen."

"Tuesday, 17th. At night preached at W. Johnson's."

"Wednesday, 18th. Set out to meet Joseph S. Allen, the preacher employed by the presiding elder to travel the circuit. Met him about twelve o'clock; heard him preach, and gave an exhortation after the sermon. There were some remarks made on temperance, and several came forward and gave their names to the temperance society. In the evening returned eight miles to Mr. Turner's; preached there next day, and added eighteen names to the temperance society. Traveled two miles when Brother Allen preached; and as that was the night for my chill and fever, by the time the sermon was ended my fever was very high, and the effort put forth in closing the meeting after him while in that condition deeply affected my lungs, so much so that my fever did not abate for several days."

"Friday, 20. Rode fifteen miles; and as Brother A. was not apprised of my affliction, he desired me to preach, which I did, but at the expense of much pain, which continued through the night."

It is easy to understand how the services of the "young brother" just from St. Louis would be in great

demand and everybody would want to hear him, and how difficult it was for a man of Stateler's temperament to refuse to preach when he was able to stand on his feet, but it is a mystery how he could continue to travel and preach when in such a condition. His motto was, "Go or die," and, but for the iron constitution that he possessed, death must have been the result of such indiscretion. But he continues:

"Saturday, 21st. Brother A., having an appointment at the Presbyterian college, desired me to ride on twelve miles to the next appointment and preach to the people on Sunday. The river was rising, and I could not get back. Suffered much pain through the night, and Sunday morning my lungs were extremely sore. Attended the appointment; and as there was no one to officiate, I thought I must say something, though from the inflamed state of my lungs I felt that my life in a degree would be risked. After the sermon I supped some warm stew made of honey, butter, and vinegar stewed together. This gave some relief."

Yes, ever since Mary broke the costly alabaster box to anoint her Lord, and the women "hasted at the early dawn" with spices to the sepulcher to perfume his body, and Lydia, "whose heart the Lord opened," welcomed Paul and his colaborers to her home, "constraining them" to come there and abide, the Christian women of every land and every age have been ministering to the wants of God's servants, and they know how to perform such ministries.

"Monday, 23d. Set out to meet Brother A. Traveled ten miles and reached North River a little after dusk, where I was to halloo, and the friends were to

come and let me know whether I could ford or not ; but no one came, and I set out on the back track, finding a place after some delay, where I stayed all night.

“Tuesday, 24th. Traveled a few miles ; met Brother A. He preached at twelve o’clock, and I at night.

“Wednesday, 25th. Weather extremely cold ; and as our way was mostly through the prairie, we suffered much from the cold wind. The cold seriously affected my lungs, which are still in a very poor state. Got bad at night ; had much fever, and still very unwell next morning. Took medicine until my fever measurably abated, and remained at that place six days, then set out, though quite weak, to meet Brother A. again. But, as he was far ahead, we did not meet again until Friday, March 6, at a Brother Pitchard’s at a little place called Canton, on the Mississippi.”

“Saturday, 7th. At the desire of Brother A. I set out up the river to go to the station on the Mississippi, at the Rapids, thirty-five or forty miles, but did not reach the place until after dark Sunday night ; hence I did not preach. Got quarters with a settler named Capt. James White, who treated me very kindly. This place is called Camp Des Moines, and is situated on the west bank of the Mississippi at the head of the Rapids, twelve miles from the ferry on the Des Moines River, and fifteen miles above its confluence with the Mississippi. The Des Moines River is the Missouri State line north, and the land immediately north of the Des Moines, for twenty-five miles up each river, bounded by a line running direct across from one river to the other, is a reserve for the half-breed Indians. The Fort, or Camp, Des Moines, stands on this reserve.

There are three companies of dragoons here, under the command of Colonel Carney, Captains Boon, Brown, and Sumner. The situation is beautiful—elevated grounds, on open prairie, with a handsome view of the river and an excellent landing for steamboats. Immediately above the reserve spoken of commences the New Purchase lately made by the government from the Indians, embracing a place called Flint Hills and extending a great distance up the Mississippi.”

“Monday, 9th. Left Camp Des Moines and set out up the river to an old fort named Madison. Tuesday I preached above that place; Wednesday, returned and preached in sight of the fort, then rode twelve miles to Camp Des Moines and preached to the army at candlelight. Felt much liberty in addressing the officers and their companies, but when through found that I had exhausted my strength, even gone beyond it somewhat, so that I could not rest or sleep for several hours after lying down. I hope that the labor was not lost to these soldiers. The next morning a dragoon came and asked me to furnish him a Methodist Discipline. I had only one in my saddlebags, but, as he greatly desired it, I let him have it. Said he: ‘I have a soul to save, and feel greatly concerned about it.’”

Thus we see how our itinerant is concerned for the salvation of all classes and conditions of men. He knew the dangers and the temptations of the soldiers on the Western frontier, and his interest in their welfare prompted him to forget himself and go even “beyond his strength” in urging them to “put on the whole armor of God.”

But he kept going. On Friday, the 14th, he says: "I met Brother A. again; he preached in the day and I at night. We also succeeded in organizing a temperance society called the Clarke County Temperance Society. This is the northeast county of the State. There is also a county temperance society in each of the adjoining new counties (Lewis and Shelby) embraced in the circuit. The temperance cause is doing much in this part, and we devoutly hope that it will prevail against the enemy and drive him from the land."

From the beginning of the great Methodist movement, its preachers have always been among the foremost in advocating the cause of temperance. It has been part of the gospel that they have preached all over this continent, and its principles have been rigidly enforced in the societies with which they have dotted the earth.

CHAPTER VI.

In Labors Abundant—A Presiding Elder Immersed—A Missouri Mustang—Preacher Takes a Tumble—Gets Bled—In Perils on Land and Water—An Unsatisfactory Service—Crossing a Prairie—Set Afoot—Feeling “Mighty Hollow”—“Cooning” a Log—Andrew Monroe—The Presiding Eldership—Interviews Keokuk, the Indian Chief.

THE reader will be interested in the following extracts from the journal as revealing certain features of itinerant life, particularly the constant travel, and some other peculiarities of the work at that time. He continues:

“Saturday, March 21. Our quarterly meeting commenced. Brother Monroe, our presiding elder, attended. A good congregation on the Sabbath; some feeling manifested; one joined the Church. The weather so unfavorable that the meeting closed on Sunday, though it was to have continued till Monday evening. As Brother Monroe was on his way Monday morning, in crossing a small stream, his horse threw him under the water, but he got out safely.”

Cayuses had no more respect for the “cloth” than they have in more modern times. I have known a preacher who was treated in much the same way in Montana, but have never known one who enjoyed such a performance.

“Monday, 25th. Brother Allen set out for his family, and as Brother Jamison has not come I am left alone on the circuit; but in the name of God I shall commence my labors.”

I suppose his meaning is that he commences now as preacher in sole charge of the work. But after the events narrated in the last chapter—the long, fatiguing rides; sermons preached while he was shaking with ague or burning with fever; and traveling almost constantly while suffering with pain and nearly freezing with cold—now to talk about “commencing his labors” sounds a little odd to the average circuit rider of the present day. But before following him very far on this round, the reader will conclude that he had indeed only “just commenced” to travel his circuit in earnest. He says:

“Friday, 27th. Commenced the circuit.”

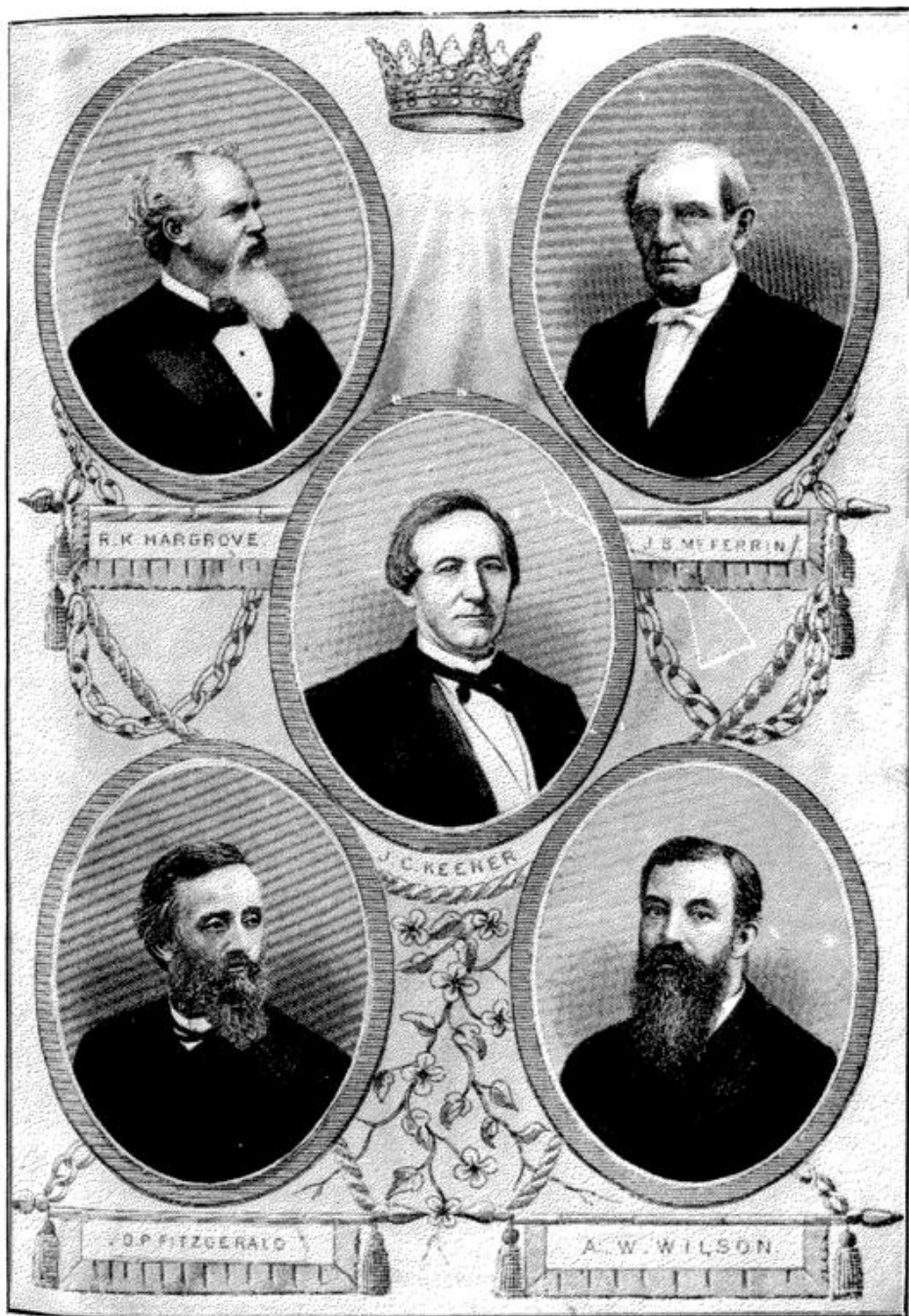
“Sunday, 29th. Preached in Monticello, the seat of justice for Lewis County.

“Monday, 30th. Set on my way to Des Moines River.

“Tuesday, 31st. While pursuing my journey my horse took fright and commenced jumping with all his might, and continued until he threw me off. The fall hurt me very much in my left shoulder and breast. I immediately got bled, and then continued my journey.”

It would seem that the fresh, nutritious provender of that new country had much the same effect upon the “Missouri mustang” that bunch grass has upon our “bucking broncho” of Montana—anyhow, the effect is the same upon the unsuspecting and too trustful itinerant, with this difference: the Missouri victim had no boundless beds of bristling cactus plants upon which to light, and the Montana sufferer does not have to call a doctor to “get bled” after such a performance.

“April 1. After trying in vain to borrow a horse, I



R. K. MARGROVE



J. B. MCFERRIN



J. C. KEENER



J. P. FITZGERALD



A. W. WILSON

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set out on foot and walked five miles, then borrowed a horse and set out on my way, and after traveling twenty miles reached the appointments. Thursday and Friday I preached day and night, and Saturday set out again, traveled twenty miles, and preached in the evening."

"Sunday, 5th. Rode this morning to the garrison at the Rapids and preached to the soldiers. On Monday traveled ten miles and preached at Fort Madison, on the bank of the Mississippi. Tuesday, set out for the Flint Hills; reached there Wednesday morning; spent the day with Doc. Ross; left appointments with him for my next round, and in the evening started down the Mississippi. This country is the land which was recently ceded by the Indians to the government, and is fast filling up with immigrants from the different States. But there is no efficient ministry among them. Truly the field is already white unto the harvest; but O, the laborers are few! O Lord, raise up and thrust out men into this great work! Amen."

"Thursday, 9th. Rode thirty miles; got into Missouri again and preached at night. On Friday preached at twelve o'clock and at night; then held a temperance meeting and appointed officers. On Saturday I traveled and preached, and on Sunday rode twelve miles and preached at Canton; then preached again at night.

"Monday, 13th. Preached at Lagrange, a little town on the Mississippi; had an attentive congregation. On Wednesday rode ten miles and preached, opened the door of the Church, and two came forward and joined with us, and one was baptized. Thursday, rode ten

miles and preached to quite an interesting congregation. Saturday, preached on North River.

"Sunday, 19th. Preached on Black Creek to a crowded house of attentive hearers. The subject led me to oppose the errors of Arianism and Campbellism."

"Thursday, 23d. Preached at a schoolhouse to a small congregation. Friday, traveled till one o'clock, but missed the preaching place, a small cabin in the woods. Saturday, preached to a small but attentive congregation, and felt blessed in my own soul.

"Sunday, 26th. Preached at Monticello to an attentive congregation.

"Monday, 27th. My horse broke away and ran fifteen miles, but caught him again and rode thirty-five miles against two o'clock; found the people principally there, and after a little refreshment preached to them."

"Wednesday, 29th. Set out to travel a day's journey through the wilderness without any road or pilot; and having been a little difficulted in crossing Fox River, dark came on before I reached Des Moines River; and as there was no road, and the brush was thick, I was compelled to stay out all night. Next morning early found my way to the settlements; got some refreshments, rested a little, and preached to the people."

"Friday, May 1st. Crossed the Des Moines River and preached, visited a sick woman, and preached at night."

On the following Sunday we find him at the Rapids, thirty miles distant, crossing the Mississippi in a shacking boat, and drenched with rain, while the high wind and waves threatened to swamp the frail craft. On their return, the boat sprang a leak and they narrowly

escaped drowning. The following week he pressed on, undaunted, through rain and mud, swimming swollen streams. On one occasion he "headed a creek," got across, but as the day was so dark, got lost, and at night hobbled his horse and stayed with some campers by the wayside.

"Next morning," he continues, "I set out to overtake my appointments. Traveled till evening before I got anything to eat. Came to a large creek, which was swimming; found a log on which I walked, and, having tied a long grapevine to my bridle, swam my horse over. Swam my horse by the side of a canoe across Fox River and got within twelve miles of my Sabbath appointment."

He seems to have left his ague and fever behind him, as we hear no more of it at this time. But there is no abatement of energy, of his gratitude to God, or devotion to his cause.

On Tuesday, May 12, he writes in his journal: "This is a day of rest—the only one for four weeks—and while I write these few and imperfect sentences I desire to return my grateful thanks and humble acknowledgments to Almighty God for his protection, both by land and on the water, through the course of my last round; for of a truth I may say,

Through many dangers, toils, and snares
I have already come.

O Lord, make me to know my end, and teach me to so number my days that I may apply my heart to wisdom. Amen. My face is still Zionward. Though my strength almost fail me, yet, blessed be God! he is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. A few

have joined during this round. I pray God that the number may be increased a hundredfold, until this wilderness and solitary place shall be glad and blossom as the rose. Amen."

"Saturday, 16th. This day rode twelve miles to where I had an appointment for a two-days' meeting, but found it called in on account of a Presbyterian camp meeting held in the neighborhood; and as I had no appointment, I went to the meeting and stayed until Monday morning. Heard several sermons preached, but saw little feeling manifested. The serious persons were invited to the anxious seats, and a few went forward, and one of the preachers published two as having 'a *hope*' that they had given their hearts to God, and said they had changed their purpose, and this was conversion!"

It is evident that such a service as that described above was anything but edifying to this young Methodist itinerant. A religion, or religious service, without fervor—what he calls "feeling"—did not meet the demands of his fervent nature, and was always unsatisfactory to him. Then, conversion meant more to him than "going to the anxious seat," signing a card, changing one's purpose, or "expressing a *hope* of having surrendered to Christ." With him it implied an awakening of the soul to a sense of the exceeding sinfulness of sin and of its lost and undone condition while resting under the condemnation of a violated law, destroying its peace and filling it with consternation, followed by a loathing of sin and a turning from it with hearty repentance and faith in Christ, and a positive, conscious knowledge of acceptance and pardon, and an

inward spiritual change wrought by the Holy Spirit delivering it from the dominion of unholy appetites and passions and filling it with love and peace and joy.

Mr. Stateler never had any sympathy with those who "heal slightly the hurt of the daughter of my people." With him sin was too vile and debasing and too strongly entrenched in the human heart to be given up without a struggle or a sigh, and Christ was too great a Saviour to be received consciously into the heart without some manifestation of emotion. If there was no emotion and no "full assurance of faith," he feared there was a lack of depth in the work. He believed in "an experience of grace," and he always urged it as the duty and privilege of every believer in Christ to "*know* that he had passed from death unto life."

Tuesday, 26th, he writes: "Set out this day for the Flint Hills to the quarterly meeting. Met my presiding elder, A. Monroe; reached the appointment at Canton and heard him preach. The waters were very high, hence we pulled our saddlebags off and drove the horses through and walked over on logs. Wednesday, 27th. A heavy rain—high water everywhere. Swam our horses as we did the day before. Thursday, crossed the Des Moines River, traveled thirty-two miles, and Brother Monroe preached again.

"Friday, 29th. Rode twelve miles and reached the place of holding quarterly meeting. Preaching at twelve and at night. Saturday, preaching at eleven o'clock; considerable congregation; some feeling manifested; several joined the Church.

"Sunday morning, 31st. Held love feast, the first

ever held in the Territory, or in the New Purchase. Several testified, and much feeling was manifested. After preaching at eleven o'clock the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered, and several joined the Church. Sunday night the meeting closed. Eighteen added to the Church on probation and by letter. O Lord, we praise thee for thy mercy!"

On Monday they set out for Missouri, and on Friday they reached the lower end of the circuit, where Brother Monroe left for his quarterly meeting on the adjacent charge.

In a letter published in the *Montana Methodist*, Mr. Stateler speaks more fully of one or two incidents in his journey about this time. He says:

"On one occasion, having preached in the neighborhood of Farmington, I started in a northeasterly direction for Clark's Point, on Skunk River, thirty miles distant. A young man accompanied me. The green-headed flies being very bad, we started late and traveled till far into the night, when we paused, hobbled one horse, turned the other loose, and laid us down on the open prairie for the night. The mosquitoes were very bad. Our horses left us during the night. At daylight the young man started after them on foot. As the day wore on, he returned with one horse, which was literally covered with flies. The other one had gotten beyond reach. The young man said he had run forty miles! We now packed both saddles on the one horse and started on our way. My companion, having worn himself out, and being stiff from overexercise, claimed the prerogative of riding. So I was left to trudge it on foot to the settlement. He had gotten his break-

fast, and reported that he held family prayers with the good people where he found the horse.

“‘Why didn’t you bring me something to eat?’ I asked.

“‘Well, I never thought of it,’ he replied.

“‘You are a great preacher,’ I said, ‘to go and stuff yourself with good things and leave me in the wilderness to starve!’

“‘We traveled on until dark, when we reached Clark’s Point, where lived a Brother Clark and two of the Kirkpatricks. I had no supper the day before, no breakfast, and no dinner that day. I had gotten past the hungry point, being overcome with fatigue; but I felt mighty hollow, I tell you.

“‘Next morning I was mounted on a stray horse, rode twenty miles to Burlington, preached at eleven o’clock, stated my case, that I had lost my horse, but had been mounted on a stray one. A man rose and said: ‘That’s my horse you’ve got. I’m so thankful that you brought him. But you can have him to ride to your next appointment.’ I rode the horse on and sent it back by the mail carrier; borrowed another, then sent him back, and thus kept on until I got into Missouri to my camp meeting, which was held seven miles northwest of Palmyra, at a place called Johnson’s Camp Ground. Andrew Monroe, the presiding elder, was there. He stated the case, told how my horse had been lost and I had worked my way along by borrowing to get to my appointment. The people raised seventy dollars, and mounted the preacher on a much finer horse than the one he had lost. In the course of time a man came along riding the horse I lost. I then had two horses.

“When I was on the Canton Circuit, in 1835, Andrew Monroe, the presiding elder, held one quarterly meeting at Burlington. A number of us traveled thither on horseback from a point farther to the south and west, in Missouri, the presiding elder preaching every day at some point on the road. Brothers Brewer, Smart, and Johnson accompanied us on this occasion. Jergens Creek was reached. It was swollen, and full from bank to bank, and ten feet deep. We found a foot log, swam the horses across, and carried the saddles, etc., over on the log. Brother Monroe could not walk the log, and got down on his all fours and ‘cooned it’ with his hands on the log—just jumped along astride like a frog. The scene was rather ludicrous, but it revealed the determined purpose of this man of God to go forward and do the Lord’s work. Andrew Monroe was a mighty man of God in his time.”

The office of presiding elder was no sinecure in those days. The most effective men were usually chosen for this position. They were expected to itinerate just like the other preachers, only the extensive territory that they compassed required their absence from home most of the time. But they preached as they went; became acquainted with the people, and the people with them, and thus aided greatly in building up the Church.

On Monday, August 10, 1835, he writes: “This week was spent principally in waiting for and interviewing Ke-o-kuk, an Indian chief of the Sac Nation, the design of which was to get a mission established among his people. In answer to my inquiries he said he would go to his town and see his people, then he would go and see the Agent, and then let me know.”

At another place in his journal the following year he makes this entry: "I spent the day amongst friends and visited some Indian wigwams, heard the Indians sing, and saw them dance. They were the Sacs, who live on Des Moines River. Up to the present time they have had no religious instruction. The present desire of Brother Monroe is, however, to send a preacher to them between this and the next Annual Conference, and see what can be done. I do hope that something will be done in their behalf."

CHAPTER VII.

Conference at Arrow Rock—Mr. Stateler Ordained Elder—
Returns to Canton Circuit—Reminiscences—William Hun-
ter's Popular Hymn.

IN 1835 the Missouri Conference was held at Arrow Rock Camp Ground, in Saline County, Mo. When Mr. Stateler arrived, on Wednesday, he found large and well-prepared grounds, together with an extensive shed for the accommodation of the congregation at the stand. Bishop Roberts presided. He says: "The preachers of the State [Missouri] part of the Conference were generally there and in pretty good health; there were but few of the Territory [Arkansas] preachers present, on account of the distance. We had a pleasant session. More than an ordinary number of preachers were admitted. On Sunday I was ordained elder by Bishop Roberts. I feel that I am honored more than I deserve. My humble prayer is that I may never disgrace this holy office."

The Conference was in session just a week, and the reading of the appointments was an hour of deep interest, because it was expected that the ensuing General Conference, to be held at Cincinnati, in May, 1836, would divide the Missouri Conference by setting off Arkansas Territory and the country west of it into a separate organization. "Hence," continues the journal, "we expected to part without the probability of meeting again, which was painful. But, thank God! we did not part without the fond hope of meeting where parting is no more. Yes, we could sweetly sing,

'By the grace of God I'll meet you
On Canaan's happy shore.'

Mr. Stateler, who had been very successful the previous year, was returned to Canton Circuit, which still remained in the St. Louis District, with Andrew Monroe presiding elder. The circuit was divided, however, and two men, J. H. Ruble and J. W. Dole, were assigned to the northern portion, which was called Burlington Circuit. But while the charge was reduced in extent by one-half, there was no abatement of zeal or lessening of labor by the circuit preacher, who resumed his duties without delay, although a new phase of our itinerant's character was to be brought out this year.

On Thursday, January 14, 1836, he writes in his journal: "Had a day's rest and a little time to ruminate on the events of the past year. I had frequently thought of the commencement of the year 1835, and of the circumstances that had occurred through the course of the year. I was with my worthy Brother Drummond [at St. Louis], where we hailed the new year and commenced it on our knees, singing the covenant song, and in solemn prayer. But ah! what did a year bring forth! The grim monster, Death, found Brother Drummond and blotted his name from the book of the living. I was moved away from my station to a circuit on the frontier, where I frequently had to stay out in the wilderness, and underwent many difficulties, but escaped with my life and was permitted to hail the new year, 1836, and commence it with solemn prayer on my knees. I desire to be devoutly thankful to God for his mercy."

From several references in his journal, I think Mr.

Stateler felt somewhat keenly the removal from the station to the distant frontier, where his nights, instead of being spent resting on "downy pillows" in the midst of kind friends, were often passed in the wilderness amid the howling of wolves and screaming of panthers, and without food, friends, or even shelter from the storm. But there is nowhere a trace of any complaint. He was an "obedient son in the gospel," and looked upon it all as providential.

He was warmly attached to Thomas Drummond, and often in conversation with this writer referred to his sudden death and to his dying message.

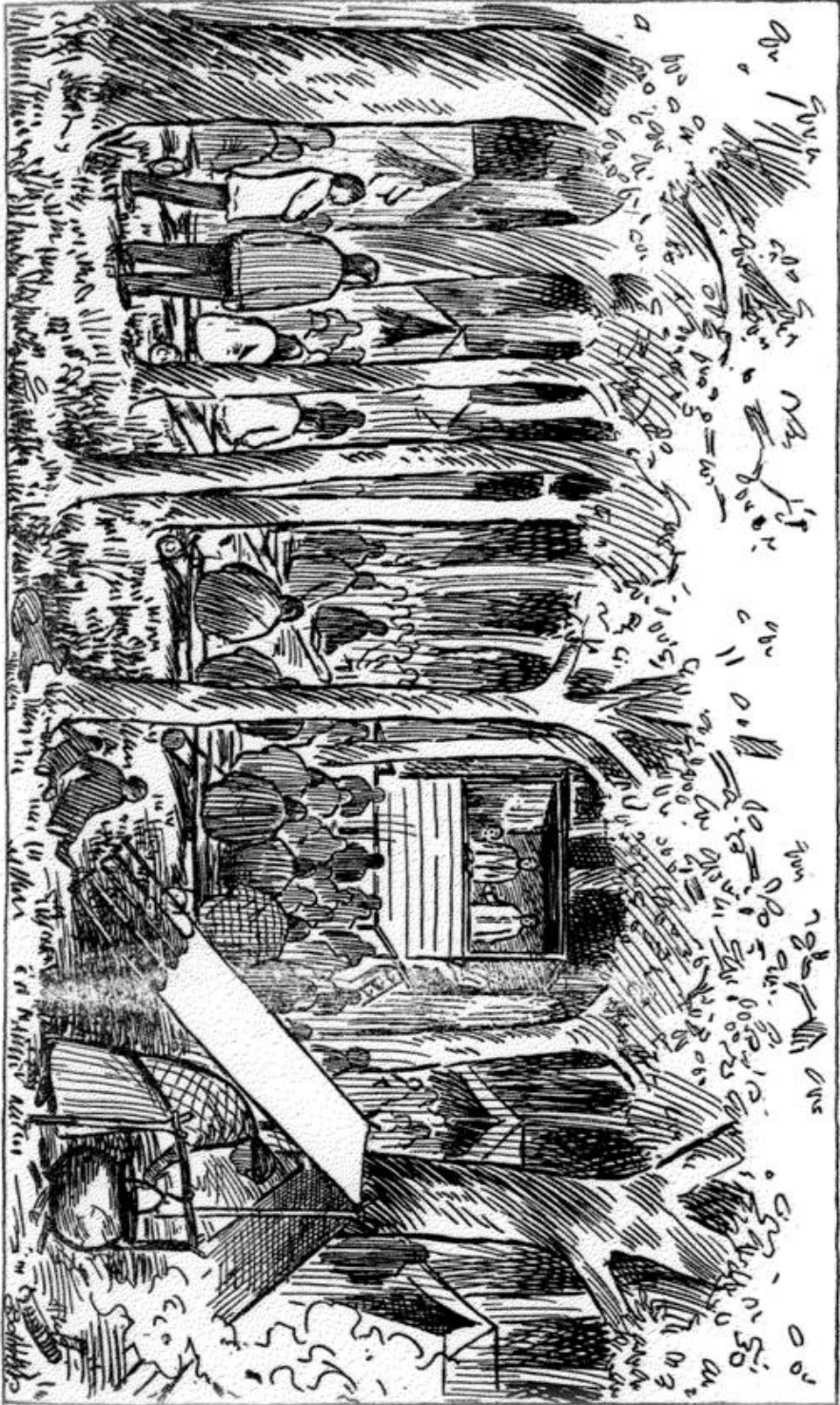
The following are some verses from a hymn suggested by his last words, composed by Rev. William Hunter and published in one of the popular hymn books of that time:

Away from his home and the friends of his youth
He hastened, the herald of mercy and truth,
For the love of his Lord and to seek for the lost.
Soon, alas! was his fall, but he died at his post.

.....
He wept not himself that his warfare was done,
The battle was fought and the victory was won;
But he whispered of those whom his heart clung to most:
"Tell my brethren for me that I died at my post."

He asked not a stone to be sculptured with verse;
He asked not that fame should his merits rehearse.
But he asked as a boon, when he gave up the ghost,
That his brethren might know that he died at his post.

.....
And can we the words of his exit forget?
O no! They are fresh in our memory yet,
An example so brilliant shall never be lost;
We will fall in the work, we will die at our post.



INDIAN CAMP MEETING.

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Mr. Stateler felt most deeply the need of a deeper work of grace in his heart and a more entire consecration to God. Like every true Christian, he hungered and thirsted after righteousness. In his journal he says: "I feel that I cannot go on in the work whereunto I am appointed as I should without it. I do pray for it, but my heart seems so hard and my faith so weak. O Lord, increase my faith! I am often tempted of the devil, and almost ready to despair.

'When shall I see the welcome hour
That plants my God in me,
Spirit of life and health and power
And perfect liberty?

Surely I shall—the sinner—I
Shall serve thee without fear,
If thou my nature sanctify
In answer to my prayer.'

Yes,

'Then shall labor be rest and pain be sweet
While thou, my God, art near.'

He was strong and ardent in his attachments to his friends, and hence he was deeply stirred when called to part with them by death. He thus refers to the departure of one whom he had known and loved from childhood:

"I was much affected on reading an account of the death of Rev. William Adams, as he was near to me from long acquaintance, and licensed me to preach. But, thank God! his death was triumphant. He died at the home of his son-in-law, Rev. William Gunn, in Shelby County, Ky., the 3d of August, 1835. Some of his dying words were: 'Something seems to

say to me I am fast shaking hands with time. I think I shall soon be gone. I see nothing here to live for, unless it is to do a little good in the Church. If it is better to depart and be with Christ, I want to go and see him. It is an easy death. I don't know but we'll get to Zion together; there's a mighty rush.' A few minutes before his departure he looked up and said: 'Wait a few minutes and I'll be ready.' Just one minute, and then his spirit fled.

"Thus died William Adams, of the Kentucky Conference, a man who had long and faithfully served the Church.

'Our brother the heaven hath gained,
Outflying the tempest and wind;
His rest he hath soonest obtained,
And left his companions behind.'

"O that I, his son in the gospel, may have victory in death, through Jesus Christ our Lord! Amen."

CHAPTER VIII.

"Murder Will Out"—"Important Business" at Bowling Green
—Repeated Visits Thither—Gets Married—Is Opposed,
but without Avail—Anecdote of James Axley.

It has been said that "murder will out." The same is true of *love*. As a rule, when two young persons become smitten with each other, for some unaccountable reason, the first thought is to keep it a profound secret, and they vainly imagine that they are wonderfully successful, while the fact is, they are far more deceived than deceiving.

In reading Mr. Stateler's journal, one is struck with the frequency of his visits to Bowling Green, his former charge, and we observe how careful he is to state that he "went on business." The most casual reader would wonder what a Methodist preacher, with no property save a horse and a few books, which he carried in his saddlebags, no money to loan, not a foot of land on earth, and no kindred within five hundred miles, would or could have in the way of "business," in the ordinary use of the term. But when we see him making those long, fatiguing rides, in addition to his regular routine of circuit work, every few months, and learn that he has just completed his four years' course of study and has been ordained elder, it is not so difficult to discern the nature of his business. And when we come to know the value of the prize that he was seeking, and succeeded in winning, the wonder is that he was as attentive to his circuit work as we find him.

I have thought the following quotation from his journal would be interesting (accounts of love and marriage usually are) and profitable, as showing the honesty, conscientiousness, integrity, fidelity, and pluck displayed in this event which, after all, had a happy outcome. He says:

“Friday, 22d. Traveled thirty miles from my circuit into the bounds of the Bowling Green Circuit, and preached at night. On Sunday, the 24th, preached at eleven o'clock and rode to Bowling Green that night. On Monday I met Dr. Leach and spent the night at his house.

“Tuesday, 26th, 1836. This was a day of solemn importance and seriousness. There had been a solemn engagement between a young woman and myself for some months past, and I went to see her about it; and as there had been some objections on the part of her friends, we scarce knew what to do. She was of age, and hence, according to law and justice, at liberty to act as she pleased. I knew my calling and relation to the Church, that it was sacred, and felt that I would rather give up a woman whom I loved than cast any reflections upon the cause of religion, though at the same time felt satisfied in my conscience in the sight of God and man to take the solemn step and consummate it. Remembering what she had borne for my sake, I knew not how I could, in justice, leave her under those circumstances amongst her opposers. Her parents had moved some distance off, and she was at the house of her brother, where I went to see her; and as they were opposed to us, we scarce had any opportunity to converse together on the subject. But while



MRS. L. B. STATELER.
(See page 310.)

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we were talking he flew into a rage and ordered me out of his house, when she said: 'Go, Mr. Stateler, and I will come.' So under these circumstances we left his house and went half a mile to the house of Brother Abraham Pritchett and were married by the Rev. Dr. F. B. Leach, the 26th of January, 1836. On the morning of the 27th I bade my dear Melinda farewell, left her at Dr. Leach's, and started for my circuit, forty-five miles distant, it being so very cold that I could not with any propriety take her to my circuit at the present time."

In another place he speaks of this event. "In January, 1836, I was married to Miss Melinda Purdom. Her father objected to the marriage. I was a favorite with him, but he objected to his daughter marrying a preacher and 'going wandering over the earth,' as he expressed it, 'with no home.' But she was of age, and had her own way in the matter. I had no home, and left my wife at the home of Dr. Leach. I had no conveyance except the horse I rode. I went away to my circuit, and was gone six weeks, came back, traded a fine watch that I had to Dr. Leach for a plain one, and got a 'dearborn,' a one-horse carry-all, with wooden axle and no springs to boot. I put my wife, her trunk, and what little clothing and other effects we both had into it and away we went to our circuit fifty miles distant, and spent a happy year, boarding with an old Virginia brother named Turner."

In reading the above account in his journal one is somewhat reminded of the story that Mr. Stateler, in his later life, enjoyed telling of the courtship and marriage of James Axley, a venerable but rather eccentric

pioneer preacher of the South. Having spent the majority of his years in active itinerant service and located, he became impressed that it was his duty to get married, and accordingly visited the home of an elderly maiden lady to whom he had decided to offer his hand, and requested an interview, which was granted. On her appearance in the room he at once addressed her with great solemnity:

"Miss Betsy, do you have any objection to conversing with me upon the subject of matrimony?"

"No, sir," was the prompt response.

"Let us pray!" replied the suitor, and down they knelt in humble supplication to the Father of mercies. The prayer ended, upon resuming their seats, the minister in a very positive and equally solemn manner, asked: "Miss Betsy, are you willing to become my wife?"

"Yes, sir," was the meek but ready reply.

"Let us pray," repeated the devout man of God, and again they went upon their knees, and it is to be inferred, with favorable results, for in due time the formalities of the marriage were gone through with, and no one was ever heard to remark against the wisdom of his choice or doubt the happiness of this honored minister's wedded life.

While the above may appear extreme and excite a degree of innocent mirth at the present day, yet if there were more prayer and common sense and thoughtfulness in connection with matrimonial alliances in these times there would be far less disappointment and sorrow and fewer divorce cases, which are a disgrace to our age and country.

Never was there a greater mistake than that made by the opposers of this match (and they saw and acknowledged it afterwards), for never did nobler knight win a fairer or truer lady than when L. B. Stater and Melinda Purdom were united in holy wedlock. His wise consideration and her courage and devotion characterized all their after life. For fifty years she walked by his side through all the thorny paths of an itinerant preacher's life, and never said "stop," and never complained, and yet she was as well provided with the essentials of life and far more highly favored with the honors and fruits of a noble and useful career than are a great majority of those who have raised such a hue and cry about the poverty and humiliation attached to the lot of a Methodist preacher's wife, who is commonly supposed to be

"Forever going, going, going;
Just three years in a place,
Forever going."

CHAPTER IX.

Conference at St. Louis—First Session Held in a Town or City—Liberal Collections—But Few Conversions—Sent to Cape Girardeau—A Visit to the Old Home—Watch Night Service—Has a Home of His Own—Incessant Labors—Camp Meeting—Protracted Meetings—Starts to Conference—A Night in the Wilderness.

ON the 14th of September, 1836, the annual session of the Missouri Conference commenced in St. Louis, Bishop Roberts again in the chair. Strange to say, it was the first session that had been held in a town. Our fathers seem to have devoted most of their labors to the country people. They found this class, with their plain, unsophisticated manners, more responsive to the truths of the gospel, and here their greatest victories were achieved. The atmosphere in the towns, where there was so much pride, formality, and worldliness of every kind, was not conducive to a genuine revival of religion. The homespun dress of the Methodist preachers, and the still plainer truths that they preached, together with the rigid rules of the Methodist Discipline upon the subject of dress and other forms of worldliness, were distasteful to the city folks. The Church was not yet strongly established in the centers of population. Houses of worship and homes for the entertainment of the preachers were scarce.

Then, in those days, the preachers generally went to Conference on horseback, and provision for horses was as much of an item in the entertainment of a Conference as homes for the preachers. Besides, the country

people could not attend the Conference in large numbers. Hence it was natural that they should prefer to hold their annual convocations in the groves, where they were free from the restraints of conventional life and from the noise and din of business, where the people would come together by thousands for the sole purpose of receiving religious instructions and for the worship of God, and where "they all were with one accord in one place," and the baptism of fire, attended by the conversion of scores of people—the great object sought in all preaching and Church work—was the result. No wonder that the camp meeting conferences were so popular with the preachers and people, and are remembered with such peculiar sacredness and joy even to this day.

But the intrepid itinerants, not to be outdone, and encouraged and inspired by the example of Jesse Walker at St. Louis, entered the towns which were growing in population, wealth, and influence, and gradually the Church gained a footing in the commercial centers. The people there recognized and sought the moral and uplifting force of these annual gatherings of consecrated men, holding out the inducements of better accommodations for the increasing membership and larger collections for the benevolent enterprises of the Church, and thus the custom of holding Conferences in the country soon passed away.

Rev. Jacob Lannius, an esteemed Methodist preacher of that time, in speaking of this session of the Conference, says: "The people of the city manifested much hospitality in entertaining the Conference, and great liberality toward the missionary cause, to which they

contributed eight hundred dollars at a Conference collection on Sabbath. At the African Church there was much excitement during the Conference, but at the white Church the people seemed cold and formal—no conversions; and no wonder, for the people seemed afraid to make a noise, afraid to praise God aloud!"

There is much contained in this short sketch. We see how surprised and pained the preacher is that there were "no conversions and few mourners" at this Conference. It was an unusual occurrence. Preaching to sinners, pleading with penitents at the altar, and rejoicing with those who were converted were part of the preachers' work at Conference as much as giving in reports, sitting on committees, making speeches, and eating fine dinners. Where there was no revival and nobody converted something was felt to be wrong.

This was the first meeting after the Conference was divided, and hence the Arkansas preachers were not present. The session lasted about ten days, and Mr. Stateler was appointed to Cape Girardeau Circuit. His wife had accompanied him to Conference. He says in his journal: "Our lot fell in an opposite side of the Conference from that in which we labored last year. As we were then in the extreme north, so now we are in the extreme south, one circuit excepted. Thus we go from side to side of the country, as sojourners, but still feel resigned to the will of God and think it will all be for the best."

They left St. Louis on the 27th of September, and arrived at the home of Uriel Haw, who was the presiding elder and lived within the bounds of their new circuit, on the 1st of October. The journey through

the mud and over the hills was very tiresome. He found a congregation assembled for a two days' meeting, preached Christ and him crucified to them, and assisted in administering the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Of his charge and his labors this year he says, in a general way:

"My circuit was a large one, twenty-one appointments, preaching every four weeks at each one. There were few rest days. A junior preacher was expected, but never came. I had the circuit all alone.

"There were three camp meetings on the charge that year, and a number of conversions and additions. We received one hundred and twenty dollars in salary, and lived the greater portion of the year with a private family. I bought a log house and a lot in Jackson. Friends helped me to fix it up, and we lived in that. There was no such thing as a parsonage. When we first went there we had two horses. I swapped one to a brother in exchange for a riding horse, and got a young cow to boot. She afforded all the milk and butter we could use. I fenced some lots and made a good pasture for our horse and cow. I gave one horse for the house and lot. Thus we had a home, a cow to give us milk, and a horse to carry us whither we would go. I tell these things to let the reader know how we had to manage in those days to keep our heads above water and to continue in the work.

"The stewards of the circuit proposed to buy our house and lot for a parsonage, and so agreed; but at the last Quarterly Conference they rescinded their action, and the house was left on my hands. I didn't know what to do about it. A friend proposed to give

me a horse for it, and I traded the house for a horse—a good working horse. We managed to sell some stuff and purchased a hack with springs, and started to Conference with two horses and a comfortable hack, and square with the world at that!”

It is a singular fact that at that time nowhere in the Missouri Conference, except at St. Louis, was there a parsonage. Preachers with families had to look out for themselves to a great extent.

He and his wife made a visit to his parents in Kentucky during the early winter, traveling in a carriage. While there he preached to his old neighbors and conducted a protracted meeting at an adjacent point, returning to his charge just in time to join in watch night exercises, of which he says:

“This to us was a joyful privilege. Just off a journey of twenty days [they had been hindered by snow and rain and mud], in which time we had no opportunity of hearing the gospel or meeting with God’s people, we commenced the services at candle-lighting and continued until the new year ushered in. Two sermons were preached: one by Brother Poe, and the other I had the honor of preaching. This was the third year that I had enjoyed this privilege. One year at St. Louis with my Brother Drummond; the next on the frontiers in North Missouri, in a log cabin, with a little band of Christians; this time in South Missouri. Each time we bowed upon our knees and implored the blessings of the Almighty upon us, and asked for grace to serve him better in the year to come.

“And while I turn my thoughts to retrospect the mercies of God toward me the past year, they are more

than the hairs of my head in number. My path has led through a dangerous wilderness, where many foes lay in ambush; but, thank God! I am still preserved and feel that my feet are in the same narrow way that leads to my Father's house on high. During this year God gave me a helpmeet who has shared my sorrows and doubled my joys, and who still lives to adore with me the God of all our mercies. The Lord be praised forever! Amen."

The journal kept by Mr. Stateler is crowded with records of travels and sermons preached, class meetings held, "two days' " meetings and camp meetings attended, and other labors performed that put to shame many of our young preachers to-day. I feel constrained to give a few more extracts from his journal. He says:

"Saturday and Sunday, March 11, 12. Held a two days' meeting at Crooked Creek. Had the assistance of a Brother Crain. The weather was very rainy and bad, and the house very open; hence I took violent cold, which prostrated me very much. For days I had to keep my head bound up, but through mercy my life was spared."

"Saturday, April 8. Had a little time to write and read, and now while I make marks that convey ideas I desire to speak of the grace of God toward me, and still feel to say:

'T'll praise my Maker while I've breath;
And when my voice is lost in death,
Praise shall employ my nobler powers;
My days of praise shall ne'er be past.

"Saturday, 22d. Commenced quarterly meeting.

Tuesday, 25th. Traveled and preached. Wednesday, 26th. Started with Brother Haw for quarterly meeting on an adjoining circuit, about one hundred miles distant. Absent eight days, preached eight times, and got home greatly exhausted. My wife being very sick, I went for the doctor, hardly able to ride. May 5th. Wife a little better, and I set off for an appointment fifteen miles distant."

"Saturday, 27th. Commenced a protracted meeting at McKendree's Chapel; crowded congregations. I charitably hope the labors were not in vain in the Lord. During the last six weeks have traveled six hundred miles and preached many times."

After filling regular appointments, holding class meetings without number, reading the General Rules, visiting and praying with the sick, on Saturday, July 8, he rode fifteen miles to a two days' meeting and met Brothers Casteel and Crain, local preachers, and Brother Haw, his presiding elder, and says: "We had a good meeting. Five persons joined society."

On Thursday, the 12th, he started for a camp meeting on Cain Creek. Next day he reached the place and commenced the meeting, and on Saturday was joined by Brothers Haw and Eakes, and had a good meeting. Six joined society, and on Monday the meeting closed. On Wednesday he reached home, and says: "We found our house still standing, and again joined in prayer around our own family altar. Thank the Lord for the mercies we now enjoy!"

He continues:

"After a day or two of rest, Friday, 28th, commenced a camp meeting at Crooked Creek. Had several local



Bishop E.R. Hendrix



Bishop Chas B Galloway



Bishop W.W. Dunnean



Bishop H.C. Morrison

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preachers to assist me. We had a gracious time, many were converted to God, and a goodly number joined the Church. On Monday the meeting closed, and on Tuesday returned to Jackson and found all safe and well."

"Friday, 4th. Set off for a camp meeting on West Prairie Circuit. Met the presiding elder and several other preachers; had a good meeting. Several professed to find the pearl of great price, and many joined the Church."

"Monday, 7th. Rode thirty miles home, and Wednesday rode fifteen miles and licensed a young man, named Urban Spencer, to preach, and then returned home again. On Friday, the 11th, set off with wife and several others for a camp meeting in the New Madrid Circuit. Got lost and traveled until near midnight. Next day got to the camp ground, met several preachers, assisted them, and had a pretty good meeting. Monday, the 14th, we started for home and arrived there in the evening, after a ride of forty miles."

"Friday, 18th. My own camp meeting commenced at McKendree's Chapel. We had the assistance of a number of preachers, had a very large attendance, but not many conversions. The meeting continued till Tuesday."

"Saturday, 26th. Went to a camp meeting on the Farmington Circuit, assisted them two days, and returned home again."

"Friday, September 1. Set out with Brother Casteel for a camp meeting at New Madrid. Got there on Saturday. Found several brethren there; assisted them in the meeting, and on Monday, after a long ride of

forty miles through the rain, reached home and found my family enjoying good health."

"Wednesday, 6th. Very busy preparing for Conference, and on Tuesday, the 7th, we hitched our horses to the carriage, bade our friends farewell, and started to Conference."

They stopped at the home of Brother Haw, where Mrs. Stateler was taken quite sick. But upon her partial recovery they continued the journey, and, being misinformed about the route, missed the way, failed to reach a house, and had to stay out in the woods one night without food or shelter for themselves or their beasts. They reached St. Louis, the seat of the Conference, on Tuesday evening, with no evil effects from the night spent in the wilderness.

There are many things suggested by these brief notes from a preacher's journal made sixty years ago, a few of which I cannot forbear to mention.

And first, we see how prominently the class meeting figured in those days. It was customary for the preacher to lead the class after preaching. This in a measure served the purpose of pastoral visiting, which was out of the question, and kept the preacher and the people in touch with each other at the most vital point. Christ said to the disciples: "Ye are witnesses of these things." He wants a testifying Church, and the class meeting did much, under the old régime, to keep the membership educated up to this point.

Then, we see what a power local preachers were at that time. God bless them! They did much to plant the banner of Methodism all over the great Mississippi Valley. Mr. Stateler believed in local preachers, en-

couraged them and coöperated with them, and in some cases found their labors more productive of results than those of the visiting traveling preachers.

What a power for good were the camp meetings! There were one or more on every charge each year. People found time to leave their homes and their cares behind them and devote at least a week to the solemn worship of God. The corn was laid by, and the cows and calves were turned together, and either a neighbor was engaged, or a boy sent home from the camp every day or so to "see to things." These were not religious picnics, nor occasions for recreation. People went to worship God, and were greatly blessed. There were no boarding tents, but ample provision was made for the free entertainment of all who came, and God blessed these sacrifices upon the part of his people to the conversion of thousands of souls.

Another thing noticeable is the shortness of the special services held. It was common to have from three or four to a dozen conversions at a two or three days' meeting, and a camp meeting at which forty or fifty would be gathered in seldom lasted longer than a week. The evangelist did not have to come and labor for a month to get the Church awake. The people of God were alive. They had the faith that overcomes the world. They were "builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit," and God was in them and with them, and worked through them to the pulling down of the strongholds of Satan.

The exultation of the preacher in having a house of his own in which to dwell is natural and somewhat pathetic. The love of home is strong in every well-

balanced mind. The preacher is no exception to the rule. But owing to the character of his work, he cannot indulge this natural and commendable trait to any great extent. This should serve as a stimulus to each traveling preacher in the Church to use his utmost endeavor toward providing a parsonage for every pastoral charge, to do all he can to beautify and improve the parsonage he occupies, and to strive to make it an ideal home.

It is a fact worthy of mention that, while Mr. State-ler helped to provide homes for other preachers, and invested liberally in every parsonage built by his Church in Montana, yet he never had a home provided for him by the Church. During the sixty-five years that he served the Church he never lived in a parsonage.

CHAPTER X.

Conference Again at St. Louis—Bishop Soule Present—
Among the Delaware Indians—Historical Sketch—Mission
Work—Difficulties Encountered—The Heathen Party—
Tragic End of Two Drunken Characters.

THE generous hospitality and the liberal contributions of the people of St. Louis at the previous session of the Missouri Conference made such a favorable impression upon the preachers that they voted to hold the next session there also, though it was by special request of the people.

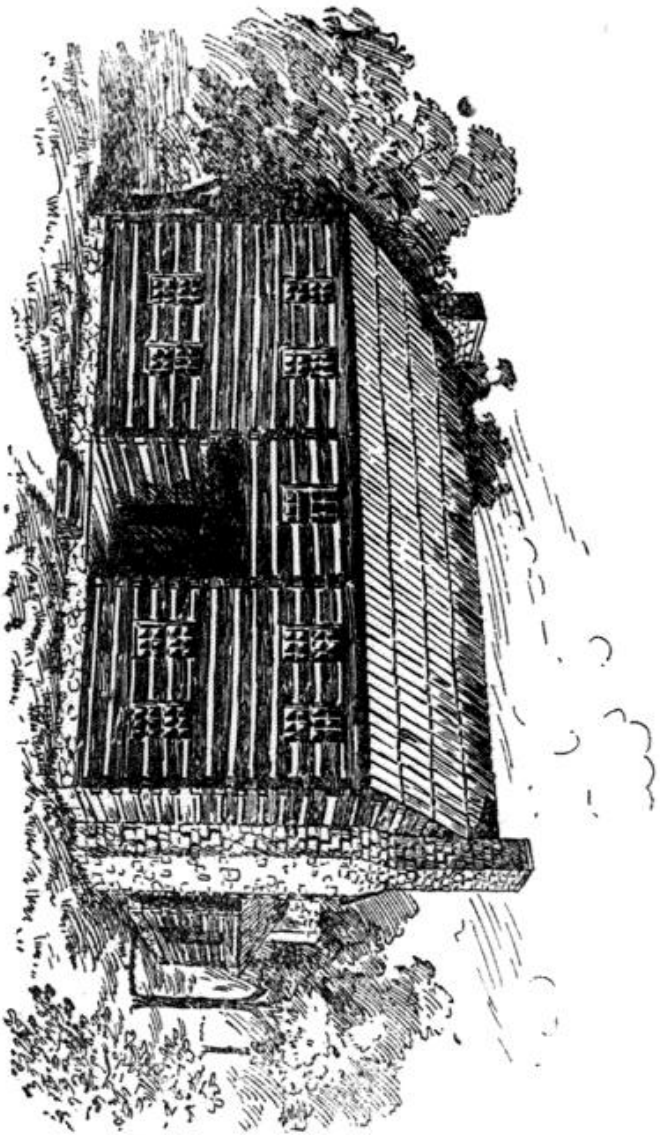
The session commenced on the 13th of September, 1837. Bishop Soule, who was becoming quite venerable in appearance, and a great favorite in the West, presided. The Conference now numbered sixty-five preachers, besides those that had been cut off with the Arkansas Conference. There were also one hundred and sixty-three local preachers and nine thousand two hundred and fifty-eight members, five hundred and two of whom were Indians and eight hundred and twelve colored people. The preachers generally were present. There had been no deaths. Quite a number were received on trial and by transfer. Among the latter appears the name of E. R. Ames, from Indiana, who, in after years, became a bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church and achieved considerable notoriety by taking forcible possession of some of the best church buildings belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in the principal Southern cities by

means of an order commonly known as the "Stanton-Ames Order."

At this Conference Mr. Stateler was appointed to Delaware Mission, among the Delaware Indians, on the north bank of the Kaw, or Kansas, River in what is now the State of Kansas, but which was at that time included in the Indian Territory.

This year marks an epoch in Mr. Stateler's history. The change was even greater than when, a beardless boy, he left home and friends behind him and plunged into the wilds of Missouri. He was yet a young man, and young in the ministry, newly and happily married to one of Missouri's fairest maidens, and was filling some of the best charges in the Conference successfully wherever he went and growing in favor both with the preachers and the people. He was in a rich country and surrounded by every element favorable to his growth and usefulness as a minister. He was just in the formative period of his character as a preacher. And now he was to be sent forth into a wilderness and among the people of another race whose language, habits, and sympathies were entirely different from his own, where his preaching and all his intercourse would have to be through an interpreter, and he and his young wife would not only be deprived of nearly all the social enjoyments of life but often have to bear with the perversity and superstition peculiar to a hitherto heathen people, with no compensation but the approval of their Lord and Master and the thought that they were helping, in some measure, to bring others up to a higher and better life.

As soon as Conference adjourned they started for



OLD SHAWNEE MISSION.

Erected in 1830 by Rev. Thomas Johnson.

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their new field, traveling in their hack "with springs," which contained everything they had in the world and was drawn by two good horses; and on October 8 they reached the Indian country in time to join with them in worship, and the following day reached the Delaware Mission, having traveled five hundred miles since leaving their former charge. At this time he makes the following entry in his journal: "Thus we go from one corner of the land to another, to the white man and to the red man of the woods, not for the riches of the earth, but to carry the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ to perishing sinners. O that God may assist us in this great work!"

Speaking of his labors at this place, Mr. Stater says:

"The Mission was about twenty miles in the interior from Westport, which was a prominent Indian trading post near the Missouri line, a few miles southward from where Kansas City now stands. We got our supplies for the mission from that point. Kansas City, the place where it now stands, was then a wilderness, a great big hill covered with timber and owned by half-breeds, children of old French traders who had been with the Indians a long time and had married Indian wives.

"In entering upon our work we had to relinquish the society of white people and live alone with the Indians. At first it was very lonely dwelling with people of a strange tongue and whose habits of life were so different from ours. But we were sent to labor for their good, and endeavored to reconcile ourselves to the situation the best we could.

“The missionary was not only expected to teach religion and instruct the people in the way of life, but also to take their children, clothe and feed and teach them in the day schools. This devolved a great amount of labor both upon the missionary and his wife. We had to go quite a distance for supplies and cross either the Missouri or the Kaw River on the journey, and it was very difficult to employ assistance, either male or female. Clothing had to be made, for the little Indian children came to us destitute. This work the missionary’s wife had to perform with her own hands, for that was long before sewing machines were in existence. Then the cooking had to be done, the clothes washed, ironed, and mended, and the only assistance rendered her was that given by the Indian girls. When springtime came, the missionary had to take the plow, go into the field, sow and plant and cultivate, that the mission might be made as nearly self-sustaining as possible. Thus it will be seen that the mission work among the Indians in those days was laborious and constant.

“The Church at that time fixed no salary for her preachers except the amount allowed by the Discipline, which was one hundred dollars for the preacher and another hundred for his wife, upon which amount they were expected to subsist and meet all necessary expenses. The missionaries ate at the public table, which was kept up by the general fund. The Missionary Board furnished a certain amount to each mission station, out of which the varied expenses, such as food and clothing for the children, were met.

“When our missions were first established, funds

were provided, houses were built for the missionary to live in and for schools, farms were fenced and stocked, and means furnished to carry on the work.

“The mission here had been in operation four or five years, and other brethren had labored earnestly and faithfully. Their labors had been blessed of God. A religious society had been gathered, many of the members of which were earnest Christians. The school also had been organized, but quite a while had now been spent in vacation.

“We had not been long at the new station before we gathered the children in and began the work of teaching them. It was all entirely new to us. We went into it the more heartily because of the extreme poverty of the Indians and their great need of being taught letters and religion.

“At our first school there were about twenty children. Our duties were quite varied. Many of the children would come in their native costume, and with the habits common to nomadic tribes of people. They had to be taught habits of cleanliness in person and dress; how to work—the girls to cook, wash, iron, cut and make their clothing, the boys to plow and work with tools, and all of them to read and write.

“The Delaware tribe numbered about fourteen hundred. They received about ten or twelve thousand dollars in annuities. A wagonload of silver coin (they cared for no other kind of money) was brought to the place. They would come and camp together for days to get their annuities. Every person’s name was called—man, woman, and child—for a census was kept, and each would touch the pen to make his or

her mark to show that the money was received. These were gala days—great occasions—with the Indians. The money was in payment for lands that they had sold before coming to the Kansas country.

“Our labors were blessed of God from time to time. Souls were converted. We had prayer meeting every Sunday at the schoolhouse, and prayer meeting at the private houses during the week day evenings. The people were scattered. They had right comfortable log buildings, which they had built themselves.

“The Delaware Indians had come from Ohio and Indiana. They had some degree of intelligence and refinement. Our intercourse was mainly through an interpreter, especially the preaching. When the missionary preached, the interpreter stood at his side and gave the sense, sentence by sentence, in his native tongue. The children were taught English only in the school, and out of English books.

“It must not be supposed, however, that all this instruction and religious worship went smoothly on. The Christian portion of the tribe was greatly opposed by what was known as the heathen party. These latter were not only led away by their own superstitious ways, but were also drunkards, were very vicious, and would try to lead off all who were Christians. They would get liquor from the whites, much as they do nowadays.

“At one time two drunken fellows came to the church near the mission house intending to break up the mission and drive the Christians away. But the people were too strong for them, and they did nothing more than frighten a few persons. The two who came

were desperate characters, however, and they were made a terrible scourge to each other. They fell out and, Indianlike, purposed to have revenge. One of them went away, got whisky, and induced the other to drink with him, he pretending only to drink, the object being to get his victim gloriously drunk, while he kept sober. When the other Indian became helplessly intoxicated, the sober man got a hickory and gave him a merciless beating. The one that received the thrashing said nothing, pretended friendship, though bent on revenge when opportunity should present itself. Then he got a bottle, enticed the other to drink (for it is hard for an Indian to resist such a temptation), and when he became beastly drunk, the sober one drew out a huge knife and disemboweled the other, who fell dead at his feet like a dog. The murderer then fled the country. We were thus rid of the two drunken characters that tried to break up our meetings."

CHAPTER XI.

Continues among the Delawares—Building a New Meeting-house—Extracts from Journal—A Moravian Missionary—Feasting the People—Arrival of Missionaries for Oregon—A Macedonian Call—Offers Himself for the Oregon Work—Marcus Whitman—Rattlesnake Bite—The Indian Doctor—Sorcery Practiced—Drunken Indians—A Visit to Des Moines Rapids.

THE location of the Delaware Mission was first made at a place where there was a fountain of water and the soil was good, with a view to making the school as nearly self-sustaining as possible. But it was not central, and after consultation it was decided to erect another building in a more central locality.

The missionary led the way, and, attended by a number of the leading Christian men, went into the woods, felled the trees, cut the logs, scored and hewed them, hauled them to the place, and with their own hands built a comfortable house. It was all accomplished with their own means and labor, except a few dollars contributed by friends outside, which were used to purchase windows, lumber for the floor, and a few other commodities. The building was covered with clapboards which were riven with a frow from blocks of wood in the old-fashioned way.

After the new house was completed, at a later date, a large shed was made on one side which was used at the time of camp meetings, which were held there annually for many years and which resulted in great good to the Indians.

Of this work, Mr. Stateler writes in his journal:

"Sunday, October 15, 1837. I preached to the Indians in the mission house for the first time. There was a good congregation and considerable feeling among the people. There are quite a number of Christians among this people—a Church of eighty or ninety members—and a number of them apparently devoted to God. Sunday, 22d, I preached again. Thus Sabbath after Sabbath we meet and preach and pray and sing the praises of God.

"During the balance of this month and November, and most of December, we were very much engaged in preparing buildings for the mission. There was so much to do that we were going from morning till night. I never worked harder in my life.

"About the first of December a small band of Delaware Indians, who had been living in Canada, came in. A number of them are Christians. They brought their missionary with them. His name is Jesse Vogler. He is a minister of the Moravian Church, and appears to be a man devoted to the cause of God and missions. He left his family in Canada, and, like a good shepherd, came with his flock to this land, intending to get his family next spring.

"Sunday, December 24. We held meeting with our people, assisted by Brother Vogler. We tried to explain to them what was meant by Christmas, and enlarged upon the advent of the Saviour and how we might obtain everlasting life through his name. There were many tears shed upon the occasion."

"Monday, January 1, 1838. We met in the mission house for the purpose of speaking to the people upon

the subject of education, and after meeting gave the people a feast. A great number of men, women, and children partook thereof. This custom of feasting the people had been gotten up hoping thereby to secure their friendship and get them to meeting, but I very much doubt the propriety of it among this people."

He does not state the ground of his doubts, but those who know his plain, matter-of-fact way of doing things and his abhorrence for all worldly devices for extending the Church can easily understand it. He knew that the friendship of those who followed the Master because they ate of the loaves and fishes only could not be relied upon in a crisis any more now than in our Saviour's time.

"January 4. Our school commenced."

"January 14. We had a good meeting, much feeling manifested among the Indians, and after sermon five persons came forward with streaming eyes and gave their hands to become members of the Church. During the balance of this month and February our meeting-house was generally crowded, and our meetings generally lively."

"Sunday, February 25. Spent this day with Brother Johnson and others of my brethren at Shawnee Mission. Preached, through an interpreter, to the Shawnees."

"Sunday, March 4. Preached to my own people with some effect. We are still encouraged to go on in the service of God and his Church, and hope in due season to reap if we faint not. Our school prospers very much. Our hope is that from these young scions we are now nurturing many fruitful trees will spread

their yielding boughs over this nation after a while. O that God in his mercy may bless our efforts to do good here, for his name's sake! Amen and amen."

"During the month of April we had to excommunicate a few, and hope by purging the Church that it will prosper more."

"Sunday, May 13. Had the company of Brother Waugh and Sister Johnson from Shawnee Mission. Brother Waugh preached for us. This day a missionary and his wife and two ladies came to Shawnee Mission. They had started to Oregon Territory to labor there, but not arriving in season, the caravan started, and they were left behind. The man's name was Allen. He and his wife went to the State of Indiana to remain until next spring, at which time they and the two ladies who are with us expect to go on. The name of the one with us is Mrs. Emeline Clarke; that of the other, who is at Shawnee Mission, is Mrs. Mary Renshaw. Their husbands and Messrs. Geiger and Renshaw pursued on after the caravan, hoping to overtake it and go on in company with it over the mountains and select a location and prepare for the reception of the company that is behind with us."

It is proper to state here that in the fall of 1832 there had appeared in the city of St. Louis four chiefs of the Flathead Indians from beyond the Rocky Mountains who had been sent by their tribe to make inquiry for the white man's Book of Life (the Bible) and for missionaries to explain it to them. They were cordially received and kindly treated by General Clark, who was a great friend of the Indians. Two of their number died during the winter, possibly the result of

overeating and a change in their mode of living. But the true significance of their visit was not made manifest until about the time for the departure of the two survivors (one of whom died on the return trip) for their home the next spring. At a farewell meeting given in their honor, one of them made a speech expressing the great disappointment he felt at not having been shown "the Book." He said, in part: "I came to you over the long trail of many moons from the setting sun. I made my way with strong arms through many enemies and strange lands that I might carry much back to them. I go back with both arms broke and empty. My people sent me to get the white man's book of heaven. You took me to where you allow your women to dance as we do not ours, and the book was not there. You took me to where they worship the Great Spirit with candles, and the book was not there. You showed me pictures of the good spirits and of the good land beyond, but the book was not among them to tell us the way. I am going back the long and sad trail to my people in the dark land. You make my feet heavy with gifts and my moccasins will grow old in carrying them, yet the book is not among them. When I tell my people, after one more snow, in the big council, that I did not bring the book, no word will be spoken by our old men or by our young braves. One by one they will rise up and go out in silence. My people will die in darkness and go a long path to other hunting grounds. No white man will go with them, and no white man's book to make the way plain. I have no more words."

When this speech was published in the *Christian*



MAIN SCHOOL BUILDING, INDIAN MANUAL LABOR SCHOOL.
Erected in 1839.

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Advocate in the spring of 1833, together with a thrilling appeal closing with the question, "Who will respond to this call to carry the white man's Book of Heaven beyond the Rocky Mountains?" the whole country was stirred up on the subject of missions as it had not been before. It was a veritable Macedonian call. Young Stateler, then on the Bowling Green Circuit in North Missouri, was greatly moved by it, and with tears and earnest prayers immediately responded: "Here am I, send me: I am already a thousand miles on the way." For some reason he was not accepted, but a company consisting of Jason Lee, a strong man who afterwards made himself felt in the West, his brother, and others, was sent by the Board of Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church the following spring, 1834, and the next year Dr. Marcus Whitman and others were sent out by the American Board. Reinforcements followed from time to time, the missionaries usually going in company with parties of trappers or fur traders who frequented that region.

The first missionaries reported great success in their work, and they sent back such favorable reports of the Oregon country, which had been represented as a very undesirable region (the fur traders who were growing rich in their traffic with the Indians probably seeking to make this impression), that great interest began to be awakened in its settlement by white people, and quite a movement was started in that direction. As Mr. Stateler's mission station was right in the great passway to the West and Northwest, where he came in contact with these companies of missionaries and emigrants, he could not help being interested in the

movement, and we are not surprised at this further entry in his journal. He says:

"Friday, May 15. This day I started a communication to Messrs. Wright and Swarmstedt, Book Agents at Cincinnati, Ohio, in which I made proposals to raise a company of one hundred families to go and settle a colony in Oregon Territory. I also proposed that a great company of missionaries be sent at the same time, and offered to go as a missionary and give one hundred dollars to assist in effecting the benevolent design. The caravan is to meet at Independence, Jackson County, Mo., the middle of April, 1840, and start immediately for Oregon. The above proposals I made in the fear of God, and earnestly pray the blessing of heaven to attend the effort that may be made and speedily send the gospel to the people of that Western world."

Thus we see that our hero not only had the honor of being among the first to sow the gospel seed and plant the Church of God in the virgin soil along the border of this new Western world, but his home was the outpost from which new enterprises of exploration and occupancy were going forth into the almost unknown regions beyond. He had the honor of entertaining such men as Dr. Marcus Whitman,* who died a mar-

*Mr. Stateler spoke to this writer more than once of the incident of Marcus Whitman stopping at his home, which was the first station that he reached after crossing the plains on that memorable horseback ride in the winter of 1842-43, which he made to save Oregon to the United States. He said that Whitman was accompanied part of the way by a Mexican whom he had employed as guide, but that he be-

tyr's death, and others who went and came from time to time. His home was a lighthouse, its bright rays penetrating into the darkness beyond to encourage and cheer the missionary on his outward journey, and the first to greet him on his return.

But not satisfied with this, he longed to be at the very forefront of the battle, and with prayers and tears offered to go as a missionary to the Pacific Coast. Neither did he proclaim his poverty and sit down and wait for everything to be provided for the journey, but he willingly offered to contribute the means saved by the rigid economy of himself and wife to provide

came suspicious of his dusky companion, so much so that when they would lie down on the ground to sleep at night he would make the Mexican turn in first with his face from him, and then Whitman would lie down and sleep with his arms around the Mexican, so that he could not make the slightest move without arousing his master. Thus they journeyed many days; and when Whitman arrived at Stater's home, his face and limbs were badly frozen, and he stopped for a short time to recuperate. He was clad in skins from head to foot, and told Mr. Stater that he was going into the presence of President Tyler and Mr. Webster, the Secretary of State, in that garb to make his plea for Oregon. Sure enough, one of the illustrations in Mr. Nixon's book, entitled "How Marcus Whitman Saved Oregon," shows the intrepid missionary standing before those two men in that quaint attire. It is evident that he made an impression, for action upon the treaty by which Oregon was about to be bartered away to England for some fisheries about Newfoundland was delayed and later on defeated. It is beginning to be conceded quite generally that our country owes it to Marcus Whitman, Jason Lee, and their partners in missionary work that the territory west of the Rocky Mountains and north of the Columbia River was not traded to England.

for the journey and to help others to go. But the time had not yet arrived. There was other work for him to do.

"On Saturday, the 19th," he says, "one of our little Indian children was bitten on the finger by a rattlesnake, causing it to swell considerably. We first bathed it in strong lye, then applied bruised plantain leaves, which drew it very much, and then jimson leaves bruised in the same manner, which had a good effect, drawing out the poison freely. His friends came to see him, and insisted that Indian medicine should be applied. As he was their child, we had to submit, the old Indian saying he could cure him in three hours. He applied the medicine several times, and then left; but the child grew worse. Then we used our own remedies, which were having the same happy effect, when some of the child's relatives came bringing a 'doctor,' as they called him; but properly speaking he was a conjurer, or sorcerer, who sang a song and blew his breath over the child. Then we were gravely informed that 'now he will get well.' But after waiting awhile, the child growing worse all the time, they turned him over to us again, telling us to cure him if we could. We resumed our former treatment, and soon had him in school again. These people are greatly given up to superstition, and believe in witchcraft and practice sorcery. Even the Christian Indians believe very much in it."

"Monday, June 11. The visiting committee appointed by the Conference arrived at our mission. It consisted of Andrew Monroe, Jesse Green, and J. G. Young, who were accompanied by N. M. Talbot, of

Peoria, and J. C. Berryman, of Kickapoo Mission. Our meeting commenced Monday evening. On Wednesday we had a good love feast; three joined the Church (three adults), and one child was baptized. The Church seemed to take courage; quite a number received the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. But while the members appear steadfast, they have to bear considerable persecution from the heathen party, who even threaten the lives of the Christians."

"July 2. While we were engaged in worship several drunken Indians rode up to the door of the meeting-house and interrupted the congregation. Some of the Christian Indians went out and talked with them, but they would not desist. At length my interpreter went out, caught hold of the fellow that had the bottle, wrested it from him and shivered it against the house, and after a few words the drunken fellows went off. The heathen party sometimes talk of killing all the Christians, thinking by this means to get clear of the gospel and have no restraint whatever. But God, we hope, will make even the wrath of man to praise him."

In the month of July Mr. Stateler and his wife made a visit to his wife's parents at Des Moines Rapids, where they remained three weeks, and he preached to white people for the first time in months, and returned in time for him to hold the Indian camp meeting, at which there were a number of conversions. Soon afterwards he started with a number of brethren to attend the Annual Conference.

CHAPTER XII.

From 1838 to 1840—Conference at Boonville—Still among the Delawares—Work Prospers—The Establishment of the Great Central Manual Labor School—Its Object—Thrilling Incidents—A Noble Chief—Story of "Aunt Barbara"—Wonderful Providence—Charles and James Ketchum.

IN the year of 1838 the Missouri Conference held its annual session at Boonville, Mo., and was presided over by Bishop Soule. Mr. Stateler was returned to the Delaware Mission, with Abraham Millice for his assistant.

In his journal Mr. Stateler refers to the religious services at different times during the year as being quite interesting and spiritual, and the outlook encouraging for building up the Church, "if ardent spirits could only be kept away from the Indians." He also speaks of the progress of the children at school. Some who had commenced with the alphabet were learning to read; then later on he observes that they were reading well and "could cipher through the first rules of arithmetic."

The Board of Missions recommended, and the Missouri Conference at its recent session had authorized, the establishment of a Central Manual Labor School for the benefit of the Indian children and youth who were connected with the various missions of the Northwest. The government had stipulated to aid in the erection of the buildings and in the support of the school.

Mr. Stateler states that during the winter of 1838 the missionaries were called together to consult in regard to the matter; that arrangements were perfected and the work of building was commenced in the spring of 1839.

The first building erected was a two-story brick structure forty by twenty feet, with an ell one hundred feet long. The lower part was for a dining room, kitchen, etc., and the upper for dormitories, and was used for school purposes for a while. The next building was a two-story brick forty by one hundred feet, and was used for schoolrooms and chapel, with teachers' rooms and dormitories overhead.

The children were taught in the chapel. One-half of it was for the girls, the other half for the boys. As soon as practicable, a female department was added, which was also two-story and about one hundred feet long. The buildings were all near together, though the male and female departments were kept entirely separate.

There was in connection with this a farm of three hundred acres or more, with carpenter and blacksmith shops and buildings for the superintendent and employees. The school was located on the Shawnee lands one mile west of the Missouri State line and two miles southwest from the town of Westport, Mo. There was an arrangement made with the government and the different tribes of Indians represented, whereby the school funds belonging to each tribe should be concentrated and put into this institution. The Board of Missions furnished a portion of the money for the building, the probable cost of which, with all the at-

tachments, was fifty thousand dollars, and appropriated ten thousand dollars annually to support the school, to which was added eight or nine thousand each year from the Indian school fund, most of which, Mr. Stateler stated, came from the Delaware nation.

The object of the institution was, in addition to an ordinary education, to furnish the Indian youth, both male and female, with a practical knowledge of the different departments of civilized life, and to stimulate them to adopt the ideas and customs of the white people. Mr. Stateler writes in his journal: "We have great hope in the final success of this new establishment, as we think it is on the best plan that could be adopted—viz., the manual labor system."

At the session of the Missouri Conference held at Fayette, Mo., in 1839, W. Browning and D. Kinnear were placed in charge of the Manual Labor School, and were assisted by Mrs. Jesse Green, Mrs. Browning, and Miss Elizabeth Lee. Mrs. Green, who came from Bristol, England, is said to have been a lady of more than ordinary culture and much strength of character. After her husband's death, she published his biography, which was widely read and highly appreciated by the Church. The latter portion of her life was spent at Lexington, Mo.

Mr. Stateler was returned to the Delaware Mission, and the other missionaries in the district were also returned to their respective stations and continued until the meeting of the Conference at St. Louis, Mo., in the year 1840.

The children from the various missions were removed to the central school, which must have been a

great relief to the missionaries, thus enabling them to give themselves more fully to evangelical work.

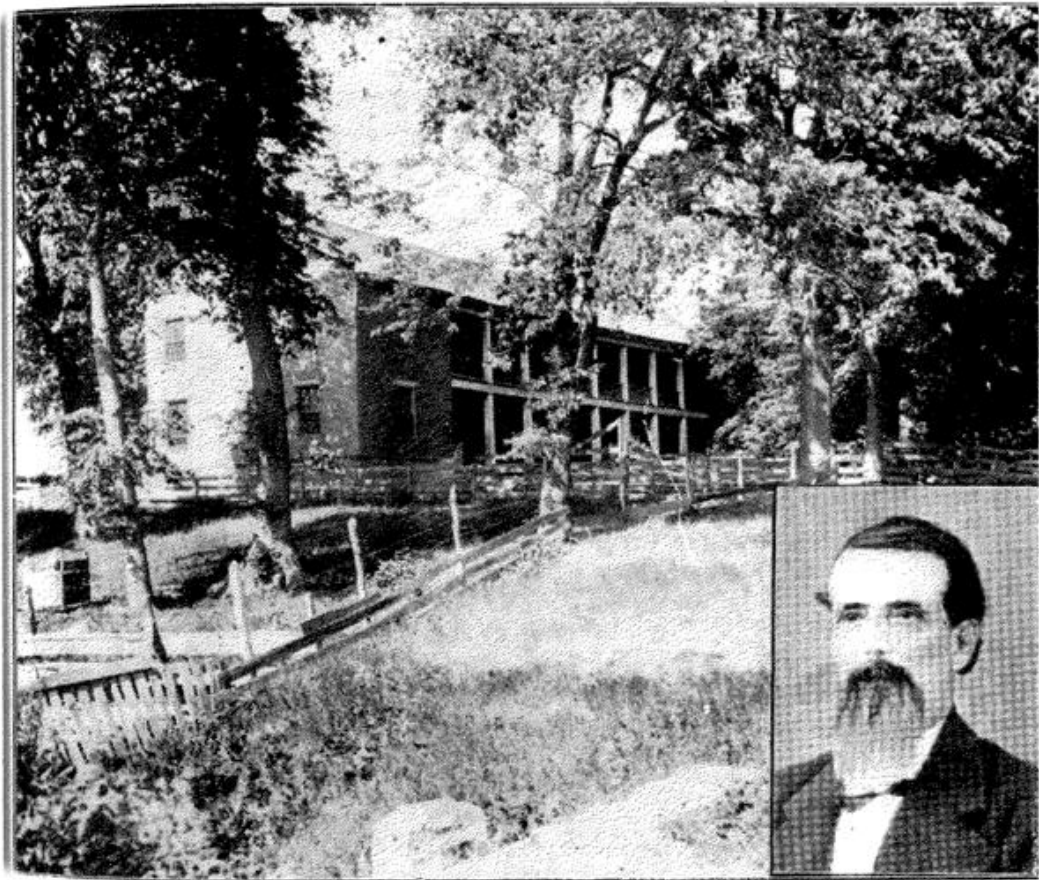
In the fall of 1839 Mr. Stateler and his wife made a visit to his old home in Kentucky, which was six hundred miles distant. Surely they must have had great courage and been accustomed to hardships to start in a "carryall" on such a journey at the commencement of winter. They were two weeks on the way, remained four weeks, and were over four weeks returning home through the wintry blasts, but arrived in safety, stopping at St. Charles, Mo., to spend watch-night with a Brother Fielding, where they had a profitable service. He says: "Our parents are very old—my father about seventy-two years of age. We spent the social hour together, and bade farewell with the strong hope of meeting in heaven."

In referring to his experience with the Delaware Indians, Mr. Stateler tells of a different species of persecution from that mentioned in a previous chapter, and which is of a most thrilling character. It was instigated by the "heathen party" against a Christian chief. He had made a profession of religion and become a thorough Christian man. The heathen chiefs summoned him to appear before them at a given time, and he promptly obeyed. They demanded of him the reason for giving up the religion of his fathers and going off with these "singers," as the Christians were called, at the same time charging that he had committed deeds worthy of death, and that unless he renounced the new faith he must die.

Surely this was enough to cause any man of weak faith to quail, but it did not affect him in the least.

With great self-possession he replied that he had done nothing amiss; that he had simply renounced that which brought him no permanent peace, that by trusting in the "great Saviour" he had found great and lasting peace, and that he was willing to die. He told them that he was in their hands, and that they could do with him as they pleased. But faith in Christ is stronger than heathenism. His firm purpose in regard to his religion, expressed in a noble, manly way before these heathen men away in the lone solitude under the stars of the sky, whither they had led him, astonished and awed them. They paused, and then said: "We will give you time [naming so many moons] to consider this; and if you do not renounce this new faith, you may expect a visit from us." But they never came, and he was never molested again. "He lived and died trusting in God, and I doubt not," says our missionary, "went home to heaven."

Thus we see the wonderful power of the gospel of divine grace in saving a sinner. There was a fine illustration of it in the character of this man. He had lived in all the wildness and wickedness of heathenism until he was perhaps fifty years of age, when, through the instrumentality of the ministers of divine truth, his attention was arrested, his sins arrayed before him, he repented, and found the salvation of God. And so thorough was the work of divine grace that, though he had formerly been given to drunkenness and all the vices of a heathen life, after his conversion he was never known to falter. Such was his faith that when summoned to a martyr's fate he stood firm as a rock and said: "I am ready; I do not fear to die."



GIRLS' BOARDING HOUSE, INDIAN MANUAL LABOR SCHOOL.
Erected in 1845.

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There is another incident mentioned by Mr. State-ler in connection with mission work among the Dela-wares which deserves a place here. It is given in his language, substantially :

“In the early settlement of Kentucky, when people lived in forts, there was a family located near where the city of Louisville now stands, living in a ‘block-house,’ a building constructed of logs in a very substantial manner so as to render it a place of defense against an armed force. While the men were away, Indians came, captured the fort, and killed all the inmates except the mother and her little girl, whom they led away as captives. The mother, not being strong enough to travel as fast as they wished, was tomahawked, but they carried the little girl with them away to their distant home in the North.

“She was raised up among the Indians, having no opportunity to get back to the white people. She never forgot her home, though in time she did forget her language. She determined never to marry. She knew she was white—different from the Indians—and wanted to get back to her own people, but knew not how to carry out the hazardous undertaking. She was adopted by an Indian woman. The woman died, leaving her ponies, blankets, and all her household effects to the adopted daughter, the white girl. She lived for a considerable time alone in her cabin. Finally, seeing no prospect of ever returning to her home, she consented to marry an Indian. By this marriage she had one daughter. The husband died, and she was left alone with her little child. Subsequently, she married a Frenchman, a trader. They

had no children, and not many years afterwards the husband died and she was left alone again with her daughter; but they were in very easy circumstances, as the husband had left all his goods and possessions to his wife.

“In course of time the daughter grew up and married in the Delaware Nation—married an Indian man. She raised up quite a family of sons, who were almost like white men, their complexions were so fair. They were men of intelligence, and spoke English very readily.

“The grandmother was a woman of considerable intellect, and never came down to the level of the common heathen Indians, but maintained that degree of dignity and self-respect due to one of her ability. Her father was a German.

“The Delaware Indians, in time, moved to White River, Ind. From thence they went to James Fork of White River, in Southwest Missouri, about twenty-five miles from where Springfield now stands. From this place they were removed to the Kansas River country, where our missionaries found them.

“Well, when the missionaries came among the Delawares, they found this white woman of whom I have been speaking. We called her ‘Aunt Barbara’ (Barbara was her name when she was a little girl at home). Then she was a venerable woman of seventy years, living in a comfortable hewed-log house like any other civilized woman. She was first to welcome the missionary when he came. She could converse in Indian, French, and English, and made a good interpreter. She and her daughter and grandchildren were the very



REV. JAMES KETCHUM,
Delaware Chief and Interpreter. (See pages 101-103.)

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first to come and unite with the Church, and thus formed a little nucleus. The grandsons subsequently became very ready interpreters, and two of them afterwards became preachers of the gospel. The family name of the grandsons was Ketchum—the two preachers were Charles and James Ketchum.

“Thus the providence of God appears, though dark and mysterious at first, to open the way for the spread of the gospel. This poor little girl, snatched away from her home and from her murdered mother, like the little Hebrew maid of old, becomes the messenger through whom the light of God’s truth and salvation is carried to a nation.

“For many long, long hours those two men, Charles and James Ketchum, have stood at my side interpreting the words of life to the people.”

CHAPTER XIII.

Among the Shawnees—From 1840 to 1844—Builds Another Meetinghouse—The Missionary Takes Part—The Heathens at Work—The House Defiled—A Great Camp Meeting—Death of William Johnson—Bishop Roberts—The School a Success—Attends a Council—A Native Preacher, Ma-she-la-Bose-man—A Singular Providence—Ministry of a Bear.

AT the session of the Missouri Conference held at St. Louis, Mo., in the autumn of 1840, and presided over by Bishop Waugh, Mr. Stateler was changed from the Delaware to the Shawnee Mission, and Edward T. Peery took his place among the Delawares. D. Kinnear was in charge of the Manual Labor School.

The Shawnee Mission was adjacent to the Manual Labor School, where Mr. Stateler lived, and his wife was employed as matron of the girls' department in the school. It became necessary to build a large central church where the regular Sunday services could be held, though it does not appear that any funds were provided for that purpose, but was left largely to the energy of the missionary to carry out. But he was equal to the occasion. A meeting of the leaders of the Church was called for consultation (a wise move) and the erection of a hewed-log building, twenty-five by fifty feet—double lengths of logs—was agreed upon. The force was divided into companies, giving to each company so many logs to cut and hew and haul to the building place. The logs were all to be of one length and to "face" one foot or more at the little end.

The missionary, who was not to be left out, was given two logs to hew and haul for his share.

The building was located in a grove about four miles west of the Manual Labor School and about six miles southwest of Kansas City.

The house was put up in good condition, the rafters made of poles and covered with short boards, which were riven by hand and nailed on; joists were put across, and the building was ceiled overhead. The cracks were "chinked" with pieces of wood and daubed with lime mortar. The missionary solicited money from friends across the line in Missouri with which to buy lumber and other necessary articles.

The building had one large door and nine windows. Although the work was commenced in the winter, yet all that labor was performed and the house was ready for use by early summer. Surely "the people had a mind to work."

The spirit of heathenism, as manifested in opposition to the cause of truth and righteousness, abounded here as well as among the Delawares. In fact, it prevails in many places among white people. Soon after the new building was completed, some of the "vile fellows" went in secret, broke all the windows, tore down the pulpit, piled all the seats on the floor, and defiled all the house. This was a sore trial. The Christian people had exhausted their funds in building, and knew not what to do. But they were not to be outdone. It required a mighty effort to refit the building, but they succeeded in doing it.

They held their central camp meeting for the mission at that place the following fall. It was a time of

the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Seventy-one persons gave their names for membership in the Church, and more than that number professed to find the Saviour in the pardon of their sins. Mr. Stateler, in speaking of the result of the meeting, remarked with exultation: "The power of heathenism was now broken. Ah! that was a glad, glad day!"

At the next Conference, held at Palmyra, Mo., Bishop Thomas A. Morris presiding, Mr. Stateler was returned to Shawnee Mission. The health of Thomas Johnson had failed; he was superannuated and left the Territory, and William Johnson was made superintendent of the district, while he continued in charge of the Kansas Mission. J. C. Berryman was placed in charge of the Manual Labor School, and N. M. Talbot took his place at Kickapoo Mission. N. T. Shaler supplied Peoria and Pottawattomie Mission, and was assisted by a "Brother Roachman, a native man."

At this Conference a class of fifteen were received on trial into the traveling connection, among them Thomas Glanville, who became a useful minister and was cruelly murdered in his own house by soldiers in 1863 because of the prejudice that existed against Southern Methodist preachers at that time. Another was William M. Rush, who became and continued for years the leading spirit of the Missouri Conference; and still another, Enoch M. Marvin, who was assigned to "Grundy Mission," and who became a bishop and one of the greatest men that the Methodist Church has ever produced.

Mr. Stateler notes in his journal the commencement of a "two days' meeting" at the Shawnee meeting-

house on the first of January, 1842; that "the friends came and brought provisions with them and remained during the meeting," and they "had a gracious time."

He also speaks of the death of one of their young members, who, though she had not been long a Christian, yet "knew Christ and the power of his resurrection, and with the composure of feelings attendant upon the separation of cheerful friends only for a season, she quit the world, leaving a bright evidence behind of the power of Jesus to save to the uttermost all who come to God by him."

On the 8th of April, 1842, he makes this entry in his diary: "Our dear brother, William Johnson, superintendent of our mission district, departed this life. He had been eleven years a missionary; part of the time to the Shawnees and Delawares, but most of the time to the Kansas Indians. But his toil is ended. The Master has said, 'It is enough.' He died in the peace of the gospel. He was a good minister of Jesus Christ, well instructed in the things of God, and able also to instruct others in those glorious truths."

During the month of April, Bishop Roberts, senior bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church at that time, visited the Indian Mission and spent some time in visiting and preaching at the various charges. During his stay he preached the funeral of William Johnson. He attended the Conference that year at Jefferson City, Mo., and died the next spring (1843) at his home in Indiana. He was a native of Maryland, was a self-made man, a fine preacher, an excellent bishop, remarkable for his modesty, and presided over the preachers in Conference like a father among his chil-

dren. He was greatly loved by the preachers. His death was peaceful and resigned, "and," says Bishop Paine in his "Life of McKendree," "rarely has so pure and lovely a spirit passed from earth to heaven." A few of his neighbors were present at his burial, who, having prepared for him a grave on his own little farm, quietly laid him away to rest in one of the most sequestered places of the West." He was a great favorite with Mr. Stateler, who often spoke of him, and delighted to relate anecdotes that are current in connection with his career.

At the Conference of 1842 E. T. Peery was appointed presiding elder of the Indian Mission District, and G. W. Love was sent to the Kansas Mission in place of William Johnson, deceased.

In 1843 the Conference was held at Lexington, Mo., presided over by Bishop James O. Andrew.

Four delegates—W. W. Redman, W. Patton, J. C. Berryman, and James M. Jamison—were elected to represent the Missouri Conference in the General Conference, which was to meet the following May in the city of New York, at which time and place the great climax of the slavery agitation in the Church was reached, and the Plan of Separation adopted which resulted in the division of Methodism into two great bodies, and in which it continues unto the present day.

Mr. Stateler was returned to Shawnee Mission this year, which was the fourth in succession that he served this charge. His wife still occupied a position in the school. Soon after Conference he makes this entry in his journal: "Our residence is still at the

Shawnee Manual Labor School. During the past summer God greatly blessed the institution. Most of the grown children have professed religion, and seem to enjoy it, so that we thank God and take courage."

Later on he notices the sudden death of one of the young women (a Shawnee) of the institution, which caused great solemnity to rest upon all, but observes: "We have good hope that her happy soul is landed safe in heaven,

Where the weary are at rest,
Where the saints do cease from sighing,
Where they are forever blest."

This shows the deep and tender feeling which, as a true shepherd of the flock, he had for those under his watch care.

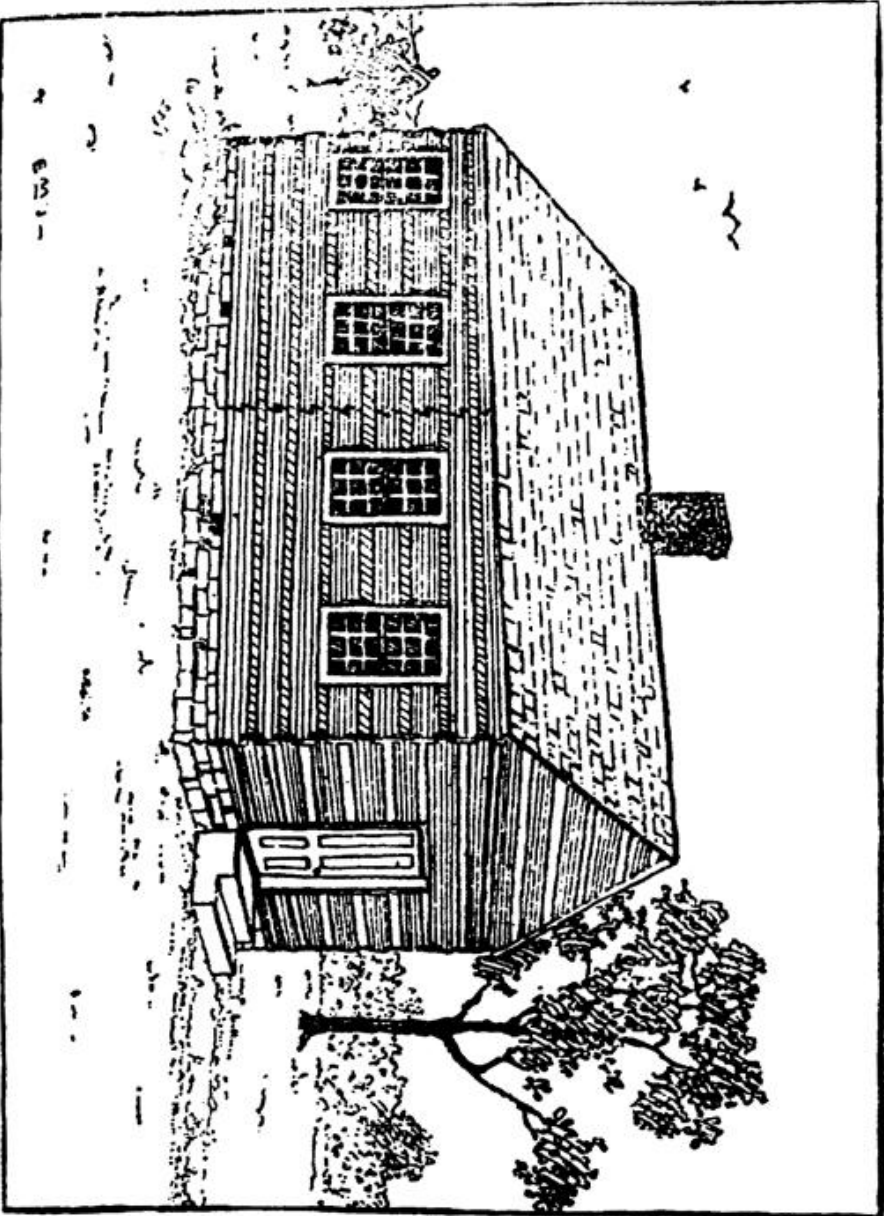
In the month of June, 1843, Mr. Stateler was selected by a delegation of the Delaware Indians to accompany them to a great council held in the Cherokee Nation. They were Christian men, and desired his presence to assist them in their religious duties, which evinces the confidence they had in his religious counsel. They had to travel much in the night on account of the flies, which made it very unpleasant. The object of the council was to try to get all the tribes of the West to enter into a compact and pass a law that would bring them into closer intercourse and friendship with each other. There were delegations from many different tribes present. Mr. Stateler was gone a month or more, and rejoiced when he reached home, found his family well, and "joined in worship with his Shawnee brothers and sisters once more."

The usual camp meeting was held at Shawnee

Meetinghouse, at which "souls were converted and believers strengthened." This year (1844) they held one of the best camp meetings which Mr. Stateler had ever attended. He says: "A very great number joined the Church, and believers were greatly strengthened and built up in the faith of the gospel."

There was generally a camp meeting held on each of the mission charges once a year. The Indians of the various tribes would visit each other at such times. There was something about them—the outdoor life, the hospitality and sociability manifested, the simplicity of the service, the echo of the songs, sermons, and prayers through the groves, and the fervor and enthusiasm of the worshipers—that seemed to suit the Indian nature. Many who did not attend the regular mission services would flock to these meetings, where they witnessed wonderful displays of the Divine power and were awakened and converted.

"On one occasion," says Mr. Stateler, "there were several of the Kaw Indians, who lived next to the wild tribes away to the West, that happened to come to one of our meetings at the Shawnee Mission. Though they could not understand either the English or the Indian (Shawnee) tongue, yet one of the party was powerfully wrought upon by the Holy Spirit. Sister Johnson, the wife of Rev. William Johnson, who spent many years among the Kaw Indians and had learned their language sufficiently to instruct the poor, struggling mortal how to find Jesus, went and knelt by his side and directed him to repose in him, the sinner's Friend, and with streaming eyes he rejoiced, giving thanks and praise to God.



SHAWNEE INDIAN CHURCH.
Erected under the Supervision of Rev. T. B. Stetler in 1840-41. (See page 104.)

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"The Indians were very devout in their worship. Penitents would come and kneel down at the altar and weep and pray and agonize, and when converted would rejoice and shout aloud and make the groves vocal with their praises.

"Not a few native men among those who were converted were impressed and called into the ministry. They were generally *earnest* men, preaching and exhorting with fervor, accompanied by the Holy Spirit, that resulted in the conversion of the people."

Mr. Stateler tells of one whose history is somewhat remarkable. His name was Ma-she-la-Bose-man.* He had a wonderful knowledge of the various Indian tongues, and could converse in most of them. He was a Pottawattomie, but his wife was a Shawnee. While yet a young man he went with others of his tribe on a hunting expedition away toward the head of the Missouri River. They were gone for several years, trapping otter and beaver. They passed through portions of country inhabited by hostile tribes, which rendered their journey extremely hazardous.

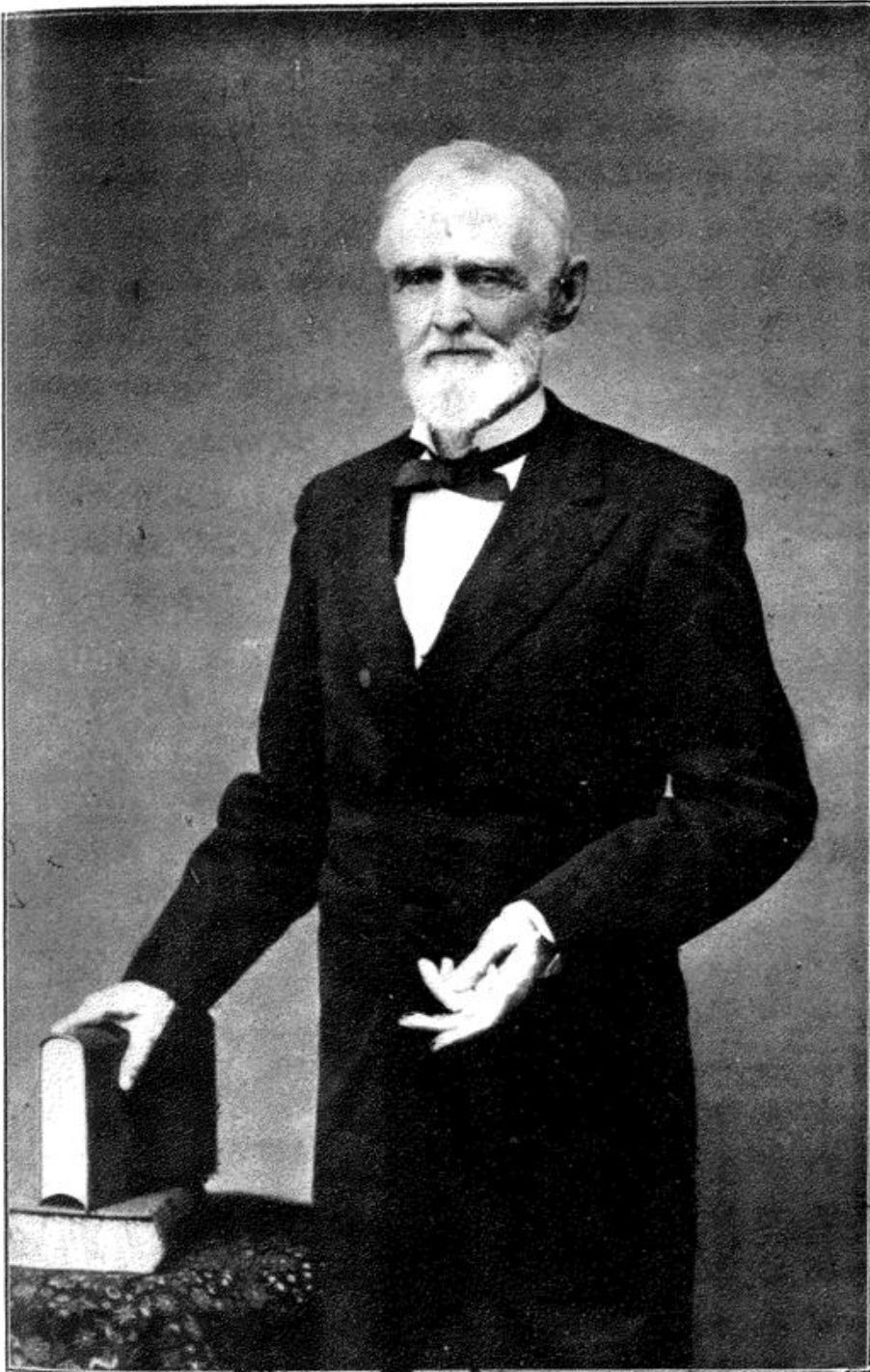
They had their traps set for some distance along a stream, a mile or two from the camp, which was back in the mountains in a secluded place. One morning while returning from the traps to camp, riding a mule, our hero saw a huge, angry bear coming directly to-

*This is the name as given to the writer by Mr. Stateler, and is undoubtedly the same person referred to on page 27 of "Methodist Missions among the Indian Tribes in Kansas," written for the State Historical Society by J. J. Lutz, where he is called "Bashman," "Mackinaw Beauchemie," and "Bossman."

ward him along the steep mountain side above. The mule, all oblivious to the danger, could not be forced out of a walk. On came Bruin at a quickened pace, as if bent on the destruction of the two invaders of his realm. Boseman waited till the bear was close upon him, when he fired and broke the bear's shoulder, which sent it rolling over and over like a barrel down the steep declivity, passing near the man and the mule, until it reached the bottom of the canyon far below. Thus his life was saved.

This wonderful deliverance made such an impression upon his mind that he made a solemn vow to God, and promised that if he was spared to get home he would consecrate his service to the Lord. His prayer was answered; he reached his home in safety, sought the first opportunity to see the missionary, soon after joined the Church, professed religion, and became an active and efficient worker.

"He never faltered," says Mr. Stateler, "in his religious course during his life. He became a regular preacher and assistant missionary to his tribe, the Pottawattomies. He was ordained deacon by Bishop Capers at the Indian Mission Conference held at Doakesville in the year 1847. He passed from labor to rest soon after that Conference."



JEFFERSON DAVIS.
(From a photograph belonging to Mrs. Stateler.)

Beaumont Missi

7th Dec. 1884

To Mrs. L. B. Stater,
with grateful affection
and admiration both
for herself and her
husband whose devoted
service in the cause of
Christianity is meet for
a monument higher than
man could build

Faithfully

Jefferson Davis

INSCRIPTION ON BACK OF PHOTOGRAPH SENT TO MRS. L. B.
STATELER.

CHAPTER XIV.

Indian Mission Conference Organized—Journey Thither—Mr. Stateler a Charter Member—Bishop Morris—Wonderful Growth—Success of Missions—A Destructive Tornado—On Choctaw District—Conference at Shawnee—Mr. Stateler on Kansas River District.

At the General Conference held at New York in 1844, the various Indian Missions along the Western border had been organized into a separate body known as the Indian Mission Conference. The first session was appointed at Riley's Chapel, Cherokee Nation, Indian Territory, to commence October 22, 1844.

Mr. Stateler started hither on the 14th of October, accompanied by his wife, who was in poor health at the time. The first day they traveled from Shawnee twenty-five miles southward and camped. On Tuesday, the 15th, they traveled thirty miles farther and camped on Mariedezine, or Big Osage River. On Wednesday they made thirty miles more, and halted near Fort Scott, on the Mom-a-taw River. On Thursday they camped at Drywood Creek, fifteen miles farther on, and on Friday, although "the snow was two inches deep and it was very cold," they traveled thirty miles and "reached Sister Adam's, at Sinakee," where they spent the Sabbath, and Bishop Morris, who was traveling the same way to the Conference, preached. Mr. Stateler loved to talk of those journeys to and from the Conferences when they were accompanied by one of the bishops or other distinguished brethren.

He has told of how particular good Bishop Paine was to return thanks for a lunch by the roadside the same as at a regular meal, the Bishop sometimes pleasantly remarking that "lunches were instituted by the devil to cheat people out of asking the blessing on their food."

They arrived near the seat of the Conference on Tuesday evening, and the session opened on Wednesday and closed on Saturday, Bishop Morris presiding. Mr. Stateler's journal notes that "considerable business was transacted." J. C. Berryman was appointed Superintendent of Missions in the Conference. There were three presiding elders' districts organized—Kansas River, with N. M. Talbot, presiding elder; Cherokee, with D. B. Cummings, presiding elder; and Choctaw, with L. B. Stateler, presiding elder.

Three thousand two hundred members were reported, of whom eighty-five were whites and one hundred and thirty-three colored, leaving two thousand nine hundred and ninety-two Indians. There were twenty-seven preachers stationed, seven of whom were Indians—five Cherokees and two Choctaws. There were twenty-seven local preachers, twenty-two of whom were Indians and five whites.

Says Mr. Stateler: "The Conference is bounded on the north by the Missouri River, on the east by the States of Missouri and Arkansas, on the south by Red River, and west by the Rocky Mountains. In this territory it is estimated there are ninety thousand Indians."

This is surely a short account of a Conference the organization of which marked so important an epoch

in the history of missionary effort among the Indians. The work had been commenced by godly ministers belonging to various Conferences, among the tribes who lived adjacent to their fields of labor east of the Mississippi, where it had borne some fruit. But now we see it crystallizing and growing into a mighty movement that is to go forward with increasing momentum and become a great factor in the uplifting of whole tribes of these sons of the forest to a higher plane of life. Like the men who composed the Christmas Conference at Baltimore, in 1784, it is probable that these self-denying missionaries hardly realized the full significance of their work, and hence said but little about it. They were better preachers than writers. The three thousand souls gathered into their Churches, the thousands of children in their schools, besides the great company that had already crossed over the river in the triumphs of a living faith, were their epistles, known and read of all men.

Thus we see that Mr. Stateler was a charter member of this Conference, which has continued through all these years and now numbers four hundred and eighty-eight societies, three hundred and fifty-four church buildings, ninety-three parsonages, one hundred and sixty-four traveling preachers, two hundred and nineteen local preachers, ten thousand six hundred and forty Sunday school scholars, twenty thousand six hundred and ninety members, and about one thousand five hundred Epworth Leaguers.

If any doubt the success of missionary effort or the elevating and refining influence of the Christian faith upon the hearts and lives of men, let them only note

the condition of these tribes of people when the missionaries—Stateler, Berryman, the Johnsons, Harrell, and others—went among them, and at the present time, with their intelligent faces, refined manners, comfortable homes, costly colleges and universities, hundreds of schoolhouses and churches, and their orderly life, as witnessed throughout the same region of country known as “the Indian Territory” to-day. Not a few of the boys who were taught by Mr. Stateler and his wife became prominent preachers and chiefs among their people, and many of the men who sit in their highest councils and who represent them at our national capital to-day—men of sagacity, integrity, and high moral qualities, Christian men—are members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

The Indian Mission Conference adhered to the South in the division of the Church; and although Bishop Morris, who presided at the session, adhered with the Northern portion of the Church, yet because of his generous, conservative spirit and well-rounded, Christian character he was always a great favorite with the preachers and people in the West and South.

The week following the Conference found Mr. Stateler at Shawnee, where he says, during their absence, “a dreadful hurricane passed over the institution, demolishing many of the buildings and injuring some few individuals, but no lives were lost. It passed into the State [Missouri], laying waste many buildings and destroying about fifteen lives. It occurred on the 24th of October, 1844.”

In my travels over Western Kansas I have often crossed the track of these terrible tornadoes, where the

ground had been torn up on the prairie and great swaths mowed through the growing timber along the streams, which proves that these ruthless ravagers of our Western prairies are not of such recent origin as many suppose.

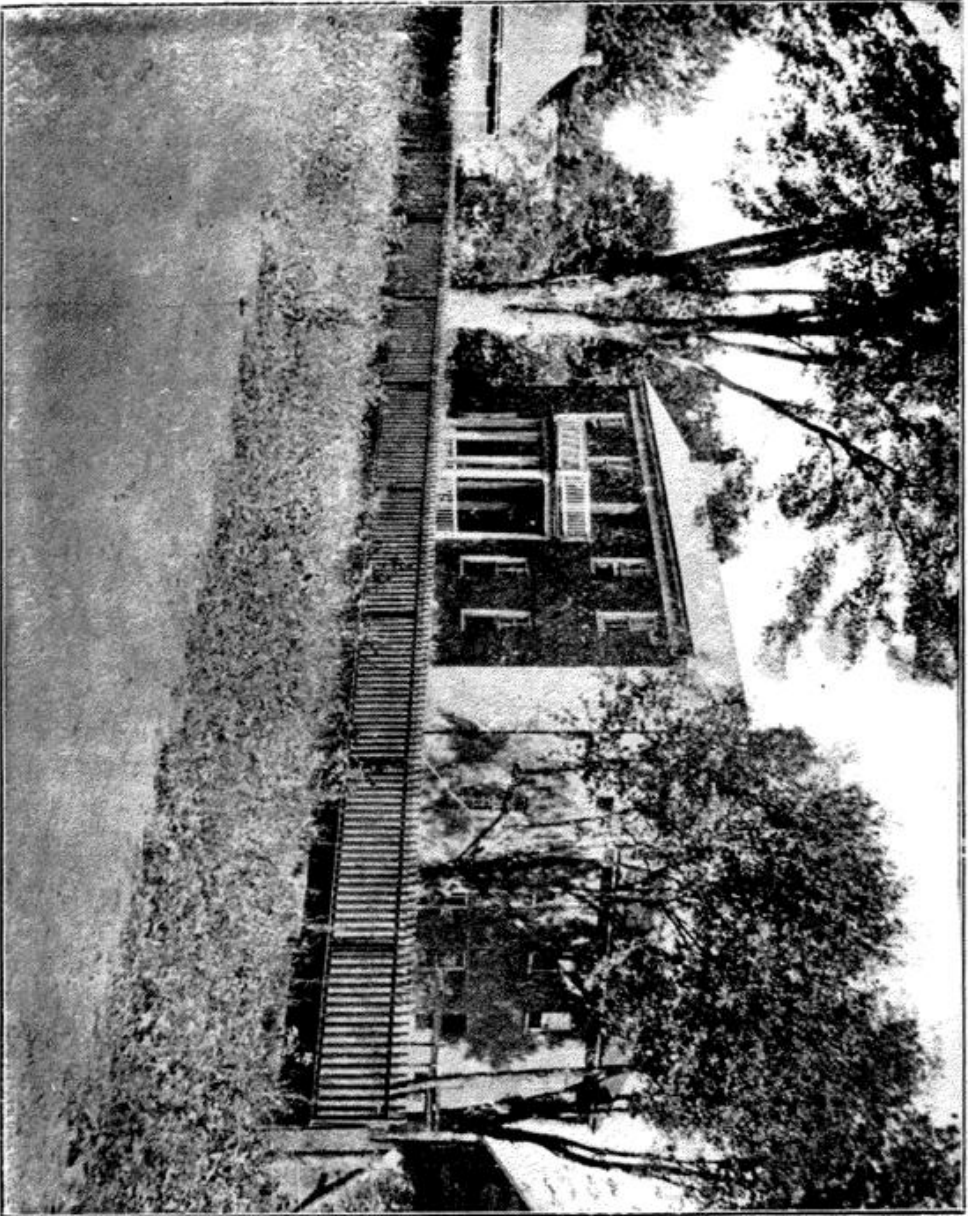
Our missionary also notes the death, during his absence, of Miss Mary Paschel, a young woman of the Peoria tribe and a member of the mission family. She was a worthy Christian, and spoke of her approaching death with great composure, giving the strongest evidence that she was prepared for heaven. When we see the tender sympathy that he felt and the fatherly interest that he manifested for those who were placed in his charge, we do not wonder that Mr. Stateler was popular with the Indians. The sickness and death of an uncultured Indian girl are noted with almost the same attention and affection as if she had been a member of his own household—in fact, she was recognized as a member of the “mission family.” More than once has the writer seen the tears start unbidden from his eyes and his strong frame tremble with emotion as he related some touching incident connected with his life and labors among these children of the forest and plains.

In a short time he and his wife were off for their new field, stopping over Sunday at the Qua-paw Mission, where they met Brother Berryman and had a pleasant time together. On the 28th of November they arrived at the Oil Springs, in the Choctaw Nation, where they spent a few days for the benefit of Mrs. Stateler’s health; but on account of the poor accommodations, which seem not to have improved much as

the years rolled by, they passed on, though he returned later and fitted up a cabin in which he left his family for more than a month at a time during his long journeys to distant stations. To the day of his death, Mr. Stateler loved to talk of the virtue of those springs; and when greatly enfeebled by age, he often expressed a desire to return to them, seemingly indulging the fond hope that they would renew his youth and strength as in former years. But this fond desire was never gratified.

On Thursday, December 5, we find him "setting off with D. B. Cummings, V. Essex, and Thomas Bertholf for the Creek Nation," to hold the latter's quarterly meeting, after which, on Thursday, the 19th, he and Brother Essex arrive at Little River near its junction with the Canadian. Here they found a trader named Edwards, who, he says, "earnestly requested us to help them. Accordingly Brother Essex promised to return after having gone with me to Choctaw Mission." There they held a good quarterly meeting on Christmas, after which Essex proceeded to Little River and Stateler returned to Fort Coffee, on the Arkansas River, a distance of something like one hundred and fifty miles.

Later on, in midwinter, we find Mr. Stateler "leaving his wife as it were alone, and poorly supplied with conveniences and society," which he says was a great cross, as he expected to be very far from home. On one occasion he speaks of having been absent more than a month and of having traveled about five hundred miles. On February 3 he set off with Brother Page for the Red River side of the district, where they



HOME OF MISSIONARY AND TEACHERS AT SHAWNEE MISSION AS IT NOW APPEARS.
Erected in 1830.

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held two very profitable quarterly meetings among the Chickasaws, besides other meetings between times.

Traveling with a guide through a vast wilderness where the country is covered with buffalo heads (doubtless much the same as I have seen it in Montana in the early seventies), after two days he reached Little River, where he found Brother Essex at his post conducting a day school, Sunday school, a prayer meeting, and preaching on Sabbath. He remarks that "some have already professed religion, and that at this remote point *the gospel has never been preached before.*"

After his return home, and a few days of rest, he "sets off" with his family to take charge of the Fort Coffee Academy, Rev. W. H. Goode having returned with his family to Indiana. Mr. Goode's sympathies were with the Northern branch of the Church in the separation, and hence his departure. Mr. Staterer always referred to him in the most friendly terms.

Thus he continued to travel and labor, and the work prospered during the year, near the close of which William L. McAllister came from the Memphis Conference to take charge of the academy, and Mr. Staterer and wife made a hasty visit to his parents in Kentucky, whom he had not seen for six years. They returned to the Indian country in time for the second session of the Indian Mission Conference, which convened at the Indian Manual Labor School the 12th of October, 1845.

The session of the Conference seems to have been a pleasant one. The presence of venerable Bishop Soule in their midst once more must have been a benediction

to the preachers and people. Favorable reports came in from the work, although the contention that prevailed about this time, to which Mr. Stateler scarcely refers in his journal, must have had its effect, and possibly accounts in a measure for a decrease of seventy-one in the membership reported, although there was an increase of four in the number of missionaries.

J. C. Berryman and Wesley Browning were elected delegates to the convention of the Southern delegates to be held at Louisville, Ky., the ensuing year. J. C. Berryman was continued Superintendent of the missions, and also placed in charge of the Indian Manual Labor School. L. B. Stateler was appointed presiding elder of the Kansas River District and placed in charge of Shawnee Circuit. Mr. Stateler "believed the work still on the advance, and accepted the responsibilities of his new position with tears and trembling, but determined to go forth by the grace of God, trusting in him for assistance."

On December 25 he held a quarterly meeting at Delaware, at which the Church was quickened and blessed, and January 1, 1846, he says: "We held our quarterly meeting at Shawnee, as we had been accustomed to for many years together that have passed. We had a gracious time."

This is the last entry in his journal, made in a well-worn, weather-beaten, but well-preserved little book, which he turned over to the writer just a few days before he went up on high. From this time on he seems to have been too busy to keep a diary.

CHAPTER XV.

Peculiarities of Indian Mission Work—Success—Owing to Settled Condition—Adjacent to Wild Tribes—Thrilling Incident—Sixteen Delawares Slain—Mode of Worship—Indian Hymns.

WHILE we are among the Indians it is well to consider some characteristics of mission work not hitherto mentioned. I will let Mr. Stateler speak. He says:

“Our success in this field was largely attributable to the fact of those Indians being a settled people. Though they were not large farmers and stock raisers, yet they cultivated the ground and made a partial support in the way of raising grain, vegetables, cattle, hogs, horses, etc., which, together with their annuities, made them a living. They were surrounded on two sides—north and east—by white people, and on the west by wild and savage tribes. Although the buffaloes abounded by the million not many days’ travel west of them, yet the fierce Cheyennes and Arapahoes were there in great force—made their home there—and were the deadly enemies of all the domestic tribes. Had the Indians among whom we labored been permitted to go after the buffalo at will, we could have accomplished but little, religiously or by instructing their children, for it seems to be the nature of the Indian to engage in the exciting chase. As it was, but few would venture out, either to trap or hunt, where there was so much danger. Several times during my stay among

them small parties ventured forth, but would seldom all return. One incident I will relate.

“A company of sixteen men organized under the direction of a prominent chief. Among them was one of our native preachers, a most worthy and useful man. They had gone westward into the Cheyenne country, some hundreds of miles away. They had left the timber and were out on a broad, open prairie, when all at once they were surrounded by a vast number of savage and bloodthirsty Cheyennes. There was no possible way of retreat, and the only thing left for them was to fight for their lives. Against such fearful odds there was no hope. Their number was rapidly thinned, and it was not long until the last man had fallen except the preacher. He then threw down his gun, drew from his bosom his hymn book (printed in his native language), and, looking up into heaven, sang one of the songs of Zion. The Cheyenne chief ordered his men to cease firing, intending to save this man, believing him to be a great medicine man; but he could not restrain his warriors. The Christian man was shot down, and the sixteen all lay dead upon the field, side by side, and their bones were left to bleach. Months passed. No word came. Their families at home waited in anxious suspense.

“The great Santa Fé Road was traveled every spring and summer by caravans going to and from New Mexico. To the camp of one of these caravans out on the plains there came one day an Indian bringing with him a little book carefully wrapped and well preserved. He inquired of the white men what it was, and then told in detail the sad story just related. He

let the men have the book. The teamster brought that book home, with the story obtained from the Cheyenne Indian. I was among the Delawares at that time and saw the little relic.

"Thus it has ever been with the fated Indian race. They have been devouring one another from the time they were first found on our eastern shore until the present, and they keep at it.

"The Indian is as susceptible of religious influence as the white man, when he is stationary and has a permanent home, and he is as easy to convert as his white brother, the surrounding circumstances being equal. And when an Indian is truly converted to God I think we may safely say that he is as stable and firm as the white man, or, if any difference, he is more so.

"There is one peculiarity about Indian worship that is highly commendable. When they assemble at church they enter in a quiet and orderly way, without stopping outside to converse, and take their seats silently as if in deep meditation. You seldom hear a whisper from one of them in church, though they may sit there for some time before the services begin.

"They generally all join in singing in their native tongue, and at the close of the opening hymn, when the minister kneels, the congregation usually, almost universally, kneels with him, and though they are not demonstrative, yet you will hear many prayers going up to God, uttered in whispers.

"As a rule, they are more attentive to the appointed times of religious worship than their white brothers. When they are happy they are not ashamed to express their gratitude to God, their tears possibly expressing

more than their tongues. I have frequently seen and heard them shout the praises of God in rapturous strains.

“When they assemble for prayer meetings, which they hold very regularly, it is customary for them to call upon every brother and sister to lead in prayer.

“I have seen them when near the dying hour and conversed with them in regard to their prospects on the other shore. In the most trusting manner they expressed themselves with a readiness and clearness that removed all doubt in regard to their future happiness, illustrating most forcibly the sentiment of that verse in one of our hymns :

Life's duties done, as sinks the clay,
Free from its load the spirit flies ;
While heaven and earth conspire to say,
'How blest the righteous when he dies !'

“The Indians were generally very poor, and hence there was little or nothing done in the way of taking collections for the support of the missionaries. But we sought to cultivate the missionary spirit among them, and endeavored to impress upon them the duty of giving five and some ten cents each every month to send the gospel to others. A sealed box, with an opening large enough to receive their gifts, was placed in the hands of a responsible member of the society, who acted as treasurer. They were instructed to bring their offerings on the first Sunday of each month and deposit them in the box, which was in readiness. At the end of the Conference year the ‘treasure box’ was opened in the presence of the congregation, the money counted, and the amount reported and credited to the

charge or the society that gave it. The people gave freely and promptly, and seemed to regard it as a great privilege. The amounts thus collected would range from twenty to thirty dollars from each mission charge.

“The Indians are fair singers compared with the white people that have no more culture. They have good voices, and are full of emotion. We had books printed for them with the Indian and English languages on alternate lines or pages. I learned some of their choruses, and would join with them in their native tongue as they sang and made melody in their hearts unto the Lord. I remember some of them yet. The following is a chorus much loved by the Creeks:

Hul we minah pe ye koth lese,
 Hul we minah pe ye koth lese,
 Hul we minah pe ye koth lese,
 Pulth ke li e kon.

The English of which is:

I am bound for the kingdom,
 I am bound for the kingdom,
 I am bound for the kingdom,
 With glory in my soul.

“In our labors among the Indians there was not a great amount of discipline required. When one erred in his course, there was a consciousness plainly visible of unworthiness to remain in the Church. Leaders’ meetings were called and delinquents cited to appear. They were not severe in taking account of erring members, but very firm. The defaulting one must make acknowledgment, show penitence, and pledge reformation or be excluded from the Church.

“At first the missionaries experienced the greatest difficulty with them in regard to their marital relations. The Indian custom is, if a man and his wife cannot live together in peace, they simply ‘agree to disagree,’ and each one goes his way. They feel free then to form another alliance. The missionaries endeavored to teach them the sacredness of the marriage relation and to impress upon them the great truth that it could not be dissolved for slight cause.”

CHAPTER XVI.

Sketch of Colaborers—N. M. Talbot—N. T. Shaler—Edward T. Peery—J. T. Peery—Thomas and William Johnson—Jerome C. Berryman—Nathan Scarritt—David Kinnear—A. Millice—Charles Boles—J. H. Slavens.

I CANNOT pass from this scene of Mr. Stateler's labors without speaking more particularly of some of the noble characters who were associated with him in the Indian Mission work and whom he held in high esteem to the end of his life.

It will be remembered that the Peoria Mission was made up of remnants of various tribes—Peorias, Weahs, and Miamis—who spoke the same language, thus requiring but one interpreter. Rev. N. M. Talbot was very successful in his work among them, a large majority of whom were converted to Christianity. After laboring for twenty-four years in mission work, desiring his family to have the benefits of civilized society, he transferred to the St. Louis Conference, where he labored until the war came on. During the war he served as chaplain in the Confederate Army, in which relation he was very popular and greatly useful. After the war he returned to the itinerant ministry and remained in it until 1872, when the Lord called him home.

Rev. Nathan T. Shaler took Mr. Talbot's place among the Peorias. He continued for many years in the mission work, was earnest and faithful, and in-

strumental in accomplishing great good. He joined the St. Louis Conference, in after life was superannuated, and many years ago went home, departing with a shout of triumph. He was much loved by Brother Stateler.

Rev. Edward T. Peery commenced work in the Holston Conference, and was sent in 1832 to the Shawnee Mission, and served in various fields and in different relations. For a time he was Superintendent of the Indian Manual Labor School, and was also presiding elder. He subsequently settled near Kansas City, where he died and was buried in the fall of 1864. He was regarded as a humble, faithful, and useful minister of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Johnson brothers—Thomas and William—were the pioneers in the mission work and opened the way. They came from Virginia. William labored mostly among the Kaws. He was a missionary in the truest sense of the word, was noted for the sweetness of his spirit, and his early and triumphant death, which occurred at the Manual Labor School in 1842, made a profound impression upon all who knew him, both whites and Indians.

Of Thomas Johnson, Rev. W. S. Woodward, in "Annals of Methodism in Missouri," says: "He was born to be a leader and ruler of men, and right well did he fulfill the mission of his life. Of large physique and commanding presence, and with a penetrating eye and a full and pleasant voice, he attracted attention. He pleaded the cause of the Indians before the Mission Board in New York, and made himself felt by the authorities at Washington. His end was tragic. He

was living just across the line in Missouri near the close of the Civil War when, at a late hour one night, a company of armed men who were unknown called at the front gate, under pretense of asking directions to Kansas City, which were given. They then asked for water, and Brother Johnson pointed them to the well, told them to help themselves, stepped inside, and closed the door, when they immediately fired a volley, the bullets penetrating the door and killing him almost instantly. Who the assassins were was never ascertained." *

Rev. Jerome C. Berryman was also among the first to enter this field. He was sent to the Kickapoo Mission and School in 1833, and continued among the Indians until 1846 or 1847. Part of the time he served as Superintendent of the Manual Labor School. He was delegate to the General Conference in 1844, at which time the famous "Plan of Separation" was adopted and the Indian Mission Conference was organized. For a number of years he served as Superintendent of the Indian Mission work, and was evidently the leading spirit in the Conference. His wife died and was buried in the mission burying ground near the Manual Labor School. Left alone with a considerable family to educate, he transferred to the St. Louis Con-

*Since the above was written a statement has been published to the effect that the murderers were citizens of Jackson County, that their purpose was robbery (as Mr. Johnson was thought to have money to the amount of one thousand dollars in his house at the time), and that most all of them were hunted down by the United States soldiers and slain. ("Methodist Missions in Kansas," page 3.)

ference, was appointed to Cape Girardeau District, and soon after established Arcadia High School, which became a power for good in Southern Missouri. He filled important appointments in the regular work until 1883, when he superannuated. He still lived at Caledonia, where he commenced his labors in the Far West, after he left Kentucky, and patiently waited the call of the Master to the home beyond, where nearly all of his colaborers had preceded him. The call came in May, 1906, during the session of the General Conference in Birmingham. He was about the last survivor of the General Conference of 1844.

Mr. Berryman was tall, portly, and of commanding presence. His features indicated strength of intellect and great sincerity and earnestness as well as kindness. He was conservative in spirit, adhered with the South in the division of the Church in 1844, was a Union man during the war, and exerted the influence which his political views gave him with the leaders of the North, as far as he could, to prevent the carrying out of radical measures in dealing with the South and to secure peace and fraternity everywhere. He and Mr. Stateler were boys together, and were bosom friends until the last. When his feet had already entered the chilly waters, Mr. Stateler referred with no little satisfaction and with much emotion to his associations with Berryman in their boyhood days and then in their arduous labors together for many long years in the wilderness. Mr. Berryman felt a deep interest in the Western work, and sent many cheering messages to the men on the outposts of the Church. He watched with interest the progress of the battle in the

conquest of this Western land for Christ. He was honored and loved by his neighbors and by the entire Church of which he was a faithful servant so long.

Rev. Nathan Scarritt began work as a teacher in the Shawnee Manual Labor School in 1848, and remained there three years. About this time he entered the ministry, and his first charge embraced the Shawnee, Delaware, and Wyandotte Missions. He made many friends among the Indians. He was the prime mover in building the High School at Westport, which was at that time a lively Western town, and in 1855 he was assigned to the Kickapoo District and for several years served as presiding elder, traveling extensively in visiting charges and organizing Churches among the white settlers in Kansas. About the commencement of the war he located in Kansas City, Mo., and by the increase in the value of real estate afterwards became quite wealthy. He continued his labors as a teacher and minister, and was intimately connected with the growth of Methodism in Kansas City. By the donation of a valuable lot (worth \$15,000) on an eligible site in Kansas City and \$25,000 in cash—upon condition that the Church should raise \$25,000 more—he became instrumental in founding a school for the training of missionaries, which is known as the "Scarritt Bible and Training School for Foreign Missionaries and Other Christian Workers." It is under the control of the Woman's Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the money raised by the Board was secured largely through the efficient labors of Miss Belle Bennett, the acting agent of the school.

It is quite fitting that so near the scene of arduous missionary work among the Indians in earlier years, and after the Indians are all gone, there should arise this noble institution, overlooking the scenes of successful missionary work and the graves of both men and women who had laid down their lives in their loved employ, which is to stand as a great lighthouse on the borders of the Western world, sending the rays of the bright and ever-increasing light of the gospel of Jesus Christ into "the regions beyond," even to the uttermost parts of the earth. Dr. Scarritt's motto was: "Plan large things for God; expect large things from God." He was several times a member of the General Conference, and while in attendance upon the session of that honorable body convened at St. Louis, Mo., in May, 1890, he was taken sick, obtained leave of absence, and returned to his home in Kansas City, where, on May 22, he departed in peace.

Rev. Charles Boles was another faithful laborer in the mission work. He came only a few years before the Indians sold their lands. He commenced among the Shawnees, and served at different mission stations until the Indians left for the South, and then continued his labors among the white people, serving in the Kansas Mission Conference and afterwards in the Western Conference. He was honored and respected by all who knew him. During his labors among the Delawares he lost his wife, who had, prior to her marriage, lived a long time in Brother Stateler's family. One of her daughters, Miss Nannie Boles, became the wife of Rev. Joseph King, of the Southwest Missouri Conference, and another, Miss Eddie, the wife of Rev. T. C.



REV. JESSE GREENE.

REV. THOMAS JOHNSON

REV. J.C. BERRYMAN

REV. J. T. PEERY.

MRS. MARY GREENE.

REV. JOAB SPENGER.

MRS. J. T. PEERY.

BUSH & BROS. LITH.

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Downs, who was for many years an honored member of the Western Conference.

Rev. John T. Peery spent several years laboring among the Indians, and returned to Missouri, where he filled important charges, twice represented his brethren in the General Conference, and was superannuated in 1882. He was a faithful, true, good man.

Rev. George Love and John Dole each labored one year in the mission work and returned to Missouri.

David Kinnear's name appears frequently in the minutes of the Indian Mission Conference. He began his itinerary in Ohio, spent a number of years teaching in the Indian schools, and then went with his wife, whom he married while at the mission, to the Louisiana Conference, where he labored until called home.

Rev. A. Millice also spent a year or two among the Indians, and was at one time associated with Mr. Stateler among the Delawares. Rev. W. S. Woodward says: "He was a Dutchman and a curiosity. He possessed a good intellect and fair preaching ability. He would have his audience convulsed with laughter one moment, and the next they would be in tears. While preaching once upon the power we have to keep evil thoughts from our minds, he said: 'I cannot keep the birds [pointing to the little songsters twittering among the trees] from flying over my head, but I can keep them from building nests in my hair [at the same time rubbing his hand over his shining pate, on which there was not a single hair].'" The people on Big Blue, where he traveled in later years and where he ended his labors on earth, April 8, 1859, loved to talk of his eccentricities, which were harmless. His ashes

rest in a graveyard gently sloping toward the west, overlooking the waters of the beautiful Big Blue River, not far from the present town of Garrison, Kans. He was born in Shenandoah County, Va., and spent about twenty-five years in the itinerancy. This writer visited his grave in 1867, and a suitable stone was placed over it by the Western Conference in 1871, Mr. Stateler being one of the chief contributors to the fund for this purpose.

Rev. Jesse Greene, while never on a mission station, was for a time presiding elder of Lexington District when it included the Indian Mission charges in Kansas, and was one of the chief promoters of the Indian Mission work. He married Miss Mary Todd, who came from Pennsylvania and was of English stock, to teach the Shawnees, and spent a number of years in that work. He was one of the grandest men in the itinerant ranks of Missouri Methodism. Twenty-one of the twenty-four years spent in Missouri was on districts, and the revival flame burned wherever he went. He fell at his post, away from home, in 1844, and his biography was prepared by his wife and published. The many letters it contains from the missionaries (one or more from Mr. Stateler) show the affection of his brethren for him.

The name of James H. Slavens appears in the minutes of the Missouri Conference in connection with Peoria Mission and School in the year 1832. He entered the itinerancy in Missouri in 1829, and located in 1834. He studied medicine, and became a practicing physician in Green and adjoining counties, and also labored most acceptably as a local preacher. His last

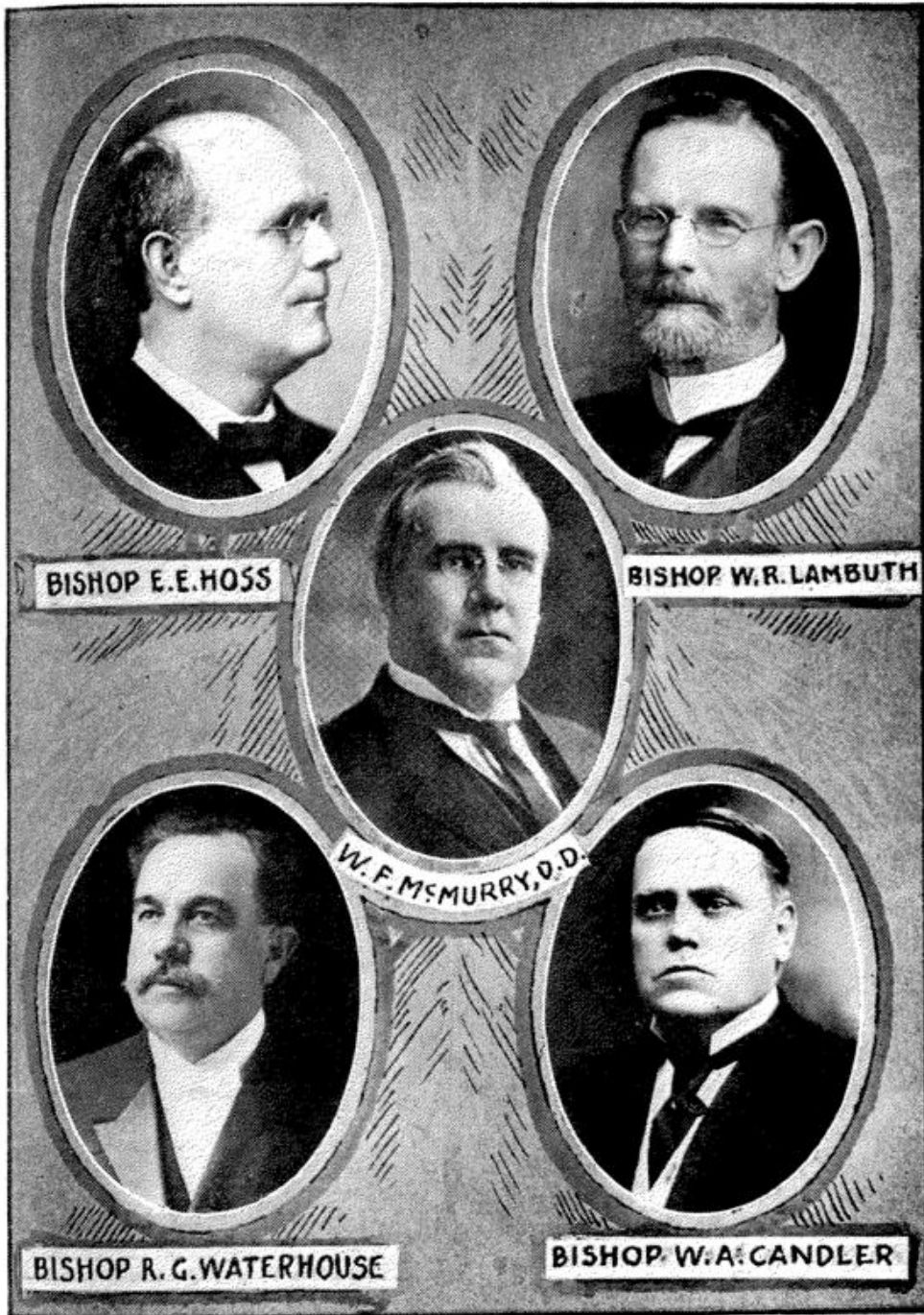
days were spent in retirement at Urbana, Mo., where, a few years ago, he passed away, loved, honored, and lamented by all who knew him.

Rev. Joab Spencer came from Missouri when a young man, and labored among the Indians, spending two years (1858 and 1859) on the Shawnee Mission. In the fall of 1860 he was appointed to the Paola Circuit, and the next year presiding elder of Council Grove District, but was hindered in his work by war troubles. He remained about Council Grove for a number of years, when he returned to Missouri. For a number of years he edited the Sunday school department of the *St. Louis Christian Advocate*, and has recently written a sketch of the early missionary work among the Indians and white settlers in Kansas for the columns of that paper which is of thrilling interest. He now resides at Slater, Mo.

CHAPTER XVII.

Double Work—Some Native Men—Not Appreciated—Kansas Mission Conference Organized—Indians Sell Their Lands—White Settlers—Churches Formed among Them—Partisan Spirit—Extensive Revivals—Stateler and Hedgepeth.

MR. STATELER was presiding elder in the Kansas portion of the Indian Mission Conference until the year 1850. Part of the time he was also in charge of a mission station. This arrangement imposes double work upon a man and renders success difficult for the one occupying such a position. But no one ever heard Stateler complain of having too much or too hard work to perform. Before me is a small leather-bound day book in which he kept an account of the funds, amounting to thousands of dollars, that were appropriated to the missionaries under his direction, and that passed through his hands while he held this position. He was always very careful and prompt in attending to financial matters. There was never any complaint against him of withholding or misappropriating funds placed in his hands. Every dollar was accounted for. Each missionary helper was required to sign a receipt for the money paid him. In the memoranda of receipts I notice the names of Thomas Johnson, E. T. Peery, N. T. Shaler, B. H. Russell, Thomas Hurlbut, J. C. Berryman, J. Wheeler, W. A. Duncan, C. Ketchum, Charles Blue-jacket, M. Roachman, and others. The last three were



BISHOP E. E. HOSS

BISHOP W. R. LAMBUTH

W. F. McMURRY, D. D.

BISHOP R. G. WATERHOUSE

BISHOP W. A. CANDLER

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native helpers, and they simply made a cross mark opposite their names. Some of them became eminent and useful men. Charles Ketchum was a man of pure character, and was greatly loved and respected by every one. At the session of the St. Louis Conference held at Kansas City in the fall of 1867, Charles Bluejacket, a Shawnee man, stood side by side with my father, Rev. Henry Stanley, a local preacher, when they were ordained to the office of deacon, together with a large class who were ordained at the same time by Bishop Marvin.

In the year 1850 the Kansas District was taken from the Indian Mission Conference and attached to the St. Louis Conference and the mission work included in the Lexington District. John T. Peery is presiding elder and Mr. Stateler appears on the Wyandotte and Delaware Mission. For three years following, the name of Stateler appears on the superannuated list. He was always quite reticent concerning this portion of his career; and while he harbored no spirit of bitterness, yet he felt that this retirement from the active work was somewhat forced upon him by brethren who came into authority and who had mistaken views as to his efficiency. But as an obedient son in the gospel he quietly and patiently submitted to their rule, and by following the leadings of God's good providence became a leader of our hosts, honored and loved throughout the entire Church, long after some of the good men who thought his day of usefulness was past had retired from active work or gone to their reward.

In 1854 the Indian mission work in the St. Louis Conference was detached from the Lexington District

and appears in the minutes as "Kansas Mission District," with A. Monroe, Superintendent. With this veteran at the head of affairs on the district, it is not surprising to see Stateler again on the effective list. He was a lifelong friend and admirer of Andrew Monroe, and Monroe had too high an appreciation of true merit to permit such a workman as Stateler to remain inactive where he was in charge. Mr. Stateler served the Wakarusha charge.

It was in 1854 that the General Conference organized the work in Kansas into a separate Conference, known as the "Kansas Mission Conference," and of course Mr. Stateler was included in and became a charter member of this Conference. The Indians along the border had deeded most of their lands to the government, and they were now thrown open for settlement.

By an act of Congress in May, 1854, the territories of Kansas and Nebraska were organized. The public domain, of which Kansas was part, was purchased by the United States from France in 1803, under the designation of Louisiana. By what was known as the Missouri Compromise Bill, passed in 1820, it was provided that slavery should be forever prohibited in all the territory ceded to the United States by France, known as Louisiana, north of latitude thirty-six degrees and thirty minutes north, except in the State of Missouri. On the admission of these two territories the above law, so far as it applied to them, was declared null and void, and thus the slavery question here was left an open question, its establishment or rejection to be decided by the people through their

legally constituted representatives. This caused a great rush of people into Kansas, both from the Northern (and Eastern) and Southern States, and produced great strife, and finally led to war and bloodshed. Although Mr. Stateler was right in the midst of this, he scarcely ever referred to it in all the long years that we were together. He was eminently a man of peace, and sought only to promote peace and good will among men. But it was difficult to accomplish much religiously among people in the midst of the disturbed conditions that prevailed in Kansas at that time.

As the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, had shown its fidelity to the Indians by the long years of toil and self-sacrifice of its ministers who were sent among them when the country was a wilderness, it now sought to provide for the religious welfare of the incoming whites. A few scattering societies and families of the Indians only remained. In some instances the mission churches became centers of religious activity and influence that extended among, and soon became dominated by, the white people. Some of the preachers would have Indian congregations and white ones in the same charge, and frequently whites and Indians in the same congregation.

In the year 1858 the Kansas Mission Conference was held at Shawnee, Kans., which was long the home of Mr. Stateler. Bishop Early was the President, and Cyrus R. Rice Secretary. There were two districts—Lecompton, with William Bradford presiding elder, and Leavenworth District, with Thomas Wallace presiding elder—and seventeen charges reported, with five hundred and ninety white and one hundred and

thirty-eight Indian members and eleven local preachers. There had been an increase of forty-seven white members, and a decrease of forty Indian members. The number of pastoral charges was increased from seventeen to twenty-one, to which twenty-one preachers were appointed, besides the two presiding elders above mentioned. Mr. Stateler appears again as a superannuate.

In 1859 the Kansas Conference was held at Tecumseh, near Mr. Stateler's home. Bishop Paine was President and Nathan Scarritt Secretary. There were reported six hundred and ninety-two white members, one hundred and eighty-six probationers, twenty-four colored and one hundred and fifty-one Indian members, with thirteen local preachers. In the appointments there were twenty-five charges, besides the three districts, to which twenty-four men were sent, including the three presiding elders. There had been an increase in every item reported. Mr. Stateler was sent this year to Leavenworth City Mission.

The names of "Sante Fe" and "Pike's Peak" appear in the list of appointments, but both are marked "to be supplied." The former was a small but lively town, the capital of New Mexico Territory (which had been organized in 1850), located about six hundred miles west by south of Kansas City, Mo., and the latter was the name of a peak in the Rocky Mountains discovered by Colonel Pike in 1806, which name was now applied to all the region about Clear Creek and the present site of Denver, Colo., where gold had been discovered by a Mr. Russell, from Georgia, in 1858, and to which there was a great rush of people at this time. It was

about seven hundred and fifty miles west of Kansas City. These appointments in the minutes show that our preachers, true to their spirit, were looking to the planting of the Church in "the regions beyond." It will be remembered that at this time there were not only no railroads, but the country traversed by the wagon road leading from our frontier settlements to those distant points was a broad, bleak, barren, sandy region, marked on the maps as the "Great American Desert," inhabited only by wild beasts and by wilder men—Indians. But our preachers were determined to keep up with the tide as it extended westward.

Strong and growing societies and charges were reported at Council Grove, which was the frontier town on the road leading from Leavenworth and Kansas City to Mexico, and also on Big Blue, which included Maryville, the last town of any consequence on the old military road leading toward Fort Kearney and Denver. Here Millice labored and laid down his life; and Robbins, a vigorous and effective young man, built a church, and Foresman, King, Duncan, and others traversed the country from the Smoky Fork to the Nebraska line, preaching and holding revivals in every community where a dozen settlers could be assembled.

The Conference for 1860 was held at Wyandotte City, Bishop Kavanaugh President and Nathan Scarritt Secretary.

There were many things that greatly militated against our preachers in this field at this time. The large number of Northern and Eastern people who came were filled with prejudice against whatever

hailed from or was in any wise connected with the South. As a rule, they brought their own ministers, who were in sympathy with their ways of thinking and acting, which resulted in the setting up of altar against altar in many localities. The Civil War between the States had actually begun, and partisan strife was becoming more intense every day.

But our preachers were true men of God and determined to know nothing among men but Christ and him crucified. They addressed themselves earnestly and faithfully to their own work, and glorious revivals attended their labors, so that there was a marked increase in the membership this year. The reports show one thousand and thirty-nine white members, an increase of three hundred and forty-seven, and four hundred and eight probationers (this was while the six months' probation system was yet in force), an increase of two hundred and twenty-two. There were six colored members and probationers, one hundred and sixty-eight Indian members and probationers, and fifteen local preachers, making a total of one thousand six hundred and thirty-six members and probationers.

During the year they had raised on the field one thousand and forty-nine dollars for missions, one hundred and twenty-seven dollars and eighty-five cents for Sunday schools, and fifty-four dollars and ninety-seven cents for tracts. The list of appointments by the bishop included twenty-nine pastoral charges, besides the three regular presiding elders' districts.

The work in the Rocky Mountains was designated as "Pike's Peak Missions," including Denver City,



REV. H.H. HEDGEPETH.



REV. JOSEPH KING.



REV. J.W. COMPTON.



REV. E.G. MICHAEL.

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California Gulch, Canyon City, Colorado, and Tarry-All Missions. William Bradford was appointed Superintendent, and was also in charge of Denver City Mission. Thus the little Mission Conference sent its representatives not only to points embracing the entire settled portions of the Territory, from the Nebraska line on the north to the Indian Territory on the south, and from the Missouri River on the east to the extreme frontier settlements on Big and Little Blue and Republican Rivers on the west, but sent a man, and prepared to send others, to the summit of the Rocky Mountains on the west—wherever men could be found to preach to.

J. H. Pritchett, who had spent two years at Leavenworth City, returned to Missouri. Joseph King and P. W. Duncan were sent to Big Blue Mission, which embraced all the country from Circleville, extending to the Nebraska line on the north, to the Kansas River on the south, and "westward indefinitely."

L. B. Stateler and H. H. Hedgepeth were appointed to the Grasshopper Mission, which embraced portions of Leavenworth, Jefferson, and Jackson Counties, in Kansas. One of the appointments on this charge was Circleville, a small village on Elk Creek.

Of the labors of these two godly men there, Rev. Henry Stanley says: "The circuit included all the country from the Wyandotte Indian reserve north of the Kansas River up as far west as Circleville, some fifty miles in length. Rev. L. B. Stateler came on the circuit, I think, in 1861, and Rev. H. H. Hedgepeth was associated with him. They were well mated. Each one had rather a singular way about him. Hedge-

peth had a wonderful memory. He could read a story in a newspaper or a chapter in the Bible and repeat it from memory. Stateler also had his peculiarity. We had no churches and but few schoolhouses to preach in, and they generally preached in our cabins. The appointments were four weeks apart, so that it took each one of them eight weeks to make the round. We were always glad to see them come, and the entire neighborhood for miles around would turn out. Brother Stateler's custom in preaching was to stand behind a chair (we generally had those old-fashioned, straight-post, split-bottom chairs), and when he would make a point and wanted to impress it upon the minds of his hearers he would lift the chair a few inches and set it down suddenly and forcibly, seeming to make all the legs touch the floor at once. He was loved by all who knew him."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Some Observations Concerning the Division of the Church.

MR. STATELER says but little in his journal about the division of the Methodist Church into two separate bodies, yet he had pronounced views upon the subject, and a few observations from the standpoint occupied by himself and others who adhered to the Southern side in the great controversy will not be out of place here.

When America was discovered, human slavery in one form or another, without regard to "race, color, or previous condition," existed in well-nigh every part of the civilized world, and the colonization of the New World gave a fresh impetus to the traffic, particularly that of African slaves, who were sold to the settlers all along the Atlantic coast extending from Massachusetts southward indefinitely. They were brought in great numbers by Dutch, English, American (New England), and other vessels. In fact, the people of Massachusetts seem to have been so eager to obtain slave labor that they sought to enslave the Indians, many of whom were sent away and sold or traded for other slaves.

"But the feeling in the United States," says the American Encyclopedia, "was generally averse to slavery at the time their national life began, and in some of the Southern States that feeling was stronger than in most of the Northern ones. The ordinance of 1787

excluding it from the Northwest Territory was supported by Southern men, and some Southern States abolished the slave trade with Africa while Northern States continued to carry it on." Finding, after due trial, that slave labor was not profitable in the New England States on account of the rigidity of the climate, and the revenue from the traffic in slaves from Africa having been cut off, the movement in that direction was checked, most of the slaves sent to the South and sold, and soon a sentiment adverse to the institution began to develop there. Eminent men, such as Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Patrick Henry, and others, deprecated and opposed it at the South; but owing to the congenial nature of the climate, the fertility of the soil, and the increased demand for tropical products, making slave labor more profitable, especially after the invention of the cotton gin, this opposition availed little until the system came to be recognized in the Constitution, protected by the laws, and became thoroughly interwoven with the commercial and social life of that section.

As the South grew prosperous the North became clamorous in opposition, not being satisfied with gradual emancipation accompanied with some compensation to those who would sustain such loss in the transaction, as had been practiced in England and elsewhere, but demanding immediate abolition of the entire system.

This naturally provoked opposition and aroused animosity at the South. The people there, possibly quite as large a proportion of them as at the North, while deprecating the condition of things, felt that they

were not entirely responsible for it. Northern dealers, who had grown rich by the traffic while it continued and desisted from it only from sheer necessity when the hope of gain was gone, had brought many of the slaves there. The people now their owners had come by them innocently and honestly—by inheritance. It was their system of labor, and was so interwoven with all their institutions that it was virtually impossible to carry on business requiring labor, either indoors or out, without connection with it in some way. And a change, if desired, could not be made in a day, or even in a few years, without greater evil than that already existing.

Under these conditions Methodism was introduced and grew to be strong in both sections of the country; and notwithstanding the efforts of the bishops and other able men to prevent it, the agitation was brought into the Church, where it produced much discussion and great dissension. From the beginning, one of the general rules in the book of Discipline prohibited "the buying or selling of men and women with the intention of enslaving them," which was commonly interpreted as referring to the African slave traffic—buying men or women who hitherto had been free and reducing them to servitude. The preachers at the South sought to carry out the advice given to the Wesleyan missionaries in the West Indies by the eminent Richard Watson, who urged that their only business was to promote the moral and religious improvement of both master and slave and without in the least degree, in public or private, interfering with their civil relations. The same old gospel was preached to rich and poor,

to black and white alike, and as a matter of fact many thousands of all classes were gathered into the Church.

What was regarded as a compromise measure was finally adopted by the General Conference, declaring against the great evil of slavery, forbidding any slaveholder to occupy an official position in the Church where the laws of the State permitted emancipation and allowed the liberated slave to enjoy freedom. It also declared that "when any traveling preacher becomes the owner of slaves he shall forfeit his ministerial character in the Church unless he execute, if it be practicable, a legal emancipation of said slaves, conformably to the laws of the State in which he lives." The General Conference of 1836, held at Cincinnati, severely reprimanded two of its members for "lecturing upon and in favor of modern abolitionism," and "wholly disclaimed any right, wish, or intention to interfere in the civil and political relation between master and slave as it exists in the slaveholding States of this Union." This gave the Churches rest from the great agitation for a period, and was followed by an era of great prosperity; and if the spirit of this action had continued to prevail, the day of separation had been deferred indefinitely, while under the enlightening and elevating influence of its gospel of righteousness and good will the relations of men in the civil and political world might not have been materially different from what they are.

Thus things continued until the General Conference of 1844, held at New York, when it became known that Bishop James O. Andrew, of Georgia, had incidentally, through inheritance and by marriage (his

wife having inherited slaves from her former husband's estate), become connected with slavery. He stated his case before the Conference clearly and fully and in a manly and Christian spirit: how he exercised no authority over the slaves, and was prohibited by the laws of the State from setting them free, claiming that he had violated no law, and asking an investigation and trial according to the law of the Church. This was denied him, and after much discussion a resolution was passed by a majority virtually deposing him from office. In the opinion of the Southern delegates this action was in plain violation of the specific provision in the Discipline, taking the episcopal office from the organic law of the Church and making it subject to the caprice of a mere majority of the General Conference. If a bishop could be thus treated without due form of trial, no man could feel safe. Knowing the temper of the people they represented, and seeing that the effect of this action would be to drive Methodism from the South and thus destroy the work already accomplished among the whites as well as the slaves, the Southern delegates presented a "declaration," signed by fifty-one of their number, the result of which, after much deliberation and discussion, was the adoption by a well-nigh unanimous vote of the famous "Plan of Separation." In this it was sought by those present and voting to provide for what was now deemed the only course advisable or practicable, owing to the widely divergent views honestly and openly expressed—a friendly and peaceable separation of the great Methodist body into two distinct jurisdictions, one to be the Methodist Episcopal Church in the North

and the other to be the Methodist Episcopal Church in the South, the two to coöperate and labor in harmony and good will, side by side, each doing the work assigned it in the order of that Providence that seemed to direct the movement. If this plan had only been carried out in the spirit and design of those adopting it, there would have been, as the great and good Bishop Morris expressed it, little more "inconvenience or friction than that attending the dividing of an Annual Conference."

The first resolution of the "Plan" states in plain words that "should the Annual Conferences in the slaveholding States find it necessary to unite in a distinct ecclesiastical connection, the following rule shall be observed with regard to the northern boundary," etc., thus leaving the question as to the necessity for a separation, as clearly as words could express it, solely to the Southern Conferences.

In the exercise of this right the said Conferences, with unparalleled unanimity, decided such a course necessary, sending delegates to a general convention which was held at Louisville, Ky., in 1845, and then to their first General Conference at Petersburg, Va., in 1846, which was organized, as they considered, as nearly in accordance with the provisions of the said "Plan of Separation" as possible. Bishops Soule (of Maine) and Andrew (of Georgia) adhered to the South, and William Capers and Robert Paine, two excellent men, were elected new bishops. A commission was appointed, as provided, to represent the Church, South, in the division of the property and the Chartered Fund, and Dr. Lovick Pierce was appointed

to bear the fraternal greetings of the body to that of the other General Conference, which was to be held at Pittsburg, Pa., in 1848.

Inasmuch as the body organized under the new conditions was expected and designed to be, and was in fact, a continuation of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the South, without a dream or thought of the strife that was to follow, or of the occasion that would ever present itself to attach political significance to and arouse sectional prejudice by the use of one little word, the legal title of the new organization, as suggested by the very wording of the "Plan" itself, was "The Methodist Episcopal Church, South."

Thus the climax was reached. Under the circumstances it was the only thing that could be done. It gave relief to both sides. The Church in the North, as Dr. Hoss has so truly said, was freed from the odium of association with a slaveholding bishop, though leaving it to bear until the emancipation proclamation came the lesser burden of several thousand slaveholding members in its communion in the border Conferences. It relieved the Southern branch from the suspicion of being in alliance with New England agitators and emancipationists, the chief obstacle to its work in evangelizing the negroes, nearly two hundred and fifty thousand of whom were afterwards gathered into its communion—"the largest body of converted heathen in all the world."

It has often been asserted that in this discussion the Southern delegates "stood up as the proud and boastful champions of slavery," and there are thousands who think that the division came because the South

believed in it and the North did not. "But," says Dr. Hoss, "there was no defense of slavery *per se*. Even Dr. William A. Smith, in language of almost passionate earnestness, avowed himself an antislavery man, and the whole of the Georgia and South Carolina delegations rose up at once to express their agreement with him." There were thousands of others of the same opinion. But they honestly believed that the radical measures advocated and urged by their brethren at the North would not only be of no benefit to the slave but would rivet his chains more firmly, and by depriving him of the gospel would make his condition tenfold more deplorable. By the adjustment now made a new and inviting field was opened for missionary work, and an unprecedented era of prosperity was to dawn upon the Church in this direction.

In view of the trying ordeal through which our country was so soon to pass, affecting most vitally the relation of the white and black races and putting a strain upon our civilization that it had not been subjected to before, we cannot but see the hand of a gracious Providence in this movement, so shaping events as to protect against threatened dangers and to better provide for the future welfare of the millions suddenly released from slavery and (so unwisely) invested with the privileges of citizenship.*

*Rev. W. P. Thirkield, prominently connected with the educational and religious work among the colored people, in a recent article in the *Christian Advocate* (Nashville, Tenn.) gives utterance to these wholesome sentiments: "After living face to face with this problem for a score of years, I am deeply convinced that the Christian religion was the supreme

But, unfortunately for the future harmony of Methodism, things did not go so smoothly at the North as they might. Many who had favored the division, upon seeing the Southern Conferences take the action they did, now opposed it. Even Dr. Charles Elliot, who had moved the adoption of the report and advocated it upon the ground of expediency, now gave his influence against the movement, which he sought to characterize as "a great secession." The framers of the "Plan," desiring to "meet the emergency with Christian kindness and the strictest equity," but anticipating

influence that restrained, controlled, and guided into channels of order and peace the lives of these millions in the order of Providence set free. The Church became the center of their entire life—civil, educational, social, political, as well as religious. And Methodism, through its missionary zeal under slavery, by its educational and religious work following emancipation, as well as by its very organization, polity, and evangelical spirit, was above all other Churches providentially fitted for the task of saving to civilization millions of a race threatened with a relapse into barbarism. . . . Whence came these negro preachers and class leaders, who in this critical period at the close of the war effectively reached and held the multitudes of roving freedmen, and who through the troublous reconstruction days gave Christian restraint and direction to their lives, laying broad and deep the foundation for colored Methodism throughout the South—men who knew God; men with minds richly stored with God's Word; men who prayed with power and fervor, who preached the word with grace and saving power? . . . Let us estimate the effect on our civilization of the educative and redemptive influence of this missionary work on the millions of American negroes. Black and white worshiped in the same church together. They met in the communion at the same sacramental table. They listened to the same preaching. They breathed

a possible technical difficulty in distributing the property and funds, recommended to the Annual Conferences (in the third resolution) to authorize a change in the sixth restrictive rule in the Discipline, so that there might be no legal difficulty nor delay in the distribution in case the Southern Conferences should decide it necessary. An effort was made to defeat the measure in the various Conferences, hoping thereby to defeat the entire movement for separation, and the next session of the General Conference, in 1848, composed largely of new men, elected under reactionary influ-

forth their spirit in the same noble hymns of Wesley. Their minds were stored with Scripture. They wove psalm and prophecy into immortal melodies. Fortunate indeed for the race and for the civilization of America when there came upon it the strain of these millions fresh from slavery, without preparation for citizenship, that a quarter of a million had been trained, even though crudely, in Methodist discipline, doctrines, and moral ideals. The record of the negro race, under the circumstances, is one of the miracles of history. And of all the single contributions of Methodism to the civilization of America, the gathering of three millions of these black people into well-ordered Church life and Sunday school training within a little more than one generation after emancipation must take important rank among the largest and most far-reaching achievements of American Methodism." Rev. John B. McFerrin, of Nashville, Tenn., in a forceful speech before the Methodist Ecumenical Conference held in London in 1881, while referring to the work of Methodism among the colored people, remarked, speaking to the Englishmen present: "You sent them to us as cannibals from the jungles of Africa and sold them as slaves; now (pointing to the colored men who sat about him as delegates to the Conference) we bring them back to you as bishops and ministers in the Church of God."

ences and without the delegates from the South, proceeded to declare the "Plan of Separation" adopted four years previous unconstitutional and therefore "null and void," refused to recognize the fraternal delegate from the Church, South, refused its consent to a division of the property, or to recognize the sister Church in any way whatever.

Driven by necessity, the Southern commissioners resorted to the civil courts, and, after free and full discussion and consideration, a decision was given by the Supreme Court of the United States recognizing the correctness and justice of every claim of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, as a legitimate part of the original body, as much so as that of the Methodist Episcopal Church (North), and compelling a division of the Church property and the Chartered Fund, as was honestly sought to be provided for by the General Conference of 1844 without all this trouble.

While it could hardly be expected that the preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, would be entirely blameless in all this trying ordeal, yet they sought to keep within their legitimate field of labor and to do their duty in the fear of God. To-day this Church occupies no territory that rightfully belonged to that of the Church, North, at the time of the separation according to the "Plan" adopted, except two Conferences—the Illinois and the Baltimore—that came bodily and unsolicited into its fold, and they have never spent a dollar of missionary money in those fields. At the time of the separation the vast region west of the Missouri River was a wilderness, and into these rapidly growing settlements the Methodist Episcopal

Church, South, has sent her representatives, feeling that this was new ground, and that she was called upon to do her share in holding this great domain for Christ and his kingdom; and here she has seven Conferences, including several thousand members, and here the two Churches sometimes come in contact and now and then, especially in small communities, there is some friction, which of course is always unfortunate.

If the brethren of the North had shown some regard for the aforesaid "Plan," or had submitted with grace to the decision of the Supreme Court—the highest tribunal in the land—how much friction and turmoil had been avoided! But seemingly they were so bent on carrying out their measures that they could brook no opposition, denounced it as unjust and sought to discredit the judges, held to the Church property wherever possible until compelled by law to give it up, and sent their ministers into the territory occupied by their Southern brethren wherever and whenever possible to gain a footing, thus initiating the work of setting up altar against altar. And in later years, after the great strife had culminated in civil war, as the victorious Union armies advanced into the South, as if expecting that the fortunes and property of Southern Methodism would share the fate of the Southern Confederacy, Bishop Ames, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, North, armed with an order from Secretary Stanton, proceeded to take forcible possession of some of the best Methodist churches in the South, against the earnest protest of the pastors and congregations occupying them, until compelled to desist by an order

from President Lincoln, and the property was retained until it was restored by an order from President Johnson.

These incidents (and others might be named) are given here in no spirit of bitterness, but as facts of history to show to the unbiased reader some of the obstacles that are in the way of organic union, and those that for a long time prevented even formal fraternity.

When the Methodist Episcopal Church (North) declined to receive Dr. Pierce as the fraternal messenger of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, he informed that body that the offer would not be renewed by the Church, South, but it would hold itself ready to receive any proposition for friendly relations coming from the Methodist Episcopal Church "upon the basis of the 'Plan of Separation,'" and there was no official fraternal communication established between the General Conferences of the two Churches till 1872. In that year a delegation was appointed by the General Conference of the Northern Church to bear its fraternal greetings to the Church in the South, *though it refused to provide for a commission to adjust existing difficulties in the way of formal fraternity.* The delegates (Revs. Albert S. Hunt and C. H. Fowler and Gen. Clinton B. Fisk) were cordially received by the General Conference at Louisville, Ky., in 1874, which authorized the appointment of three delegates to convey their Christian salutations to the next ensuing General Conference of the Church, North, also providing for a commission, consisting of three ministers and two laymen, to meet a similar commission from

that Church to adjust all existing difficulties between them.

Thus while the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, desired peace and fraternity, it wanted only such as was consistent with principles of equity and right, and took the initiatory steps to secure such. In 1876 the General Conference of the sister Church appointed a similar number, and the joint commission met at Cape May the 17th of August, 1876, and after a week of patient and prayerful consideration unanimously agreed upon terms which were accepted by the ensuing General Conferences of both Churches, giving general principles for adjustment of claims to Church property and regulating the occupancy of places as well as property. They declared without a dissenting voice that "each of said Churches is a legitimate branch of Episcopal Methodism in the United States, having a common origin in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and that since the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, by the voluntary exercise of the right of the Southern Annual Conferences it has been an evangelical Church, reared on scriptural grounds, and her ministers and members, with those of the Methodist Episcopal Church, have constituted one Methodist family."

Thus grace and good sense triumphed after so many long and fateful years. Although the paper is carefully worded, yet it contains substantially all that the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, had contended for, and that, too, without any humiliating confession upon the other side. Since that time the two Churches have exchanged mutual fraternal greetings through

delegates sent to their General Conferences at each quadrennial session; and while organic union is not considered practicable at present, yet it is earnestly desired that a plan of federation be arranged whereby through the division of the various sections of the Church into as many General Conferences, each doing its work in its own particular way, and all united under one delegated body of advisory powers, or by some other course that will prove effective, the last remnant of occasion for friction may be removed and the great Methodist body of the United States will move forward with a force and energy hitherto unknown to the conquest of the world for our Lord and for his Christ.

CHAPTER XIX.

Last Session of the Kansas Mission Conference—Increasing Excitement—Threats of Violence—Appointed to Denver—Preparation for the Journey—The Departure—Described by an Eyewitness—Scene Worthy of Remembrance—Mysterious Providence—Thrust into the Wilderness.

IN the fall of 1861 the Kansas Mission Conference was to have been held at Atchison, one of the chief towns of the State, located in the northeastern part, on the Missouri River. But on account of the increasing excitement and the prejudice that had been aroused against the preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and to avoid occasion for any disturbance, the session was held at a country place on Grasshopper Creek a few miles west of the city. There was no bishop present, but a president was elected, the regular business gone through with in an orderly, Christian manner, and the preachers went forth to their various fields of labor.

The proceedings of this session were not published in the General Minutes; and as the writer has never seen a copy of them, he does not know the appointments of all the preachers. But L. B. Stateler and H. H. Hedgepeth were returned to the same charge. This was the last time that the members of the Kansas Mission Conference were ever permitted to meet in session. Although they had taken their lives in their hands, many of them, and had launched forth

into the wilderness where they had spent years of ceaseless toil for the good of the inhabitants of this fair land, now, just as they were beginning to reap in a larger measure the fruit of their self-denying labor, for no fault of their own, except that they were connected with a religious denomination whose sole object was to save people from their sins, but which happened to be in disfavor with some, especially those in authority, they were looked upon with suspicion and compelled to scatter as sheep having no shepherd.

The excitement caused by the secession of the Southern States and the conflict that followed grew apace. There was not a man in the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in Kansas that was guilty of a disloyal act or who ever said or did anything inconsistent with his duties as a true citizen or a faithful minister of Jesus Christ, yet because the word "South" happened to be on the name of their Church, or for some other indefinable cause, they were looked upon with suspicion, harassed by squads of armed men who would hoist flags over them while preaching, require them to frame their prayers after a particular fashion, and otherwise disturbed their assemblies. In some cases they suffered personal violence for no apparent cause but that of preaching the pure gospel and for keeping clear of political issues.

In the spring of 1862, while Mr. Stateler was laboring on his charge, threats were made by desperate characters to the effect that he and others would be hanged. His home was at Tecumseh, a small place just south of the Kansas River and a few miles east of Topeka, where he had a good stone house, comfort-

ably furnished, located on a tract of three hundred and twenty acres of good land, which by rigid economy he and his wife had been able to secure. Knowing so well the source of the threats against him, he felt that his life was in danger, and realized that it was impossible to labor successfully under such conditions. He communicated with Bishop Kavanaugh, who lived in Kentucky, requesting that he be changed to a field in Colorado. The Bishop authorized him to go at once and take charge of the Church in Denver City, which was then vacant. There were no funds appropriated—none to appropriate—to pay his expenses thither, and he had to get there the best way he could.

The first thing was to provide for the comfort of his wife and little girl Eliza—an adopted daughter—during his long absence. He then provided wagons and, like Jesse Walker when he went to St. Louis, loaded them with corn meal, together with soap and other such articles as he could procure, for which he supposed there would be a ready market in the new gold mines to which he was going. Men were hired to accompany him; and about the first of June, 1862, they started upon the long, dreary journey, the hired men driving the teams and Mr. Stateler riding on horseback looking after a few cows and other loose stock that were taken along.

Rev. Joab Spencer, a faithful man of God who spent years of toil in that frontier field, and who is still an interested observer of events transpiring in this vast domain, and who was an eyewitness, thus describes the scene of Mr. Stateler's departure. He says:

"In May, 1862, I had occasion to go from Council

Grove, Kans., where I had just located, to Kansas City, and took advantage of the trip to visit Rev. L. B. Stateler and his excellent family.

"At that time he was living on his fine farm located about six miles east of Topeka and near the Kansas River. Only a short time before he had built himself a nice, and for that time a fine, large house. On my arrival I found him just getting ready to leave on that trip for the West which has since become famous.

"Sister Stateler, in explaining the matter to me, said the times were becoming so unsettled that she thought it unsafe for him to remain there longer. In fact, if I remember correctly, they had been bothered and annoyed even then by the powers that were. So a wagon load of corn meal and soap was prepared from the product of their farm, and on the day following my arrival the wagons were loaded, one carrying chiefly the supplies for Brother Stateler and his hands. They were drawn by three yoke of oxen each.

"It was to me an impressive sight. Brother Stateler had reached that point in life which we younger men began to regard as old. Yet here he was, going not knowing whither, or what was to be the result; but, with his authority from Bishop Kavanaugh in his pocket and an ox whip in his hand, he went forth full of faith. It was his idea to go, sell his stuff as he could, and finally decide on the future. This idea, it seems, he carried out. Colorado was the objective point when he left. Sister Stateler had her share in the plan, which required her to remain at home and care for the stuff. Of her future course, with the destruction of her home, etc., you are advised.

"The picture of his starting that bright spring morning, turning his face to the West and away from his long field of labor, is very vivid yet in my mind and much more beautiful and interesting than any pen-sketch I can make. I have one small material interest in that trip—a buffalo robe which I let him have, as he said he would need it."

In his conversation with the writer, Mr. Stateler never referred to but one wagon, though Brother Spencer speaks of more. He also says in a private note that he thinks several cows were yoked together in the teams, that some of the oxen were not well broken, and he remembers that Mr. Stateler was very busy working and giving directions in loading and making the start.

Mysterious indeed are the workings of Providence. Years previous Mr. Stateler, "with prayers and tears," and when in the strength of his young manhood, had offered himself to the Board of Missions at New York for the Flathead Mission. Later he had renewed the offer, volunteering financial aid to others who might be sent with him to the far-off Oregon field. But all of these offers had been declined. The time had not come. But now, when he is blessed with a comfortable home and looked upon by his younger brethren as ready to retire from the more active work and enjoy the fruit of his toil, we see him literally thrust out from his delightful home, leaving loved ones behind, and required to make the journey, much of it by the same road followed by Marcus Whitman and others, traveling almost alone and at his own expense through a wilderness more barren and unpromising than any

that he had before encountered. Like Abraham of old, he went out not knowing where he went, and we seriously doubt if he ever dreamed of the possible issues of that long and lonely journey of seven hundred miles across the plains.

CHAPTER XX.

Arrival at Denver—Great Disappointment—Church Had Been Sold—Prepares to Return Home—Startling News from His Wife—Their Home Destroyed by Fire—Stateler Warned Not to Return—Family Starts to Join Him—Meeting at Kearney—Thrilling Experience—A Vast Snowy Wilderness—Wearing the Winter Out—Intense Sufferings.

DENVER was reached early in August, the load disposed of, the oxen and other stock also sold, and a portion of the proceeds sent back for the family to live on.

Colorado had been organized into a separate territory in 1861, with Denver as the seat of government. The town was beautifully located on the bank of North Platte River, about fifteen miles from the base of the mountains. The gold mines were yielding something over two million dollars annually. The population of the territory numbered about thirty-five thousand, and Denver was the center of life in this seething mass of humanity.

In the fall of 1860, a society of twenty-six members had been organized here and was reported to the Conference at Wyandotte, at which time Rev. W. M. Bradford had been appointed preacher in charge of the work, and was reappointed the following year. Under his ministry a neat brick church had been erected in the new Territory. Stateler had been sent to take charge of the Church, and upon making in-

quiry about preaching, the following Sunday after his arrival, imagine his great astonishment when he was told that the Protestant Episcopalians were holding the church, and that the following Sunday had been set apart as the day for its dedication, or consecration, according to the forms of that denomination, Bishop Talbot officiating.

“Thus,” he says, “I had the privilege, if such it can be called, of sitting in our own house, which had been erected by the self-sacrificing and heroic efforts of our own people, and witnessing its dedication and passage into the hands of other people.”

It appears that, on account of the increasing excitement occasioned by the Civil War, the preacher in charge thought it best to return to the States; and, having no money, he borrowed a small amount and gave the church into the hands of Col. Chivington, who was a preacher of the Methodist Episcopal Church and also commander of the military forces at that place, and who at a later period made himself famous by leading his command against a force of hostile Indians in a battle which resulted in the complete annihilation of every Indian, old and young, in the camp attacked. In the meantime the trustees, for some reason, becoming uneasy as to the safety of the property, and for a very insignificant sum, sold it to the Episcopalians. Hence Mr. Stateler had no house in Denver to preach in, though he put in the time by preaching at such times and places in the vicinity as opportunity offered.

As the entire country was under martial law and the way for immediate usefulness was apparently

closed, the same conditions existing, in a large measure, as in the older settlements, Mr. Stateler disposed of all his effects and was preparing to return home, when, to his horror, he received a letter from his wife stating that their home had been set on fire by an incendiary and all that they had was in ashes, she and the little girl Eliza barely escaping with their lives. It appears that she had suspected an attempt of this kind and sat up until a late hour in the night, during which time there was not a spark of fire in the house, and just before day, overcome with fatigue from long watching, without undressing, she lay down upon the foot of the bed and dropped into a sound slumber, during which time the torch was applied and the flames spread so rapidly that she and the child doubtless would have perished had not a neighbor, aroused by the bright light shining in at his window, hastily run and by a heroic effort rescued them from destruction. The letter told him also of the growing excitement in the country, and warned him not to return.

With Stateler in a new and strange country, without a church to preach in or a house to live in, with no means of support, and his family seven hundred miles away with their home in ruins, the life of the husband threatened should he dare return, and winter approaching, the picture is anything but promising.

But Mrs. Stateler was not the woman to pine over misfortunes or to be overcome by them. On a former occasion, when she was opposed by her brother, who ordered her intended husband from the room, in her indignation she arose and said: "Go, Mr. Stateler, and I will follow you." She still possessed the same spirit

of womanly courage and independence and readiness to brook opposition, only it had become tenfold stronger from her long experience in frontier life.

Although late in the season, at a time when strong men shrank from the thought of endeavoring to cross the bleak plains, nothing daunted, she began preparing for the journey. After months of effort, a man was hired to drive the ox team and another to drive the loose stock, a few cows and calves, that were to be taken along, and they started upon the dreary journey late in the season, Mrs. Stateler driving her own team, a favorite span of brown mares which they took through to Montana and kept for years afterwards.

Mr. Stateler was to meet them at Fort Kearney, a prominent military station near the south bank of the Platte River on the old overland road, about two hundred and fifty or three hundred miles from Fort Leavenworth, which he did.

They were so late in starting that stern winter had set in ere they reached this place. It makes one shudder even now to remember hearing Mrs. Stateler and Eliza (who is now the wife of Mr. A. D. Weaver, a substantial citizen of Gallatin County, Mont.) talk of how they shivered with cold as they faced the northwest wind that blew so fiercely on the dark night that they reached that place. The scene at the meeting must have been an affecting one. But there was no time to lose. Says Mr. Stateler:

"When she arrived at Fort Kearney, immediately we started on our dreary journey, facing the severe storms of a rigid northwestern winter over the bleak and snow-covered plains for four or five hundred miles.

“We were poorly prepared, not having a sufficient tent to protect us from the cold at night, nor a good stove on which to cook our food. At first we had fuel, along the Platte River; but soon it gave out, leaving but a vast open waste before us, and nothing in the shape of timber but a fringe of willow brush along the bank. When we came to the last timber, we put all the wood we could haul into the wagons and suspended it with ropes under the axles that it might last as long as possible, not knowing what we would do when it was gone. Our sufferings during the day were often intense, for we were very poorly clad. At night we were but little better off under our miserable tent and by the broken stove which my wife had brought along—the best she could get. The cold was severe. We had to use iron pins which were driven in the hard, frozen ground to hold our tent, under which we laid us down on the ground and got what sleep we could. The snow was from six inches to a foot deep, which we would scrape away the best we could to get a place where we could make our beds down.

“Our stock—oxen, cows, and horses—we would turn loose and let them get what they could, grazing where they could get to the grass or browsing upon the willow brush at night, and then hitch them up in the morning and go on again.

“Thus we traveled, suffering with hunger and cold, until we wore the severest part of the winter out, never thinking of going into a house. There was no travel upon the road except by the stagecoach, which carried the mail, and which would pass us every day. The cold was so intense that the noise made by the



WEARING THE WINTER OUT.
(See page 170.)

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wheels grinding in the snow and ice could be heard afar and added to the dreariness of the surroundings. It was one vast, snowy wilderness as far as the eye could reach in every direction. There was not a tree, nor even a hillock, to break the force of the piercing winds that swept the wild, wintry waste. We would travel only a few miles—eight or ten—each day. When we arrived in Denver we had not *one dollar*, not even a *cent*, of money to our name.”

CHAPTER XXI.

Hard Times—Keeping Hotel—"China" Clarke—A Friend Indeed—Travels a Circuit—Martial Law—Starts Northward—A Large Train—Mode of Travel—Build Their Own Bridges—Preaching Every Sunday—Wagon Tips Over—Narrow Escape—Broken Axle—Indian Scare—A Glad Surprise—Old Friends Meet—Big Feast—Chief Washakie—Jim Bridger.

THE advent of Mr. Stateler into this lively Western mining town the second time was quite different from the first. Then it was summer, or early fall; now it was in the midst of winter, or early spring, the most disagreeable season of the year in the Rocky Mountains, and the most trying and depressing to poor people. Then he had a load of goods for market, which would bring him what money he needed; now his supplies were exhausted, and he had nothing for sale that would bring money. Then he was alone and had claims upon the people whom he had been sent to serve; now he had a family with him, was without a pastoral charge, without house or home or people upon whom he had any claims—except those of humanity—to whom he could look for needed assistance. They were dependent upon their own resources and upon God, who always opens a way for those who serve him.

"In order to make a living," says Mr. Stateler, "we rented a house, promising to pay twenty dollars a month, and put in what little we had. We spread our table with three plates and three knives and forks—

those we had on the road—our object being to keep a boarding house.” But there were too many people in Denver who crossed the plains for similar reasons for them to remain long in such circumstances, and so he continues: “We found a friend who had come from Missouri. They called him ‘China’ Clarke. He learned whence I came and something of the distress we were in, and at once, without any security, loaned me fifty dollars, thus illustrating the truth of the adage, ‘A friend in need is a friend indeed.’ He is now better known as A. G. Clarke, of Helena, Mont. By that timely friendship in furnishing me with money, I was able to pay the man who had come with me and have something left with which to fix up for housekeeping. Our boarders increased in number, so that we were enabled to pay our rents, increase our facilities, and ere long we had quite a house full of people stopping with us. By diligent effort we not only supported ourselves, but also made something besides.”

Mr. Stateler never forgot a friend, and he loved to speak of this incident as long as he lived. Mr. Clarke—“Uncle China,” we all called him—seems to have enjoyed it about as much as Mr. Stateler. He was a prosperous merchant, and full of sympathy and always ready to lend a helping hand to any worthy individual, and I trow that his influence had something to do with the increase of boarders at the “Missouri House,” as it was called. From that time there sprang up an attachment between these two men—one a worthy minister of Jesus Christ, the other a successful business man of pure type—that grew stronger with increasing years.

Mr. Clarke was one of the early settlers of Montana,

and resided in Helena, where he became quite wealthy and erected an elegant residence which, during his lifetime, was always a home for the itinerant preacher. He and his noble wife—"Aunt Sally," as she was commonly called—were active workers for and liberal supporters of the cause of Christ in Helena for many years. They have since died in the faith, and have been admitted to the "everlasting habitations" above. The memory of their noble lives is as precious ointment poured forth.

While here Mr. Stateler arranged a circuit with several preaching places, one of which was thirty miles down the Platte River from Denver City. The people were very kind, and attended upon his ministry. At one point they raised forty dollars for him, which was the extent of his salary for that year's work.

By this time the War between the States was in full blast, and the war feeling was prevalent everywhere. It was impracticable, if not impossible, to hold Annual Conferences. As a rule, our preachers along the border and in the West could not continue their labors with peace or safety, and most of them had to resort to other vocations for a living.

Martial law was the rule in Denver, and it was common for those who arrived there from Missouri, or the border States in particular, to be relieved of whatever weapons they had, although it was known that they were necessary, for protection from Indians or wild beasts, to those crossing the great plains or living out on the frontier away from the city. Besides, not a few were thrown into prison without any special charges having been made against them.



STATELER PREACHING IN CAMP.

(See page 176.)

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In the meantime gold had been discovered in the far Northwest, first at Gold Creek, in Deer Lodge Valley, in 1860, later at Bannack City, on Grasshopper Creek, in 1862, and still later at Alder Gulch, where Virginia City is located, in 1863. Rumors of the immense richness of these mines rapidly spread, and people flocked thither from all parts of the country.

In the spring of 1864 a large company was preparing to start thither from Denver; and Mr. Stater, finding there was but little opportunity to accomplish any permanent good where he was, and preferring to get from under military rule, where they could live in peace, determined to go with them, and so gathered up what little substance they had and started northward about the first of May, 1864.

The company, or "train," numbered about three hundred persons, with sixty-two wagons. They were regularly organized under the guidance of Major Bridger, the famous mountaineer, and traveled in military order. Mounted men went before and followed behind. In the morning the horses were harnessed and the oxen yoked and hitched up, and they would make one move, or drive, each day, traveling until about three or four o'clock in the afternoon. Upon arriving in camp, the wagons were driven close together, the front wheel of one wagon close to the hind wheel of the other, in a circular, or diamond, shape, with the wagon tongues and the teams inside, thus making a strong corral sufficient to hold all the stock, and constituting a strong bulwark for defense should they be attacked by Indians.

When they camped the horses were unharnessed, the

cattle unyoked, and sent out under a strong guard to graze. About sundown all the stock—horses and cattle—were driven inside the corral, the gate, or opening, closed by a cordon of ox yokes and chains or by a wagon being drawn into the gap, where they were kept until morning. When it was dark, guards were posted all around the camp to prevent surprise by an enemy. At daylight the animals were sent out again and grazed until about seven o'clock. By this time breakfast would be over, tents struck, and baggage packed away; the stock would be driven in, hooked up, and the march resumed for another day.

During the afternoon, when the day's journey was ended, the camp presented a scene of activity. The men who were not on guard were busy preparing wood, bringing water, mending harness, or greasing the wagons; the women (and some of the men, too) were baking bread, cooking, and doing their laundry work; while the children were engaged in their youthful sports—all seeming to forget, for the time at least, that they were in the heart of a vast wilderness and surrounded by numerous savage foes. There were quite a number of families along.

"It was soon noised abroad," says Mr. Stateler, "that a preacher was among the emigrants, and, without ever speaking a word to me, they decided to lay over and not travel on Sunday. From that time on we had regular preaching. There were quite a number of religious people along. The emigrants were civil, respectful, and quiet. We usually camped where there were trees, and the services were held under the shade of those friendly pines."

There is something inspiring in such a scene. A company of honest, earnest, liberty-loving, enterprising, well-disposed American citizens, journeying through the trackless wilderness seeking a better country, stopping over each Sabbath day and making the woods and mountains echo with their songs of worship and praise to God as they thus halted by the wayside. Thus the route was dotted from one end to the other with altars upon which holy incense was poured forth to God from earnest hearts. Who dare say that these acts of worship did not contribute something to the protection and prosperity of that company of people? In the first place, those who are careful and diligent in things spiritual are apt to be so in temporal affairs. Then, God honors those who honor him. And it is possible that the knowledge of such services by the Indians, who have a superstitious regard for the "Great Spirit," might inspire them with awe and fear, and prevent their attacking such a company.

We begin to observe the intimations of the Providence that was leading Mr. Stateler. We have seen how, when he responded to the call to go with the Lees, and later with Whitman to Oregon, his plans were frustrated; after he was thrust out from Kansas and his home destroyed, the Church to which he was sent, by a strange procedure, had passed into other hands, and the way was closed against him in Colorado. The Lord had use for him in a new country that he was just preparing, and to which he was now leading him. See how readily and naturally the way opens. He was not even consulted about preaching. His personal presence made such an impression upon the lead-

ers of the train that they took it for granted that he would respond to their invitation, and he did. Thus we see a kind of militant Church organized and journeying as the people journeyed, and to be transplanted in a new country, in the "regions beyond."

They traveled northward from Denver, and passed near where the city of Cheyenne now stands, although there was not an inhabitant—a white one—in all that region then. They proceeded to Fort Laramie, where they took the old Oregon and California road through the Black Hills till they came to the North Platte. They left the road at the Red Buttes and continued northward, with the Wind River range on the west and the Big Horn Mountains on the east of them. There is a vast opening between those ranges extending for hundreds of miles, through which they traveled, making their own road, until they reached Montana. It will be remembered, too, that the country was not known by this name when they left Denver, for the act of Congress creating the Territory of Montana was not passed until in May, 1864, while they were on the way.

They found the Big Horn and Yellowstone Rivers too deep for fording, and it was impossible to bridge them. With axes the trees were felled, lumber sawed with whipsaws, and ferryboats were soon constructed, by means of which they crossed their wagons and substance over these mountain streams, causing the cattle and horses to swim.

Game was not as abundant as they expected to find it, but provisions were plentiful. The few cows that the Statelers had driven along—some of them all the



JIM BRIDGER,
The Famous Scout and Guide Who Conducted Mr. Stateler's
Train to Montana. (By courtesy of the Historical
Library of Montana.)

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way from Kansas, and sometimes yoked in the team and worked as oxen—gave plenty of milk, as grass along the new route was abundant and very nutritious, and water was found in abundance. The milk was placed in a churn or tight vessel and churned partly by the jolting of the wagon as it moved along. Thus they were supplied with milk and butter, not only for their own use, but they had enough to share with their fellow-travelers in exchange for other much-needed articles, which helped to provide for their necessities along the journey.

“To my own wagons and teams,” says Mr. Stateler, “there happened a serious accident. One of our horses having been disabled, we had hitched the tongue of the horse wagon to the hinder part of the one drawn by the oxen. While passing a very steep place just where the road made a turn, the oxen turned too short, which threw the hindmost wagon, in which my wife and I were riding, off the grade, pitching me far down the precipice. The wagon turned over twice; my wife was inside, and I thought for the time that she was killed, when she called out: ‘I am not hurt; save the team.’ It was a miracle that she escaped, as there were a stove and several heavy boxes whirling about her as she went down. The shock was so great that it threw the horses down, whirled them over on their backs, and broke one axle of the front wagon, jerking the wheel right off. There was a frightful precipice right below, over which if we had gone all would have been dashed in pieces. We escaped with slight injury. Surely an Unseen Hand upheld and protected us.

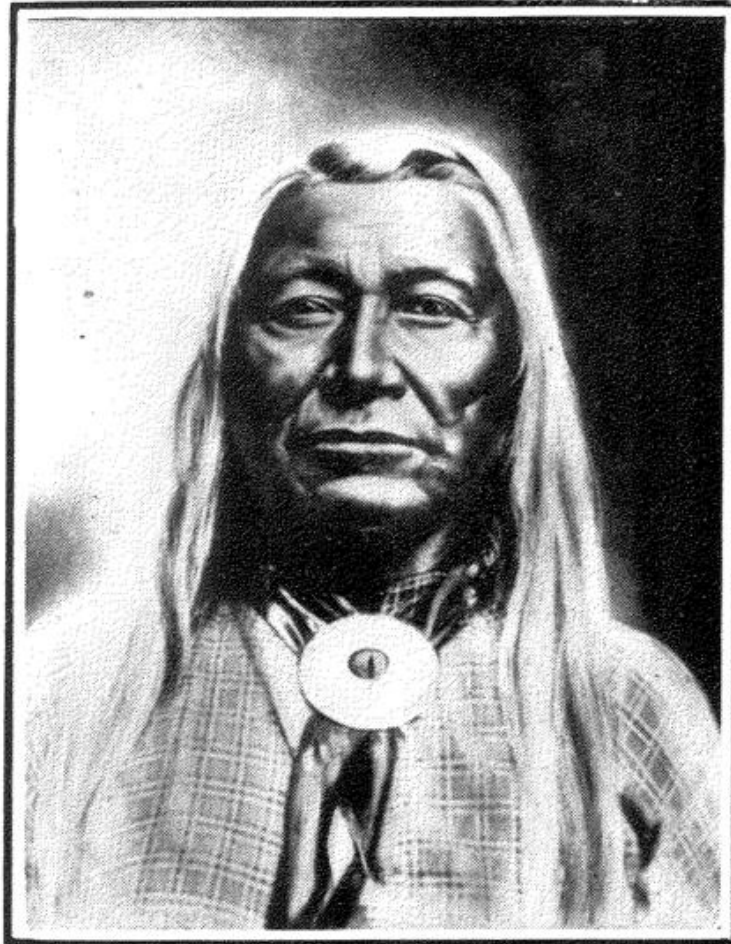
“It was but a little way into camp. Willing hands

were soon at work gathering up the goods and righting and fixing up the wagon so that we could make camp. The axle was spliced and so mended that we were ready to move at the usual time next morning. Several kind friends divided up our loading between them until we could reach the next camp, where the broken axle was so strengthened as to go through to the journey's end. There appeared to be a gracious Providence that watched over us, so that we went in peace and safety. Others who followed behind us had both sickness and death.

"At one of our camps, before reaching the Big Horn River, we had quite a scare. We had stopped in a kind of basin (a fine place for a camp) in the bend of a good-sized stream, with a bluff rising up on two sides, making it very dangerous for us if attacked by Indians.

"Next morning, to our astonishment, we found that we were within a mile of a large band of Indians who were camped on the creek below us. They had come in during the night. We thought they were hostile Sioux, expected an attack, and placed our men in the best positions possible on the bluffs to meet them should they come.

"Major Bridger, our captain, went with a small company of unarmed men in the direction of the Indian camp, hoping to obtain an interview with them. The chief, seeing them approach unarmed, came with a company of his braves in the same manner to meet them. Presently the Indians changed their manner, began to shout 'Bridger! Bridger!' at the top of their voices, and came galloping up to where the white men



WASHAKIE,
The Shoshone Indian Chief Who Met Mr. Stateler's Com-
pany on the Journey to Montana.

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were. They were Shoshone, or Snake, Indians from about old Fort Bridger, and recognized our captain as their old friend. They had come away across the mountains on a buffalo hunt. The chief was a particular friend of Bridger. When we found out who they were and what it all meant, there was great rejoicing. We made them a feast, gave them some presents, and Major Bridger gave the chief a paper showing that they were friends of the white people. The chief's name was Wash-a-kie. This was the only Indian scare we had on the journey."

Wash-a-kie became noted throughout the West as the peace chief of the Shoshone Indians and the steadfast friend of the white men.

Mr. Bridger was born in Richmond, Va., in 1804, and his parents moved to St. Louis and died when he was quite young. Having to look out for himself, he drifted into the mountains with a party of trappers under General Ashley; and being enamored of this kind of life and destitute of the first rudiments of an education, he wandered from place to place and lived among the Indians, with whom he became a favorite, learning their language and becoming familiar with their habits.

In later years he became useful as an interpreter and guide, and thus rendered valuable service in opening up this vast region to civilization. In 1870 he retired to his farm, near Kansas City, Mo., where he died July 17, 1881.

CHAPTER XXII.

A Famous Passway—The Home of the Sioux and Absaurokees—Scene of Many Tragedies—Wonderful Preservation—Arrival at Yellowstone—One Thousand People in the Train—Bozeman Pass—Gallatin Valley—Norwegian Gulch Gold-Mining—Preaching under an Arbor—Camping among Rattlesnakes—Trip to Virginia City—Extreme Isolation—High Prices—Removal to Jefferson Valley—Living on “Meat Straight”—A Remarkable Incident—Kills a Deer—Plenty of Meat.

THE route through which Mr. Stateler passed from the North Platte to the Yellowstone, though new as far as it had been traveled by wagons, was not new to Indians and adventurous whites. It had been the home of the Cheyennes, Shoshones, Sioux, and Absaurokees from time immemorial. It was traversed in about 1744 by M. de la Verendrye, an adventurous Frenchman, who discovered the “Shining Mountains” (which were doubtless the Rocky Mountains), in 1810 by John Colter, a member of Lewis and Clark’s expedition, by Captain Bonneville in 1832-36, by Kit Carson, Jim Bridger, Kruse, Anderson, and others in 1850, by James Stuart and company in 1863, by Sir George Gore in 1854-56, and by other trappers and members of the various fur companies who traded with the aborigines; and in this region have been some of the most bitter contests and tragic events in the history of Indian warfare.

It was along this route that James Stuart and his
(182)



CUSTER'S LAST BATTLE.
(See page 183.)

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party were harassed for days and days by bloodthirsty savages in 1863, during which several of the party were wounded, in the trip from the Yellowstone to the emigrant road on the North Platte. Here also the noble Southerner, Bozeman, met his fate, April 20, 1867.

It was not far from here that the famous Phil Kearney massacre occurred in 1866, in which more than a hundred brave soldiers were surprised and shot down by the murderous savages, which resulted in a treaty in which the government closed this route, leaving the entire country—a good-sized empire—under the undisturbed control of the savage red men for a series of years. Possibly this unwise course paved the way for the Custer massacre, in the same region, in 1876, in which a brave general and an entire command of two hundred and fifty-one officers and men were slain by Sitting Bull and his Sioux warriors, not one escaping to tell the tale.

This battle occurred on the Little Big Horn River, along which the Burlington Railroad has been built, and the large granite monument erected by the government near where the lamented Custer fell can be seen from the car windows looking to the right just a few miles before reaching the Crow Agency as the train goes west. It was one of the most noted conflicts in the history of either civilized (if there can be such a thing) or barbarous warfare.

It was while traveling the same route, somewhere along the banks of the Yellowstone and not far from the same time, that a minister, whose name the writer cannot now recall, was killed by Indians. He and his

boy had left the train, traveled on ahead, and stopped to fish, when they were surprised, slain, and scalped.

But, by a merciful providence, our missionary and all of his party, who were on an entirely different mission from any of the expeditions that had preceded them, passed through unharmed, and crossed the Yellowstone River on the 4th of July, 1864. By this time several other trains had overtaken them, and the company now numbered about one thousand persons, all pressing forward to the new El Dorado.

They left the Yellowstone at a point near where Livingston now stands, crossed the mountains through a gap that took and has ever since retained the name of Bridger Pass, and camped in the valley near where the beautiful city of Bozeman, the pride of Eastern Montana, and of Gallatin Valley in particular, now stands, though there was scarcely a cabin there, and it was all a wilderness then.

They journeyed on, crossing and camping at Madison River July 8. From here Mr. Stateler went to Virginia City, where he arrived about the 10th; but as there was no suitable house and everything was in such confusion, he did not preach, but returned to the camp and proceeded to Norwegian Gulch, where they pitched their tent about the 20th of July. This was about thirty-five miles northeast of Virginia City. There were two or three hundred miners scattered along the creek taking out gold. The mines were such as are called placer diggings. The gold is found in small particles and mixed in with the dirt or gravel and bowlders, and is separated therefrom by means of water, which is taken from the natural channel at a

A MONTANA GOLD MINE.



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point higher up the stream and brought through a ditch or flume and caused to flow in a strong current against the bank, which is thus cut down and all but the larger bowlders (which are picked out by hand) forced through a flume, the bottom of which is usually lined with stone or wooden blocks to prevent its wearing out. In some places, where the gold is found on the bench or hillside and there are large banks of dirt or gravel to remove, the water is brought through iron pipes and hose and precipitated, through a nozzle by means of hydraulic pressure, with great force against the embankment, which speedily crumbles and is washed away in the seething flood below, leaving only the gold, which is usually mixed with a little black sand in the crevices along the flume. Sometimes the gold is cleaned up every night, in some places every week, and in other localities only at the end of the summer's run, when the water gives out. It is always an important occasion with the miner. I have heard men tell of "clean ups," particularly one in Confederate Gulch, near Diamond City, where there were bushels of gold, ranging from fine dust to good-sized nuggets, and amounting to hundreds of thousands of dollars, all in one pile!

Among the people there were several families from Missouri and Iowa, a number of whom were Christians, and including a local preacher of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, a Brother Hardgrove, from Missouri. Almost the first thing after getting settled was to prepare a place for preaching, which they did by erecting an arbor made of forks set in the ground, on which poles were laid and covered with brush. The

people were elated at the idea of having preaching, joined heartily in the work, and most of the miners ceased work on Sunday that they might come to church. The attendance was good, and many took an active part, especially in the singing. The two preachers, Stateler and Hardgrove, alternated each Sunday morning and afternoon.

"The next morning after we arrived at this place," says Mr. Stateler, "I walked a few steps from the tent and came onto a large rattlesnake, which I killed with a stick. I went a few steps farther, when I came on another one, which I dispatched in the same way. I returned at once, and told my wife that we were right in a rattlesnake den and would have to fix up differently for our lodging, as we had slept on the ground. So during the day I cut some wooden forks, which I planted in the ground, and made a scaffold, upon which we placed our bed, where we slept in greater security from these dangerous reptiles."

The cattle and horses that were brought along, and which were very much jaded by the long, toilsome journey, were turned out upon the rich bunch grass peculiar to this country, and were soon in good condition again. Stateler and his wife were very poor, having spent the last dollar they had in getting there, and their hope of living lay in the six cows and calves that they had brought along.

An inclosure of pine logs, commonly called a "corral," was made, in which the calves were kept during the day and the cows at night. The fine grass produced an abundant flow of milk. Milk pans and a tin churn had been brought along, and so they were soon

supplied with butter. A sparkling mountain stream ran near the tent. A log structure, like an old-fashioned spring house, was built over it, in which the milk and butter were kept cool. In addition, a water wheel was soon constructed, by means of which the churn was operated. The butter was sold to the miners for one dollar and a half per pound in gold dust, or three dollars in greenbacks—the prevailing price at the time. During the summer Mrs. Stateler soon made three hundred pounds of butter, which furnished them with means to buy the necessaries of life for a time.

Everything in the way of merchandise had to be brought a great distance across the rough mountains, either in wagons or on pack animals. They were more than two hundred miles from Fort Benton, the head of navigation on the Missouri River, where an occasional steamboat would land a load of supplies from the States. Hence everything was high. The average price of flour was twenty-five dollars per hundredweight in gold, or double that in paper money. It got up to fifty dollars, and even higher, at one time. Coffee was one dollar a pound, and sugar fifty cents. Coarse blankets sold for twenty dollars a pair in gold, while common calicoes and coarse plain goods were fifty cents a yard in gold, or a dollar in greenbacks, and everything else was in proportion. An ordinary cook stove was worth two hundred and fifty dollars.

Cabins were built of pine logs, over which small poles were laid and then covered with dirt—the floor usually being of the same material—dirt. They were provided with fireplaces. For chairs they used stools, which were sometimes covered with skins. Now and

then the stool was provided with a back by boring two holes in the rear portion at a slight angle, into which were thrust the two ends of an inverted ox bow. The lumber was manufactured by means of whipsaws, or hewn out with an ax, like the puncheons of olden time.

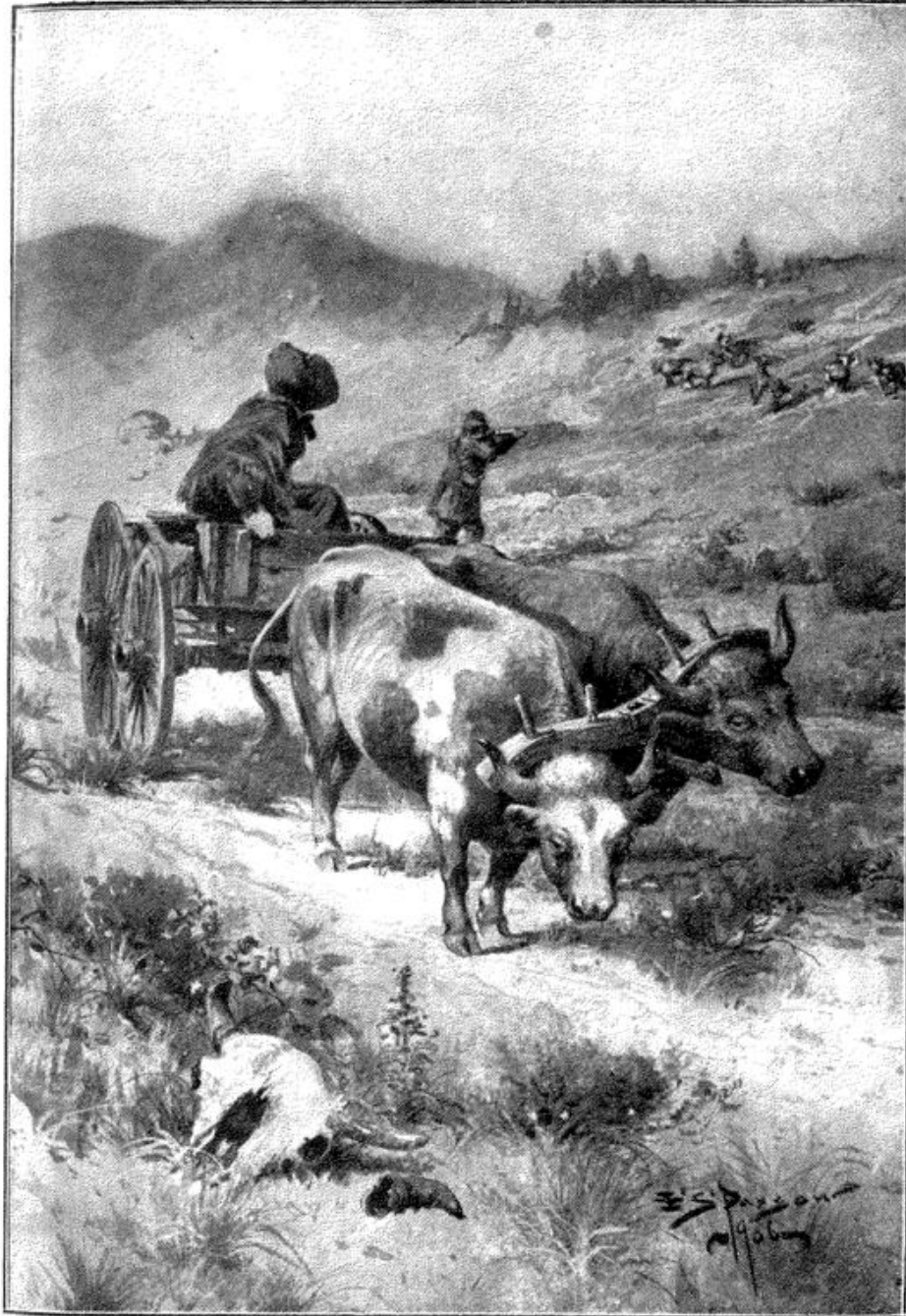
Wild game was abundant, and they were generally well supplied with meat. The skins of the wild animals were sometimes dressed and used for clothing.

In the early winter of 1864 there came a heavy fall of snow, so that the supply trains coming from Salt Lake were blockaded and unable to reach the mining camps, which caused the stock of provisions in many places to be cut short before spring. A "corner" was formed on the goods in the stores, and they were sold at exorbitant prices. For a while flour sold for one dollar a pound. This caused much suffering among the people, and for a while our missionaries had to live on "meat straight," and wild meat at that, such as could be killed in the mountains where the snow was deep, in midwinter or early spring, and which, of course, was not of the best quality.

A little later on most of the miners left Norwegian for the winter, and Mr. Stateler moved his camp about fifteen miles to the Jefferson Valley, which place afterwards became his permanent home. There was not so much snow here, and the grazing was much better.

"In the meantime," says Mr. Stateler, "a deer had taken up with our cattle, and we had noticed it there a time or two. My wife said to me one morning: 'Take up a pair of the oxen and let us go up the valley and look after the cattle.'

"'All right,' I replied. 'I will take the gun along.



GETTING A SUPPLY OF MEAT.
(See page 180.)

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There is a deer that stays up there with the cattle, and maybe I can kill him.'

"When we drew near to the little bunch of stock, sure enough, there stood a great big buck near them.

"'You get out and walk on,' said my wife, 'and the deer will be looking at me driving the oxen and won't notice you.'

"Thus it turned out. The deer, attracted by the wagon and team, did not seem to observe me. I got as near as I wished, drew up and fired, and down he came, right in his tracks. I hastened up, cut his throat, and turned away with a feeling of shame, and prayed that I might have forgiveness if I had done wrong in betraying the confidence of the poor animal, which seemed to have no fear and to look upon us as friends. We now had plenty of meat, sufficient to last us a long time. We felt that it was providential—that the animal had been sent to supply our want in a time of need. True, in the last extremity, we could have killed one of our domestic animals. But they were our dependence for a living in the future, as they had been in the past, by the supply of milk and butter that they furnished."

Mr. Stateler often referred to this incident, and always with a sense of gratitude to God, and yet manifesting a degree of self-reproach for having seemingly betrayed the trust of even a wild animal of the desert.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Religious Conditions in Virginia City—The "Log Church" Built—Stateler Preaches at Willow Creek—Organizes the First Society—Preaches in Virginia City—Travels Two Hundred Miles Each Month—Receives Nothing for His Services—Reign of Lawlessness—Trial and Execution of Ives—Vigilantes—Hanging of Road Agents—New Discoveries of Gold—New Settlements—Departure for Oregon—Chopping His Way through the Cœur d'Alenes—A Pack Train—Whitman's Grave—Visits the Columbia Conference—A Surprise—Takes Work—Plans Thwarted—Resolves to Return.

WHEN Mr. Stateler visited Virginia City, in the fall of 1864, he found many friends and a number of Methodists, some of them English people, who said to him: "We have no minister, and we want you to come and preach for us." In the meantime he learned that a Baptist preacher by the name of Torbit had preached in a private house there. About that time the people began the erection of a large log building, which came to be known as the "Log Church," and was of good size and comfortably seated.

Late in the fall Mr. Stateler began preaching at Willow Creek, which was only a few miles from where he was camped, and where he found a number of Church members from Missouri. His first sermon was preached in Mr. Nave's cabin on Christmas day. He continued to preach regularly, alternating between the several cabins in the neighborhood that were most

commodious, and in the meantime he organized the first society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in Montana. It consisted of the following persons: Richard (commonly known as "Uncle Dick") Reeves, Ann Reeves, Joseph H. Tinsley, Martha Tinsley, Lucy Nave, and Mrs. "Colonel" Wood. I presume that Mrs. Stateler's name should be included in the above list, though it was not on the paper that Mr. Stateler gave me.

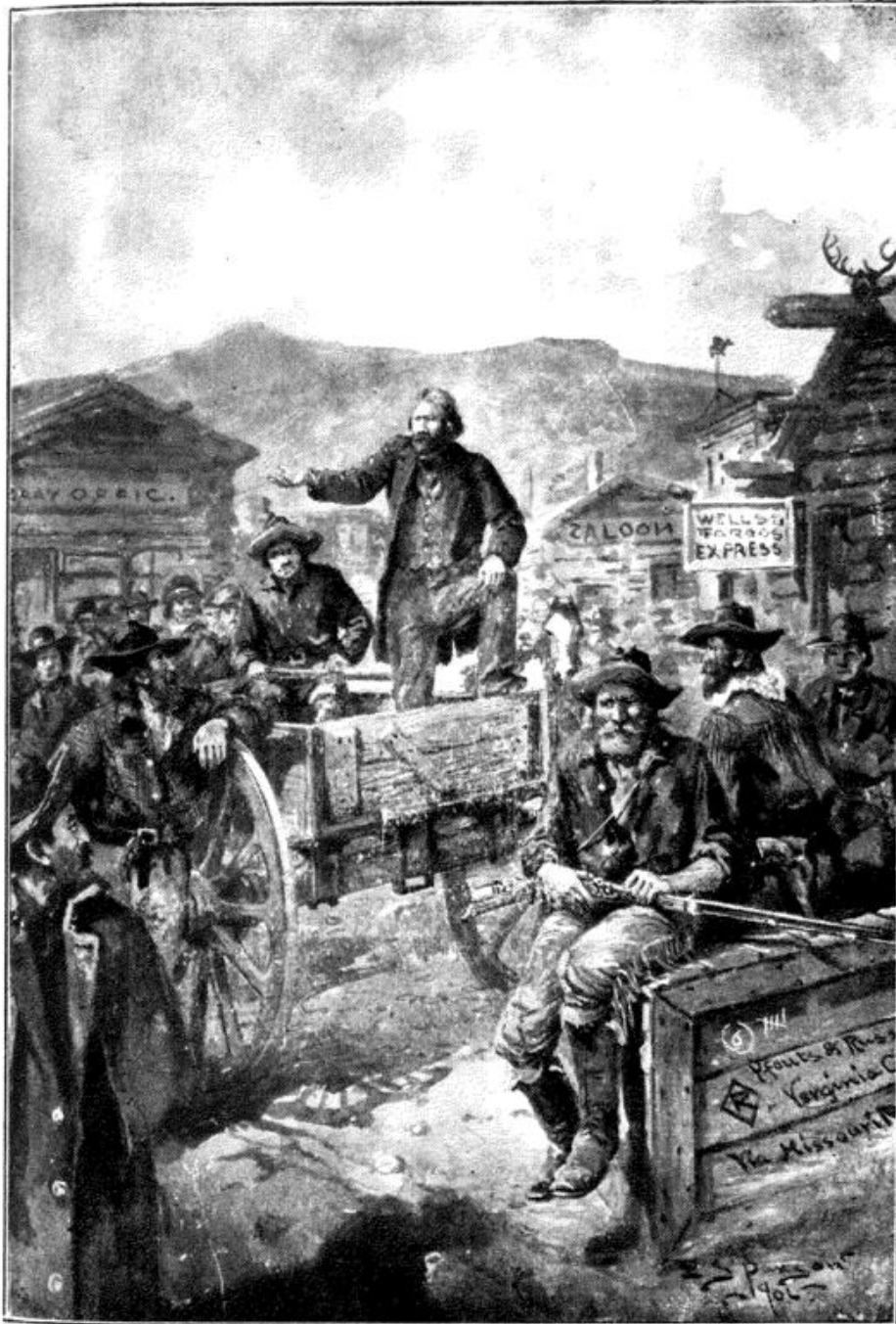
When the log church in Virginia City was completed, Maj. J. R. Boyce wrote to Mr. Stateler inviting him to come and preach for them. He mounted his horse and rode over at once and began preaching on alternate Sundays with Mr. Torbit, who occupied half the time in the new church for a while. This was about the first of February, and Mr. Stateler kept up his appointment for four months, traveling two hundred miles over the rough mountain roads, through the cold and snow, crossing two mountain ranges each way. The attendance at church was large, the people attentive and liberally disposed, for gold was plentiful in every man's pocket; and although the preacher was poor and hardly able to afford the necessities of life, yet he did not receive enough to pay his horse fare at the livery stable—"simply," he says, "because there was no one to ask for a contribution, and the preacher was too modest to take a collection for himself."

There were several members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, here, but there was no organization at this time.

Virginia City and the adjacent camps numbered fifteen or twenty thousand people, a motley, mighty,

surging mass of humanity gathered from every quarter of the globe, and which constituted the major part of the population, excepting Bannack and a few other camps and some settlements in the valleys where people were taking care of stock and preparing to till the soil.

While Stateler was on his way from Denver events transpired that were to prove historic and were destined to bring order out of the chaos that had begun to reign well-nigh universal in all the new mountain settlements. The unearthing of such vast quantities of gold had attracted the outlaws and criminals from every section. And so shrewd were they, and successful in their efforts to "steal the livery of heaven to serve the devil in," that the man, Henry Plummer, who had been elected and was acting sheriff—the principal executive officer of the law—was captain of a band of robbers, while those who served as deputy sheriffs in the several districts were also his lieutenants in the well-organized band of "road agents," as they were commonly called. Murders, robberies, and thefts became frequent, while drunkenness and gambling, with all their accompanying evils, were practiced in open defiance of law. How to protect themselves against these crimes sorely taxed the ingenuity and the courage of the honest property holders, for they feared to express their suspicions or repeat what they knew in fact to the closest neighbor, lest betrayal and punishment should follow. Wagon trains were attacked, stagecoaches were robbed, and people suspected of carrying treasure in any quantity were "held up" repeatedly, until life became a burden. Finally a noted



COLONEL SANDERS PROSECUTING GEORGE IVES, THE ROAD AGENT.
(See page 193.)

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ruffian, George Ives, was arraigned at Virginia City for robbery and murder, and after a most exciting trial before a public meeting of the miners held in the street, with an advisory jury of twenty-four men—twelve from Virginia City and an equal number from Nevada, a suburban village—was convicted and hung to a pole planted in the ground and suspended over the top log of an unfinished building. The scene of Col. W. F. Sanders, then a young lawyer, standing in a wagon and making a plea for law and order and boldly advocating and urging the conviction and execution of a red-handed criminal before an assembly of rough-looking, well-armed mountaineers, nearly equal in number in their sympathies for and against the prisoner (for he possessed a pleasing manner and had many friends who believed him innocent), when the firing of a shot would have precipitated a fierce and bloody battle, is worthy the pen of the finest artist and will never be forgotten by any who witnessed it.

Although successful in this effort, yet it revealed the futility of depending upon public trials for the breaking up of the reign of outlawry, and the best men of the country formed themselves into a vigilance committee, the knowledge of which seemed to strike instant terror to the criminals. The capture and confession of one of the bandits soon after revealed the names and workings of the robbers, and before they could make their escape the most of them were arrested and made to pay the penalty of their fiendish crimes. Five of them—Boone Helm, Frank Parish, Haze Lyons, George Lane, and Jack Gallagher—were

seized, and while they indulged in the vilest blasphemy, too horrible to repeat, were hanged from the main beam of a then unfinished building which was later used for a drug store in Virginia City, January 14, 1864. The chief of the band, Henry Plummer, and his two leading lieutenants, Ned Ray and Buck Stinson, were executed at Bannack, June 10, 1864, on a scaffold which Plummer had erected for the execution of another man—like Haman, little dreaming that he would be the first to be suspended therefrom. Criminal that he was, and said to be the readiest with a revolver of all his associates, yet when captured he showed the greatest weakness and cowardice, begging his captors to cut off his fingers and toes, and offering to crawl out of the Territory on his elbows and knees if his life were only spared, earnestly avowing that he was not fit to die. Almost every one of the remaining members of the gang was speedily hunted down and executed wherever captured.

Although this particular band of robbers was broken up, yet it did not cause the cessation of crime, nor do away with the necessity for the work of the committee. There were public executions in various places throughout the Territory from time to time for several years, a large pine tree with a strong limb projecting horizontally at a convenient distance from the ground by the roadside in a gulch near Helena, and commonly known as "Hangman's Tree," becoming quite as famous in the early history of that place as that of "Plummer's Gallows" at Bannack. But it was a victory for law and order, and brought about a respect for the principles of justice and fair-dealing that

gave a wonderful sense of security to the better class of people, and without which there could have been no progress. This work was so effective that Rev. R. A. Austin, a popular minister, in giving a sketch of his experience about that time, remarks: "A year later a man could have lain down by the roadside or on the street with a bushel of gold under his head and no one would have molested him." And even to this day in most of our frontier towns when lawlessness becomes unduly aggressive and the figures "3-7-77" appear in chalk marks in public places it is considered as a warning to the baser sort that it is time to quit their meanness or depart for healthier climes, which hint they are usually not slow in heeding.

In the spring of 1865 "Last Chance" Gulch, as it was then called, now the beautiful city of Helena and the capital of the State of Montana, began to attract attention, and great numbers left Virginia City for the new El Dorado, which was producing fabulous quantities of gold. New discoveries were made in other localities, the news of which spread far and wide, causing a mighty rush of people to the land which but a few years previous was thought to be nothing but a barren waste. New settlements were formed, and thus the work of laying the foundations for a new and mighty commonwealth went rapidly on.

In the meantime Rev. R. A. Austin, of Missouri, arrived in Virginia City in the autumn of 1865, and spent at least several months at that place. He was engaged in secular business, having come for the same reason that prompted many others—to escape the excitement and turmoil of the Civil War—but preached,

conducted a prosperous Sunday school, held class meetings, and won the good will of the people generally. He returned to Missouri the following summer.

Rev. D. C. O'Howell, of the Kansas Conference, also came to Montana about this time, but did not remain long.

In the summer of 1865 Rev. J. H. Pritchett, of the Missouri Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church, South, came to Helena, where he remained for a time and preached to the people the following winter and spring. He was very popular as a preacher and lecturer. The people rented a hall for him, as there was some disagreement concerning the use of the small church that had been erected. He did not organize a Methodist Church, but formed a kind of union society, composed of members of different Churches who were willing to become thus associated for the time. It was not intended to be permanent. In fact, there was nothing regarded as permanent in the country at that time. It was not considered a desirable place to live in. Those who had come to dig gold expected to go elsewhere to enjoy their prospective fortunes, and most of those who had come to find refuge from the storm of war expected to return to their homes when the war cloud had passed away. Mr. Pritchett returned to Missouri the following summer.

During the summer of 1866 Mr. Stateler wrote a letter to the *St. Louis Christian Advocate* giving a brief account of his movements since he had left Kansas, and stating his present whereabouts. Receiving no response, and finding everything so unsettled, he concluded to go with his family to Oregon that fall.



SCENE AT "HANGMAN'S TREE" IN THE EARLY
DAYS OF HELENA, MONT.

(See page 194. From a photograph by E. H. Train.)

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Their route was by the Mullan military road, which had been built by the government a few years previous. It followed down the Deer Lodge River, through Hell-Gate Canyon, past the present site of Missoula, crossing the Missoula River about ninety miles below by a ferry; thence up the St. Regis Borgis River to the summit of the Cœur d'Alene Mountains—the line between Montana and Idaho—thence down the north fork of the Cœur d'Alene River, past where the town of Wallace now stands, also past the old Catholic Mission, to the Cœur d'Alene Lake; thence by the way of Wolf Lodge, or Fourth of July, Canyon to the government bridge and trading post at the crossing of the Spokane River above the falls.

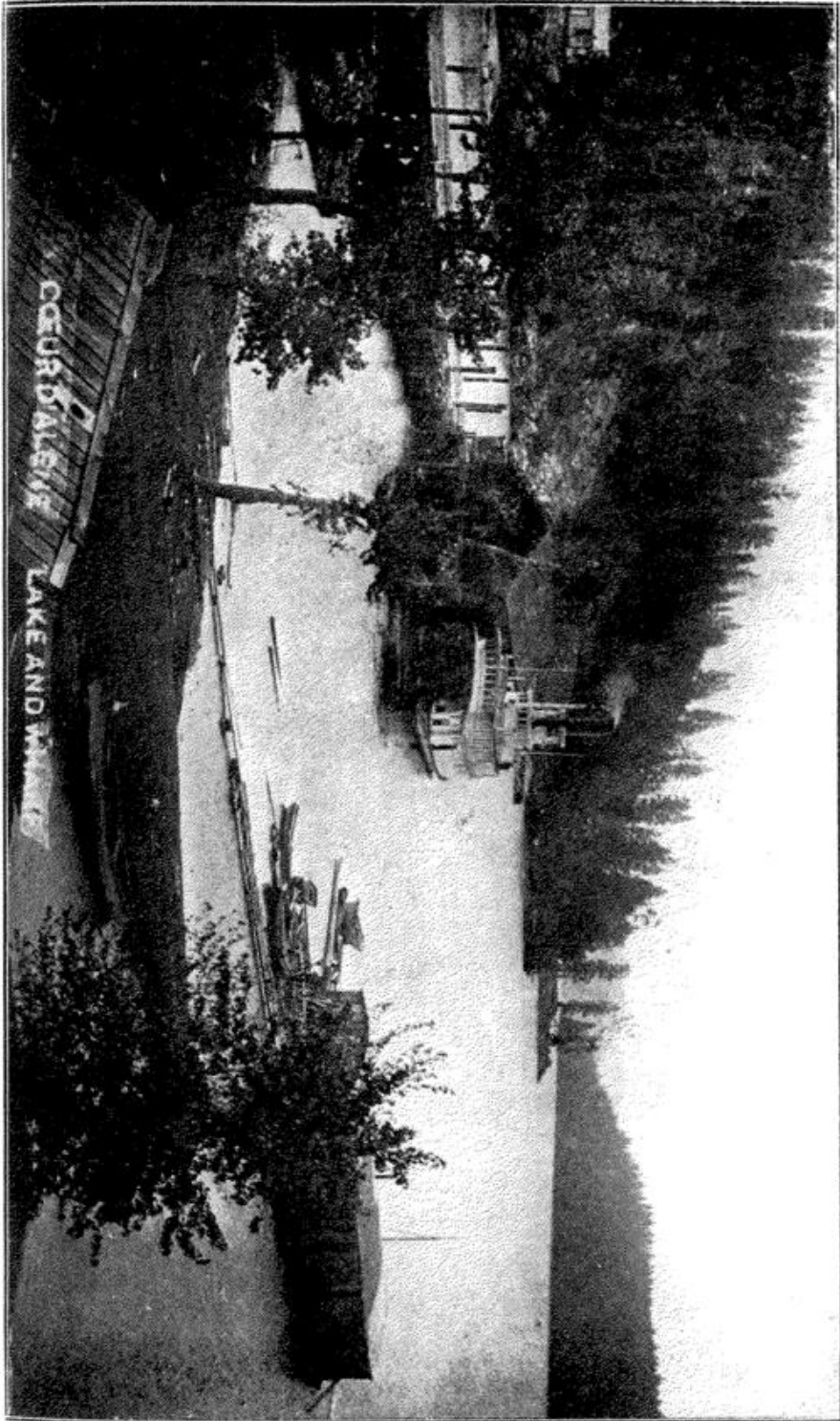
There were several families in the party. Their vehicles consisted of light, two-horse wagons, on which were packed their bedding and supplies. They cooked their meals by the camp fire, slept on the ground, and turned their horses loose at night to graze. They bought oats from half-breeds living at French Town, the last settlement in Montana, who warned them not to turn their stock loose in the dense timber through which they were to pass, as it would be almost impossible to find it again.

"The road up the St. Regis River," says Mr. State-ler, "leads through the densest forest that I ever saw. The pines were so tall and so close together that the sunlight could scarcely get to the ground anywhere. A road had been cut out, but the fallen trees were so thick and so completely locked together as to make a perfect network and present a great and serious obstruction to travel. Many of the trees that had fallen

across the road were so large that it was impossible to think of cutting them in two. To make a way around them was impossible, for many of them were one hundred and fifty or one hundred and seventy-five feet in length. The only way was to cut smaller logs and place beside them, thus forming a bridge, and roll our wagons over partly by hand. This involved much labor, and rendered our progress very slow. Eight or ten miles was about as far as we could go in a day. If a fire had broken out, there would have been no escape for us, as the dead timber was so abundant and so dry, and the trees were fairly dripping with pitch. But we passed safely through.

“On the west side of the mountain the stream is very crooked, and we crossed it twenty-seven times. We passed through a forest of very large cedars. [This was where the town of Wallace now stands. The writer has measured cedar stumps there that were ten and twelve feet in diameter at the base.—E. J. S.] We camped near the old Catholic Mission at the head of the Cœur d’Alene Lake, which was established by the Jesuit Fathers about the year 1841, and hoped to get supplies there, but found the place quite destitute, although the mission was in operation. I saw timothy growing here five or six feet high. The seed had been dropped by the Mullan road builders, they said.

“When I saw the church, an imposing structure, built entirely of wood, standing on a grassy knoll, surrounded by other improvements, I felt impressed with this evidence of the self-sacrifice, the heroic and persevering efforts of the Catholic fathers. It presents a wonderful and striking contrast with the surrounding



SCENE AT FOOT OF CEUR D'ALENCE LAKE, IDAHO.

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wilderness. But when I saw there Indians still wearing their breech clouts and living much after their primitive style, I thought that all this labor had not greatly benefited them. They had possibly learned to receive baptism and count their beads and go through with some other outward religious rites, but not much else. In all charity, to me there is a manifest defect in this system of teaching. It fails to regenerate the heart, improve the character, and elevate the life of its devotees as it should."

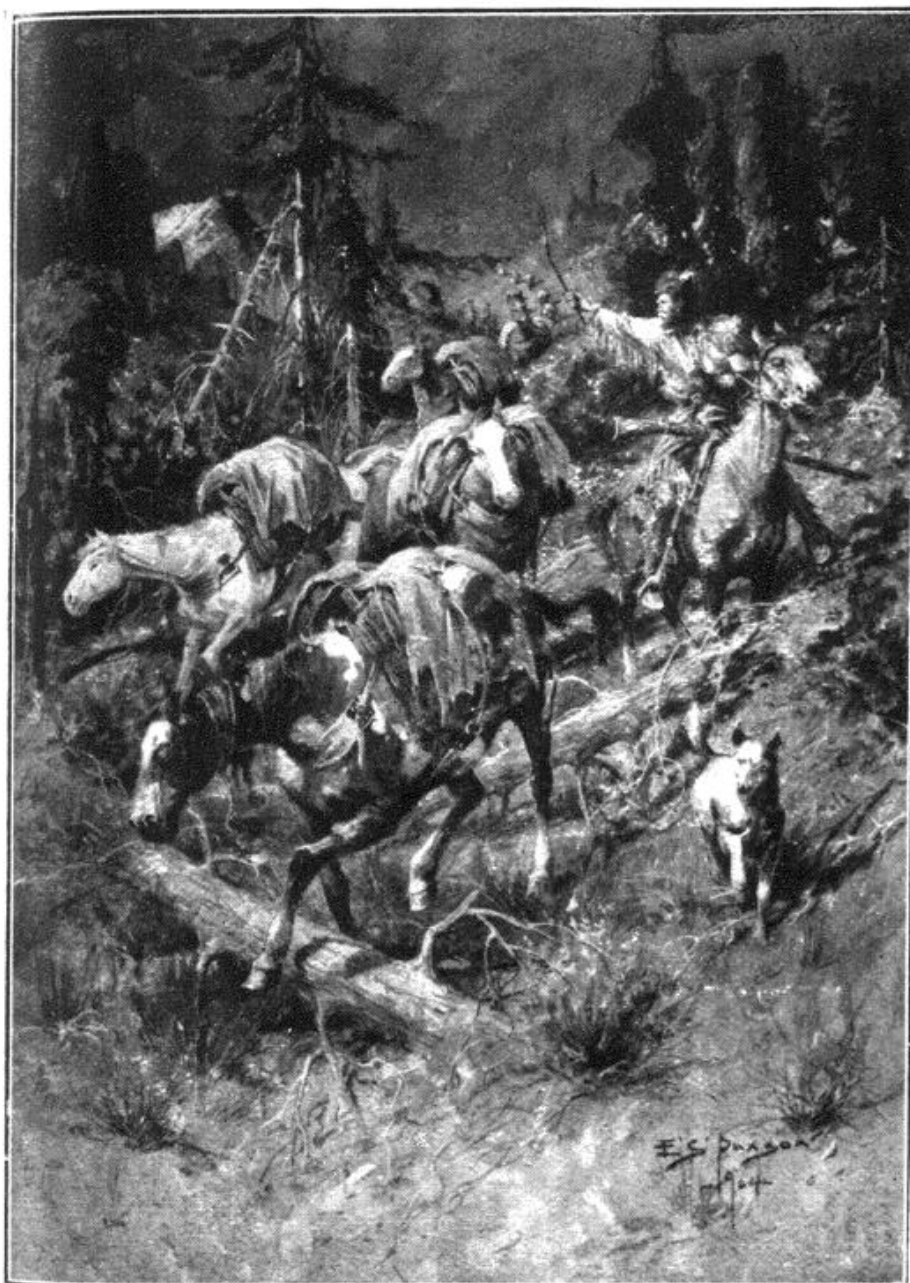
The road from the mission to the foot of the lake was exceedingly rough. At the latter place they camped on a grassy plat amid scattering pines and where the foam-crested waves of the lake dashed up against the pebbly shore. This was where Cœur d'Alene City now stands. The lake is from two to four miles wide and about twenty-five miles long.

From here on to the Spokane River, which is the outlet of the lake, the road traverses a rolling prairie.

On the trip the party met no one except a small company of men with a pack train coming from Walla Walla loaded with flour and other provisions and going to Montana. There were about one hundred packs. Such a procession is always interesting. Each animal will carry from two hundred and fifty to three hundred pounds, which is fastened on a peculiarly shaped saddle by means of a cinch and a stout rope securely tied. Frequently a man rides in front leading a gray mare with a bell on, and every animal in the trail will follow her or break his neck in the attempt; and alas! every now and then a poor beast does break his neck, or lose his life by being crowded over an embankment

into a surging stream or tumbling over and over down the depths of a rocky gorge. Usually, however, they are very careful, and deliver their charge in safety at the camp, where they are quickly relieved of their burden and turned out to graze and get ready for another drive. They soon learn to avoid contact with stumps and trees. It is surprising to see how readily the poor creatures adjust themselves to the situation, and with what safety and speed goods—and almost all kinds of goods—are transported over the rough, mountainous trail, where fallen trees, covered with knots and limbs lying across each other in every direction, and huge piles and ledges of protruding and jagged rocks present a seemingly impassable barrier except to the most intrepid traveler. With all their weaknesses—and it is a wonder they are not more numerous, considering the life they are compelled to live—the Western world owes a debt of gratitude to the hardy frontiersman and his friend, the cayuse, that it will be a long time in paying.

Not far from the old Spokane bridge, west, they passed an immense bone yard where Colonel Steptoe had slaughtered a large herd of ponies that he had captured from the Indians when he was fighting them only a few years previous, and which had the effect of subduing the redskins, causing them to come in and surrender. This gave the name of "Hangman's Creek" (which is retained to this day) to a stream coming in from the south, up which the road follows southward, out through the rich and beautiful Palouse country, and on to Walla Walla, at that time a town of one hundred inhabitants, located in the fruitful valley of



PACK TRAIN CROSSING THE MOUNTAINS.

(See page 199.)

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the same name. Here they passed near the grave of the lamented Marcus Whitman, whom Stateler had entertained at his mission home in Kansas nearly thirty years previous, and who was massacred by the Cayuse Indians belonging to his mission, in his own home on November 29, 1847, near where his ashes now repose under a mound of earth inclosed by a paling fence.

From Walla Walla the little company traveled one hundred and sixty miles to The Dalles, which was one of the old mission stations established by the Lees. Here they shipped their teams and went by boat down the picturesque Columbia to Portland, then a town of five thousand inhabitants, from which place they resumed the journey by land up the Willamette Valley, passing the site of the old mission established by Jason Lee and his companions, whom Stateler had desired so much to accompany, to the town of Albany, the terminus of the long, tedious journey.

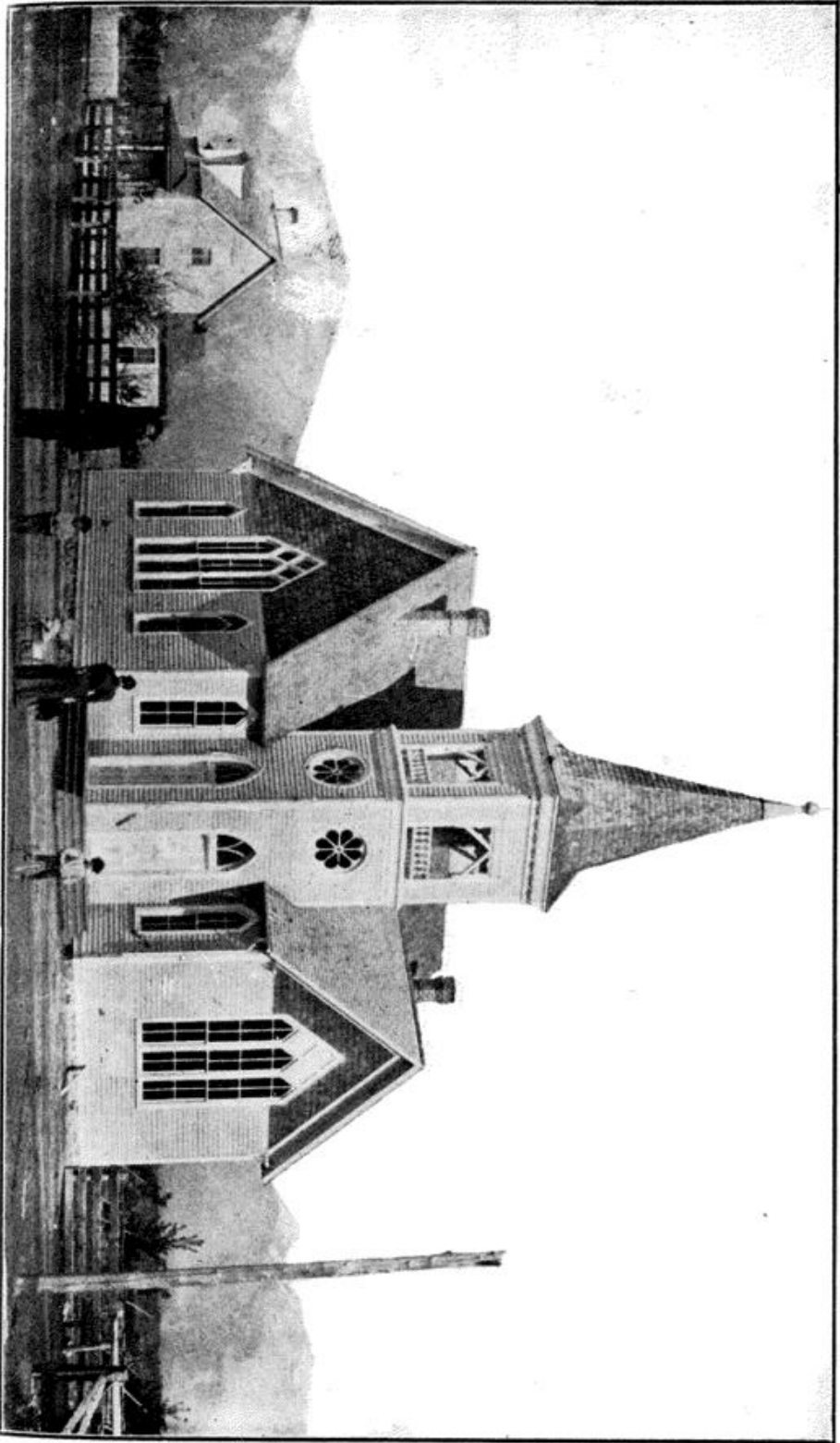
From here Mr. Stateler attended the session of the Columbia Conference, which was held that year at Corvallis, Oregon. The bishop expressed himself as greatly surprised and pleased at meeting him there, in which surprise and pleasure the preachers shared, no doubt, and he was given a cordial reception.

"It had been my purpose," says Mr. Stateler, "to proceed at once to California, where, if the climate suited, I might take work and remain. But Bishop Kavanaugh overruled my purpose, and at the close of the Conference I was read out as a supply for Albany Circuit. I at once entered upon my work as a circuit preacher, and hoped that I might put in a successful winter's work on the charge. But about those days

the rain began to patter down. It fell continuously, day after day, until the entire valley seemed to be a sluice of water. Not to be outdone, I got me a gum suit and expected to continue my work. But I found that the rain not only affected things outside, but inside as well. The very beds I slept on seemed damp to me. The effect of all this soon became apparent upon my system. My mouth refused to give utterance. My throat was affected so that I could not make myself heard. I had to give up my work. The doctor informed me that as soon as I could get out of the country I must do it, as I could not remain there; and instead of going south to California, as I had expected, I prepared at once to retrace my steps to Montana. Thus we spent the winter, sorrowful and depressed, in that rainy climate."

The thoughtful reader cannot help noticing the singular providence attending the movements of the subject of these sketches. We have observed in former chapters the burning desire that he cherished to come West, in response to the Macedonian call that came from the Flathead chiefs in 1833, at the time the Lees and others were sent out; also how he proposed to head an expedition to Oregon in 1840. Now, after the lapse of years, we find him right in the heart of the country to which he had so long desired to come, and here at his own expense and by his own heroic effort, and here as an obedient son in the gospel, ready for the work assigned him as a minister of the gospel.

The Willamette is the principal valley in the State, and constitutes the wealthiest and choicest portion of Oregon. The stream is navigable for a distance of



METHODIST CHURCH AND PARSONAGE, CORVALLIS, MONT., WITH THE BITTER ROOT MOUNTAINS IN THE BACKGROUND.

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one hundred and twenty-five miles from its mouth. It flows northward about midway between the Cascade and the Coast Range. The valley proper is about one hundred and thirty miles long and sixty miles wide, containing about seven thousand eight hundred square miles, or nearly five million acres, all of which is highly fertile. It abounds in broad prairies, beautiful woodlands, level valleys, gently rolling hills separated by streams flowing over gravelly bottoms, and rivals almost any country on earth in the extent, variety, and quality of its productions. Dotted with thriving towns and villages and the thousands of homes of prosperous citizens, and coursed by lines of railroad, and so near the broad Pacific, the gateway to the Orient, it is surely an attractive place for one in search of a home. But it was not to be Mr. Stateler's home nor the scene of his active labor any more than the beautiful spot that he had chosen for a home in Kansas. The Lord had other work for him to do. We shall see what and where that work was.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Stateler Appointed Superintendent of Missions in Montana and Colorado—Returns to Montana—Anomalous Position—Plans for Enlargement of the Work—Church Organized in Gallatin Valley—B. R. Baxter at Helena a Short Time—Stateler Alone Again—Settlements Extending—Appeals for Help—Western Conference Organized—Three Men Sent—Stateler Pays Their Way—Preachers Well Received—A Great Revival—The Work Prospers.

To add to the depressing effect of the climate which Mr. Stateler suffered while at Albany, one day he read in a paper an account of the proceedings of the Missouri Conference. Bishop Marvin, who presided, knowing that Stateler was somewhere in the region of the Rocky Mountains or beyond them, recognized him as a member of that body and appointed him to the anomalous position of "Superintendent of Missions in Montana and Colorado." The two Territories were a thousand miles apart, the superintendent was nearly a thousand miles from either one of them; there was not a man appointed to assist him, and not a dollar appropriated to help support or even to pay the expense of travel of a preacher in all that vast field, which must necessarily be traversed by private conveyance, or at best by a stagecoach, which was too expensive for a man of ordinary means to think about.

But while the West is a country of magnificent distances, it has furnished the men to traverse them, and Stateler was one of the men. He says:

“Early in the spring in April, 1867, we set our faces homeward, following up the Columbia River, the same way that we came, to The Dalles. From there we followed the old emigrant road across the Blue Mountains to Snake River, by the way of Grande Ronde, thence by the way of Boise City, Idaho, and along the southern base of the Salmon River Mountains, by the famous lava beds.

“The appearance of this formation is very remarkable, rising from six to eight or ten feet above the common level of the country. The vast amount of molten lava seems to have been forced up by the intense heat from below, or poured out from the crater of some mighty volcano, until it covered the surface of the country for miles, and then hardened as it cooled. There are great crevices and openings in the deposit, into which, if a stone is dropped, it disappears and the sound of it comes back fainter and fainter until it is lost in the seemingly bottomless depths. The place is dangerous and frightful. I started to walk over it, but drew back with a feeling of horror when I came to those frightful chasms. It was in this kind of place that the Modoc Indians in Oregon, headed by Captain Jack, hid themselves in 1873 when pursued by the United States troops who sought to punish them for the murder of Dr. Thomas and General Canby, and from which retreat they were forced only by starvation to surrender.

“We came without interruption from Indians, having in our company two men besides our own family. Crossing the main range of the Rockies at the Bannack pass, we came through the small town of Ban-

nack, thence down the Beaverhead and Jefferson Rivers until we reached our old home in the Jefferson Valley, arriving there in August. We were glad to return again to our rude cabin and to renew our efforts to do good among the people."

Mr. Stateler now felt that he was in the field to which he was providentially called, and, recognized by the constituted authorities of the Church, he began to address himself to it with increased energy and to plan for an enlarged occupancy of it.

At the session of the Missouri Conference held in the ensuing autumn he was made presiding elder of the Montana District, though there was not yet a man sent nor a dollar appropriated to assist him in supplying the work.

He visited Gallatin Valley and preached his first sermon there in a log house owned by Andy Cowan, located on the east side of the West Gallatin River, a short distance above Vard Cockerill's toll bridge. On the 24th of November of that year he organized a society in the valley, of which B. M. Dawes, Mary E. Dawes, Agnes Robinson, Rebecca Keaton, Mary Chrisman, and Mary Francisco were members. On the 28th of the following January three others (Judge J. H. D. Street, Adelia Street, and Mrs. Donahue) were added to it. Judge Street was a lawyer and a lifelong friend of Mr. Stateler, and at his death left the savor of a good name behind him.

Mr. Stateler went to Helena first in December, 1867. There he found Rev. B. R. Baxter, who had come the previous year and was living on Ten-Mile Creek. He employed him to supply the charge there. They held

the Quarterly Conference on Christmas day, and organized the society, among whom were J. R. Boyce, Sr., Mariah Boyce, George Duke, Catherine Duke, Sally Duke, and Mrs. Phineas Miller, and others. The communion service on Sunday seems to have been a very impressive one and was participated in by leading families of other Churches. Mr. Baxter had a large and prosperous Sunday school under his charge, and through the agency of a Mrs. Donald, of St. Joseph, Mo., and other friends, a beautiful organ and an excellent library had been procured for the school and were on hand at this time. Mr. Baxter was a good preacher, popular with the people, and the work was in a flourishing condition at the time.

Mr. Baxter remained until spring, when he removed with his family to Oregon, going by way of the Mullan road. His departure was greatly regretted by the people, as it was impossible to get any one to take his place.

Mr. Baxter was licensed to preach in 1844, and entered the traveling connection in the Missouri Conference at once. He spent four years in the Indian Mission Conference. He was very successful in the work in Missouri until the troublous times of 1863, when he went to Nebraska City, where he preached for a while, and then made two trips to Denver as wagon-master in charge of a freight train, after which he came to Helena. He spent five years in Oregon in the regular work as college agent, pastor, and presiding elder. The demands of a large family, together with the scanty support furnished by the Church, compelled him, as it has many others. to locate, after which he

preached as time and strength permitted, as he remarked to the writer, "on his own hook." I saw him at the Columbia Conference held at Albany, Oregon, in 1892. His heart and sympathy were still with the regular ministry, but he was resigned to his lot. The gospel that he preached with such acceptability and power to the people in Missouri, the Indians of the Southwest, the teamsters while crossing the plains, and the miners and settlers in the Rocky Mountains sustained and cheered him in his advancing years. His hair and beard were silvered, his voice slightly tremulous, but his form was still erect, his features strong and placid, and his eye fixed on the mark and prize above. I had crossed his path so many times in Missouri, and heard so many kind words spoken of him and his ministry during the time when men's souls were tried as by fire, that I felt it a privilege to look into his face, shake his hand, and hear from his own lips something of his experiences in preaching the gospel in the great West. He died a year or so afterwards in peace and triumph at his home, in Willamette Valley.

Mr. Stateler was now left alone—presiding elder over himself—as there was not even a local preacher left in all the Territory to assist him, and he was nearly two thousand miles from the seat of his Conference. He wrote to the Church papers at home setting forth the destitute condition of the country, and begged for men to be sent to occupy the needy fields. People were beginning to find out that it was a better country than they supposed. The soil was fertile, the climate was far less rigorous than was ex-

pected, the atmosphere was pure, exhilarating, and healthful, and the mining camps furnished an excellent market for everything that could be raised.

The settlements extended rapidly, and were without preachers. Many of the people had come from sections of the country where our Church was strong. Missouri, Arkansas, Texas, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia are all well represented; while there was a goodly sprinkling of people from Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and the Carolinas. A large per cent, however, was from Missouri. Hence it was that there was such a call for our preachers. But years passed on, and there was no response. In the printed minutes of the Missouri Conference would appear the simple entry, "Montana District, L. B. Stateler, P. E.," with five or six appointments following, all of which were marked, "To be supplied."

In the meantime the lone missionary was not idle. In the winter of 1868-69 he organized a society at Gallatin City, and carried on his work in Gallatin Valley and Bozeman, preaching and holding quarterly meetings wherever practicable, administering the ordinances of the Church, performing marriage ceremonies, offering words of cheer and encouragement to the disconsolate, and performing the last sad rites over the departing ones.

By the way, there is an amusing anecdote related in connection with a marriage ceremony that he performed in those early days. A well-to-do ranchman had sent for the preacher to come quite a distance to officiate at his wedding. After the ceremony was over, and the minister was about to depart, the groom ad-

dressed him, "How much do I owe you, Mr. Stateler?" with a heartiness that indicated his readiness to hand the parson twenty dollars, or even a much larger sum if the amount had been named; for he regarded it in a purely business light, and was ready to pay the bill, whatever it might be.

But the preacher mistook his man, and in a very modest manner replied, "Well, it is not customary for ministers to make charges for such services," but with the inference that the happy groom was at liberty to make as handsome a present as his circumstances and good nature would permit.

But never was greater mistake made. The hardy frontiersman was not up in the etiquette of such occasions, utterly failed to take the hint, and, out of a heart swelling up with gratitude and good nature, replied: "I am much obliged to you, Mr. Stateler, though I really did not expect it; I am very much obliged for your trouble, *and will try and do as much for you sometime.*"

If Mr. Stateler ever complained of such treatment, no one heard it. He was accustomed to work for little or no compensation, managed to live on what he received, or whether he received anything from others or not, and did not take such things greatly to heart. Even after other preachers came into the country he continued to be sent for from far and near to officiate at weddings, which indicated his popularity among the young people, though it is seriously doubted whether he ever had just such another experience as this one.

In 1869 Mr. Stateler renewed his efforts for reënforcements, but with the same result. In the first

place, the preachers and people in the East and South did not realize the demands of the work here; and, secondly, they were generally poor and had all they could do in reorganizing and providing for the work in fields nearer home that had been laid waste by the Civil War.

But these earnest appeals were not in vain. The leaven was working. The missionary fire was being kindled and was burning in more than one boyish heart that could scarcely wait for the age and experience necessary for a prompt response to such calls. Slowly but surely the way was opening.

In May, 1870, the General Conference organized the fields embraced in Kansas, Nebraska, and the Territories extending westward to the Rocky Mountains into what was known as the Western Conference. This included Montana. The first annual session of the body was held at Leavenworth City, Kans., September 8-10, 1870, Bishop H. N. McTyeire presiding.

Unable to travel the long distance of sixteen hundred miles to Conference, Mr. Stateler sent another appeal urging the claims of this field, and offering, moreover, to become personally responsible for the traveling expenses of the preachers who should be sent, and for their support after they arrived.

Here we begin to see the interest felt by our missionary in the work committed to his charge and the faith that qualified him for leadership. A man thrust out into the wilderness without funds to rely upon, traveling thousands of miles, and preaching and subsisting for years without missionary assistance from abroad or without salary from those to whom he min-

istered, without wealth of his own to rely upon, now in his great zeal offers, if the Church will only send the men needed, to bring them to the field and see that they are supported.

Such an appeal could not be resisted. Three young men (Revs. W. L. Blackwell, C. W. Sanford, and A. M. Kiergan, all from Missouri) volunteered and were appointed to Montana. They traveled by rail to Ogden, Utah. Here they were met by a conveyance which Mr. Stateler sent, and in it they traveled overland from there to his home, which was at this time on Crow Creek, near Radersburg, Mont.

Blackwell was sent to Helena, Kiergan to Gallatin City and Willow Creek, and Sanford traveled the Bozeman Circuit, including the Gallatin Valley. There was not a dollar of missionary money appropriated to assist these brethren. They came wholly on Mr. Stateler's pledge to sustain them. The friends of the Church rallied to the aid of the small membership; the traveling expenses were paid and the preachers were sustained. Stateler had received comparatively nothing for his services during the long years that he had been in the mountains. The ranchmen among whom he labored mostly were poor and had all they could do to make a living for themselves. For three years he never asked anything, and when they became able to give he cheerfully waived his own claims in behalf of the men who had come to join him.

The preachers were kindly received and were quite successful. Blackwell preached in the courthouse in Helena and reorganized the society there, adding the names of A. Collet and wife, C. E. Kemp and wife,

Mary Brooke, Rachel Brooke, Mrs. Ashby, R. M. Craven and wife, E. G. Brooke and wife, of Whitehall, Daniel Searles and wife, W. E. Hall, John and Augustus Jones, and others. A good Sunday school was organized, a revival meeting was held in the Prickly Pear Valley at which there were a number of conversions, and an enterprise inaugurated for the erection in Helena of a large church building with a stone basement, which was intended to serve in part as a place for beginning a Church school.

A society was organized at Bozeman, and a meeting of great interest held in connection with the quarterly meeting there about New Year by Stateler, Kiergan, and Sanford. A revival of great spiritual power was conducted by these same preachers at Weaver's school-house, which was a log building in Gallatin Valley, in February and March, 1871. It was largely attended by the people, who came for many miles around. About thirty-two persons were added to the Church. Thus God was pleased to set his seal and grant his blessing upon the labors of these pioneers, and their hearts were greatly refreshed. A subscription was started for building a church in the Weaver neighborhood, but for some reason the enterprise was not carried through.

Mr. Kiergan was greeted by large congregations, had some success on his charge, and was a great favorite with the people, and seemingly a wide field of usefulness was opened to him. Notwithstanding the strong inducements held out to him to remain, the following summer, going by way of Helena, Fort Benton, and on a boat down the Missouri River, he re-

turned to Missouri, alleging a failure of health as his reason for so doing.

The District Conference for the year 1871 was held at Mr. Stateler's residence, near Radersburg. The report made to the Conference that year shows: Helena, twenty-five members; Gallatin City Circuit, twenty-two members; Bozeman Circuit, forty-six members. Total, ninety-three.

CHAPTER XXV.

Stateler at the Western Conference—The First for Ten Years—Interest Awakened—Ten New Men Secured—The Journey to Montana—Trials Encountered—Incidents of Frontier Work—Playing Poker to Pay the Preacher—Hog-Killing and Preaching on Sunday—Escape from a Disagreeable Drenching—Indians Murder Two Men—Two Men Licensed to Preach.

IN 1871 the Western Conference was held at Council Grove, Kans., commencing the 30th of August, and was presided over by Bishop E. M. Marvin. Stateler and Blackwell attended, the former traveling four hundred and fifty miles of the distance in a common wagon, boarding himself, sleeping on the ground every night, and paying twenty dollars for his passage to the railroad. It was the first Conference he had attended for ten years. Great changes had taken place in the face of the country over which he had traveled when it was inhabited only by Indians. Council Grove had been one of the outposts in the mission field, where the devoted William Johnson put in many years of faithful toil. Now it was a prosperous town of nearly two thousand people, among whom Methodism had taken deep root.

Among the multitudes that thronged the streets as the preachers gathered in knots on the corners and about the entrance to the Conference room were a few scattering red men in rather primitive attire (remnants of the Kaw, or Kansas tribe), who gazed at the crowd with much curiosity. Presently one of them changed

his attitude, suddenly pressed his way through the crowd of preachers, grasped Mr. Stateler's hand, and shook it heartily, his face and gestures indicating his great joy in meeting the venerable missionary, whom he recognized as an old friend and former instructor in one of the mission schools, and who seemed equally glad to meet a former pupil.

The session was a very spiritual and profitable one. Quite an interest was awakened in the Montana work, and the Church seemed ready to respond to the many earnest calls that came from the Rocky Mountains for help.

The reading of the appointments of the preachers at the close of the session reminded one of the scattering of grain far and wide by a powerful seed sower. Men were sent in every direction—from the border of the Indian Territory on the south to the limits of Nebraska on the north, and from the Missouri River on the east to the Rocky Mountains, and even beyond them, in Colorado and Montana on the west.

Mr. Stateler also visited Missouri, Illinois, and Kentucky, traveling at his own expense and doing what he could to secure preachers for Montana. Bishop Marvin joined heartily in the movement, and as a result the following new men were assigned to fields in Montana: J. E. Treadwell, E. G. Frazier, and E. J. Stanley, of the Western Conference; A. L. Brewer, of the Missouri Conference; and S. J. Catlin, G. O. Hilton, Amos Emerson, and F. E. Taylor, of the Illinois Conference. So that the appointments for the year were as follows: Helena District, L. B. Stateler, presiding elder; Helena Station, to be supplied; Bozeman,

W. L. Blackwell; Radersburg, E. J. Stanley; Gallatin City, C. W. Sanford; Virginia City, A. L. Brewer; Silver Star, Amos Emerson. Deer Lodge District, S. J. Catlin, presiding elder; Deer Lodge, S. J. Catlin; Missoula, E. G. Frazier; Bitter Root Valley, G. O. Hilton; Silver Bow, F. E. Taylor; Gold Creek, J. E. Treadwell.

An impressive farewell service was held in Francis Street Methodist Church, St. Joseph, Mo., where Rev. C. I. Vandeventer was pastor, in honor of the little company of missionaries on the eve of their departure for Montana, where many earnest prayers were offered and cheering words were spoken in their behalf.

The ten preachers above named, together with the wife of W. L. Blackwell and the wife and two children of S. J. Catlin, met at Omaha and traveled together over the Union Pacific Railroad to Ogden, thence over the Central Pacific to Corinne, Utah, about one thousand and fifty miles distant, near the entrance of Bear River into the great Salt Lake, where they arrived about the 10th of October.

This was the nearest railroad station and the shipping point by the overland route to Montana and other points northward.

The little town, spread over a sandy plateau, presented a lively appearance. Heavy, slow-going freight wagons, coupled together and drawn by oxen or mules, and rapidly moving stagecoaches jostled against each other, while the crack of whips and the sound of the ox driver's voice as he made emphatic and free use of the vernacular peculiar to plainsmen in talking to his animals, together with the numerous crowded

saloons and business houses all wide open on Sunday the same as on other days, gave things a truly Western air, and made it seem like a new world, which was to bring new and strange experiences to that little company.

Mr. Stateler had arranged for teams to convey the preachers to their destination; but as they had not arrived, and as no one had money to spend for hotel bills, he bought a large tent at his own expense, together with a camp outfit, and the company of missionaries went into camp on the bank of the Bear River, the water of which stream, like that of the great Salt Lake, was too brackish to drink.

The preachers assigned to the Deer Lodge District, which lay west of the great mountains, secured a conveyance and went forward at once. While the others were waiting for the teams, Blackwell and Brewer were both taken very ill, and their recovery was thought to be quite doubtful. Furnished with barely enough means to make the trip under most favorable circumstances, and to be thus overtaken with such a serious affliction and delay in a wilderness more than a thousand miles from home, was a sore trial. But the way was opened. Kind friends came to the rescue, the sick ones were comfortably provided for and soon convalesced, and the journey was continued after a week's delay, though not without some hardships. The hospitality and kindness of Brother Damon, pastor of the M. E. Church there, will never be forgotten.

A sand storm demolished the tent once and came near landing its contents in Bear River. At one camp in Snake River Valley a dollar was paid for a stick of

wood with which to make a fire. Near the main range the party was overtaken by a severe snowstorm which lasted a whole day and night, and their cooking utensils were buried under the snow. They were caught on the summit of a mountain near Price's Canyon, and had to scrape the snow away to make down their beds, carry wood and water a quarter of a mile, and the water would freeze in the basin while one was washing his hands to eat breakfast, which was generally before daylight in the morning. But pluck and perseverance carried them onward. They reached the fields assigned them early in November.

Late in the fall three other preachers were transferred from the Mississippi Conference, and came by rail and stage, arriving at Helena about the first of December. They were J. T. Curtis, who was appointed to Helena Station, T. W. Flowers, assigned to Diamond City Circuit, and R. S. Clark, who was sent to Helena Circuit. They were all married. The latter had a family of six boys, and came in a separate coach. They were caught in one of the severest snowstorms known to the mountains, and suffered much on the way, but all escaped without injury.

Where so many persons with different talents, tastes, and dispositions and from different sections of the country are brought suddenly together into a new and unorganized field in midwinter, in a high northern latitude, and where so little could be known by the appointing powers of the adaptation of men for the various positions assigned them, it would be natural to expect a few misfits and consequent dissatisfaction. Some of the preachers did not have a dollar in their

pockets and were in debt for their passage, besides being poorly clad for the winter, even in a much milder climate. They were almost wholly dependent upon the people for a support, the Conference missionary board having appropriated barely enough to pay their expenses hither.

The arrival of the preachers at their new fields was in the midst of one of the hardest winters known in the history of the country, just after a series of very mild ones, and also at a time when some of the gold mines were beginning to fail. Men were being thrown out of employment, and there was a reaction from the prosperous times of previous years.

One man soon became discouraged and returned home. Another, a young man without experience in the work, became disaffected because of a change made in his appointment, ceased to travel, left the Church, and went back to the world. One more, a deeply pious young man, with good education, and promising as a preacher, but with little experience, was unable on account of ill health to do active work, and was cared for most of the winter at Mr. Stateler's home.

G. O. Hilton, who went to Bitter Root, was killed by the falling of a tree upon him while making preparations to build a house for his family to occupy when they should come to him the following spring. His death occurred on the 23d of December at the home of Joseph Hull, near Corvallis, and brought sorrow to the hearts of the people among whom he labored, and to his brethren in the ministry throughout the Territory. He was a plain, sensible, good, kind-hearted

man, had won his way to the hearts of the people, and gave promise of great usefulness in this new field. Although far from his own loved ones, yet Christian friends ministered to him and wept over him and laid his body to rest. His tomb is in the Corvallis cemetery, marked by a neatly polished and properly engraved native granite stone placed there by the Montana Conference. E. G. Frazier took charge of the work after his death, and organized a society there during the year.

A few incidents are here related to illustrate some of the varied conditions attending the labors of the preachers who were just commencing in this new field.

After walking twelve miles from Deer Lodge over a rough mountain road on a gloomy November day, Rev. J. E. Treadwell found himself at Yam Hill, a populous and prosperous mining camp on one of the tributaries of Gold Creek. Hungry, weary, foot-sore, and despondent, he entered the principal store, which was a log building, and introduced himself to the proprietor, announcing that he wished to preach in the camp that night. The merchant, a generous man, received him kindly and opened some excellent canned fruits (miners generally have the best), upon which, with crackers and other choice articles, the preacher was invited to dine. He then said to him: "You stay here and make yourself at home. We are glad to have you visit our camp. I will go and get a place for you to speak in, and see that it is made ready and that everybody knows about it. You will have a good house." He then departed.

With such a reception the preacher was at perfect

ease, lay down to rest his weary limbs, and dropped into a sound sleep. From this he was aroused by a great noise and commotion outside, when, to his surprise and chagrin, he saw his host apparently the leading actor in a regular rough-and-tumble street fight. He wondered into what kind of hands he had fallen. The time approached for service to begin, but his friend returned not, though he learned that preparations were being made for the service all the same.

At the hour appointed he went to the building designated and found it to be a large saloon and gambling hall, though there was not a bottle, neither a card nor a billiard, in sight. It was brilliantly lighted, comfortably seated, and the seats were filled with intelligent-looking people. There was perfect order. He gave out and sang an old familiar hymn, prayed, read a chapter, and stood up to begin his sermon, when the missing man entered, took a seat right in front of the preacher, and never removed his eyes from him until the sermon was through.

Treadwell was no mean preacher, and the surroundings seemed to inspire him. He preached a soul-stirring sermon. His own heart was warmed, and tears flowed freely from many eyes. His friend, the merchant, now arose and said they must do something for "the parson," asked for his hat, passed it around, "and," said Treadwell as he related the incident, "I never was more surprised. The hat came back just full of money, and I was exceedingly happy, for I was completely broke and did not know what I was going to do. It contained sixty or seventy-five dollars."

A few years ago when traveling that way, and

while stopping at a hotel in Pioneer, which is only three miles from Yam Hill, I was relating the incident to a gentleman, and when I was through he remarked: "Yes, that is true, every word of it. The storekeeper you speak of was my partner. I was away at that time. He put ten dollars in the hat. When I came home he told me about it, and we played poker to see who should pay it, and I won, so he had it all to pay."

The mines at that place could not be worked in winter, and in a short time most of the men had scattered and gone elsewhere. There are no better-hearted men in the world than Western miners, and when the diggings are "panning out" well they are exceedingly liberal. As a rule, they are good livers, well posted on current events, independent thinkers, and very respectful and orderly when in attendance at religious services.

On one occasion the new preacher in another charge was walking with some friends, with whom he had spent the night, to the place where the religious service would be held at eleven o'clock on Sunday morning. It was in a mining camp, and mining shafts, "whims," windlasses, sluice boxes, long piles of gravel, and scattering miners' cabins were numerous along the gulch. At one point a little off the road there was a log heap on fire from which direction there came the frequent reports of a rifle, while occasionally a hog would squeal—all of which signified that some one was doing his butchering on Sunday. But no particular attention was paid to it, as Sabbath-breaking is a very common occurrence in such places.

A few minutes later the minister was seated by a table in a room that had been provided with a stove and made comfortable for the service, looking over his hymns and preparing to begin the service, as there were already a number of persons present, when in came a man in his everyday attire and, after looking around a moment, faced the minister, addressing him thus: "Are you the man that's goin' to speak here to-day?"

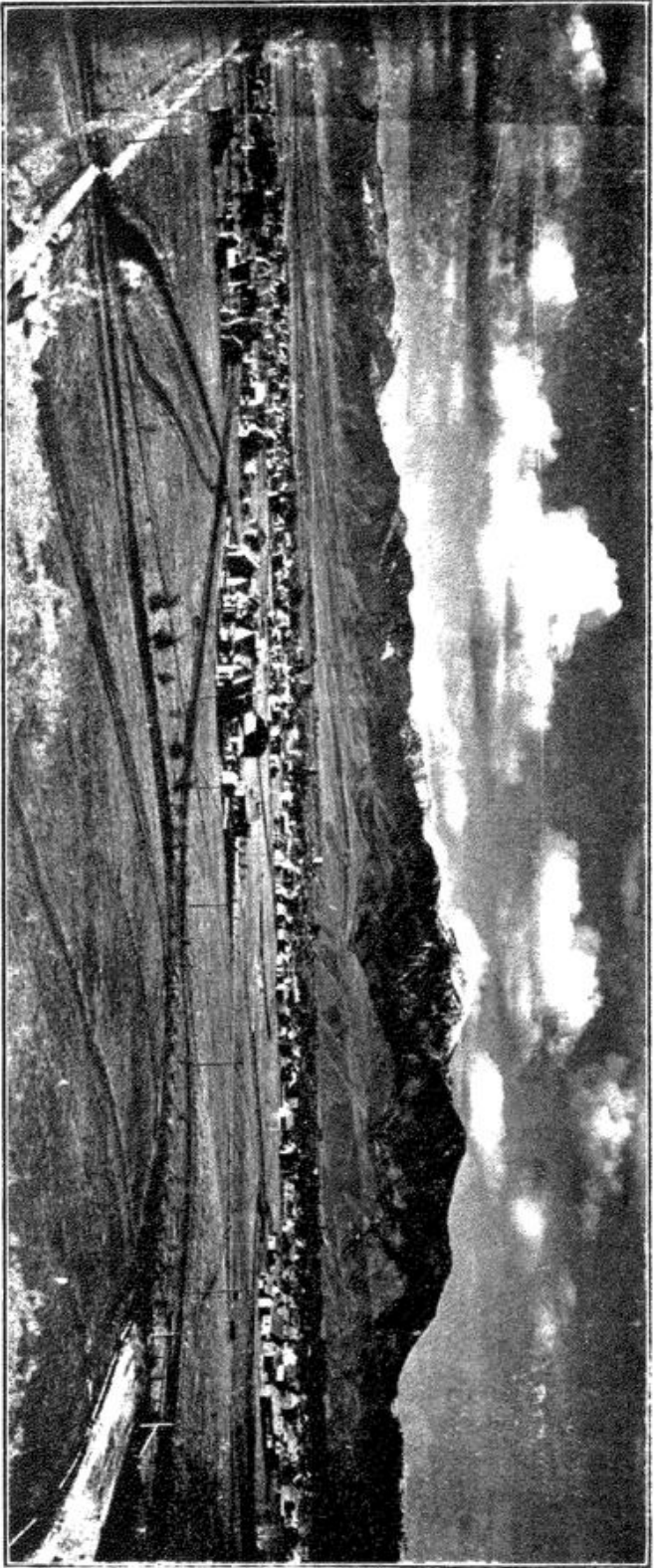
"Yes, sir," replied the young preacher.

"What time is the speakin' goin' to come off?"

"At eleven o'clock. It will commence in a few minutes."

"Well, I came down to tell you that old Mr. B. and his family wanted to come to the speakin', but he had to butcher his hogs this mornin' and can't come, and he said he would like for you to put off the meetin' till afternoon, so that they can all attend. We don't have sich doin's here very often, you know, and don't like to miss 'em if we can help it."

An invitation to postpone divine services on a Sabbath day until a man could complete his job of hog-killing and bring his family to church was something new under the sun to a young preacher fresh from "the States," and too ridiculous to be considered seriously, thought the minister. It was a new experience. But then the man was in dead earnest, and must be treated with becoming respect. So he replied: "I am sorry that the appointments conflict, especially that the gentleman has chosen the Sabbath day on which to do his butchering. But we cannot well postpone the service this morning, as the people are already



CITY OF POZEMAN, MONT.

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gathering. Yet, for his benefit, and all others who cannot attend this morning, we will have services again to-night, and I hope they will all be present."

He went away satisfied, and sure enough at night the old gentleman, together with his family and all the hired men, was present and seemed to enjoy the "meetin'." Large congregations attended the regular services that followed, liberal donations were made to the minister, and much good was accomplished.

At Diamond City the people received the preacher, Rev. T. W. Flowers, cordially, bought him a house to live in, a splendid horse to ride, and gave him and his wife a comfortable living that year.

The District Conference services for the Helena District were held at Bozeman in May, 1872. The weather was stormy, but there was a good attendance of the preachers, and the people turned out remarkably well to hear the new men. The Sunday morning hour also brought a large audience to hear the old one, the venerable presiding elder, Stateler. By some hook or crook he was mistaken in the time, was half an hour late, and the congregation was growing restless.

At last he arrived, wearing a heavy overcoat and a small but very lengthy woolen scarf, which was carefully and snugly wrapped about his neck. Always deliberate, now he appeared even more so than common, until the pastor whispered to him that he was half an hour late and the people were tired waiting. This announcement surprised and startled him, for he dreaded the thought of being tardy. I never saw him more completely waked up. The first thing he did was to begin to unwind the scarf from around his neck. Coil

after coil was removed, and yet there appeared to be no diminution in the portion remaining. I wondered, and so did others, when the end would be reached. But after a while the wraps were disposed of and the service was begun.

I feared that the haste and confusion incident to the delay would embarrass the preacher. But not so. He had a message to deliver, and the Spirit was present to help. His text was taken from 2 Timothy iii. 16, 17: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," etc. He seemed not so long, nor was he half as awkward, in unfolding his theme as he had been in disposing of his extra wraps. He preached "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power;" and while at the outset a few were ready to smile at some of his odd gestures, yet before he closed many were melted to tears, while all were ready to adopt the remark dropped by the leading merchant, General Wilson, one of the most intelligent and highly cultured men of the town, that "the old man can outreach any of them, after all."

Helena Circuit had not been included in the general plan of the work, but was formed by R. S. Clark, who preached at a number of places in the country adjacent. He paid his own way to the country and received but little if anything toward the support of his family besides that contributed by the people he served, among whom he was quite popular.

Once while he was preaching in a private house a good Christian lady, who had long been deprived of Church privileges, was so overjoyed at the soul-stirring message delivered by this servant of God that she was overcome by her emotions, praised the Lord aloud,

and finally swooned away into a semicomatose condition, from which she could not for a while be aroused, greatly to the consternation of her relatives and friends who were present. Various remedies were suggested. The preacher, who understood the situation better than the rest, did not interfere until he saw a woman, the daughter of the one so strangely affected, approaching with a bottle of whisky and preparing to give her mother a dose of it, when he took his position by the side of the prostrate form and, holding his hand out in a defensive attitude, remarked with emphasis: "You must not give her that stuff. There is nothing serious the matter, and your mother will be all right in a short time if you will let her alone."

The woman with the bottle, who was quite muscular, irate at being thus interfered with, brought her clinched fist down on the table with great force, exclaiming in a defiant tone: "*If that's religion, I don't want any of it.*"

By the timely interference of the preacher the good woman was saved from a disagreeable drenching, soon recovered her self-control, and afterwards had the satisfaction of seeing several of her children, together with a number of her neighbors, happily converted and useful and active members of the Church.

During the summer of 1870 a large band of Indians made their appearance in the Gallatin Valley, which was the eastern frontier of the settled portion of the Territory at that time, and before they left they murdered two men. One of them was shot right on the trail that C. W. Sanford traveled from Gallatin Valley to Willow Creek in filling his appointments.

After that time the preacher generally carried his rifle and cartridges as he went to his preaching places in that region.

Two young men, W. E. Hall and R. M. Craven, were licensed to preach by the Helena Quarterly Conference, and the former was sent in 1872 to take charge of the work at Salmon City, Idaho, where there was a growing settlement. Thus an effort was made to supply the people in every part of the country with the gospel.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Bishop Marvin Visits Montana—Makes a Tour of the Territory—Visits the Stateler Home—Holds an "Informal Conference"—Stateler Called to Account—A Grave Charge—Acquitted—A Good Joke at Stateler's Expense—A Preacher's "Skeleton"—Mistaken Official—Much Trouble for Nothing—Stateler Attends Conference Again—A Great Meeting at Corvallis—A Church Secured at Deer Lodge.

BISHOP MARVIN had assigned most of the preachers in Montana to their distant and difficult fields the previous year, and knowing by experience something of the hardships of frontier life, like a true episcopos, in the summer of 1872 he came the long distance across the plains and over the mountains by rail and stage at his own personal expense to encourage and help them. Colonel Broadwater, an old acquaintance, placed his carriage and a team of horses at the Bishop's disposal while in Montana. He visited Deer Lodge, where he preached and took up a good collection for the pastor. He also made a tour from Helena through Jefferson and Gallatin Counties, preaching with remarkable power to large audiences at Radersburg, Gallatin City, Willow Creek, and Bozeman. It was impressive to observe hardy frontiersmen and old mountaineers and miners weeping like children under the preaching of this godly man.

He spent a short time resting at the Stateler home, which was at this time near the town of Radersburg in the beautiful Crow Creek Valley. The house was built of hewed logs, the low, flat roof supported by

logs and fir poles covered with dirt. The walls were whitewashed outside and in, as was the underside of the roof, which served for a ceiling, and the plain board floor was scrupulously clean. A stream of sparkling, ice-cold mountain water, skirted with alder trees, rippled through the yard over a pebbly bottom, furnishing the power for the water wheel and the churn attached thereto, for family use, and also for irrigating the garden near by, and for the stock in the pasture below. Near by, in the garden, were vegetables of rank growth and rarest quality; in the adjacent fields there was an abundant yield of the finest hay, while the outline of the foot hills and snow-clad, jagged mountains in the distance presented an inspiring picture. The Bishop enjoyed it all. He was the first general superintendent to enter this home for many years, and he listened with attentive ear to the story of its trials and took an active interest in the dairy, the garden, and in all that pertained to the welfare of the household. His inspiring songs, Scripture-readings, and earnest prayers at the family altar made a lifelong impression upon every one present.

Mr. Stateler and several other preachers accompanied the Bishop on his round from this point.

But most of the Bishop's time was spent in Helena in an endeavor to relieve the Church at that place of a heavy debt that had been incurred in building.

On the 16th of August, 1871, Bishop Marvin called the preachers together in the basement of the Grand Street Church in Helena in what he was pleased to call an "Informal Conference." All the traveling preachers and a goodly number of laymen and visit-

ors were present. It was impossible for the preachers to attend the regular Annual Conference, which was to be held at Nebraska City, fifteen hundred miles away, and the Bishop stated that he desired to have the preachers come together that he might hear their reports, ascertain their wishes, and thus be prepared for more intelligent action at the regular annual session.

Committees were appointed and about all the routine work of a regular Conference was gone through with.

The Conference took the initiatory steps in securing the organization of a Bible Society auxiliary to the American Bible Society.

The religious services during the Conference were greatly edifying, and the prayer and love feast meetings were times of spiritual refreshing. Bishop Marvin did most of the preaching, which was strictly evangelical, and quite a number of persons were awakened under his ministry.

The sermon on Sunday morning was on the parable of the unjust steward. A prominent citizen of Helena (Major Forbes) remarked concerning it: "I never heard the like before. You couldn't, for your life, call it a money sermon, and yet it was calculated to take every cent a man had." The collection for the church debt amounted to three thousand dollars. The Bishop led off with a contribution of two hundred and fifty dollars, and Mr. Stateler followed with two hundred and fifty more, for which he gave his note at the bank, drawing interest at two per cent per month, and from which place it was not redeemed for about two years, Mrs. Stateler paying the last installment thereof from the proceeds of a wagonload of butter, cheese, and

chickens produced by her own labor and hauled on a wagon fifty miles to market.

The reports of the preachers, which were incomplete, showed quite an increase in the membership and Sunday school scholars. One church building had been erected at a cost of eight thousand dollars. The amount of two thousand eight hundred and forty-three dollars had been collected for the support of the ministry, and E. J. Stanley reported twenty dollars raised on his charge for missions.

During the session of this Conference an incident occurred that illustrates Bishop Marvin's sense of humor and also the self-denying zeal and heroism of Mr. Stateler and his noble wife.

The preachers were giving in their financial reports. When Stateler arose, the Bishop asked very innocently: "How much have you received this year, Brother Stateler?"

"Ten dollars, sir," said Mr. Stateler with emphasis.

"Is that all?" asked the Bishop.

"Yes, sir," was the prompt response.

"Did you receive no more than that from the Helena District?" the Bishop continued, with an air of surprise.

"No, sir; that is all that I have received."

"I heard some one say that you had gotten more than that," observed the Bishop, looking grave.

"Well, a friend did give me a sack of flour," remarked the presiding elder, who began to suspect foul play somewhere.

"Are you sure that is all?" the Bishop persistently inquired.

"I believe, too, that I received fifty cents besides; but it was not given as quarterage, and I did not think it necessary to report it."

"But I heard one person speak of giving you much more than all you have yet reported," remarked the Bishop with much gravity.

Things were becoming serious by this time. Silence reigned supreme. The preachers and others present did not understand it. Mischief was brewing. A secret enemy was at work, and the chief presiding elder, the veteran and leader of the Conference, was about to be arraigned and charged with keeping back part of the pay! All were puzzled, and Mr. Stateler's countenance indicated great astonishment and perplexity. The suspense was becoming almost painful when, with a mischievous twinkle of his eye, the Bishop remarked: "When I was at your home not long ago Sister Stateler told me that she had supported and kept one preacher in the field this year, and here you have not said a word about it in your report. I am surprised at you!"

"O—yes—well— I never thought about that," exclaimed the veteran elder, with a smile all over his face, indicating the great relief he felt and also his appreciation of the complimentary reference to his wife, which was attended with a spontaneous outburst of laughter from all present except the Bishop, who remarked afterwards to the writer that it was about the roughest joke he had ever perpetrated, but that the opportunity was so good he could not refrain. Brother Stateler forgave him, and often laughed about it afterwards.

About this time there was an occurrence which is

related here because it presents some phases of humanity that are doubtless observed in localities other than the Rocky Mountains and illustrates some of the difficulties encountered by those in charge of Church work. Among the inhabitants of Western mining camps and commercial centers are often found people who hail from Eastern cities where they have enjoyed the ministry of the leading pulpit orators of the land, and who are somewhat rigid in their requirements. There were some of this class in Helena. The Church there had been sorely disappointed in not getting Dr. Vincil, a popular preacher whom they desired for their pastor, and hence it was difficult for them to be reconciled to the ministry, or accord due credit to the pulpit productions of men of lesser note.

In the meantime, at the earnest solicitation of certain ones, during the year Helena Station had been transferred by the Bishop from the Helena to the Deer Lodge District, which brought S. J. Catlin in direct relation with the congregation there. Ascertaining the state of affairs, and desiring to measure up to the standard, as far as pulpit ability was concerned, or to ascertain the cause of the failure, he committed one of Bascom's choice sermons and delivered it in the most impressive manner possible—and he was a good preacher, too. The sermon was pronounced a very ordinary affair by certain critics.

At the quarterly meeting that followed the informal Conference, Mr. Catlin preached a sermon on the subject of the "Ten Virgins," using elaborate notes, which by an oversight he left in the family Bible that a leading official of the Church and an ardent friend of

Bishop Marvin had placed on the pulpit for the Bishop's use during his stay in Helena. Upon carrying the Bible home, the official discovered the manuscript skeleton; and as Mr. Catlin's handwriting very much resembled that of Marvin's, he thought it belonged to the Bishop, who had preached on that subject once while there. Elated at the discovery made and the prize captured, he called Mr. Catlin, who had not yet departed for home, into his parlor to show him the souvenir. Catlin listened very patiently while the steward read to him slowly and impressively his own sermon sketch, commenting at times, saying, "Now, that is perfect; no man except Marvin would ever have thought of that, or said so much in a few words. If we only had such a preacher as he, and such sermons as this, the people would come out to hear him and the Church would prosper," with more of the same sort.

Thus a sermon produced by a bishop and accredited to a humble preacher out West is considered quite inferior, while the production of the same humble itinerant accredited to a bishop is lauded to the skies and pronounced incapable of improvement.

Of course the joke was too good to be kept, and the collapse of the aforesaid official upon learning his mistake finds fitting illustration in the case of the old slave who accompanied his master to a camp meeting where a popular bishop was expected to preach, but as he did not come the pulpit was filled by another preacher. The negro did not know of the change in the plan, and as the preacher warmed in his discourse the master observed his negro servant rolling about in the dirt and greatly agitated, and approached to find

out the cause, when the enthusiastic African, his face beaming with delight and his garments covered with dirt and trash, began: "Bless de Lawd, Massa, dat I ebah come to dis place and heah dat bishop; why I jes feel like I'se gwine right up to heben and nebah comin' back any mo'."

"Why, Jim," remarked the master, "that isn't the bishop. He could not get here. That is only a circuit preacher from across the river. He is not a big preacher at all."

"Now, Massa, you don't say so?" quized Jim, with much dejection.

"Yes, it is the truth."

"Well, please help me bresh dis dirt off. *Jim hab all dis trouble for nuffin'.*"

Mr. Stateler accompanied Bishop Marvin on the return trip, traveling by stage to the railroad at Corinne, and attended the Annual Conference, which was held at Nebraska City and was presided over by Bishop Pierce. There were some changes made in the general arrangement of the work, but he was reappointed to the Helena District.

Although there was no material increase in the missionary appropriations to Montana, and a number of the preachers received nothing from that source the next year, yet they kept faithfully at work, and a number of revivals attended their labors.

A meeting was held in Prickly Pear Valley, on the Helena Circuit, in which the pastor, R. S. Clark, was assisted by Mr. Stateler and others, which resulted in a number of happy conversions, the organization of a society of twenty-two members, and, before the year

was out, in the erection of a neat log structure known as Fairview Church. Brother Clark also conducted a successful meeting at Grisly Park, a mining camp a few miles from Helena, during which time a number were converted.

But the meeting of greatest interest and importance during the year was held at Willow Creek, in Gallatin County, commencing about the first of June, 1873. It was at the time of the District Conference for Helena District. All the preachers of the district were present, besides a number of laymen. The session of the Conference was harmonious and deeply spiritual. A spirit of brotherly love and unity prevailed. The services were held under a temporary structure, or shelter, made of rough lumber, with straw scattered on the dry ground for a floor. The people came from five to twenty-five miles to attend, and many brought their tents, or secured temporary lodging in neighboring cabins, and camped on the ground. The meeting lasted about two weeks. The results were twenty bright conversions and additions to the Church, a great strengthening of the spirit of unity among both preachers and people, and the starting of a subscription by Mr. Stateler for a church building which now marks the identical spot where the meeting was held and is known as "Stateler Chapel." As it was so near the place where Mr. Stateler first pitched his tent, began his ministry, and organized his first society among the people to whom he felt providentially called, this manifestation of the Divine Spirit among the people appeared as a confirmation of the call, an attestation of his ministry and of those whom he had as-

sisted in bringing here, and as an earnest of the greater work yet to follow.

Rev. H. W. Currin, who had been transferred from the Missouri Conference to Helena, conducted a flourishing Sunday school at that place and labored earnestly and perseveringly to reduce the debt on the church. Rev. J. E. Treadwell organized a small society at Virginia City, and there were accessions on other charges.

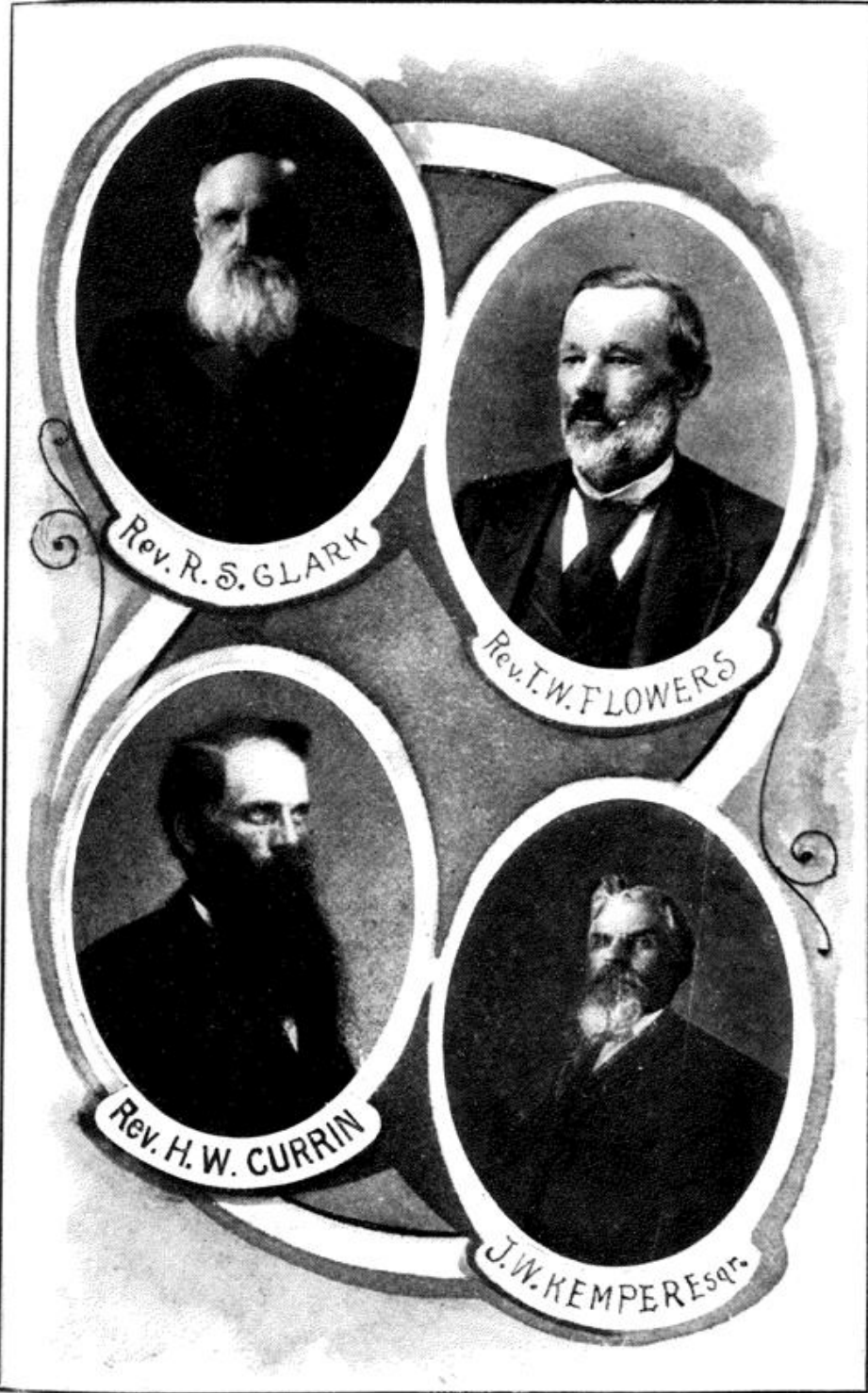
A session of an "Informal Conference" similar to the one held by Bishop Marvin the year before was held at Bozeman, commencing August 6, 1873, at which most of the preachers were present.

The membership had increased, and there had been twenty-eight infant and twenty-six adult baptisms. Five Sunday schools were reported, with two hundred and thirty-six scholars.

The body passed a resolution memorializing the ensuing General Conference to organize a Montana Conference. It also recognized the hindrances to successful Church work caused by "the depressed financial condition, together with the gloomy prospect of the country for some time to come," but recommended "patience linked with faithful pastoral work and a consecrated life, urging that none of God's ministers should think of going either to publicly teach or privately persuade without claiming the presence of the Holy Spirit."

Revs. E. C. Frazier, J. E. Treadwell, W. L. Blackwell, and A. L. Brewer returned to the States this year.

Mr. Stateler again attended the regular session of



Rev. R. S. GLARK

Rev. T. W. FLOWERS

Rev. H. W. CURRIN

J. W. KEMPERESQ.

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the Western Conference, which was held at Atchison, Kans., and presided over by Bishop W. M. Wightman. Inasmuch as there was no bishop to accompany him this time, he chose the slower but less expensive method of traveling by wagon and camping out to and from the railroad.

Mr. Stateler remained on the Helena District.

There were a number of revivals in the various parts of the field this year. E. J. Stanley and R. S. Clark held a meeting at Deep Creek, in Missouri Valley, near the present site of Townsend, in which there were twelve conversions and the same number of substantial accessions to the Church. Clark and Stateler held a fine meeting at Grisly Park, which was followed by another at the Fairview Church, in which Clark, Stateler, and Stanley united, at both of which a number of people were converted and added to the Church.

About the same time (February, 1874) there was a remarkable religious awakening as the result of a meeting held at Corvallis, in Bitter Root Valley, where the lamented Hilton had fallen but three years before. It was conducted by C. W. Sanford and S. J. Catlin, and was one of the most extensive revivals ever held in Montana, resulting in scores of conversions and about one hundred accessions to the Church, including a large majority of the people who lived in that locality. A church building was commenced, but owing to poor management was never completed.

F. E. Taylor, who had dropped out, entered the work again under the ministry of T. W. Flowers at Deer Lodge, and was sent as a supply to the Silver Star and Bannack Circuit, extending his labors to

Virginia City, Salmon City, Idaho, and other places, covering an area more than two hundred miles in extent.

Through the efforts of T. W. Flowers and S. J. Catlin a large log structure which had been used for a hospital, centrally located in Deer Lodge City, was purchased and converted into a church. The cost was six hundred dollars, besides the labor of fitting it up for occupancy, which Brother Flowers performed, tearing out the partitions and converting them into pulpit and pews, with his own hands, while his heroic wife, full of faith and zeal, collected money from the people for needed articles for the church.*

*Mrs. M. C. Flowers, wife of Rev. T. W. Flowers, was born in Franklin County, Miss., May 16, 1821; and died at Victor, Mont., March 3, 1901. She was buried at Stevensville. Her death was triumphant, her last words being, "Safe in the arms of Jesus." She possessed a well-defined Christian experience, had great faith in God, and seemed not to be troubled by the doubts and fears that annoy so many. She was consistent, cheerful, sympathetic, and active in visiting and helping other people and in building up the Church. She moved in the best society, and enjoyed the confidence and esteem of those in the humbler walks of life. She was devoted to the Church in Montana, and had hosts of friends wherever she was known. Brother Flowers at this writing lives at the old home at Stevensville, which is to belong to the Training School at his death, and is patiently waiting the call of the Master to the home on high. Since the above was in type Brother Flowers passed away peacefully at his home, in Stevensville, Mont. He was born in Meadville, Franklin County, Miss., October 24, 1828; died April 29, 1907. He was a good and faithful man.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Preachers Meet at Deer Lodge—A Crisis—Montana Conference Created—Then “Stricken Out”—A Trying Ordeal—Conference at Denver—Bishop Marvin’s Second Visit—Conference at Helena—Revival at Willow Creek—An Episode—“Uncle Dick’s” Speech—Conference at Denver—David Morton’s Arrival.

THE third session of the “Informal Conference” was held in the new church at Deer Lodge July 24 and 25, 1874, at which most of the preachers were present.

This year marked a crisis in the history of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in Montana, and but for the good providence of God it would not have survived the trying ordeal.

Among the first settlers in Montana there were many people from the South or West who were either members or warm friends of this communion. For a long time they were almost destitute of religious ordinances. They called for ministers of their own denomination. Times were prosperous, and in their zeal they said: “Send us preachers, and we will support them.”

The first preachers who came were supported and their traveling expenses to the Territory paid by the people. But there came quite a change in the financial condition and outlook for the country. The placer diggings, which had yielded such immense quantities of gold and given employment to thousands of men, began to fail. As produce was high, many went to ranching or farming. The ground brought forth abundantly, the flocks and herds increased in proportion, and the

supply was greater than the demand. The Northern Pacific Railroad, which it was confidently expected would traverse the Territory from one end to the other, was delayed in coming; the great panic that prevailed in the States about this time was felt here, and so there was a general stagnation in business. Men had borrowed money at two and three per cent per month to make improvements and buy implements for farming, and to invest in other business, and, as a result, many of them were closed out and left penniless.

Those were dark days in the history of Montana. About this time gold was discovered in the Black Hills; a great excitement sprung up, and it appeared at one time as if the Territory would be depopulated. It was estimated that the population of Montana ran down to twelve or fifteen thousand. Those who knew the resources of the country had confidence in its final development, but no one knew when the time for that development would come.

To make it still harder on our preachers, who had pioneered the way, other Churches began to send representatives. These took a share of the membership (not a few persons had united with us only until the Church of their choice should come) and a part of the financial support. There was now no increase from immigration. The authorities of the Church at home could not be made to understand or appreciate these changes in the situation of affairs of our business men. Many were apparently not in sympathy with the work here, and either could not or would not grant the assistance that was needed to sustain it in the midst of the crisis through which it was passing.

In spite of all these hindrances, the Church in Montana was growing. Revivals were prevailing and houses of worship were being erected.

It was impossible for any considerable number of the preachers to travel one thousand six hundred miles, and five hundred miles of that by stagecoach, every year to attend Conference, and it was quite inconvenient and unsatisfactory to have the business transacted by others so far away.

Then, there were some people here who thought the occupancy of this field by our Church would be of short duration. Hence we felt the need of, and pleaded for, a separate Conference organization. This it was thought would secure our recognition by the home Church, bring it into closer sympathy with the work, and give additional assurance to all of the permanence of the work. It would also secure an annual visit from one of the chief pastors, and afford that encouragement and enthusiasm that an Annual Conference session gives to Methodist preachers and people.

The General Conference had met at Louisville in May, and a resolution providing for a Montana Conference was adopted. A motion to reconsider was made and failed to carry, and so we felt secure and were greatly elated at the bright future before us. But our rejoicing was of short duration. Before the body adjourned another motion to reconsider was made, and, contrary to parliamentary usage, was entertained and adopted; and then the Montana Conference, whose existence, though short, had caused such rejoicing and awakened such hopes, was "stricken out," and the work included in the Denver Conference, which organization

thereby was made to embrace the Territories of Colorado, New Mexico, and Montana. Many of the brethren who voted for this measure were doubtless not aware of the hardships they were imposing upon our people in the far Northwest.

This action had a most depressing influence upon the infant Church in Montana. It was regarded by many people, both East and West, as a virtual abandonment of the work, and was like "striking out" the long years of persistent and anxious labor performed by earnest and devoted men. It operated as a barrier in getting people to identify themselves with the Church here, and also prevented preachers from coming to labor in this field.

This Conference addressed a paper to the Board of Missions setting forth the changes in the circumstances of the people and asking increased aid from that source, expressing faith in the outcome of the country and of the Church here.

Up to that time the expense of our work in Montana to the Board of Missions had been very light compared with that of the other organizations laboring side by side in the same field, and until within a short time previous our success had far exceeded that of any other Church, and the number of additions thereto had been greater than to all the others put together.

At that time the Methodist Episcopal Church had expended one hundred thousand dollars of missionary money in Montana, and its membership was not equal to ours. It had erected but four church buildings, and most, if not all, of them had been aided liberally by the Church Extension Fund. The Presbyterian Board

had spent ten thousand dollars, and had only a handful of members and two church buildings in course of erection; while we had received, all told, only four thousand five hundred dollars of outside assistance, had kept from four to twelve preachers in the field, whose labors had been attended with frequent revivals in which scores had been converted, and at that time we had about three hundred members and four church buildings, completed and under headway, valued at twelve thousand dollars.

The first session of the Denver (and Montana) Annual Conference convened at Denver, Colorado Territory, August 25, 1874, Bishop Pierce presiding. C. W. Sanford and E. J. Stanley, who had not attended a regular session one for three and the other for four years, made the long journey of more than one thousand miles to be present and receive ordination as elders. Through their efforts the next session of the body was appointed to meet at Helena, Mont. R. M. Craven, of Montana, was admitted on trial in the traveling connection.

The official statistics are not at hand, and are not complete, either; but there had been sixty or seventy-five baptisms in our part of the field, and the large majority of conversions reported at that Conference were from Montana.

Bishop Pierce was a man of authority, and took the responsibility of making some radical changes in the arrangement of the work in Montana without saying a word to the representatives who were present from that field, and utterly refused to make any changes in the plan when the matter was laid before him.

S. J. Catlin was placed on the Helena District and assigned to Bozeman charge, while Mr. Stateler served Gallatin City and Willow Creek, and Bozeman too a part of the year, for Mr. Catlin never took charge there.

The field in the bounds of the Virginia City District, to which E. J. Stanley had been appointed, with only one man, F. E. Taylor, to assist him and with no means of getting any more preachers, had been largely occupied by ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church—Revs. F. A. Riggin and W. W. Van Orsdel—who had held revival services and organized societies at Virginia City, Fish Creek, and other prominent points. Nevertheless the new elder and his assistant spent much of the time in holding special services. Revivals attended their labors at Whitehall and other points, at which there were a score or more additions to the Church. F. E. Taylor's health gave way, and he returned to the States the following summer, leaving the entire work to be served by the presiding elder alone.

A revival meeting was held during the year by S. J. Catlin and R. M. Craven at Stevensville, in Bitter Root Valley, at which there were fifteen conversions.

Bishop Marvin visited the Territory again during the summer, preaching at Virginia City, and also at Whitehall, where the entire country for many miles around turned out to hear him, and where he baptized two children and received several persons into the Church.

The second session of the Denver Conference met in Helena the 2d of August, 1875, with all the clerical

members of Montana and a number of laymen present. Bishop Marvin presided. His Conference talks and also his powerful sermons were listened to with no less interest than when he was there the first time. The large audience room was crowded on Sunday to hear his great sermon on "Christ and the Church," as illustrated by the marriage relation. Sacramental services were held at night, after an appropriate sermon. It was an affecting scene as preachers and people gathered around the communion table and received the sacred emblems of the broken body and shed blood of their Lord at the hands of their beloved Bishop for the last time. Tears flowed freely from many eyes.

The preachers went forth to their fields with fresh courage. Inspired by the presence and example of such a man of God, they were ready to do or suffer anything for the Master.

After Conference the Bishop dedicated the Fairview Church, in Prickly Pear Valley, and also visited Deer Lodge, where he preached a number of sermons that are talked about by the people to this day, and raised a collection and paid for and dedicated the church building there.

Several preachers left the Territory this year, which resulted in the failure to complete the church that had been commenced at Corvallis, and in other serious damage to the work.

A fine revival meeting was held in the new church at Willow Creek during the following winter (1875-76), which was attended by Sanford, Stateler, Clark, and Stanley. The preachers were greatly refreshed,

the Church quickened, and a number of persons were converted.

One incident occurred during this meeting at the close of the eleven o'clock service on Sunday which, while it caused much embarrassment to two persons, and excited much innocent mirth for a time, did no particular harm.

Mr. Sanford was the preacher in charge. The writer had preached, and the officiating elder was proceeding to administer the sacrament of the Lord's Supper when he was plucked on the arm by "Uncle Dick" Reeves, who signified his desire to take a collection for the preacher and to say a few words to the audience before doing so. "Uncle Dick" was both class leader and steward; a man of positive character, somewhat demonstrative when aroused, and with a vein of mischievous mirth cropping out in his nature at times. The pastor had been paying his attentions to a handsome and popular young lady who lived some distance away, but she was present that day; and he was engaged to be married to her, though congratulating himself that it was a profound secret in the community. "Uncle Dick" was usually rather timid about talking in public, and had never been known to volunteer to make a speech before. All were anxious to know what he was going to say, when he arose and began:

"Friends and Neighbors: We have a preacher sent us by the Conference—Brother Sanford. He is faithful and studious, and we must support him. The Church members have done what they could, and we are going to call on you outsiders to help all you can.

Here is Brother Stateler, who is married and living near us. Brother Clark also has a family and is settled in our country, and [casting his eyes back at the pastor and then across the room at the young lady, then with a smile, facing the audience, with a peculiar twinkle in his eye, he continued] there is some talk that Brother Sanford has notions of matrimony—well, he has as good a right to lead about a wife or a sister as anybody. I hope he will settle among us. Friends, let's encourage him."

It was a telling speech. Sanford, who was a modest man and highly esteemed for his integrity, sat in the amen corner with face buried in his hands, and his hands between his knees, while the deep sighs indicated his great distress of mind. The audience enjoyed the ruse and responded with a collection such as had never been taken there before. While much incensed at the time against "Uncle Dick" for "rehearsing the neighborhood gossip before a public audience," yet afterwards the young couple forgave him, got married, and many years afterwards were living happily together in Southern California.

As the people of Salmon City, Idaho, desired regular preaching, and no one else could be secured for that charge, E. J. Stanley included it in his circuit, though it required four hundred and fifty miles of travel on horseback across two ranges of mountains monthly to do so.

The Conference for 1876 was held at Colorado Springs. Bishop Marvin, who was just starting on a tour around the world—"to the East by way of the West"—presided. There was no representative from

Montana, though Rev. David Morton, who had arranged his affairs to come to Montana, was present and took an active part in the proceedings, and was appointed presiding elder of the Helena District, which now included the entire field in Montana.

The ministerial ranks were becoming somewhat depleted, but the increased appropriation by the Board of Missions to Montana (which had been secured through the earnest efforts of Bishop Marvin) and the appointment of David Morton to work here gave new courage to both preachers and people. Mr. Morton arrived soon after Conference. He stopped off the stage at Whitehall, where, supplied with an old-fashioned Kentucky saddle and bridle which he brought with him, he mounted a horse provided by the pastor and started out in true itinerant style to begin his work in the large district, preaching his first sermons at Waterloo, Silver Star, and Whitehall.

From there he proceeded to Helena, where he was greeted by a large audience on the following Sunday, after which he proceeded at once on a general tour among the Churches, traveling by wagon, stage, and on horseback. A man of great personal magnetism, his visits inspired the people everywhere with fresh life and courage. After making one complete round on the district, he took personal charge of the Church in Helena, but found time to visit the preachers occasionally and to assist them in their work.



REV. DAVID MORTON, D.D.

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CHAPTER XXVIII.

Rev. David Morton's Work in Montana—His Presence Inspires Confidence—Traveling the District—Work at Helena—Assists the Preachers—A Capital Joke—Montana Beef—Caught in His Own Trap—Called Home—Conference at Denver—Montana Conference Organized—Appropriation Cut Down—Trying Times.

THE career of Mr. Morton later in life confirms the judgment of Bishop Marvin as to his eminent fitness for the work assigned him in Montana. He was born to be a leader and knew not the meaning of failure. The entire West was as a new world to him. He had never been where he could see over the tree tops, and declared that he had never seen a prairie nor a prairie dog until he started on his journey to Montana.

But he was as sincere and unsophisticated as a child, and by observation, inquiry, and experience determined to ascertain the customs and conditions of the new life and adapt himself to them as far as possible. His culture fitted him for the society of the most aristocratic, while his simplicity and large sympathy brought him into close contact with those in humbler circumstances.

He was wise in planning, prompt and energetic in execution, and careful in looking after the details—the little things, so called—of life. By his wisely directed efforts the last installment of the debt that had hung as a mighty incubus over the church building in Helena so long was paid off, although he rented the

audience room overhead to the State Legislature during one of its sessions for a handsome sum, while he roomed and preached in the basement below in order to do so. It was of this experience that he remarked humorously to his friends that a Methodist preacher with hell beneath his feet and a Montana Legislature between him and heaven was surely in a precarious position.

Mr. Morton had a strong vein of humor in his nature and enjoyed a good joke, especially when it was at the other man's expense, which was usually the case. But on one occasion he was nicely caught in his own trap.

He was assisting the writer in a protracted meeting at Boulder City, a small town about thirty miles south of Helena, where he was universally admired, and during which time there were quite a number of conversions. One day we accepted a special invitation to dine with some bachelor friends, Mr. Morton remarking that he had never before taken a meal in a home where there were no ladies. It is well known that this class of men is numerous in all new mining communities. The sleigh, with its spirited team and jingling bells, which rang out merrily on the fresh, crisp air that bright December day, was well filled with guests—all bachelors except the guest of honor—and all enjoyed the ride to the country home, where the proprietor, Mr. Griswold, who was an excellent cook, had remained to prepare the meal. The table fairly groaned beneath its load, and chief among the choice viands was a dish of fine roast pork. Mr. Morton led in the conversation as well as in the other exer-

cises of the hour, for he was a regular and hearty eater. He had previously told the writer how, on the way over to Boulder, while dining at the stage station, in discussing the comparative excellence of Montana and Kentucky beef, he had gotten a good joke on a fellow-passenger and had a good laugh at his expense, and seemed much elated over his victory.

As the meal progressed and the spirit of good cheer prevailed, Mr. Morton remarked: "You surely have the best vegetables and the choicest butter and cheese in Montana that I have ever tasted. They are simply superb. But," he continued in a good-humored and half-bantering manner, "while you think much of your beef, fattened as it is on the rich bunch grass of the mountains (and it is good), yet it does not begin to compare with our superior blue grass beef in Kentucky—though, by the way," pointing to the good-sized chunk of rich, roast pork lying on his plate, "in honor to our host, I must say *this is the best piece of beef* that I have eaten in Montana."

Unable to account for the irrepressible smile that went round the table, while not a word was uttered in response to his challenge, though with a suspicion that something was wrong, and determined to find out what it was, he continued complimenting *the beef* and asking questions about the age of the animal, its weight, when butchered, etc., when Judge Sawyer remarked: "Mr. Morton, the boys are disposed to have a little fun at your expense."

"Why, how's that? What's the matter? Isn't this beef I'm eating?" quizzed Morton, somewhat excitedly, and with an air of astonishment.

"No, sir ; it's a piece of roast pork, and it was raised here in Montana, too," chimed in Judge Higley, who greatly enjoyed the predicament of the bantering parson.

A hearty laugh ensued, in which all joined but Morton, and he endeavored to, but it was not his time to laugh. He set himself up as a judge of meat, and without cause of provocation had challenged the Montana production, and yet gave evidence that he could not tell beef from pork, and of course he did not hear the last of it for a long time.

In the month of April, 1877, Mr. Morton invited several of the preachers, including Mr. Stateler, to assist him in a series of meetings in Helena. It commenced with a prayer meeting held in the pastor's study at which there were only a half dozen persons present, and there was not a word said about it in the papers. But the pastor and his assistants visited from house to house, commencing at the homes of the other pastors of the city ; sang, talked, and prayed with the people until the congregation doubled, trebled, quadrupled—the church filled, and the interest increased until Revs. Hewitt, the Presbyterian preacher, and Clark Wright, pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church, came and proposed a united effort for a general revival. The offer was gladly accepted, Mr. Morton declaring to the writer that it was just what he wanted. The plans were arranged, and the meeting was moving grandly forward with the prospect of moving the entire city as never before in its history, when Mr. Morton received word of the death of a nephew, under very distressing circumstances, in his

father's home in Kentucky, and which he regarded as a providential call for his return home, and so he took the stage and departed. The meeting continued for a week and accomplished much good.

Mr. Morton had become greatly attached to both the country and the people of Montana. He loved its grand, snow-capped mountains, its broad, fertile valleys, its exhilarating, health-giving atmosphere; admired the energy, activity, and generous spirit of its people; and it had been his purpose to bring his family to Montana and make this his permanent home, but decided that he was unable to do so. He never lost interest or confidence in the work in Montana, and never failed to talk, pray, work, and do all he could for it to the end of his life, and that labor was not in vain. He had a great admiration both for the character and work of Mr. Stateler, and also that of his noble wife, and he did much to awaken in the minds of the people a higher estimate and appreciation of the many virtues of the veteran pioneer, as well as of the other preachers laboring in the same field.

During the summer of 1877 a portion of the Nez Perce Indians near Lewiston, Idaho, began hostilities, murdered some of the settlers, and, followed by the United States troops under Gen. O. O. Howard, came by way of the Lo Lo Trail into the Bitter Root Valley, and passed through Montana and Idaho by way of the Big Hole Basin, through the National Park, Clark's Fork, crossing the Yellowstone, Musselshell, and Missouri Rivers on their way northward to the British possessions. Several battles were fought, in which many soldiers and a number of citizens were

killed. Several parties of tourists were taken captive, and there was much excitement among the people until the leader, Joseph, and most of his warriors were captured by the troops under command of General Miles in a battle at the foot of the Bear Paw Mountain October 5, 1877. This caused much excitement, and interfered no little with the prosecution of Church work.

The Conference for 1877 was held in August at Denver, Colo., Bishop McTyeire presiding. David Morton returned from Kentucky to attend the session, and was the only person present to represent Montana. He was elected a delegate to the ensuing General Conference, and L. B. Stateler was his alternate. Learning that there was some dissatisfaction at this action, Mr. Morton promptly offered to resign in favor of Mr. Stateler; but was urged by the latter to continue in that relation, and did so.

It was with a feeling of disappointment, and with no slight misgivings, that the preachers entered upon their work this year. The laborers were dropping out all the time, and there appeared to be none to take their places. Only five men were left in the field; and after uniting various charges and condensing the work as far as possible, five charges were left without pastors. E. J. Stanley served as presiding elder.

There had been quite a reaction for the better in the financial condition of the country. A very rich gold quartz mine, called the Penobscot, had been discovered. A gold brick, valued at sixty thousand dollars (the largest up to that time that had been molded), was sent East and attracted much attention among

capitalists. The silver and copper mines about Butte and at other places began to be developed, and a few large herds of fine beef cattle driven to the railroad in Utah and shipped to Chicago with a profit, together with the opening up of a vast extent of country—a fine cattle and sheep range—in the eastern and northern portion of the territory that had been occupied by various tribes of Indians, gave impetus to the stock business. Times were much more prosperous, and there came a new influx of people into the Territory.

But the preachers in the home Church still doubted the permanence of the work and hesitated, under the circumstances, to come and identify themselves with it. There was nothing left but for those here to continue their work with the determination to hold on and do all they could until help should arrive.

The new presiding elder gave himself entirely to the work of the district, traveling on horseback from Bozeman to Bitter Root, spending from one to two weeks on every charge each quarter, helping to raise the preachers' salaries, assisting them in revival meetings, and visiting the people in the unsupplied charges, supplying them as far as possible with the ordinances, and encouraging them to steadfastness in the faith and perseverance in the work. As a result of united efforts there were revivals in several of the charges in which were many conversions, and the seeming tendency to disintegration of the Church was arrested and confidence restored in more than one community. The presiding elder visited Fort Benton, then a flourishing town, at the head of navigation on the Missouri River, one hundred and fifty miles north of

Helena. The people were without a minister of any kind even to visit their sick, baptize their children, or bury their dead. They begged for a preacher to be sent there, offering to give liberally toward his support, donate a lot, and build a church. There were some substantial people, such as the Bakers and Conrads and others, who had been members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in Virginia and also in St. Louis, Mo., who had settled there. It was an inviting field, and its claims were strongly urged; but there was no preacher that could be found willing to say, "Here am I; send me."

The death of Bishop Marvin, which occurred at St. Louis, Mo., on the twenty-sixth of December, 1877, not long after the return from his famous trip around the world, cast a pall of sadness over the preachers, members, and friends of the Church throughout Montana, for they loved him most sincerely. Many of them had known him from their childhood. He had ordained a number of the preachers and sent them to this Territory, and he had been the first and only bishop in all these years to visit them on these extreme outposts, traveling hundreds of miles over mountainous roads by stage and private conveyance for this purpose. His voice was heard at the very front of the battle and in the thickest of the fight, inspiring and cheering his brethren on to sure and certain victory. He loved the people and work in Montana; they were on his heart to the last, and he expected to visit them again the following summer. He was bold to advocate their claims through the press and in the public councils of the Church. He believed it to be

the duty of the Church to provide for its children scattered through these mountains and appealing to her for help.* In him we had a true friend and brother, and no wonder our people wept bitterly at the news of his death. His spirit lives and his memory is cherished by hundreds of rich and poor alike throughout Montana.

At the session of the Helena District Conference, held at Boulder, in February, 1878, the Montana delegate was instructed to urge the ensuing General Conference, which was to meet the following May at Atlanta, Ga., to organize the work into a separate Annual Conference. With only five members to start with, it appeared like a hopeless effort; but it was believed by those on the ground that the permanence of our Church in Montana depended upon the success of the measure. It was carried through the efficient and persistent efforts of David Morton, assisted by other earnest and true men who ably advocated the measure.

Thus, after four long and weary years of anxious watching, working, and waiting, the request was granted. The child in Montana had received the recognition from the mother that it had sought so long, and was elated at the prospect of immediate and rapid growth. But as if the ordeal already passed had not

*So ardent was Bishop Marvin's devotion to the Montana work, and so deeply was he stirred by the indifference of many concerning it, that in a letter to the official organ of the Church he used in substance these strong words: "If our Church in Montana should fail, let this epitaph be written on her tomb: 'She was a vigorous and promising child, but died of neglect by an unnatural mother.'" But, thanks to a good Providence, there has been no occasion for any epitaph whatever.

been sufficiently severe, its faith, patience, and powers of endurance were to be subjected to another test.

Although by the hearty action of a decided majority of the General Conference, the highest authority in the Church, Montana had been recognized as a legitimate field of operation and worthy of the support of the Church, and it was naturally supposed that means would continue to be supplied for the maintenance and development of the work, yet the Board of Missions at once cut down the appropriation that it had been making to Montana for the past few years to one-third of what it was before. Thus it was expected that our struggling cause in this distant land, with ten charges to supply with preachers, some of whom it would be necessary to bring from the States and partially support for a while after they were here, should maintain and carry forward its work in a great and growing Territory with a missionary appropriation of one thousand dollars. This was less than that paid by the board of a sister denomination, in some cases, to one man, and a single man at that, laboring side by side with our preachers in the same field. Those who were responsible for this action were doubtless sincere and honest in all they did, but possibly they will never know the hardship and suffering entailed thereby upon some of our preachers, who could not get their consent to leave the field and thus abandon the few sheep in the wilderness. Yet with such a limited support it was almost impossible to remain. Their service would have been gladly accepted and amply compensated by other Churches; but they steadfastly declined all such offers and bravely stood at their posts.

CHAPTER XXIX.

First Session of the Montana Conference—Bishop Wightman Presides—Had Opposed the Organization—State of the Church—Difficulties Encountered—Determination to Go Forward—District Divided—Next Conference at Willow Creek—Bishop Keener Present—A Profitable Session—An Interesting Colloquy—Road Running Out—Sanford Locates—"Stateler Chapel" Dedicated—A Bishop Surprised—Liberal Collection—Fording the River—An Exciting Time.

THE first session of the Montana Conference convened in Helena, Mont., September 29, 1878, Bishop W. M. Wightman, of South Carolina, presiding, and was in session three days. Eight of the nine members were present—viz., L. B. Stateler, R. S. Clark, T. W. Flowers, C. W. Sanford, E. J. Stanley. Lay: Thompson Kemper, M. H. Spencer, a local preacher, and E. G. Brooke.

The Conference was duly organized, with L. B. Stateler secretary and John B. Taylor assistant. The committees and boards were appointed and the usual routine of business was gone through with.

On account of the recent and very liberal contributions made in the city and throughout the Territory for the sufferers from the yellow fever epidemic which was raging at Memphis and other large cities throughout the South, it was decided not to take a missionary collection.

At the General Conference four years previous Bishop Wightman had made a strong speech in opposition to the organization of a Montana Conference,

urging as one argument that it would necessitate a long, wearisome journey by stage across the mountains for one of the bishops each year to hold the session. Whether or not the appointment of the bishop to hold this first session was designed on the part of his colleagues as a kind of friendly chastisement for his speech or not is not known, yet it was a noticeable coincidence. And while there may have been a degree of secret satisfaction on the part of the Montana brethren, somewhat pardonable under the circumstances, at the fact of his being the first member of the Episcopal College to suffer the punishment he sought to avoid, yet the thought that possibly he was not in full sympathy with the preachers in their work was not calculated to arouse the greatest ardor at his coming.

In a talk before the Conference, the good Bishop, who was a noble, Christian gentleman, referred to his course in the matter and explained the arguments and motives by which he had been influenced. Evidently he was "of the same opinion still;" and while the brethren admired his frankness and courage, yet the inspiration and spiritual quickening which they received from his godly counsels and cheering words was, in their minds, a refutation of the arguments he had advanced in support of his position. But for the organization of the Montana Conference, which he had opposed so vehemently, they never would have had the benefit of his presence and counsels in the Conference room, his cheerful talks in the social circle, and his powerful sermons in the pulpit.

The Committee on the State of the Church took oc-

casation to mention some of the difficulties in the way of successful Christian work in this field. That the reader may understand more fully the state of things encountered by the preachers on the Western frontier at that time, a few of them are noted here :

In the first place Infidelity, unchecked by the force of public opinion that restrains it in old-established communities, stalked abroad, using all the craft and cunning that could be devised to accomplish its purpose, and openly denied and defied Christianity and made light of its time-honored usages. Many men would declare that, while religion would do well enough for old, settled communities, it would never succeed in the lively towns of the West. A tide of worldliness—a pleasure-loving spirit—swept the country like a flood. The great majority of the people who were here then came to make money, and how they could succeed in this object and have a good time, even at the expense of soul and body, seemed to be the highest aspiration of hundreds of people.

So strong was this influence that many who had been active workers in the Church, when and where they were supported by public sentiment and a strong Christian influence, upon finding themselves deprived of these helps, were carried away with it, and for the time at least lost to the Church.

Many young men, especially, were lost in this way. Coming from homes of refinement and being full of life and fond of society, upon suddenly finding themselves in a strange land, without access to refined Christian homes, with no churches to go to, and with open saloons, open gambling houses, dance houses, and other dens of infamy made attractive by every device that the cunning craftiness of the wicked one could invent staring them in the face, they would fall an easy prey to the tempter.

Then the unsettled condition of affairs makes it difficult to accomplish permanent results in a new community. People hesitate to put in their Church letters or publicly commit themselves to a movement when they are unsettled in mind. Many a preacher would have a large and promising congre-

gation on Sunday; but during the next week the mines would "play out," the mill close down, or a rich strike would be reported in a distant gulch, and by the following Sunday the preacher would find himself almost alone unless he too should pull up stakes and go with the multitude to the new diggings. This difficulty was avoided somewhat in agricultural communities, but not altogether.

The great diversity in the character and conditions of the people brought together in mining communities is also a great obstacle to speedy and successful work. Frequently there will be representatives of American, English, African, German, French, Swede, Norwegian, Danish, Hungarian, Scotch, Irish, Chinese, Japanese, and other nationalities in one small camp or village; and with all their differences of temperament, education, taste, custom, opinion, etc., it is no easy matter, even by the most skillful management, to harmonize and unite them in common aims and efforts—except in making and spending money. In the latter they are generally agreed.

But I quote from the report. It says:

"The lack of ministers to supply the entire field is another hindrance. Many communities have been almost destitute of preaching except as supplied by the presiding elder.

"Another difficulty in the way is that some of the popular diversions of the day that we discountenance are recognized and tolerated by others professing godliness, and many who are awakened under Methodist preaching seek Church fellowship in those organizations that tolerate the practices which we believe do materially interfere with the spiritual life of the true Christian.

"Another evil under the sun is the desecration of the Sabbath. We must lift up our voices against this evil, and hold the reins of discipline with a tighter hand.

"But this state of things is not universal by any means. There are a goodly number who 'cease not to sigh and cry' on account of the evils that abound, and their prayers and tears have come up before the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. God has graciously revived his work; souls have been converted

and believers stirred up to seek for a higher life. Sunday schools have been organized, and a greater interest awakened in the study of God's Word and in attendance upon the ordinances of the Church.

"We would urge that greater attention be given to Sunday schools and the religious instruction of children at home and to prayer and class meetings. Let us make it a point to hold class meetings even if but few attend. Strive to have a family altar in every Methodist household and urge a return to the old custom of fasting. We urge that the first Friday in each month be spent in fasting and special prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit upon our preachers and members, for the raising up and sending forth of more laborers into the whitening fields, for the general success of our cause and the spread of the gospel throughout Montana.

"We are highly gratified at the interest manifested in our welfare and the unanimity of action in the General Conference recently held at Atlanta, by which we were organized into a separate Conference, and fully appreciate the kindness of our friends who were so untiring in their efforts in our behalf. We have also appreciated the action of the Board of Missions in the support it has given to our work during the two years just past. But we are surprised at its action at the last meeting in reducing the appropriation as it has done. The General Conference recognized us as a Conference and as worthy of support, but the Board has cut off our supplies and refused the assistance necessary to man and successfully conduct our work. While we feel aggrieved at this action and think it will bring great injury upon our cause, yet we believe there is a work for us to do here, and we are determined to remain with our people who have stood by us in the trials through which we have already come and to go forward in our work, trusting for ultimate success to Him who said: 'Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.'"

At this Conference the district was divided. R. S. Clark was placed in charge of Helena District, also of Helena Circuit, while E. J. Stanley presided over

Deer Lodge District and was in charge of Silver Star and Butte Circuit. L. B. Stateler was returned to Willow Creek, his home charge.

R. M. Craven, who had been in Colorado for several years, returned to Montana this year, and was assigned to Deep Creek Circuit, in Missouri Valley. A very successful meeting was held during the following year at Duck Creek, on this charge, conducted by Clark and Craven, in which there were many conversions and a new society organized.

Bishop J. C. Keener held the Montana Conference in 1879. He visited Butte City and preached two sermons to large and delighted audiences on Sunday before the Conference convened. From here he traveled by wagon seventy miles, crossing the main range of the Rockies, fording the Jefferson River, to Willow Creek, the seat of the Conference.

The Conference convened in Stateler's Chapel on the 10th of September, and adjourned on the following Sunday night. The preachers were all present, but only three of the lay delegates answered to their names.

The first Friday of the following June was set apart by the Conference to be observed by all our people as a day of fasting and prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit upon our Church and ministry in Montana and for an increase of laborers in the vineyard.

C. W. Sanford, thinking it next to impossible to live upon the limited salary received, asked for a location. As he was one of the first preachers who had responded to the call and come to this field, had maintained his integrity, won the respect and confidence

of all who knew him as a sincere and upright Christian man, and remained at his post, bearing without a murmur the privations that had fallen to his lot all these years, his brethren regretted to lose him from the ranks, and Mr. Stateler and others indulged in a little speech-making, hoping that he might be induced to withdraw his application.

The Bishop, who had become enlisted in behalf of our cause here, and regretting to lose one effective man from the ranks, joined in the friendly expostulation. After speaking of the obstacles that rise in the path of a young married preacher with a growing family and a diminishing salary and how to overcome them, he remarked: "As I was coming across the mountains the other day, following the course of a little stream, we came to where the mountains rose up in great masses right in front of us, and it looked as though the road were going to run out and we should have to stop. But we kept right on our course, and were soon through the deep gorge and out into a beautiful, open country." He then made the application to the case in hand in a manner that he seemingly thought was too convincing to be replied to.

But Sanford was not to be vanquished so easily, and, rising, he replied, "Bishop, I was going up the mountains the other day, and came to place where it looked as though the road were about to run out; I kept on, *and it did run out,*" and sat down.

"But you were going the wrong way of the stream, brother. It will always run out going that way," replied the Bishop, rather surprised, but pleased, at this friendly sally.

"But, Bishop, sometimes they run out going down stream," remarked the preacher, still bent on holding his own.

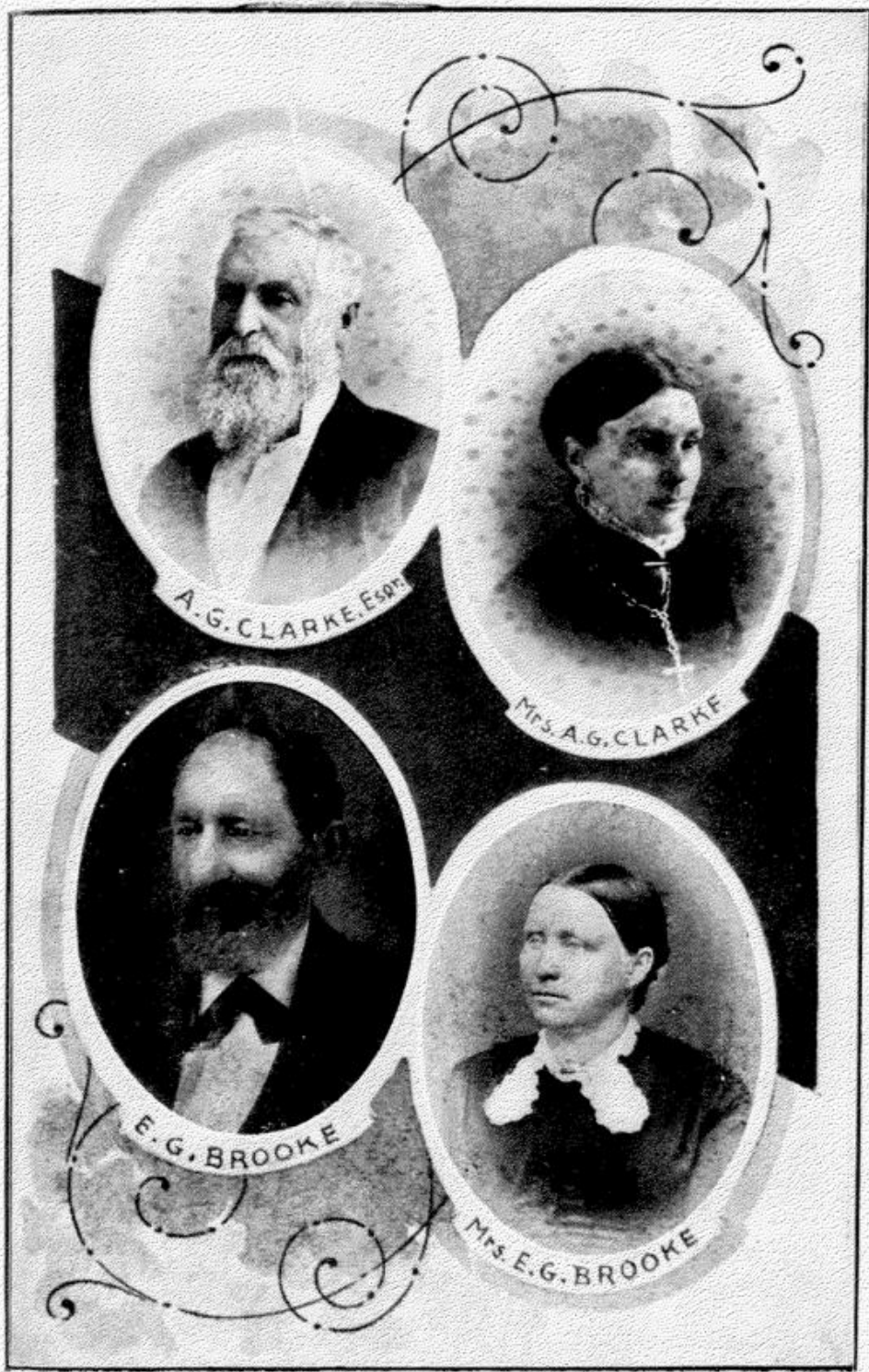
"Yes," returned the Bishop, shifting the figure from the road to the stream, "they run in the ground, and though they disappear for a while they come up again farther on; and so we will expect to see our brother coming up to Conference after a while to take work again."

The audience enjoyed the good-humored colloquy and considered it about a stand-off on both sides.

Brother Sanford located; but sure enough, after a year or so, he became dissatisfied with secular business, reëntered the work as a supply, and soon after removed to California, where he spent several years of active service on the Pacific Coast, and has since died.

The childhood home of Mr. Sanford's mother was one of Mr. Stateler's preaching places in the pioneer days of North Missouri. Though deprived of early educational advantages, Mr. Sanford had a well-balanced mind, was a close student, possessed of a cheerful disposition, and was a fair preacher and above reproach in his daily life. He had a way of telling a funny story that was always interesting and amusing. The climax was reached with an explosion of pent-up, half-subdued mirth, shaking his sides when laughing in such a mirth-provoking manner as to render it contagious.

This session of the Conference was largely attended by the people, who came in wagons from Helena, Butte City, Boulder, Whitehall, Deep Creek, Raders-



A.G. CLARKE, Esq.



Mrs. A.G. CLARKE



E.G. BROOKE



Mrs. E.G. BROOKE

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burg, Gallatin Valley, Bozeman, Gallatin City, Madison Valley, Upper Willow Creek, Virginia City, and other places, many of whom camped upon the ground in old-fashioned style. It was a real camp meeting Conference, and was a most enjoyable and profitable occasion.

Mr. Stateler and his family, Mrs. E. G. Brooke, of Whitehall, assisted by Mrs. Herndon, together with the hospitable people living in the community, made ample preparation and entertained, free of charge, the multitudes that came.

The good Bishop addressed many words of encouragement to the preachers in this distant field. His Conference talks upon the various interests of the Church that were brought before the body were greatly interesting and helpful to the large numbers of people present at the business sessions. One layman, A. G. Clarke, remarked to this writer: "I am so glad that I attended this Conference. It has waked me up. I had always thought that about all I had to do was to go to church and pay my quarterage. But I find I was mistaken. There is something besides this, and hereafter I am going to do more." After that he was a regular attendant and active worker, as long as his health would permit, both at the Conference sessions and in his Church at home.

The church building at Willow Creek, which had been erected chiefly under the superintendence of Mr. Stateler without any outside assistance except from neighboring settlements, was dedicated by Bishop Keener.

Prior to the meeting, the Bishop had expostulated

with the preachers for holding the Conference in a country neighborhood, rather than at Butte or some other large town, remarking that the larger collections to be raised at the anniversaries in the towns, if nothing else, would be a sufficient inducement for such a course, and stating with an air of triumph: "Why, just think of it! We raised a hundred and fifty dollars at the Conference at Denver City for missions." When the collection was taken at the missionary anniversary on Saturday night, it amounted to one hundred and sixty-five dollars in addition to what had been raised for missions on the various charges, and the Bishop had no more to say about the Denver collection or country-place Conferences.

Quite a revival spirit prevailed, and at the close of the session there were several accessions to the Church. This reminded Mr. Stateler of some of the camp meeting Conferences that he had attended in his early ministry in Arkansas and Missouri, only they were in a more thickly populated country and on a much larger scale than this one.

On the way to Conference, while fording the Jefferson River, the front wagon, in which the Bishop was riding, in avoiding a deep cut and dangerous current on one side, veered a little too far to the other and got into pretty deep water. Although it was not swift and not particularly dangerous, yet it was just a trifle exciting to those not accustomed to such experiences. The wagon behind, in which Brother Flowers and wife and Brother Thompson Kemper and wife were riding, followed in the wake. On striking the deep water, which came halfway up the sides of the wagon

box, Sister Kemper, who was naturally nervous, when she saw her baggage floating around under her feet, gave a scream, which of course attracted the attention of the entire company, the Bishop included. Brother Flowers had a dog with long, shaggy hair, bushy tail, and as black as a raven. His name was "Jeems." He attended at least four Annual Conferences, and was determined not to fail, even if he had to swim the river, in reaching this one. He kept right behind the wagon as long as he could wade, but upon reaching the deeper water and swifter current he had to leave his moorings, and floated out gracefully with the current from the rear end of the wagon, his raven hair forming a conspicuous object upon the clear, silvery stream as he was carried down and quartering across the river. The Bishop's quick eye caught the dark object, and he shouted with animation: "There! there goes somebody's bonnet floating out of the wagon."

"Bishop, it's only the dog swimming the river. There is nothing wrong," quietly observed the driver.

"Drive on, brother! drive on! What are you stopping here in the middle of the river for?" uttered the Superintendent with all the authority of a general giving directions to his soldiers, and with as much self-poise as if he had never been the least agitated and had never made a mistake in his life.

CHAPTER XXX.

Third Session—Bishop Doggett Absent—Dr. A. W. Wilson Attends—Mr. Stateler Presides—Fourth Session at Helena—Bishop Kavanaugh—The “Old Man Eloquent”—An Affecting Scene—A Congregation Convulsed—The Bishop “Converted”—Conference at Butte—Bishop Hargrove—A Friend of the West—Accompanied by His Wife—Church Dedication—Trying Times—Bishop Tuttle—Amusing Episode—“Rich Methodist Parsons”—“One-Horse Preachers.”

THE third session of the Montana Conference was held at Butte City commencing September 15, 1880. Bishop Doggett, of Virginia, was to have presided, but was prevented from coming by sickness, which, to the great sorrow of the Church throughout the land, resulted in his death. The people of Montana had looked forward with pleasure to the coming of this eminent, scholarly, and eloquent minister of Christ. Dr. A. W. Wilson, the Missionary Secretary, was present, and preached with remarkable eloquence and power to the large audiences that flocked to hear him. In the absence of the bishop, L. B. Stateler was elected President of the Conference.

Considerable attention was given to the subject of education and that of building churches and parsonages. During the year Rev. D. M. Conway had commenced a school in the basement of the church in Helena, which, it was hoped, would develop into an institution of learning of much larger proportions. E. J. Stanley had begun the erection of a church building at Boulder, and later on commenced another

at Stevensville, and by means of special appeals, made chiefly through the columns of the *St. Louis Christian Advocate*, for assistance in completing these houses, there was quite an interest awakened throughout the older Conferences in behalf of Montana and in the subject of Church extension generally.

A number of preachers were willing to come to our assistance; but the Board of Missions still refused to increase its appropriations to the work, and hence but little assurance could be given of a support, though the preachers on the ground were willing to divide the last dollar with them.

Dr. Wilson stated to the brethren that the Board of Missions had decided upon strengthening its work along a line extending westward from Kansas City through Southern Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona to Southern California, and that larger appropriations had been made to those fields. They seemed to think that Montana, Washington, and Oregon were too far out of the way for successful occupancy, and hence this broad field was virtually left out, the forces on hand being barely able to hold their ground and unable to do aggressive work. Of course the preachers here believed this to be a mistaken policy, but their faith remained unshaken, while they returned to their fields determined to work and wait for time and events to justify their course.

The district was again divided, Mr. Stateler taking the eastern end, called Bozeman District, and R. S. Clark remaining in charge of the western portion, known as Helena District.

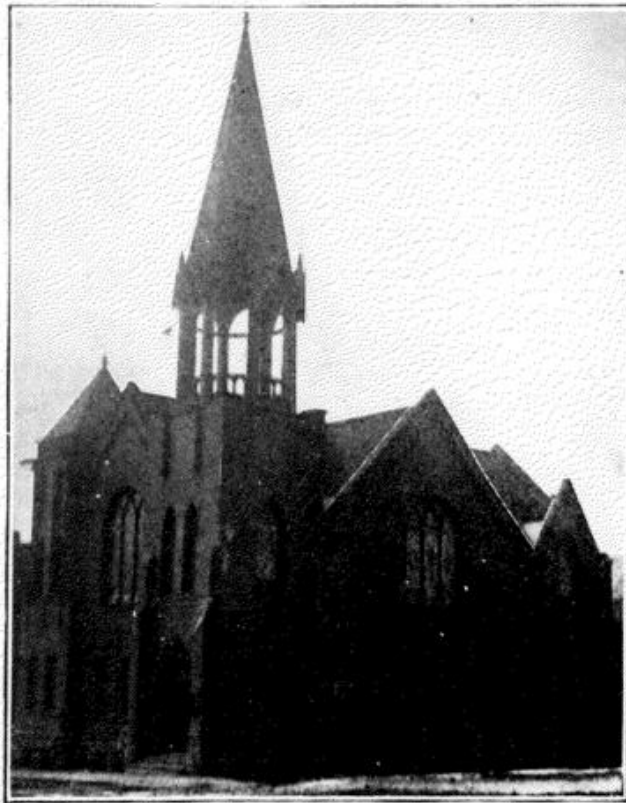
The venerable Bishop Kavanaugh, of Louisville,

Ky., held the Conference which convened at Helena October 14, 1881. He was met at Melrose, the terminus of the Utah and Northern Railway, by Brother Clark and conveyed in a buggy to Butte, where he preached two sermons of great spiritual power to the large audiences present. From there he proceeded across the main range of the Rockies through an unusually severe snowstorm to the seat of the Conference, arriving, as did most of the preachers, a day late, which was caused by the severity of the blizzard. But Mr. Stateler, finding that he could not face the storm in the conveyance by which he was traveling and reach the seat of the Conference in time, left his vehicle in charge of others and proceeded on the stage, so great was his aversion to being tardy.

Notwithstanding the storm, there was a good attendance of preachers, laymen, and visitors at this Conference. J. B. Whitford and J. L. Andrew, two young preachers from England, were admitted on trial. L. B. Stateler was elected clerical and E. G. Brooke lay delegate to the ensuing General Conference to be held at Nashville, Tenn., with E. J. Stanley and John B. Taylor alternates.

The Conference formed a Church Extension Board, with constitution and by-laws, and memorialized the General Conference to organize a Board of Church Extension for the entire Church.

During the passage of character, when the name of L. B. Stateler was called, after giving an account of his work the previous year, as was his custom, he referred in a most touching manner to the event of his reception into the traveling ministry, when Bishop



ST. PAUL'S M. E. CHURCH, SOUTH, BUTTE,
MONT.

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Kavanaugh, now present and presiding, was there and voted upon his admission. It was a remarkable coincidence, the meeting of these two venerable veterans of the cross in a Conference away here on the top of the Rocky Mountains, and many eyes were full of tears as in the chancel they greeted each other, shook hands, and renewed their pledge to be faithful until the Master should call them home. The Bishop remained on earth scarcely a year afterwards, preaching with great acceptability and power up to the last, when he was called away, since which time his old friend, Stateler, has also answered the summons and they have met in the "shining mountains" where storms never blow and where the sun will never set.

While Bishop Kavanaugh was humorous and always ready with an amusing anecdote when occasion called for it in the social circle, yet, so far as we know, he was not given to such things in the pulpit. But while preaching at Butte City, twice the audience was convulsed with laughter at the illustrations he used. Once in particular: he was discussing the advantages and blessings of a religious character and life. "Why," he exclaimed, "I have known a case in which religion saved a man's life;" and then told how, during the prevalence of the cholera epidemic in one of the large cities years ago, a man eminent for his piety and zeal in the cause of religion was stricken down with the dreadful plague. The family physician was called, and after a careful diagnosis pronounced the case fatal, though he hesitated for some time to break the news to the sick man, fearing, as doctors often do, the effect it might have.

"How long do you think I can live?" inquired the patient calmly of the doctor upon receiving the intelligence.

"Not more than two hours," was the grave response.

"Only two hours! Just think of it! Only two hours until I'll be in heaven! Praise the Lord! Only two hours until these wayworn feet that have long trod the thorny paths of earth will be walking the gold-paved streets of the New Jerusalem above! Glory be to God in the highest!" And thus he continued, rejoicing, clapping his hands, and giving vigorous expression to his joyful anticipations until, as pictured by the speaker, you could almost see the redeemed spirit, released from its suffering and wafted on angel's wing, sweeping triumphantly through the pearly gates and joining in the songs of the angels before the great white throne, safe forever from the sorrows of this sin-cursed world.

Then, pausing a moment and changing his tone somewhat, the preacher continued: "So great was the enthusiasm and excitement caused by a prospect of getting to heaven that it brought about a reaction, the disease was broken, and the man got well."

There was a mighty outburst of laughter all over the large audience, although it was only for a moment. Soon they were in a serious mood again and silently drinking in the wonderful truths proclaimed by this eloquent preacher.

The Bishop took a great interest in the work in Montana. He said that he had been skeptical about it, but frankly confessed that he was "converted." Since he had come and seen for himself he believed there

was a work here for us to do, and promised that henceforth he would assist us all he could. He was delightfully amusing and entertaining in the social circle. His missionary address was very instructive, but his sermons on Sunday—the first on “Repentance toward God and Faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ,” and the one at night on the “Being and Perfections of God”—were among the grandest discourses ever listened to by a Helena audience. He was truly the “old man eloquent” on that day. The thought that he was so near the tops of the “shining mountains,” where the atmosphere was so healthful and exhilarating, seemed to renew his youth and to give him clearer views of the greatness and grandeur of God and the wonders of redeeming love, which were portrayed in language poetic, chaste, and charmingly thrilling and impressive.

The arrangement of the districts and the appointments for them remained as they were the previous year, Mr. Stateler continuing on the Bozeman District.

The year following was one of special trial to the men in the field. S. J. Huffaker, who was expected to take charge of the school in Helena, in connection with the pastorate there, did not come. Mr. Conway returned to Missouri. On account of ill health at Butte, attributed to the climate, Mr. Whitford was changed to Helena, where he was kindly received, but which place he also left sometime before Conference. R. M. Craven did not go to his work, and became local. Mr. Andrew became disaffected, gave up his credentials, and left the Church, afterwards joining the Universalists. By using their private means and prac-

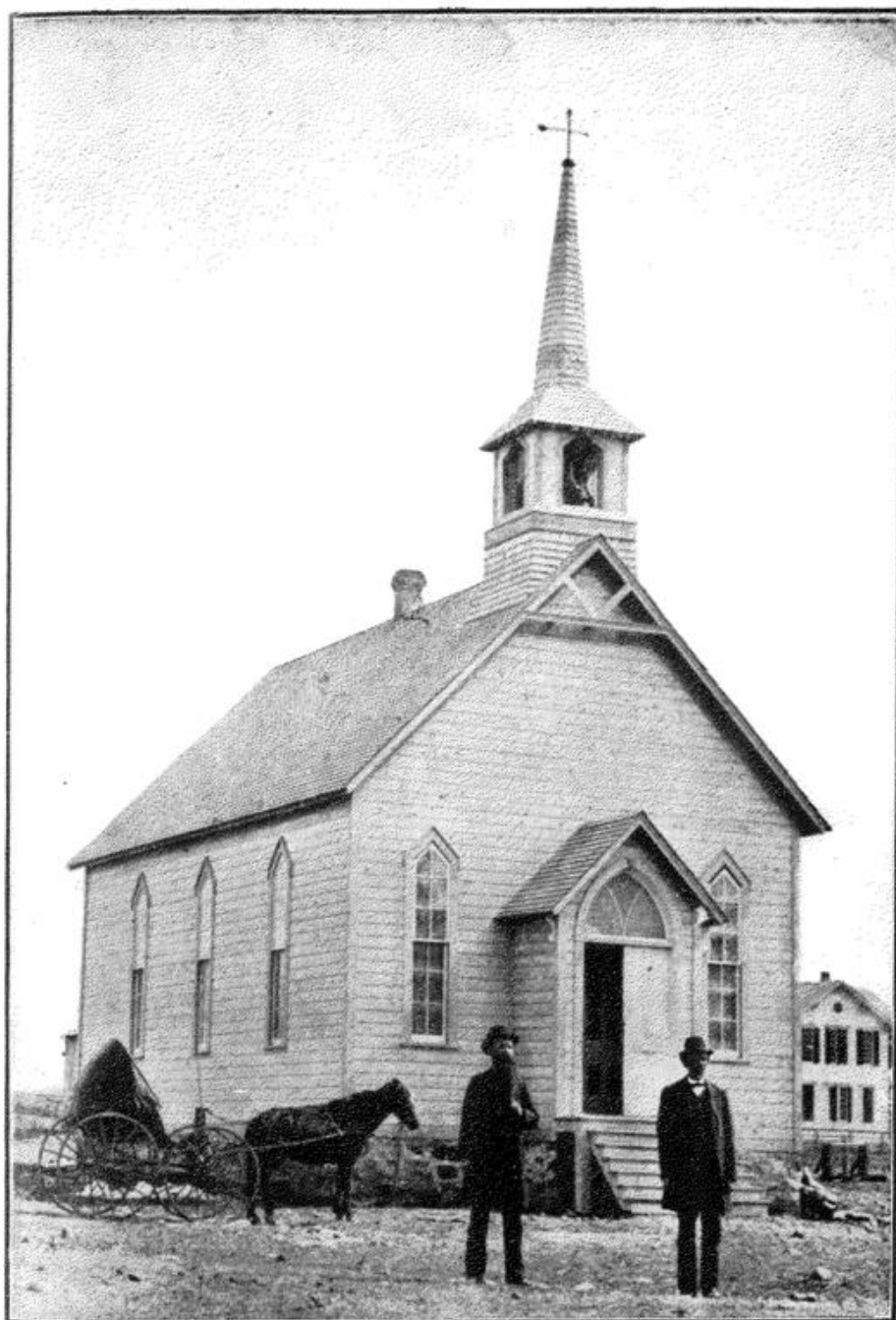
ting the most rigid economy, the other preachers remained at their posts to the end of the year, and met R. K. Hargrove, one of the newly elected bishops, who came to hold the fifth session of the Montana Conference, which convened at Butte City the 30th of August, 1882.

A new Board of Church Extension was formed, which was to be auxiliary to the General Board that had been organized by the General Conference, with Rev. David Morton Secretary.

There had been some prosperity and an increase of membership on the Stevensville charge, although the reports showed a slight decrease in the membership throughout the Conference.

Bishop Hargrove was accompanied by his wife, who had the honor of being the first wife of a Methodist General Superintendent to visit the Territory, and whose presence and cheering words did no little toward rallying the almost desponding hearts of both preachers and lay members. The good Bishop declared himself in full sympathy with the work in Montana and ready to do all in his power for its advancement. His sermons were listened to with great pleasure and profit, and his talks in the Conference room were very encouraging and helpful.

After Conference the Bishop and his wife proceeded westward by hack and stage to the terminus of the Northern Pacific Railroad in Idaho, and from there by rail to the seat of the Columbia Conference, on the Pacific Coast. They were among the first passengers over the new stage line through the Cœur d'Alene Mountains connecting the eastern and western



M. E. CHURCH, SOUTH, AT STEVENSVILLE, MONT.
The First Methodist Church in Bitter Root Valley. Erected in 1881.

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divisions of the great thoroughfare which was being hastened toward completion.

The Bishop turned aside from his course at Missoula to spend Sunday and dedicate a beautiful church building which had been erected at Stevensville. Quite a group of Flathead Indians gathered about the door during the service, and their presence seemed to inspire the Bishop so that he preached with great fervor and earnestness, after which a collection of five hundred dollars was quickly raised. It was a day of triumph for Methodism in Bitter Root Valley, and many hearts were made to rejoice.

Most of the preachers went to their fields this year without the hope of a dollar in the way of assistance from the mission fund, having left it all in the hands of Bishop Hargrove to pay the expenses of new preachers to this Conference. They "walked by faith and not by sight," and it is a wonder to this day how some of them continued at their posts. From year to year they had been encouraging the people to hold on just a little longer, in hope that the cloud would rift and reënforcements would be sent. But the people were now beginning to think that the words "to be supplied," written opposite so many charges in the minutes, simply meant "to be *un*supplied," and many were ready to despair of final success. But they kept at work; and although at times it was like hoping against hope, yet now and then an incident would occur to liven things up and let people know, at least, that there were Methodist preachers in the land.

The Protestant Episcopal Church was among the first to begin work in Montana, which was prosecuted

chiefly under the supervision of Bishop D. S. Tuttle, who prior to his call to the bishopric was rector of the church at Virginia City. His diocese included Utah, Idaho, and Montana, and his headquarters as bishop were at Salt Lake City. He would make annual trips to Montana, always in summer time, and hold services in every town, mining camp, village, country schoolhouse—anywhere that a dozen persons could be collected for religious worship. Every paper in the Territory was furnished with, and would publish gratuitously, his long list of appointments with the utmost promptness.

The Bishop was strongly built, with a ruddy face, vivacious temperament, cheerful manner, and was very sociable. He possessed a wonderful memory for names and faces, never forgetting anybody; would visit every house and call the children by name, noting readily any absent ones and promptly asking for them by name also. He was one of the most active, energetic, and popular men in all the country, and his coming was always looked forward to with much interest and pleasure by the people. He had a way of pressing people of all denominations, and sometimes preachers, into his service, not to preach, but to assist in singing, reading the responses, etc. For a long time it was common for other ministers to dismiss their services in honor of the Bishop's visit, and in many cases their churches were thrown open for his occupancy during these annual visits.

On one occasion the Bishop and his party happened to be in the Bitter Root Valley at the same time some Methodist preachers were visiting and preaching



“ ‘Perhaps you are one-horse preachers,’ rejoined one of the ‘parsons’ promptly and good-naturedly.” (Page 281.)

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there. The Methodists held forth at Corvallis and the Episcopalians at Stevensville at 11 A.M. on Sunday and were to exchange places at 4 P.M. The villages are fifteen miles apart; and although the road leads through a level and beautiful, open country, after waiting for dinner, it required a pretty good team and a lively gait to traverse the distance in the time allotted. The two parties of preachers met about midway between the places. It was a sultry afternoon. Two of the Methodist preachers were riding in a brand-new top buggy drawn by two horses, and were thus protected from the scorching sun and were driving at good speed. The Bishop, accompanied by two "other clergy" and a boy, was in an open, two-seated vehicle drawn by one horse that was much jaded and sweating profusely under the load that he was drawing. As they reined up for a moment's pleasant greeting and chat, the Bishop called out in a rather familiar and joking way: "O, you rich Methodist parsons, rushing along here in your two-horse buggy, while we poor Episcopalians have to go plodding along with one horse! How is it?"

"Perhaps you are one-horse preachers," rejoined one of the "parsons" promptly and good-naturedly.

"A-a-ah! that's it, is it?" responded the Bishop, with an air of surprise and a trifle crestfallen, followed by a roar of laughter from his traveling companions, which was kept up, the Bishop joining in frequently the remainder of the journey.

The incident, trifling as it was, spread through the valley, got into the papers, and was published far and wide, the Bishop enjoying and laughing more heartily

over it than any one else. Since then he has been called to the diocese of Missouri, where he is as efficient and popular as he was in Montana. He is remembered kindly by thousands throughout the Northwest, and doubtless he has not forgotten, as one of the Eastern papers expressed it, "How a Methodist parson got away with Bishop Tuttle out West."

CHAPTER XXXI.

A Notable Event—Completion of the Northern Pacific Railway—Conference at Stateler Chapel in 1877—Small Beginning, but Good Ending—Stateler Again at the Front—Conference at Stevensville—Rev. David Morton Present—A Great Meeting—"Delaware Jim"—Another Session at Willow Creek—First Parsonage Society Organized.

THE year 1882 marked the completion of the Northern Pacific Railroad. The event was celebrated with imposing ceremonies, including the driving of a golden spike where the eastern and western divisions came together near the crossing of Gold Creek—the stream in which gold was first discovered in Montana, in 1862, by a Canadian half-breed named Bennetsee. The exercises were witnessed by an immense crowd of people gathered from all over the country, at which President Villard, Gen. U. S. Grant, and many other prominent Americans, as well as a large number of capitalists from Germany, were present. A junction was also formed at Garrison between the Utah and Northern and Northern Pacific, which greatly facilitated travel and business of every kind, and helped to swell the population of the Territory, which now numbered fifty thousand or more.

Things looked pretty dark at the opening of the Conference held at Stateler Chapel, commencing August 15, 1887, with Bishop Hargrove in the chair. The only members of the Conference present at roll call were L. B. Stateler and E. J. Stanley. But there

was great unanimity of action. One member would make a motion, and upon getting a second it would pass unanimously. Other members arrived later, so that there was a good attendance of lay delegates and local preachers, among whom were A. G. Clarke, E. G. Brooke, A. Collet, and Revs. M. H. Spencer, H. W. Currin, and R. M. Craven. Rev. H. T. Burger, a member of the Columbia Conference, was present as a visitor and rendered efficient service in the pulpit. The people flocked in from every quarter; the Conference sessions and religious services were largely attended. The anniversaries of the Church Extension and Missionary Boards were addressed by Bishop Hargrove, and the contributions were quite gratifying.

When the Bishop announced the names of two new and efficient men who were to occupy leading charges, with the hope that others would come soon, all took fresh courage. Even at this late date, when so many golden opportunities of establishing Churches had been lost to us by the long delay of much-needed reënforcements, our preachers were still ready to leave all and go anywhere or do anything in their power for the success of the cause to which they had given so many years of earnest toil.

The Conference love feast on Sunday was a time of refreshing, and the Bishop's sermon on the office and work of the Christian ministry, as exemplified in the life of Paul, particularly his work at Philippi, was a most timely and powerful discourse, and did much to encourage and inspire the preachers present for the work before them. The Lord's Supper was adminis-

tered at night to the Conference, the large audience joining in the service, and several persons were baptized and received into the Church just before the appointments were read out.

Owing to the scarcity of men for the pastorate, and because the completion of the railroads had so greatly lightened the labor of travel through the Territory, it was decided to let one man give his entire time to the district, and there was no man so available and so competent for that work as L. B. Stateler, and he was appointed sole presiding elder for the Montana work.

If he could have been discouraged at all, there was surely sufficient cause for such a state of mind this year. The two new men did not come; and early in the year one of the old stand-bys of the Conference felt constrained to leave his charge and move from the Territory in order to prosecute a private enterprise, as well as to send his children to school, thus leaving his pastoral charge vacant. But none of these things moved the veteran leader. He traveled among the Churches, filling his appointments punctually, preaching and supervising the work with acceptability and efficiency. During the year he wrote some stirring letters to the Church papers East, asking for men to supply the work, and succeeded in getting two young men, E. L. Lee and J. L. M. Spain, who came from Missouri, and R. D. Woodly, who came from Arkansas, bringing his family with him.

Bishop J. C. Granbery came to hold the Conference this year, 1884. He dedicated the church at Boulder, preaching also at Helena, Butte, and Ana-

conda. He was accompanied by Rev. R. Boyns, a gifted preacher, late of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, England.

The Conference convened at Stevensville on the 21st of August, and was well attended. It was the first Annual Conference ever held in Missoula County, and was harmonious and deeply spiritual.

When Mr. Stateler's name was called, he represented the work on the district at length, and then referred to his long service in the traveling ministry of more than fifty years in a manner that brought tears to many eyes. He was still ready for any work to which he might be sent—still ready to go forth to the battle—and expressed the hope that it might be his lot, when the Master called, to cease at once to work and to live.

The presence of Rev. David Morton, the Secretary of the Board of Church Extension, located at Louisville, Ky., added much to the interest of the session, for he was a devoted friend of Stateler and a general favorite among both preachers and people. In a short speech he referred to the part he took at the General Conference six years previous in the organization of this body, and spoke with much emotion of the satisfaction it afforded him to be present with us at this time.

In his address on Church extension he stated that the movement resulting in the organization of the Church Extension Board originated in Montana, and that the Church in which this Conference was now convened was the second building aided by it—the one at Boulder being the first.



DRIVING THE GOLDEN SPIKE AT THE COMPLETION OF THE NORTHERN PACIFIC RAILWAY, NEAR COLD CREEK, MONT.
(From a Painting in the State Capitol at Helena.)

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The missionary anniversary at this session was largely attended, and of more than ordinary interest. The Bishop spoke of the great conquest that Christianity had made, the genuineness of conversions among the heathen and the evidences they give of a religious life, and of the spirit of Christianity, which is the only religion under the globe that seeks to bring the world under the influence of an all-conquering love. He called attention to William Geary, a Baptist missionary, to John Wesley, to the eighty-three Methodist preachers who met at Baltimore in 1784 and out of their scanty means sent two of their number to Nova Scotia, and also referred to the mission work of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in different parts of the world.

Dr. Morton referred to the beautiful figure of the leaven in the lump, the material developments of the age, and how they facilitate missionary work. He was glad that we were being recognized as a missionary Church. Our missionary work among the colored people was without a parallel in the history of missionary operations. The work among the Indians was marvelous. "Ours is the only Church," he asserted, "that has a Conference among them. Their present chiefs and leaders, many of them in the Indian Territory, have been converted under our ministry and educated in our schools, and among whom Rev. L. B. Stateler spent twelve years of successful labor as a preacher and teacher."

At this Conference E. L. Lee and J. L. M. Spain were admitted on trial, J. B. Whitford ordained elder,

R. S. Clark located, and T. W. Flowers continued in the supernumerary relation. The reports indicated an increase in membership and in almost every department of work. Dr. Boyns preached with much earnestness and effectiveness, and assisted in the meeting which continued several days after the Conference adjourned and resulted in a fine revival and many conversions. Altogether it was one of the most enjoyable and profitable of our annual gatherings ever held in Montana.

Here at Stevensville Mr. Stateler found an old acquaintance and friend, James Sarcoxie, a son of one of the chiefs of the Delaware Indians among whom he labored in Kansas. He had wandered into the West with some of the trading companies, and finally became identified with the Flathead tribe, was married, and had a large family of children. He was universally known here as "Delaware Jim," could speak English fairly well, had frequently acted as interpreter, was a great talker, and a rather noted character. Mr. Stateler, as was natural, took quite an interest in his old parishioner, and by writing letters to the tribe in their new home in the Indian Territory brought about a correspondence which resulted in one of Jim's brothers, an intelligent, well-to-do Delaware man, coming all the way to Montana to see him. While Jim was industrious and strictly honest, he was quite poor. He died several years afterwards, and his family moved with the remnant of the Flathead tribe when they left Bitter Root Valley to their reservation on the Jocko, a rich, beautiful country north of Missoula,

which, by the way, is soon to be opened for settlement by white people.*

Mr. Stateler was continued as presiding elder of the Helena District. Mr. Boyns remained in charge at Butte, preaching to delighted audiences until the arrival of W. H. Maxfield, who came from the Louisiana Conference in November. Mr. Maxfield was sick when he came, and attended but one service, from which he went to the home of Mr. and Mrs. A. H. Barret, who, with Mr. Boyns, the latter occupying

*The following incidents furnished by a white man who lived neighbor to Delaware Jim will be read with much interest. He says:

"The Catholic priest at St. Mary's Mission had his Indians far enough along that he began to talk to them about the advisability of their getting married in the regular way, and told them to come to the church, so many at a time, each day in the week with their wives and he would marry them.

"Jim came down with his squaw and said: 'Father, me and squaw come down to get married.'

"Father said, 'All right, Jim; but something else must be attended to first,' and explained to Jim that he would have to join the Catholic Church.

"Jim says: 'What you want, Father? You mean you want me to join the Catholic Church?'

"Father says: 'Yes, Jim.'

"Jim says: 'I'm no Catholic. I'm Protestant, and I no join the Catholic Church. If you want to marry me and squaw, all right.'

"Father: 'I cannot marry you, Jim, until you join the Catholic Church.'

"Jim: 'All right, Father. The Great Spirit married me and squaw away out yonder in the woods before we ever came here, and we married now, and I'm going home. Come on, squaw. Good-by, Father.'

the same room, gave him every attention possible. He grew gradually worse, and after a few days was called to his reward on high. He was born in Maine, converted in Louisiana, about twenty-eight years old, was earnest, consecrated, gifted, and promising. The people of Butte were greatly elated at his coming, and equally depressed over his sudden taking away. His death was lamented by all. The services held in his memory at the ensuing Conference were peculiarly solemn and impressive. He was the second preacher

"But later on Jim joined the Church and became a devout Catholic.

"One morning Jim's son called at our house when we were at breakfast and said: 'Friend, my father wants to see you; he going to die.'

"I told him that I would come right over. I immediately went to Jim's tepee, and found the old man lying on his bed, which consisted of half a dressed cowhide spread on the ground. He reached out his hand to me and said: 'Good morning, my friend. Me send for you; me going to die. Pretty soon me be gone to the Great Spirit. By and by you come to where I am. We see each other when you come. You have been good to me. I want to ask one favor of you: Me owe five dollars—two dollars to George Salsig and three dollars to two other persons [giving their names]. Me got one cayuse. Me want my boy to sell cayuse when I'm dead. I want you to tell me that you will see that when I am dead my boy sells that horse and pays them debts; and when I am gone, if ever you hear a man say Delaware Jim never paid his debts, my friend, I want you to tell him he's a liar! That's all, my friend.'

"He reached out his hand and said, 'Good-by,' and inside of twenty-four hours Delaware Jim was dead. And to this day I have never heard any man say that Jim did not pay his debts."

who had fallen in our midst. Both were promising, and both were called away ere they had scarcely begun their work. It was a strange providence. Mr. Maxfield's remains repose in the cemetery at Butte City, and an appropriately inscribed marble stone marks the spot. Mr. Boyns had to leave at once to take charge of a station to which he had been assigned in California. He was one of the most nervous men I ever knew. While praying he would sometimes stand by a pew, then put one knee on the seat, and then stand on it with both knees, then put one foot on the floor, then both, after which he would walk around, then come back and repeat the former movements—all unconsciously, it seemed, for at the same time he would be rubbing his hands, moving his head, and pouring out his soul in choicest language and the most fervent manner to the Lord. He was decidedly English, truly pious, intensely Methodistic, apt in illustration, a fine preacher, and, after laboring a few years in California, where he soon occupied a front rank among the workers there, he fell asleep crowned with honors and mourned by all who knew him.

Soon after Conference R. D. Woodly, who had been brought to the field at great expense to the Missionary Board, had been cordially received and kindly cared for at Stevensville, gave up his work and united with the Methodist Episcopal Church (North).

E. J. Stanley was absent from his charge a portion of the winter, attending the Centennial Conference held at Baltimore, Md., to which he had been appointed as a delegate, and visiting among the Church-

es; and thus a goodly portion of the field was left without pastors for a season, although there was a decided increase in the membership as shown by the reports at the following Conference, which convened at Willow Creek, August 6, 1885.

The brethren were glad to meet Bishop Hargrove, who came to preside over the Conference and was accompanied again by his wife. The Bishop was always a staunch friend not only of our work in Montana but of that throughout the entire West and Northwest; and never failed, when occasion permitted, to lift up his voice, both in public and in private, in its behalf.

There was a good attendance of preachers, a full complement of lay delegates, and, as was usual when the annual meeting was held at Willow Creek, a large turn-out of the people. Located so near the confluence of the three streams that form the Missouri River, and near the converging point of several large valleys, it was thus easy of access from many points. L. P. Smithy and William Hall were admitted on trial into the traveling connection, and W. W. Spain, late of Virginia, was readmitted.

The first parsonage in the Conference, built by a bachelor preacher, had been erected this year at Anaconda. The ladies present, aided by Bishop Hargrove and his excellent wife, organized a Conference parsonage society, the object of which was to encourage and assist in securing and furnishing homes for preachers, and which was the first society of the kind in the entire Church. Mrs. J. B. Taylor was President, Mrs. A. G. Clarke Treasurer, and Miss Lulu Brooke (later Mrs. E. J. Stanley) Secretary.



MRS. S. B. TABORS

MRS. J. B. PARNALL

MRS. E. J. STANLEY

MRS. D. B. PRICE

MRS. J. W. KEMPER

MRS. THOMPSON KEMPER

MRS. W. M. BRITT

SOME
MONTANA

HOME
MISSION
WORKERS

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The amount of one hundred and twenty-five dollars was raised at once to aid in the good work. This was the inauguration of a movement that has since grown to magnificent proportions under the head of parsonage and home mission work, and is destined to accomplish still grander results throughout the Church.

Rev. Jacob Ditzler, D.D., was at this Conference and made an extended visit through the country lecturing and preaching.

Mr. Stateler was again chosen to represent the body in the ensuing General Conference.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Conference at Bozeman—Trials of the Preachers—Stateler at Stevensville—Moves a Parsonage—Stricken Down with Paralysis—Conference at Helena—Affecting Scene—Bishop Hendrix Present—Conference at Butte—Bishop Galloway—The Superannuated Preachers' Benefit Fund.

THE ninth session of the Montana Conference was held at Bozeman in a neat brick chapel which had been built chiefly through the instrumentality of Mr. Stateler, who gave liberally of his own means and became personally responsible for the entire cost of the building. It convened on the 25th of August, 1886. Bishop Keener, the venerable senior bishop of the Church, was present and took an active interest in the work, and transferred to us from the Louisiana Conference A. C. Couey, a worthy and useful man, who was stationed at Butte City.

William Hall had withdrawn from the Church, and J. L. M. Spain had labored faithfully and successfully at Willow Creek until failing health compelled his transfer to Florida, where he died in peace a few years later. He was a devout man, and was greatly beloved by his people. J. B. Whitford was transferred to the Louisville Conference, and L. P. Smithy, a worthy and promising young man late from Vanderbilt University, who had accomplished a fine work at Boulder, was transferred to the Los Angeles Conference, where he died a year or so afterwards. R. F. Beasley was received by transfer from the Texas Conference.

The Church was making some headway in building houses of worship and parsonages. A brick church had been secured at Anaconda, a growing town, also one at Butte and Bozeman, a brick parsonage had been erected at Helena, and the latter place now offered to become self-supporting.

The entire Conference was receiving only \$1,000 from the Board of Missions, while other denominations in the Territory and other Conferences of our own Church in other portions of the West were receiving from five to eight times that amount. This course was proving very detrimental to the work, and resolutions were adopted earnestly praying the Board to make such provisions for the men in this field as would enable them to prosecute their labors free from any connection with secular business.

Early in the spring of 1887 Mr. Stateler was holding the quarterly meeting at Stevensville, in Bitter Root Valley, where he was a great favorite. A neat and commodious parsonage had been erected on the lot adjoining the church, and because of the lack of funds with which to buy more ground it was closer to the church—within ten or fifteen feet—than was desired. He decided it was too close for comfort or safety, and said it must be moved, offering to pay one-third of the price of the lot and to assist in the work. The people were busy, but there was no resisting his arguments, and the neighbors quit their work, came together, and rolled the new building to the new lot, the deed to which Mr. Stateler secured, and he went away greatly pleased, though fatigued and worn from the extraordinary effort put forth.

During the following summer, while at his home, Mr. Stateler was suddenly stricken down with paralysis, losing for a while the entire use of his right side, and for a time it was thought that the end was near. Bishop Hendrix made a special trip to his home, thinking he would not be present at the Conference. But under skillful treatment, with good care, and by the exercise of that remarkable will power that he always possessed, under the blessing of God, he rallied and made the trip to Helena, where the Conference convened the 15th of August. The opening exercises were very affecting. As the venerable patriarch of the Conference, whom we had scarcely expected to see again, entered the room with bowed form, limping on his crutches and supported by his faithful wife, he was greeted by his brethren with many tears. The scene was deeply pathetic, and showed the tender affection cherished by all for this venerable father in Israel.

The bishop read the twentieth chapter of Acts, beginning at the seventeenth verse, which describes the scene of Paul's departure from the Church at Ephesus when they all "fell on his neck, and kissed him."

The session throughout was deeply spiritual. Bishop Hendrix had been so intimately associated with Bishop Marvin, especially in his tour around the world, just before the latter was called to his home above, that his presence revived memories of the departed Bishop, who had gotten a strong hold upon the preachers and people of Montana. Then his interest in the work, his tender regard for the preachers, coupled with the marked ability and deep spirituality manifested in all

his ministrations, seemed to impart fresh inspiration to the workers.

Rev. B. F. Haynes, of the Tennessee Conference, was present and contributed much to the interest of the occasion.

W. W. Spain and E. L. Lee located, and A. C. Couey was ordained elder.

Parsonages had been built at Stevensville and Willow Creek, and a temporary home had been provided for the preacher at Butte.

Mrs. E. J. Stanley was chosen as the Corresponding Secretary of the Woman's Department of Church Extension.

W. M. Britt came from the Denver Conference, and was stationed at Helena, and B. E. H. Warren came from the St. Louis Conference, and was appointed to Bozeman and Willow Creek charge.

The district was again divided, Mr. Stateler retaining the Bozeman end, embracing a few charges convenient to his home.

To get more men for the work and assist in supporting them, Mr. Stateler this year supplemented the usual missionary appropriation (\$1,000) with a donation of \$600 of his own private means, besides giving his labor, for he was rarely paid for his services, often going forth to look after the interests of the Church when others would have felt it a duty to remain at home to take care of their health or their families.

When Bishop Hendrix came to Montana, he had full authority, if in his judgment it was considered best, to disband the Conference and use the appropriation, as far as it would go, in transferring the preach-

ers and paying their way to other fields. But the good Bishop came and saw and was convinced of the error of such a course, just as others before him had been. When he found that Stateler was not only not dead but was wonderfully alive, witnessed the devotion of himself and his heroic wife to the cause of Christ in Montana, saw that they had not only given much of their own means to the cause and were still doing so but also that as fast as they could realize from the few horses and cattle that had grown up around them and from the homestead they had received from the government it was their purpose to lay everything upon God's altar, and when he found other preachers and not a few laymen possessed of the same spirit, he was convinced that there was a field for them to occupy and a work for them to do in Montana. He also saw that the ministers of this Church were no intruders here. They had not waited until the field was occupied, and then crowded in to build on foundations laid by others. The veteran Stateler had come through a trackless wilderness, inhabited by savage foes, to get here, and his colaborers had helped to make the first roads and blaze the trails through the forests and over the mountains, preaching the gospel to miners, prospectors, teamsters, and cowboys in their cabins or in the open air before they had time to build cabins. They had braved the dangers, fought the battles, shared in the privations and toils that are now making the valleys to blossom as the rose. Under their ministry many of the first religious societies of the Territory were organized, and the first and most extensive revivals of religion were held, and their suc-



REV. D.B. PRICE.



REV. R. H. SHAEFFER



REV. R.B. SWIFT.



REV. W.M. BRITT



REV. A.C. COVEY



REV. C.W. SANFORD.

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cess, meager as it appeared, compared very favorably with that of other bodies of Christian people occupying adjoining fields.

The Bishop saw that what we needed was confidence among preachers and people in the permanency of the Church here, and more consecrated men to press the battle. Hence he determined that the work should be sustained, and at the next meeting of the Board of Missions the appropriation to Montana was increased to three thousand dollars.

Mr. Stateler, feeble as he was, and accompanied by his wife, who attended him wherever he went, made a trip to Missouri, and spent several months during the winter endeavoring to regain his health.

John Moore, an ordained elder of the Arkansas Conference, was transferred to Montana, and served part of the year at Deer Lodge.

The next Conference was held in Butte, commencing August 25, 1888, over which the able and eloquent Bishop Galloway presided.

Prior to the meeting of the Conference, some of the brethren had started a paper, called the *Montana Methodist*. It was adopted as the organ of the Conference, with A. C. Couey editor and W. M. Britt associate editor and business manager. The paper was first issued semimonthly and afterwards became a weekly, attaining a circulation of one thousand copies, and was a welcome visitor to hundreds of homes for a period of seven years or more, when the great financial pressure that came upon the country compelled its suspension.

At the earnest solicitation of Mr. Stateler, at this

Conference a board was created for the purpose of raising and administering a fund to be known as "The Superannuated Preachers' Benefit Fund," which was to continue a permanent investment, the interest on which was to be used for the support of superannuated preachers and the widows and orphans of those who had fallen in the itinerant work. He and his wife started the subscription with \$500 each, which in a few moments was increased by the subscriptions of other preachers and laymen to \$1,267. It has since been increased, chiefly by Mr. Stateler's bequest, to about six or seven thousand dollars. Mr. Stateler had doubtless witnessed the scant provision made by the Church for its worn-out preachers and the sufferings endured by this class of men, whose energies had been expended wholly in extending its borders and advancing its interests, and who were often left in poverty and affliction in their old age to get along the best they could. He recognized the obligation of the Church to provide more amply for this class of men and their families, and he desired that none who gave the strength of their lives to the Church in Montana should ever be left to suffer thus.

The spirit of good cheer prevailed at this Conference. There had been a decided increase in the membership. One new church had been built at Victor, in the Bitter Root Valley; the general assessments had been raised in full; and with devout gratitude for the success attending their labors the Conference joined in singing with much enthusiasm "Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow."

Bishop Galloway was one of the youngest general

superintendents of the Church, and one of its most eloquent preachers. His presidency, as well as his services in the pulpit and on the platform, gave great satisfaction. He dedicated the church at Butte, the debt on which, through the untiring efforts of A. C. Couey, had been liquidated, which, however, was made possible only by a donation from Mr. Stateler of five hundred dollars, which he had loaned the Church in a trying time and which he had borrowed, giving his note drawing interest at one per cent per month until paid.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Again Appointed Presiding Elder—Interest in Young Men—Mrs. Stateler Passes Away—Bishop Galloway's Noble Tribute—Conference at Stevensville—Stateler Relieved of Active Work—General Conference at St. Louis—More Interest in Montana—Conference at Deer Lodge—Bishop Hendrix Present—Stateler Active Again—An Ideal Preachers' Home—Montana Hospitality Remembered.

MR. STATELER was again assigned to the presiding eldership of Bozeman District. This was the last year that he was called upon to bear the burdens and endure the criticisms of this responsible office, and he experienced his full share of them until the last. So great was his solicitude for the success of the Church, and so intense was his interest in young men, that he was ready to take up and put forward every man who seemed to possess any qualification whatever for the work of the ministry. He would give the candidate a trial; and if possessed of anything like a right spirit, he would bear long with him. But if the young man was found to be perverse, unsound in doctrine, or otherwise incompetent, when the time came, he was ready to act in defense of the character and welfare of the Church.

Several men dropped out of the ranks this year.

Soon after Conference the Board of Church Extension made a liberal donation to the new brick church in course of erection at Deer Lodge. A number of new men were added to the list of workers. H. B. Cockerill came from the Kentucky Conference and was

sent to Townsend Circuit; J. H. Johnson came from the Memphis Conference, and was stationed at Bozeman part of the year; W. T. Goulder came from the Memphis Conference, and served the Whitehall charge; while J. B. Parnall came from the Missouri Conference, and served the Stevensville charge with marked ability and success.

Of all the severe trials that Mr. Stateler had passed through, the severest was in store for him this year: the taking away of his devoted wife. Owing to the severe bodily affliction that had fallen upon him, he had thought he would be the first to go; but it was not to be that way.

In February they both attended the District Conference at Bozeman, which occasion was a time of rejoicing for all who were there. I had never enjoyed Mrs. Stateler's company so much as at that time. Her womanly face indicated a sense of freedom from care, and gave expression to a feeling of joyful anticipation such as I had not before observed. She was greatly elated at the hopeful outlook for the Church in Montana, and expressed to the writer the desire that all that she had in the way of worldly effects should be used for the promotion of God's cause in the world.

At the meeting of the Helena District Conference, at Butte, in April, we learned of her serious illness at her home, offered special prayer in her behalf, and sent resolutions of sympathy. Only a short time elapsed until word came that on the 13th of April, 1889, her pure spirit had gone to be with the Saviour, and very soon thereafter this writer received the following letter, which gives the particulars of her last illness

and expresses in part the sense of bereavement and loss experienced by her husband:

Dear Brother and Sister Stanley: Yesterday morning my dear wife, whom you loved to call "mother," departed this mortal life and entered into rest. But, thank God! she is not dead—only gone before, and we shall overtake her after a while—not very long. I watched by her bedside for twenty days and nights. At times we thought the disease was broken and entertained hopes of her recovery; but it would take hold again, and continued until it wore her out; feeble nature gave way and her spirit fled. O that you could have been with us even for a short time and bade the trusting one good-bye! She often spoke of her trust in the Lord Jesus, using this language: "I am trusting, trusting, trusting." "Getting near the end?" I inquired, when with great emphasis she replied, "Yes, yes," and added, "I am getting anxious to go." She has now been gone thirty hours, and I have no doubt she feels amply compensated for all her labor and sacrifice in the Master's cause. And then that joy is eternal, that joy is everlasting. May we meet her there!

She had been a member of the Church fifty-five years. I saw her when God for Christ's sake spoke peace to her soul, and with what rapturous shouts she praised God for his mercies! Since that time I never knew her to falter in his service. She walked at my side in the toils of the itinerancy for fifty-three long years. She never said stop, never said it was too hard, though we were often very poor. She had gone beyond her threescore and ten, yet was very vigorous until smitten by disease within a year or two past. O how I shall miss her! Only the grace of God can sustain me. As you have known her long, I would thank you if you will write a suitable notice for the *St. Louis Advocate*. She received the kind resolutions of sympathy passed by your District Conference and expressed her gratitude.

My heart is very sad. I beg you and all my friends to pray for me, that I may not sink under the fearful distress that is upon me.

Your brother in deep affliction,

L. B. STATELER.



REV. E. J. STANLEY.

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Suddenly bereft of the wife of his bosom, with whom he had walked so long and upon whom he had depended for sympathy and care during his recent affliction, and being yet unable to walk without a crutch, no wonder he should be fearful of sinking. But he trusted in God, and had the sympathy of hosts of friends far and wide.

Bishop Galloway, in writing to the *Montana Methodist* soon after, said: "I see many things to encourage, but am very sad to read the notice of Sister State-ler's death. How vividly I recall her presence at the Conference session in Butte last July! So prompt and constant in her attendance on all the meetings, and so interested in all our work, she was a benediction to us all. The matriarch of our Montana Methodism has passed to the better land. Throughout her long and checkered career she was firm and loyal in her devotion to Christ, and unvarying in her attachment to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. For her Church she made sacrifices and suffered hardships during the dark days of war worthy of mention among the canonized saints of God in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. Her escape from her burning dwelling and flight to the far West and her heroic toils there for half a jubilee of years are written in the chronicles of the skies. To her venerable husband I offer a brother's sympathy. For him my prayers will be offered. May his eventide be light!"

The Conference was held this year (1889) at Stevensville. Bishop Granbery was to have presided, but was prevented from coming by the death of his daughter and the severe illness of his son. A member of the

Conference was chosen president. Mr. Stateler would doubtless have been selected, but the preachers desired as large a representation as possible in the "cabinet," where the appointments were to be made for the ensuing year.

Rev. J. D. Barbee, Agent of the Publishing House, was present, and by his wise counsels in the Conference room, his earnest and able sermons, and his strong faith and courage did much to atone for the absence of a bishop and to animate and inspire the preachers for their work in this great and growing Northwest.

A neat brick church had been erected at Deer Lodge under the pastorate of John Moore, and also a frame church at East Helena, chiefly under the wise management of W. M. Britt.

At this Conference Mr. Stateler was relieved of active work and appointed agent of the Superannuated Preachers' Fund. He was now at liberty to travel at large and visit and preach to the people, which he was ever ready to do as far as his health and strength permitted.

The district was again consolidated, and E. J. Stanley was placed in charge.

D. B. Price came from the Southwest Missouri Conference, and was stationed at Helena, where he was most kindly received by the people, and rendered efficient service.

The General Conference was held at St. Louis, Mo., in the month of May, 1890, and the Montana Conference was represented by E. J. Stanley, clerical delegate, and R. S. Clark, who had returned from Michi-

gan and was now serving the Church as a local preacher.

The Board of Missions began to realize the importance of the work, and was prevailed upon to double its appropriation to the Conference this year, thus putting it more nearly upon an equal footing with other mission Conferences, which greatly encouraged the preachers and people and strengthened their confidence in the permanency of the work here, and made it possible to enlarge the field as well as to make better provision for the men already here.

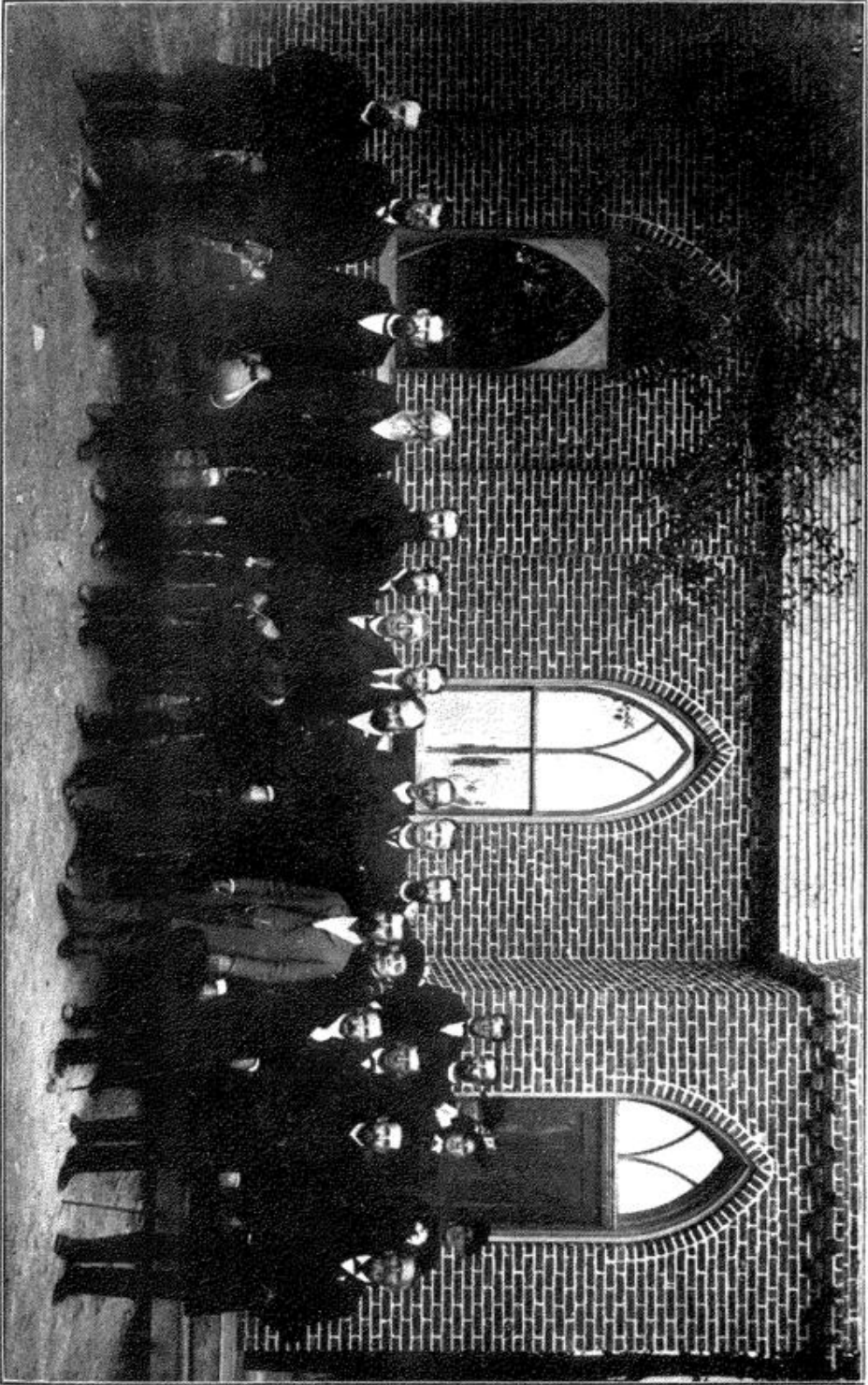
Through the liberality of Mr. Stateler in advancing several hundred dollars, a neat church was purchased at Townsend. A house had also been commenced at Belgrade and left unfinished and involved in debt. By the timely aid of the Board of Church Extension, together with the coöperation of the people, both of these structures, together with the one at East Helena, were completed and freed from debt.

Bishop Hendrix came to preside at the session of the Conference which was held in the beautiful new brick church at Deer Lodge August 7-11, 1890. He was accompanied by Dr. J. C. Morris, who had been elected Assistant Secretary of the Board of Church Extension, and who, by talking, advising, praying, preaching, and exhorting, won his way to all hearts.

Bishop Hendrix had lost none of his interest in the work. He had taken hold of it in earnest, and was determined to see it move forward. He was an expansionist in the true sense of that term. With map in hand he pointed out the new towns, mining camps, and settlements that were forming, and planned for their

occupancy by the Church. Especially did he urge the closing up of the lines between the Montana and the East Columbia Conferences. Hence the district, which now numbered nearly twenty appointments, was again divided. A. C. Couey, who had completed a four years' pastorate at Butte, was placed in charge of Helena District, and E. J. Stanley in charge of the Missoula District, which now extended westward across the Cœur d'Alene Mountains into Idaho and northward to a point in sight of the British possessions.

At this Conference R. S. Clark and E. L. Lee were readmitted into the traveling connection. John Moore was transferred to the Denver Conference, and E. C. Finley went back to the St. Louis Conference. W. M. Britt, on account of his wife's declining health, and much to the regret of his brethren, transferred to the Kentucky Conference. S. B. Tabor came from the Missouri Conference, and was stationed at Deer Lodge; and J. E. Squires, who came from the Denver Conference, was stationed at Butte City. Both of these brethren were valuable additions to our body. L. Bramble was transferred from the Western Virginia Conference, and stationed at East Helena and Alhambra. Mr. Stateler was assigned work on the Whitehall charge, where he labored with acceptability, making headquarters part of his time at the hospitable home of E. G. Brooke and wife, where he was always a welcome guest. This place had been one of the home stations on the old overland stage road from Corinne, Utah, to Helena, Mont., where the passengers would stop for meals, and in winter would stay overnight. It is a fact worthy of mention that in



THE MONTANA CONFERENCE AT DEER LODGE, MONT., 1890.

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the early days, when prices were high and meals were from one dollar to one dollar and a half each and lodging the same price, no minister of any denomination nor any Sister of Charity was ever charged a cent at this hotel. And from the time that Methodist preachers began to labor in that section it was the recognized home of the preacher (and his wife if he had one), where every want was anticipated and cheerfully provided for the same as if he were a member of the family, and without thought of recompense, save that which came from a sense of helping to extend the kingdom of Christ in this mountain land. When in the fall of 1897 the consecrated Christian wife and mother of that home passed peacefully and triumphantly to the skies, her departure was widely noticed by the press, and her loss deeply mourned throughout the State.

With such homes opened to them and such kindness and encouragement shown them here and there throughout the Rocky Mountains, is it any wonder that some of our preachers utterly refused to abandon this field and were willing to remain and continue the struggle as long as soul and body could be kept together? All honor to those noble spirits, both men and women, whether living in a costly mansion or a mud-covered cabin with a dirt floor, who have housed and fed and refreshed God's ministers in their journeys to and fro in establishing the kingdom of our Lord throughout this mountain land! Their name is legion. When they fail on earth, may they be received into the everlasting habitations above! Amen.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Memoir of Mrs. Stateler—Born in North Carolina—Her House the Preachers' Home—Struggles with Poverty—Life on the Frontier—Love of Humor—A Good Joke—Devotion to Principle—Pent-Up Patriotism—Voice from a Rocky Cliff—Amusing Incident—A Valued Souvenir—Devotion to the Church—Triumphant Culmination of an Eventful Career.

A CHARACTER so noble and notable, and a career so eventful, as that of Mrs. Melinda Purdom Stateler deserves and shall have at least one separate chapter in this humble volume. I knew her for eighteen years; and the longer my acquaintance continued, the more I appreciated her many sterling qualities and the stronger grew my attachment for her as a faithful Christian and a heroic and devoted servant of God and his Church. She was one of the first persons to welcome me to her home in Montana when I was a boy preacher far from home and without purse or scrip to procure those things needful for my comfort. She welcomed me as one of her own family, with her own hands cut and made my clothing, and otherwise ministered to my wants, and by her kind words and cheerful spirit did much to encourage and help the young preacher during the first year of his ministry in Montana. And the writer is not the only one who has been thus favored. From time immemorial her house was a preachers' home, and scores of itinerants and missionaries scattered from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, among them Bishops Roberts, Soule, Paine, Marvin,

Keener, Hargrove, Hendrix, Dr. Marcus Whitman, and scores of other worthies, will never forget the Lydialike hospitality dispensed by her in the days of old. She possessed intelligence and accomplishments that rendered her interesting and entertaining, and enabled her to make her home attractive, however humble it might be. She had the faculty of making her guests feel at home, and made hosts of friends wherever she lived.

Her life (commencing in North Carolina—she was born there—and extending over three score years and ten, fifty-three of which were spent sharing the toils of a Methodist itinerant on the Western frontier, and in the times when they lived and labored) was an eventful one indeed. She frequently made long journeys on horseback, or in a wagon without springs, and was often happy, after a long trip, to find shelter in a log cabin with a dirt floor and other accommodations of a like character. Reference has been made elsewhere to her work in clothing, cooking for, and instructing the Indian children. She frequently spoke of her sincere affection for the little urchins at the mission schools, many of whom have since become men of prominence among their tribes, and some of them worthy ministers of the gospel.

Mrs. Stateler was a woman of strong convictions and of undaunted courage, though not by any means to be numbered with that class often called "strong-minded." She was modest and unassuming, though eminently practical and full of energy and perseverance. She "tarried by the stuff," and looked after affairs about the place while her husband girded him-

self and went forth to the battle. She found ample opportunity for the exercise of all these qualities when her elegant and comfortable home at Tecumseh, Kans., was burned by incendiaries, she and her little adopted daughter Eliza barely escaping with their lives, and while making that perilous journey across the great plains to Colorado in the dead of winter, and from there through a trackless wilderness infested by savage foes to Montana, subsisting largely upon the proceeds of the milk and butter from the few cows that she was thoughtful enough to drive along, the particulars of which have been related elsewhere. It makes one shudder to think of the trials endured by those brave pioneers while seeking a country where they could dwell in peace and worship the God of their fathers with none to molest or make afraid. Mrs. Stateler used to tell of cooking by the camp fire when they were expecting every moment to be attacked by Indians. Well may it be said that such heroism is worthy of mention with that of "the canonized saints of God in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews."

In these struggles with poverty she had acquired habits of economy, industry, and such a disposition to look after things that some who had only a partial acquaintance with her and saw only this side of her character may have thought her worldly. But if there were such, later in life when they saw her lay all her substance on God's altar, witnessed her meek and patient spirit while passing through sore affliction, heard her words of trust in Jesus and her notes of triumph as she passed to the other shore, they were convinced of their mistake.

She was honest and unaffected in her manner of life. Once when having a picture taken the artist asked if he should not touch up the negative a little so that the wrinkles would not show quite so plainly in the picture. She promptly refused, saying: "I came by them honestly, and I am not ashamed of them." She was never idle; and later in life, when largely freed from the cares of earlier years, she would spend hours along the banks of the beautiful Jefferson River, which was only a few steps in front of her door, fishing, and many were the speckled trophies landed by her hook and line.

Mrs. Stateler was cheerful and lively, and was not averse to a little innocent mirth. Once while her sister, Mrs. Gray, was crossing the divide from Crow Creek to Jefferson River on a camping trip, when far out upon the high prairie the hay in the bottom of the wagon box caught fire from a box of matches that had been carelessly packed and had ignited, and the wagon was burned up with nearly everything therein, the occupants barely having time to unhitch the team. The bedding was first thrown out; and as there was no water near, it had been thrown in again, in the hope of smothering the flames, but only to be consumed with the rest of the stuff. When the party returned home on foot and reported the incident in detail to Mrs. Stateler, she saw only the ridiculous side of the affair, and, seemingly ignoring the loss of the wagon, laughed heartily at their conduct in first unloading the wagon and then piling everything in again, as if their object had been to feed the flames and have as large a bonfire as possible.

When the Statelers lived on Crow Creek, near Radersburg, their home was a convenient stopping place for their old neighbors on Willow Creek and Jefferson Valley while *en route* to Helena with their marketing. On one occasion, during the very severe winter of 1871-72, a man, a Brother Banta, was overtaken there by a severe snowstorm and was compelled to leave part of his load, consisting of dressed pork, which was deposited in an outbuilding. The pork was piled up by the door, where it remained until the cold relaxed a little, when the topmost, ugliest, hairiest, bloodiest, and most frightful-looking hog in the lot tumbled down, still frozen stiff, lighting on its all fours in the pass way, with mouth open as if thirsting for more blood, directly facing the door. It was enough to frighten an ordinary man when not expecting anything unusual. It so happened that Mrs. Stateler was the first to open the door, and when she saw the horrible-looking creature standing as if waiting to devour her, she was frightened almost out of her senses, uttered an involuntary "S-soo-oo-oo-ey," then laughed immoderately at her folly and carefully and quietly closed the door, determined not to be the only one caught in such a trap. In a short time Mrs. Gray, her sister, commonly known as "Aunt Sally," was on her way to the "cheese house," as the building was called, having been sent by Mrs. Stateler upon some simple errand. The day was bright and beautiful, and as she walked leisurely along the path, her fingers busy with the knitting she carried in her hands and her eyes feasting upon the beauties of nature, she was the picture of serenity and trustfulness. But when she opened

the door what a change in her attitude and appearance! "Soo-oo-ey! Soo-oo-ey!" she shouted at the top of her voice, with arms extended in a defensive attitude to avert if possible the threatened catastrophe—that of being devoured by a dead hog—while Mrs. Stateler emerged from her place of concealment nearby, joining heartily in the merriment furnished at her sister's expense.

"I'll get even with you for this, Mit," remarked Mrs. Gray, as soon as she recovered sufficient composure to speak. But she never made good her assertion. It was not easy to "get even" with such a sister.

I have spoken of Mrs. Stateler's devotion to principle. She was a Southern woman by birth, a Southern Methodist from choice, and cherished the sympathies and attachments peculiar to a strong and sensitive nature living at that time. The fact of her husband being forced, without good reason, to abandon the field that he had helped to redeem from the wilderness, and of their home having been laid in ashes, compelling her to seek shelter on the bleak plains in midwinter, would naturally tend to arouse a spirit of resentment. But while possessed of a womanly nature and claiming a woman's prerogative, yet in all these trying experiences she observed the proprieties of prudent speech becoming to her position.

But after they had crossed the plains and were safely sheltered in the rugged mountains of the Northwest, the pent-up feelings of her somewhat impulsive nature could no longer be restrained. One day, while she was out watching the little herd of cows and the

two faithful mares that had accompanied them (about all the property that had been saved out of the disaster) in one of the deep canyons tributary to Jefferson River, away where there was no human ear to be disturbed by the strange note, she raised her voice to its highest pitch and shouted "*Hurrah for Jeff Davis!*" with all the lusty life that thrilled her ardent nature, grateful to the Father above that she could give expression to her feelings where there was none to molest or make afraid. To her surprise, a voice came back from a rocky crag in the distance uttering the same words with a force and distinctness that at first startled and then pleased her. Discovering that it was only an echo, she repeated the exercise again and again. "I tell you, Brother Stanley," she remarked to the writer after relating the incident, "I thought I had never heard anything that sounded so well as the echo coming back from that rocky cliff."

Well, when Bishop Keener came from New Orleans to hold our Conference, as we were crossing the mountains not far from where the incident occurred, I told him the story, which greatly amused him. He laughed most heartily, and then remarked: "Well, I shall tell Jeff when I get back home (you know he is my neighbor) that he has at least one admirer out in Montana." I suppose that he kept his promise, for in the course of time there came through the mail a neat little package addressed to Mrs. Stater containing a photograph, cabinet size, of a fine-looking gentleman, on the back of which, in the neat, plain handwriting of the sender, was this inscription:

BEAUVOIR, MISS., December 7, 1887.

To Mrs. L. B. Stateler, with grateful affection and admiration both for herself and her husband, whose devoted service in the cause of Christianity is meet for a monument higher than man could build.

Faithfully,

JEFFERSON DAVIS.

While she was too noble-hearted not to appreciate such a token of esteem coming from one occupying a position so conspicuous, yet a sense of modesty prevented its parade before the world. She never even spoke of it to the writer, who found the photograph in the family album at the old home after both the inmates had gone to the home above, and obtained permission to take and keep it as a souvenir and reminder of noted individuals and incidents of nineteenth century times. This little episode is given here not with a desire to awaken or perpetuate any sectional or political prejudice, but simply as an interesting incident of long-gone years and bygone issues, illustrating the devotion of a noble-hearted woman and manifesting the manly bearing and refined Christian sentiment of one whose memory the people of the Southern portion of our great country will ever delight to honor.

The cause of the Master lay near Mrs. Stateler's heart. For it she planned, prayed, and labored year after year, and in her last conversation with the writer she seemed greatly elated at the prospect for the success of our beloved Methodism in Montana. She saw the Church of God extend its borders from the Mississippi, across the Rockies to the mighty Pacific, and acted her part in the grand conquest. Its complete history cannot be written without the mention of her

name. The strength of the last years of her life was devoted almost exclusively to nursing and caring for her husband after he was stricken with paralysis. She accompanied him wherever he went, by day and by night, and doubtless her faithful and tender nursing under the blessing of God did much to prolong his life, while possibly the heavy strain may have shortened her own. She has left a noble example of Christian fortitude and perseverance. The unrelenting force of her strong nature sustained her to the end. Toward the last her countenance wore a smile that betokened the complete triumph of divine grace and indicated perfect inward peace and joy—a sense of readiness to depart and be with Christ.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Closing the Gaps—Work in Flathead County—Church Built at Wallace—East Columbia Conference Organized—Montana Represented—Gratifying Progress—Stateler Attends Ecumenical Conference—Donation to Church Extension Fund.

REFERENCE has been made to the plan of Bishop Hendrix to close up the gap between Montana and the Conferences west. Those in charge of the work had not been indifferent to this matter. But it is well to note that just west of Montana there is a rugged range of mountains covering a vast extent of country, which for a long time constituted an almost insuperable barrier to any one but the Indian, the trapper, or adventurer, and offered but little inducement to the settler, as there was no market for the timber in the almost interminable forests found there. True, Lieutenant Mullan had built a wagon road across it in 1859-60 at great expense, but the tide of immigration seemed to have stopped short on reaching the eastern base of the Bitter Root and Cœur d'Alene Mountains.

In the meantime enterprising prospectors and business men were penetrating the wilderness both from the east and from the west. Rich deposits of ore had been discovered in the Cœur d'Alene country, and small but fertile valleys were found nestling between the great ranges. Settlements were forming, villages and towns were springing up. The iron horse was puffing along the valleys and threading its way through

the narrow canyons, and the steamboat was plowing its way along the rivers and lakes that abound here, laden with the commerce of enterprising people.

A settlement had been formed in what was known as the Flathead country, lying just north of the Flathead Indian Reservation and bordering on the lake, a beautiful body of water bearing the same name. Rev. E. L. Lee, a preacher then in the local ranks, had settled there and was followed by the presiding elder, who organized a class, then a pastoral charge, and later a beautiful church was erected chiefly under the supervision of Brother Lee, at Demersville, where there was a good congregation and a prosperous Sunday school. Bishop Duncan visited the place, dedicated the church, free of debt, and spoke encouragingly of the work. The trip to this region by steamboat across the lake was beautifully suggestive of a visit to the Sea of Galilee, and I never pass that way without being reminded of some incident in the life of our Lord connected with that part of Palestine.

The town of Wallace, which is the metropolis of the Cœur d'Alene mining district, was also occupied, although at first, prior to the completion of the branch road from Desmet to Wallace, it required a long stage ride over the rugged mountains, or a trip of several hundred miles around by Spokane, to reach it. Although it was in ashes when first visited by our preacher, yet a pastoral charge was organized, a commodious church building erected under the superintendence of W. O. Waggener, and dedicated by Bishop Duncan and supplied with a pastor from the Montana Conference until it was turned over to the East Co-

lumbia Conference, to which territory it rightfully belonged, as it was across the line in the State of Idaho.

Bishop Hendrix held the first session of the East Columbia Conference at Spokane, Wash., September 3-7, 1890. Spokane is only two hundred and sixty miles west of Missoula. Mr. Stateler had the honor of assisting in the organization of the original Columbia Conference, having been present at its first session at Albany, Oregon, in the fall of 1866. That work had grown and extended its lines, following the settlements eastward up the mountain sides, until, on account of the great distances to be traversed, a division had become necessary, and its representatives were now gathering in this new and rapidly growing city; while the work that Stateler had organized and fostered in Montana had extended westward, and was represented by one of its preachers in the person of the present writer, who was there as a visitor. I was entertained by E. P. Dyer, in whose home I had preached while traveling my first circuit in Kansas and in whose father's house Mr. Stateler had preached and been entertained on Big Blue River, in Western Kansas, when that country was yet a wilderness. At the time of the first Conference at Albany there were only a few churches, scarcely a dozen preachers, and five hundred members in all this Northwest. At the time of the Spokane meeting the three Conferences contained about fifty preachers and as many church edifices, valued at one hundred thousand dollars, with nearly three thousand members and as many Sunday school scholars.

It was cause for special gratitude that the ranks of

our advancing forces from the east and west, so long separated by great barriers, were being brought into closer contact. Enlisted in the same cause, fighting under the same royal banner, encountering the same adversaries, experiencing the same hardships and trials, and rejoicing in the same successes, it was a great pleasure, after the lapse of so many long years, to meet in this intermountain region, exchange greetings, talk over the past, and plan for the future. Like Paul when he met the brethren on his way to Rome, we thanked God and took courage.

The East Columbia Conference included in its territory the State of Washington, Eastern Oregon, and a good portion of Idaho. It was composed of as brave, earnest, energetic, self-denying, and spiritual men as are to be found in the Church. The reports of the preachers revealed extensive charges, abundant labors, limited salaries, but encouraging results in the way of conversions.

The following is a list of the traveling preachers and those on trial at that time: J. W. Compton, E. G. Michael, M. V. Howard, R. B. Swift, W. T. Haggard, G. H. Gibbs, P. M. Bell, J. W. Shreve, A. Y. Skee, Michael Larkin, F. C. Adkins, F. F. St. Clair, W. S. Hornbuckle, R. V. Crego, D. W. Yoakum, and Henry Barnhart.

Compton, Michael, Howard, and Swift were the acknowledged leaders, though there were younger men who have come to the front since then and made full proof of their ministry.

W. T. Haggard had been in the field but a short time and gave great promise of usefulness, but on ac-



COLUMBIA CONFERENCE AT ALBANY, OREGON, 1892.

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count of family affliction was compelled to return to Tennessee, where he soon stood in the front rank among the leaders of the hosts.

It has been a great misfortune to all the Churches in the West that so many preachers who seemed adapted to this kind of work and were acceptable to the people, and were so much needed, have for one cause or another felt constrained to return to the home land, while not a few others who were not so well qualified have been compelled to remain.

The session of the Montana Conference for 1891 was held at Helena, presided over by Bishop Duncan, at which time J. H. Johnson transferred to California and H. B. Cockrill located. The Conference expressed its appreciation of Brother Cockrill's high Christian character and regret at his retirement from the itinerancy. He died at St. Louis, Mo., in November, 1904, and the writer of these lines esteemed it a privilege to stand up at the memorial service held in his honor at Centenary Church and bear witness to the purity of his life and his devotion to the cause of truth and righteousness.

A. G. Clarke, of Helena, had been appointed by the bishops as a delegate to the Ecumenical Conference to be held in Washington City, D. C., that fall. He and his excellent wife attended the Conference. They were accompanied by Mr. Stateler. From there they went to Eureka Springs, Ark., where they spent the winter, returning home the next spring.

While at Louisville, during this trip, Mr. Stateler made a donation of five thousand dollars, in his wife's

name, to the Church Extension Loan Fund of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

Strange to say, he was severely criticised by a few persons for this generous act, on account of which he was deeply pained and justly indignant. In a letter to the writer upon the subject he said: "It [the donation] has reference to the diligence and attention of my dear wife to our domestic affairs while I was away from home trying to build up the Church of God in Montana." After a brief reference to the sad circumstances attending their departure from Kansas and their dreary journey through the dead of winter across the plains, he continues: "From those two mares which my wife drove to get her away from persecution and death, and the little bunch of cattle that she brought along, by which we were kept from starvation, came the herd of cattle and horses we had in Montana and which, by her attention and care, with the assistance of a hired man, grew into that which I sold after she was called away, and which brought the five thousand dollars which I donated to the Church Extension Board, and the one thousand dollars given by her and myself to the Superannuated Preachers', Widows' and Orphans' Fund. I feel that it is her donation and not mine, and I intend it to perpetuate her memory, and desire it to be known as the 'Mittie Stateler Loan Fund.' I am deeply pained at what has been written."

It will be remembered that at this time Mr. Stateler had given liberally to almost every Church and parsonage in the Conference, was always ready to head the list for benevolent objects, both at home and abroad,

had helped those who were his severest critics to the amount of hundreds of dollars, and had up to this time given more than five thousand dollars in cash to aid the work in Montana. He was very sensitive about such criticisms; and although he felt after this that his labors and contributions in behalf of Montana were not duly appreciated, yet he bequeathed one-third of his estate to the Montana Conference Trust Fund, and the remaining two-thirds, after all expenses were paid, to the Church Extension Loan Fund, at Louisville, Ky.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Conference at Bozeman—Mr. Stateler Retires—Sends a Missionary to Japan—Conference at Butte—Bishop Fitzgerald Presides—Conference at Corvallis—New Church Dedicated—Conference at Helena—Last Attended by Stateler—Goes on His "Last Round"—Visits Corvallis—Unusually Cheerful—Appointment to Preach—Taken Sick—Last Hours—Memorial Services—Funeral at Stateler Chapel—Last Resting Place.

THE fifteenth session of the Montana Conference was held in Bozeman, commencing August 10, 1892. Bishop Duncan was in the chair and W. M. Britt Secretary. At this session A. C. Couey was transferred to the Tennessee Conference, D. B. Price to the Arkansas, and J. B. Parnall, whose health had failed, and who was granted a superannuated relation, to the Columbia Conference. R. H. Schaeffer came to us from the Southwest Missouri Conference. The entire work was again thrown into one district, and J. E. Squires was made presiding elder.

Mr. Stateler reported that he had preached much, but had raised no funds for fear of interfering with the preachers in their regular collections. He consented, with some reluctance, to be placed upon the superannuated list. He deplored the idea of being considered noneffective, and frequently expressed the desire that he might cease at once to work and to live.

Dr. H. C. Morrison, Missionary Secretary, who was afterwards elected bishop, was present and preached with acceptability. Mr. Stateler made a proposition to the Board of Missions to equip and send a missionary

to Japan and become responsible for his support for a number of years. The proposition was accepted, and in due course of time the missionary, Rev. S. E. Hager, and his wife arrived at Helena, where they were met by Mr. Stateler, who procured their traveling outfit at his own expense, pronounced his blessing upon them, and sent them on their journey to that distant land. In previous chapters we have seen how he offered himself, and even begged, to be sent as a missionary to the Indians in the far West, and later how he offered himself and his means for missionary work in far-off Oregon. Now, after he has spent a long life in missionary service on the frontier of his own land, when he can no longer go forth in person, yet with his heart all aglow with missionary fire, standing almost upon the top of the great Rocky Mountains (for Helena is only a few miles from the main divide), in the midst of Churches that God has helped him to plant, and with the funds that have been saved by rigid economy, we now see him sending forth two devoted missionaries away across the sea to the Sunrise Empire—a land that was in total darkness and shut in from all missionary influence or contact with the outer world at the time Mr. Stateler first came West.

The *Montana Methodist*, in referring to the above incident, says: "We feel congratulated that Montana has two such representatives diffusing the light of the glorious gospel of our God among those who are away beyond the seas. May this prove to be the beginning of a great movement, and may our Montana cities become famous as outfitting stations for departing missionaries!"

Brother Hager sailed from Vancouver August 7, 1893, and at last accounts was still doing good work over there.

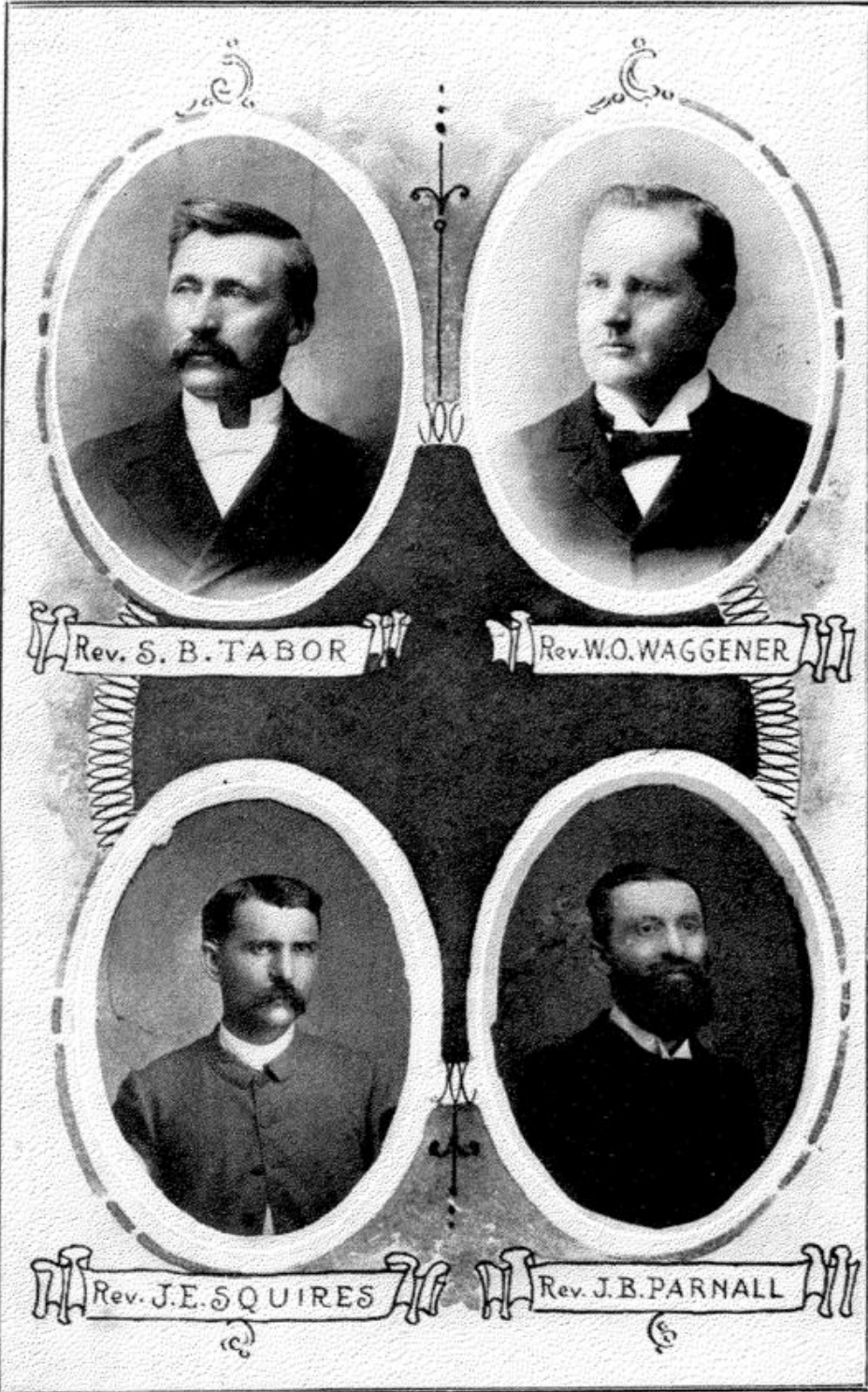
The sixteenth session of the Conference was held at Butte City, commencing August 16, 1893, Bishop O. P. Fitzgerald presiding and W. M. Britt Secretary.

Dr. E. M. Bounds, Assistant Editor of the *Christian Advocate*, Nashville, Tenn., was present, and by his able and impassioned sermons, his earnest prayers, and godly counsels contributed greatly to the interest and spiritual life of the occasion. Bishop Fitzgerald had always been such an ardent friend of Montana and the West that his coming was hailed with great joy, and his timely talks, interspersed with amusing anecdotes, and his Holy Ghost preaching, carried everybody by storm and made the session a delightful one.

W. H. Kincaid came to us from the Western Conference, and T. W. Alton from the Southwest Missouri; F. F. St. Clair came from the South Georgia Conference. M. H. Kauffman was admitted on trial.

J. E. Squires was stationed at Helena, while R. H. Shaeffer was appointed presiding elder of the Helena District and W. O. Waggener presiding elder of Missoula District. W. O. Waggener was elected clerical delegate to the General Conference, which met at Memphis, Tenn., the following May.

The Conference for 1894 was held at Corvallis, commencing September 5. On account of the great strike that stopped all railroad traffic in the West for a period, it was postponed about a month from the regular time. The session was held in a new building that had been erected that year. Bishop Fitzgerald was again



Rev. S. B. TABOR



Rev. W. O. WAGGENER



Rev. J. E. SQUIRES



Rev. J. B. PARNALL

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present, accompanied by his wife, and fully sustained the good impression made the previous year. Dr. David Morton, the Church Extension Secretary, was also present and accompanied by his wife. The principal event of the Conference was the dedication of the new church on Sunday by the Bishop, assisted by the Church Extension Secretary. The beautiful and commodious audience room was full to overflowing, the Bishop's sermon and his after talk while taking the collection delighted the people, the services were solemn and impressive, and the occasion one of general rejoicing and gladness.

At this Conference B. F. Bales was transferred from South Georgia, while the Conference lost three active and efficient men: W. O. Waggener, W. M. Britt, and T. W. Alton. Mr. Stateler was *en route* to this Conference, but was overtaken at Helena by severe illness, which it was feared for a while would prove fatal. Although unable to come in person, he sent a telegram to E. J. Stanley saying: "Put me down fifty dollars for your new church." There was yet other work for him to do.

In the early summer of 1895 he made an extensive and prolonged tour to and through Bitter Root Valley, visiting the hot springs on Sleeping Child Creek, hoping thereby to recruit his health, and preaching at Corvallis, Victor, and Stevensville, baptizing children, helping to pay off old debts on church property, and visiting, talking, and praying in the homes of the people, who, regardless of denomination, vied with each other in the welcome extended to him and the attention shown him, and where his presence seemed to

carry with it a gracious benediction and delight. It appeared that he had never preached with such clearness, fervency, and unction as at this time. There was a peculiar mellowness about his spirit, as of one standing upon the borders and catching the aroma of the better world, and his powerful sermons were listened to by delighted audiences wherever he went.

The eighteenth session of the Conference was held at Heiema, commencing August 1, 1895, with Bishop Wilson President and W. T. Goulder Secretary. There was a good attendance of the preachers, and also a number of visitors. Dr. W. B. Palmore, editor of the *St. Louis Christian Advocate*, was present, and by his able sermons and lectures added much to the interest of the occasion.

The Conference, in a suitable resolution, hailed with joy the presence of Rev. J. W. Compton, a visitor, who was recognized as one of the pioneers of our Church in the great Northwest and one of the stanch members of the East Columbia Conference, to whom was extended a hearty welcome. It heard with profound interest and deep solicitude the message he brought of the trials and triumphs of our cause beyond the great mountains, expressed its deepest sympathy with him and his colaborers in our sister Conference, and prayed that the time may soon come when we shall close up our ranks and join hands in the work of establishing our beloved Methodism in this great Northwest.

Bishop Wilson received a cordial welcome, and his thoughtful and powerful sermons made a profound impression.

W. G. Forbes, an earnest young man who had labored on Shields River charge the previous year, was admitted on trial into the traveling connection.

R. H. Shaeffer was continued as presiding elder of the Helena District, and E. J. Stanley was placed in charge of the Bitter Root District in place of S. B. Tabor, who was appointed to Butte City.

Mr. Stateler was present at the Conference, and, though in feeble health, manifested his usual interest in every detail of Church and Conference work.

His talks at Conference, when his name was called, were always listened to with interest; and when he would sit down, nearly every eye would be wet with tears. This year he felt that the end of the journey was drawing near. He had followed no cunningly devised fable. He knew in whom he had believed; and while he was not tired of life, yet most of those who started out on the Christian journey and had entered the ministry with him had gone before, and he expressed a readiness to depart when the Master should call.

Mr. Stateler spent most of the time that fall and winter at his old home near Sappington Station, on the Jefferson River, where a nephew, Mr. Frank Purdom, and family lived on his place and kept house for him. On the 3d of March, 1896, he wrote the following letter, which is possibly the last letter ever written by his own hand:

Dear Brother Stanley: Your kind letter came with the storm which shut us all in with the weather from eight to ten below zero. So you see it was not practicable to undertake to travel. I have been planning to come to you all winter, but

for unaccountable reasons have not gone. It is still in my mind to go before long—hardly practicable just now.

I rejoice at your success in getting the people converted [he refers to a revival at Victor]. May the good work go on until scores and hundreds are saved!

We were all saddened at the sudden death of Sister Clark. How lonely he must feel!

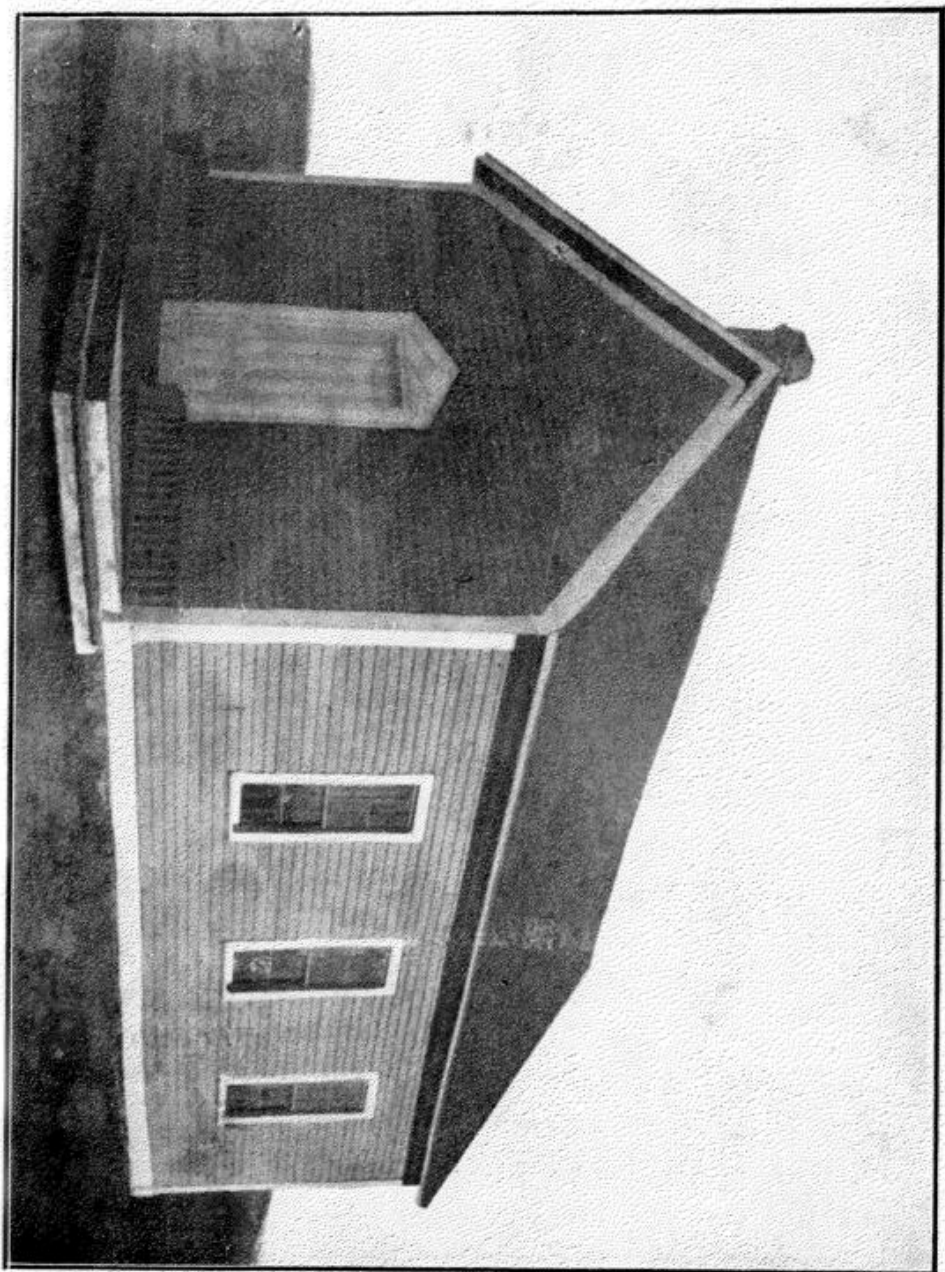
Love to all the family. Tell Stateler [a namesake] I am coming.

Your brother,

L. B. STATELER.

The "Sister Clark" mentioned was the wife of Rev. R. S. Clark, of the Montana Conference. She came to Montana with her husband from Mississippi in 1871, and died in Gallatin Valley while her husband was pastor of Belgrade charge, February 19, 1896. She was a lovable and beautiful character, and by her zeal and consecration, as well as by her cheerful and hopeful spirit, rendered efficient service in advancing the cause of Christ in Montana. Clark Chapel, on the Gallop charge, not far from Flathead Pass, in Gallatin County, was named in her honor.

Early in April Mr. Stateler went to Willow Creek and preached what proved to be his last sermon in Stateler Chapel, from the text: "Time Is Short." The next day he started on a tour of visitation among his friends, remarking that he was going on his "last round." He stopped in Helena, and came from there to our home at Corvallis, arriving on Wednesday night. There seemed a peculiar mellowness and grace about him, a singular charm, such as I had not observed before. But he appeared so vigorous and cheerful, and we enjoyed his company so much—talking about the Church, its past trials and future prospects—and es-



STATEIER CHAPEL, AT WILLOW CREEK, MONT.
Erected in 1873.

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pecially the family devotions, which it was such a pleasure to have him lead, that I thought he was good for several years of life yet. An appointment was made for him to preach in the church near by the following Sunday, but on that morning he complained of being unwell. The best physician available was called, and treatment begun, but he grew weaker, though we were still hopeful of his recovery. On Thursday he dictated two letters on business matters, one of which stated his purpose to return home soon. The same evening he walked to the dining room, declining to have the food brought to him, remarking, "I'm not that bad off yet," ate heartily, after which he sat at the table and chatted pleasantly with several friends for nearly an hour, and then walked back to his room.

On Friday morning he declined rapidly, early losing the power of speech, until shortly after nine o'clock, May 1, 1896, when he closed his eyes as if going to sleep, and without a struggle or a groan ceased to breathe, and his spirit fled away to its home in the skies. He "slipped away" without leaving a farewell word, but we "know where to find him."

Thus passed away this venerable man of God, the hero of so many conflicts—quietly, peacefully, and triumphantly. While we did not expect the event to come so soon, yet if it had been left to his choice, possibly circumstances of time and place for his exit could not have been more in harmony with his wishes. It was in the beautiful Bitter Root Valley, which Bishop Fitzgerald aptly styled "a slice of paradise," which he greatly admired and with whose people he loved to mingle. It was in the valley that was the

home of the Flathead Indians, some of whom made the long, perilous journey to St. Louis in 1832 seeking for the Book of Life, and whose Macedonian call kindled the missionary fire in the Church so wonderfully and stirred Stateler's heart so deeply that he begged to be sent to them at once. It was in a Methodist parsonage, whose inmates he loved as his own kindred, and who loved him as a father, and felt greatly honored in being permitted to minister to him in his last hours. It was on a bright May morning, when the buds were bursting, the flowers blooming, the birds singing cheerfully, and the sun shining through a cloudless sky, flooding hill and dale and the lofty snow-clad mountains to the westward with beauty and glory—fit type of the "unclouded day" in that "land where everlasting spring abides," and "where sorrow and death can never come.

Although fully aware that he could not remain with us much longer at most, yet the fact of his death came with a shock, and brought the deepest sorrow to all our hearts. My children, whom he loved so fondly, wept as if their little hearts would break. I could but exclaim: "My father, my father, the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof!" After an acquaintance of thirty-five years, and an intimate association with him of twenty-five, in which we had labored and toiled, often sleeping together on the hard ground, experiencing hunger and cold and fatigue, weeping and rejoicing together, during which time he had never refused a favor in his power to grant nor spoken to the writer a harsh or unkind word, the world seemed lonely after he had gone.

Revs. D. B. Price, T. W. Flowers, and M. H. Kauffman, who had been called by telephone early in the morning, arrived, when religious services were held at the parsonage and arrangements made for holding memorial services at Corvallis, Helena, Butte, and Bozeman the following Sunday at 11 A.M. The pulpits of nearly all the churches in the Conference were draped in mourning, for it was known that "a mighty man and a prince in Israel had fallen."

There were fully three hundred people, who had assembled from every part of the valley, crowded into the Corvallis Methodist Church at the memorial service, which was conducted by D. B. Price, of Stevensville, assisted by E. J. Stanley and M. H. Kauffman. The text was from Acts xiii. 36: "For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers." The discourse, largely biographical, was well prepared, ably delivered, and listened to with profound attention. The pulpit and altar were draped in deepest mourning, and the casket was covered with floral offerings.

On Monday, May 3, I started with the casket to Willow Creek, and was joined at Helena by Mr. Stateler's old and tried friend, A. G. Clarke, Esq., and at East Helena by Rev. E. L. Lee, arriving at Willow Creek late in the evening.

On Tuesday, May 4, the regular funeral services, attended by a throng of people, were held at the Stateler Chapel.

The entire country, for miles in every direction, turned out. The little chapel was neatly and plainly draped. The pallbearers were Joseph Tinsley, Wil-

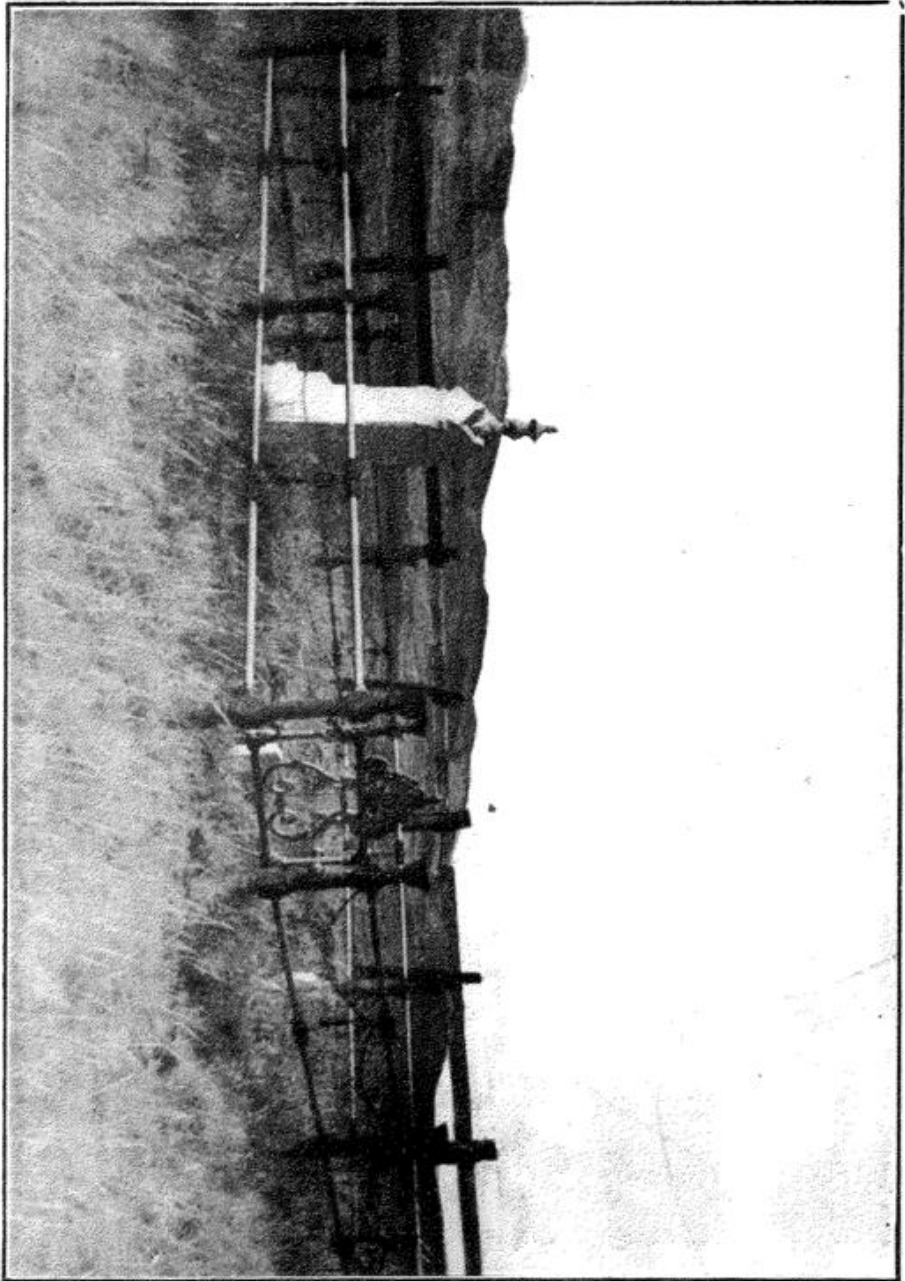
liam Tinsley, William Hankinson, E. G. Brooke, Levi Maxfield, and Henry Carroll, all elderly men and old neighbors and friends of the deceased.

J. E. Squires, E. L. Lee, S. B. Tabor, W. H. Kincaid, and E. J. Stanley assisted in the funeral rites.

Rev. R. S. Clark, the next senior preacher in the Conference, preached the sermon from Romans xiv. 7-9: "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living." The speaker seemed to be inspired for the occasion. The sermon was masterful in thought, excellent in diction, and impressive in its delivery—worthy of the theme and of the occasion. The sobs and tears of his brethren and of his neighbors who had known him so intimately for many long years were a fitting and noble tribute to the memory of this venerable servant of God.

With slow and solemn step the remains were borne to the little plot of ground on a mountain slope overlooking the chapel, which, like Abraham with the field of Machpelah, he had bought with his own money "and made sure," by the side of his beloved wife, who had preceded him but a few years.

It was hard to realize that he had gone; that we should see that manly form and kindly face and hear that familiar voice and those soul-stirring prayers and gentle, godly admonitions at our Conferences and in our homes no more. But his work was done. He had served faithfully his generation, and had fallen on



THE STATELER TOMB.

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sleep, and we could only bow in submission to the Father's will, knowing that, though he buries his workmen, he carries on his work.

Servant of God, well done!
Rest from thy loved employ;
The battle fought, the victory won,
Enter thy Master's joy.

The pains of death are past,
Labor and sorrow cease;
And, life's long warfare closed at last,
His soul is found in peace.

Soldier of Christ, well done!
Praise be thy new employ;
And, while eternal ages run,
Rest in thy Saviour's joy.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Mr. Stateler's General Character—A Remarkable Career—
Thoroughly Converted—Strictly Orthodox—A Good
Preacher—Full of Sympathy—A Man of Simple Habits—
True Benevolence—Dr. Hoss's Tribute.

IN many respects L. B. Stateler was one of the noblest characters that Methodism, or Christianity of whatever type, has produced in any age, and his career scarcely has a parallel. Leaving the plow in the furrow, mounting his horse, an uncultured but a thoroughly converted and deeply consecrated youth, clad in homespun made by his mother's hands, at the call of the Master he marched forth to the battle, and for sixty-five years, never sheathing his sword, he remained in the very forefront of the advancing hosts in the settlement and civilization of this great Western land. When at the end he laid aside his armor and peacefully fell on sleep without a struggle or a sigh, his features in perfect repose and his face radiant with the light of heaven, there was not a blot upon his escutcheon. It was impossible for him to do an unmanly thing. The luster of his pure life shone brighter every day that he lived upon the earth.

Mr. Stateler was not a man of great literary culture, having been born and reared on the frontier. But he had a strong will, good judgment, great common sense, a retentive memory; was a close and diligent reader and observer, and hence had a vast and

varied fund of useful information at his command. He had a kindly face, a pleasing address, and possessed conversational powers of a high order. Mr. A. G. Clarke said that during the winter they spent together at Hot Springs, Ark., he would spend a portion of every day in Mr. Stateler's room hearing him talk, and that he was always interesting and had something new to tell every time he would go to his room.

He was thoroughly converted, had a deep and abiding sense of his call to the ministry, lived in close communion with his Lord, and was ever ready, on short notice, to deliver his message to dying men. While he was not abrupt or offensive in urging his peculiar views upon others, yet he sought in some way to impress upon those with whom he came in contact in private life the importance of being in right relations with God. I have heard men who had stopped at his house overnight speak gratefully of the fatherly interest he had manifested in their spiritual welfare.

He studied the Scriptures closely, understood the doctrines of his Church, was ever ready to defend them, and loved to preach them, especially those relating to the goodness and love of God in providing a free and full salvation for every man, the complete regeneration of the heart, and the inward consciousness of acceptance with God.

He was quite orthodox according to the old standards of interpretation of scriptural doctrine; and felt pained when he heard anything, especially from a Methodist pulpit or preacher, that even seemed to inveigh against "total depravity," the vicarious nature of the atonement, or the goodness and graciousness of

God as the chief incentive in leading sinners to repentance.

On one occasion we had assembled in a church building owned by another denomination (whose ministers had frequently used our churches) to hold quarterly meeting. There was a blackboard fastened in a frame that stood against the wall in the corner of the church by the pulpit. It had some diagrams and propositions upon it, used presumably by the pastor of the Church, that were quite contrary to Mr. Stater's ideas of Scripture teaching. I observed him eying the board rather closely, saw that he was not exactly pleased with the situation, and was curious to know what he would do. I was not long in finding out. Just before beginning the service he deliberately arose from his seat, took hold of the uprights that supported the blackboard with much of the resolution with which I imagine Samson took hold of the pillars of the Philistine temple, raised it from the floor and quietly turned the board around with its face to the wall, and then, with a satisfied expression, he commenced the service and preached a telling sermon on regeneration and a conscious witness of the Spirit. The episode indicated his true character. While he did not wish to give offense, yet he could not and would not stand by what he believed to be erroneous teaching.

Preaching was preëminently his business. I never heard him preach a poor sermon, and the last that I heard him preach was the best. He often spoke of how his labors among the Indians in his earlier life, just when his habits were forming, preaching through an interpreter, had impaired his ready utterance, thus

militating against his usefulness as a preacher to white people, and stating that it was late in life before he fully recovered from it.

He possessed great faith, much patience, a strong and healthy physical frame, and wonderful energy and power of endurance. He had imbibed largely of the spirit of Asbury and McKendree, and believed that the cause of God should be maintained whether the men in charge had an easy time or not. He was not the man to take "the sulks" or give up the work because his salary was not paid promptly. If the people did not support him, he generally devised some other way to get along, and he thought that other brethren were able to do the same thing if they loved the Church as they ought. Hence he was sometimes criticised in his arrangements for carrying on the work.

He believed in expansion, and deplored the disposition among some of the brethren to abandon outlying fields and draw in the lines. In his last conversation about Church matters, while discussing this subject, he remarked with emphasis, "If we do not quit this drawing in, and begin trying to extend our work, we shall die," and he was right.

He was naturally gentle, kind, and tender-hearted, won the hearts of the children and young people wherever he went, and made pets of the fowls and domestic animals about his home. It was really touching to witness the tenderness with which he treated and talked of "Mary" and "Jennie," the two faithful mares that brought them across the plains, and which lived to be twenty-five years old and were granted an honorable burial; and also to observe his regard for "Jeff" and

"Tobe," the horses that he either rode or drove on his long journeys before railroads were known in Montana. One of the severest expressions I ever heard him use was concerning a preacher who had mistreated one of his horses, kindly and freely furnished for the use of the circuit rider.

It was interesting to note his kindness and attention to the people in his employ, no matter how lowly or humble their circumstances in life. For several years there lived with him in his Montana home a Mexican man of humble birth, who possessed common sense and was the soul of honesty and integrity. His name was John Bapteese, but he was commonly known as "Mexican John." Mr. Stateler trusted him as a son. His speech was broken, but he would generally make himself understood. Once in describing the circuit preacher, who happened to be absent at the time, he called him "de man what belongee to de bald horse," meaning the man who owned the bald-faced horse. Once when I was helping him haul in some hay from the meadow, he took occasion to remark: "Longee time de grass he no grow here. Heap dry. Sun burn him up. But Mr. Stateler makee fence, diggee ditch, and de creek he come along and spillee all out, and now de grass grow big and makee heap hay for dem cattles."

Later on, with the advice and help of Mr. Stateler, John got a piece of land of his own near by, gathered some stock around him, and was fairly prosperous until he was stricken with blindness, when he traded his possessions for a home with a kind family, who cared for him the remainder of his life. He remem-

bered Mr. Stateler, whom he survived for a few years, with the greatest affection and esteem, and at his death the present writer went thirty miles to officiate at his funeral, which was held in Stateler Chapel and was largely attended by the best people in the community, whose tears and other expressions of esteem for a poor man of a foreign race and a strange tongue, of whose birthplace or parentage little or nothing was known, were a tribute to honesty and simplicity of life that were refreshing to behold and are pleasant to remember. If Mr. Stateler had survived his friend John, he would have been the chief mourner in that procession.

Mr. Stateler was sometimes criticised for the rigid economy which he practiced in everyday life, and which was kept up till the day of his death. It must be remembered, however, that he had acquired such habits when they were a necessity; and now he kept them up, as he stated to the writer more than once, that he might have the more to give to some commendable and worthy object, and as a result he gave between twenty and twenty-five thousand dollars to benevolent objects—all that he had except a few small bequests to relatives and what was necessary to meet his burial and other necessary expenses.

The following letter, sent by Rev. W. M. Britt, who was at that time pastor of the Church at Deer Lodge, illustrates the quiet, practical, and cheerful way he had of rendering help where he thought it was needed. He says:

Dear Brother Britt: Brother Stanley told me sometime ago that you were hard pressed to meet your payment on the

church debt, and, not having the money, I borrowed it, and send you herewith a little check to help you out. This completes an interest I have in every church building belonging to the M. E. Church, South, in Montana. I am glad I can thus speak. God bless you in your labor of love for the Lord Jesus! Kindest regards to Sister B.

Your brother,

L. B. STATELER.

The "little check" was for fifty dollars.

Another letter, addressed to the writer while editor of the *Montana Methodist*, which had recently been changed to a weekly publication, reveals the innate kindness and deep spirituality of his nature. It is as follows:

Dear Brother Stanley: The *Methodist*, since it became a weekly, comes regularly and is in good time, and I think the patrons ought to be satisfied—yea, pleased—and the subscriptions ought greatly to increase. I am so situated that I cannot do much toward getting subscribers for the paper. I propose, however, to do this: I inclose ten dollars, and wish you to send ten copies for one year to ten poor widows or to other persons who would like to read the paper, but are unable to pay for it. This will help a little in meeting the increased expense of publication.

I want to say in conclusion that my face is still toward the mount of God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and my hope of immortality and eternal life is very steadfast. The larger part of my old companions are on the other shore, safe at home, and I am pressing on to overtake them.

O, think what a shout of victory we will raise when we get home and utter the triumphant words, "Safe at rest!" May we all meet there! I wish to be remembered to my friends. Tell them I love them still.

We close this chapter with a clipping from the *Christian Advocate* (Rev. E. E. Hoss, D.D., editor), the official organ of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, published at Nashville, Tenn., which appeared soon

after Mr. Stateler's donation to the Church Extension Loan Fund and which voiced the sentiments of the great body of the Church :

HONOR TO WHOM HONOR.

We take off our hat to our venerable brother, Rev. Learner Blackman Stateler, of the Montana Conference. He has been an itinerant preacher for sixty years, and has always stood in the front of the battle, "jeoparding his life on the high places of the field." First and last, he has belonged to eight Annual Conferences, all on the remote frontier. No Roman soldier ever showed a cooler courage than this heroic man has displayed on many occasions. Neither perils nor privations have daunted him. He has often led the way in what looked like a forlorn hope, and stood at the post of duty when there was neither friend nor comrade to cheer him. Though utterly unsecular in temper, he has a distinct gift for affairs, and has come through manifold hardships to a comfortable old age. The habit of giving to good causes has long been fixed in him, and he did not surprise us when he recently made a donation of five thousand dollars to be used as a Loan Fund by the Board of Church Extension.

Blessings on this aged and godly couple, whose whole life has been an unbroken service to the Lord Jesus and to his Church! Such people are an unmixed benefaction to the world. Wherever they move through the encompassing darkness, they leave a luminous track behind them. From them we learn how to live and labor and suffer for our fellow-creatures. The example which they give puts to shame our narrow and calculating selfishness, and teaches us the possibility and the glory of true benevolence. Blessings on them, again we say! We pray that every remaining day of their pilgrimage may be radiant with the shining of our Father's face, and that when the end comes they may have an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Tribute to the Memory of L. B. Stateler by Rev. David Morton, D.D.—Early Life—In His Mountain Home—Lifelong Friends—Working in Shafts—A Good Parrot Story—Magnificent Gifts—His Departure Deeply Mourned.

WHEN I was first grown, I used to hear the old preachers of the Louisville Conference speak of Stephen Stateler as a rugged German pioneer who moved from Pennsylvania to Kentucky when it was a wilderness, and settled in Ohio County, about fifty miles north of Russellville, in Logan County, where I was born. He was noted for his sterling worth and genuine piety. He was an industrious and thrifty farmer, who brought up a large family in creditable style and left them with a competency. From his early manhood till his death he was a stanch Methodist, and his house was known far and near as the hospitable home for Methodist preachers. I have always regretted that I never knew him personally.

Learner Blackman Stateler was his youngest son, and was more than sixty years old before I ever saw him. Upon my appointment as presiding elder of Montana District, Denver Conference, in August, 1876, I went immediately from Kentucky to my new field of labor, and soon after met Brother Stateler at his own house on the bank of Jefferson River, in Galatin County, Mont. This residence consisted of a series of one-story cabins, built of round logs, chinked and daubed in genuine pioneer style, with puncheon

floors, ribbed rafters, and clapboard roof, the latter being covered with about one foot of soil and gravel. Rough but well-built stone fireplaces, closely fitting plank doors, and glass windows made them very comfortable. I had a chance to test them once by a week's stay when the thermometer was thirteen degrees below zero.

When I stopped with him first, his family consisted of his wife and two hired men, one her nephew and the other a pure-blood Mexican.

I had, of course, heard of him before I saw him, and studied him as closely as I could on this my first visit to his home. I formed the opinion then, and have never had reason to change it, that he was one of the most unique and excellent men that I had ever seen.

I found him thoroughly versed in the Scriptures, a really able theologian, and better informed in Methodist history, polity, and usage than many more pretentious preachers. Withal he was as simple as a child in his manners, of a most lovable spirit, and kept in close and constant communion with God, and was full of zeal for his cause. He was a pronounced but not bigoted Methodist, and held himself ready to do and dare—if need be, to die—for its extension in the earth.

We were together some days, visiting and preaching in the neighborhood around, hunting up the mountaineers in their cabins and mining camps, and looking after the sheep of our Israel as best we could. In such work he always delighted. He afterwards visited me at my headquarters in Helena, the capital of the State, and with other brethren assisted me in revival serv-

ices held there; and again the following spring I saw him at his home once more.

This was the beginning of an acquaintance and friendship which lasted to the end of his life.

I was with him in two General Conferences, and also at the second Ecumenical Conference, in 1891, and on several occasions I had the privilege of entertaining him in my own home for a month or more at a time. For nearly twenty years we were together a part of almost each year, and it seemed to me we were drawn closer to each other every time we met, until at length we were united as with hooks of steel.

He was a handsome man, with a really benign countenance that was a true index of a kindly heart and a gentle, sweet spirit.

He was most happy in his domestic relations, and loved the only wife he ever had with genuine affection, and treated her at home and elsewhere with as courtly devotion "as knight ever bestowed upon fair ladye."

He had a vein of mischief in him which occasionally cropped out in a good story told at the expense of some one else, or in a practical joke when opportunity offered.

We were once crossing the Missouri River, near its head, on the ice, and were warned by the ferryman that it would be unsafe to drive across. I was directed to work in the shafts while the ferryman led our horse some distance before us, and Brother State-ler pushed the buggy from behind. Several times I found myself slipping on the ice till I fell, and on looking back would discover that he seemed very much amused; but until after the fourth or fifth fall I had

not suspected that whenever we reached a smooth place he purposely pushed the buggy upon me to throw me down. As soon as I made this discovery I insisted on changing places, but never succeeded in getting even with him, though I tried it several times.

A lady in Montana told me that once, while her mother's family was living near his in Kansas, he came regularly into the neighborhood and generally preached at private houses, as there were no churches there. At one of these places was a parrot who knew him and would begin to call his name as soon as he got in sight of the house, and continue to do so till he reached it and spoke to him. Poll also sometimes indulged in some rare antics during the services, repeating parts of sentences and passages of Scripture that he would use in his sermons. On one occasion the lady of the house covered the bird up in a barrel to prevent his interruptions; but about the middle of the service he escaped, and, perching on a piece of furniture clear out of reach, was more boisterous than usual, so much so as to utterly destroy any chance of further worship. Yielding to the inevitable, he said, "Friends, the bird has the advantage of us to-day, and the services must end. Let us pray." Poll said: "Let us pray." During all the former part of the prayer he repeated word for word what the preacher was saying, until a general titter went around the whole room. By this time the bird had become tired and began to scream at the top of his voice, "Say amen, Stateler; say amen," and continued so to scream till the grave old preacher was compelled to yield and

close without further ceremony the exercises of the hour.

He was a trifle eccentric in several particulars, and especially in that he would never tell his age. Soon after I met him the first time, without any knowledge of this idiosyncrasy, I asked him how old he was, and he replied promptly, "Past sixty;" and though I plied him with this question many times afterward, and resorted to strategy in a number of instances, I never succeeded in eliciting from him the secret or surprising him into a betrayal of it.

During the General Conference of 1886 we dined together at the house of Mr. Thomas Branch. I had told Mr. Branch of this peculiarity, and said to him: "I hope you will find out his age, if possible, to-day." Just after dinner our host invited him into the family room, while the rest of the company went to the parlors. One of them talked right loud, and the other was slightly deaf, and so the conversation could be heard from one room to the other. After an effort or two to catch him with guile, Mr. Branch asked him the question categorically, "How old are you?" and he replied very promptly, "I shall not tell you. Morton has put you up to this, and I shall not answer your question." So I failed to do by proxy what I had so frequently attempted before in person.

His gifts to the Church were really munificent for one of his means. I shall not refer to any of these, as his biographer will doubtless do so, except those made to the Board of Church Extension.

On reaching my home at Louisville from the Ecumenical Conference, he said to me, without a hint or

suggestion from myself: "I want you to explain fully to me the annuity feature of your loan funds." This I proceeded at once to do, and the day after he said: "I have been thinking much since our conversation yesterday, and have made up my mind to establish a loan fund of five thousand dollars in memory of my wife with the means which she earned." The details were soon settled, and the securities were turned over to me, and he received his certificate of annuity, upon which interest was paid him up to January 1, 1896, and will be for the four months succeeding that date.

Though we had frequent conversations about our work, I never asked him to give more; and while he spoke to me several times about certain provisions of the law of Montana touching legacies, he never promised me anything more, nor even intimated a purpose to give more until last winter, when he stated in one of his letters to me that he had a secret to tell me, which was that at his death more would follow the five thousand dollars already given.

Only a few days before his death I received a letter from his old friend, A. G. Clarke, Esq., of Helena, Mont., stating that he had just left him at his home in fair health, and expressing the opinion that he would be able to render several years of pioneer service yet. You may therefore imagine my surprise when I received on May 2, just after the annual session of our Board had closed and the brethren were nearly all gone, information of his death.

I mourn his loss as a son grieves for the departure of his father.

Louisville, Ky., June 4, 1896.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Tributes to Mr. Stateler's Memory—Rev. D. B. Price—*Central Methodist* and *Courier-Journal*—Rev. W. O. Waggener in *Alabama Christian Advocate*—Rev. R. S. Clark in Funeral Discourse.

THE following are some of the tributes to the memory of Mr. Stateler that appeared in the public press soon after his decease. The first is an extract from the memorial sermon by Rev. D. B. Price, which first appeared in the *Northwest Tribune*. Among other things, Mr. Price said:

He proved a chosen vessel of the Lord, for he lived in the times and places that tried the souls of men. No man has been so honored in planting Methodism in the Northwest. He was one of the saddlebags men to whom Western civilization and Methodism is more largely indebted than any other class of agents. His life was spent upon the frontier, amid its perils and privations, and he accomplished an immense amount of good. He did border work all of his life, preaching the gospel from the Mississippi to beyond the crest of the Rocky Mountains. His name is as ointment poured forth in all this vast region. His cherished and single purpose was to glorify God and do all the good in his power.

Nature had endowed him with a fine and pleasing person and address. He was above the average in size—features rather small and smooth, grave and expressive of great firmness—standing erect. His voice was a deep baritone, characterized by clearness, softness, and melody. His education was limited—such as the "old field schools" of his boyhood days afforded—and was continued by the reading of good books and a close observation of an extensive and varied field of labor. He was thoroughly converted in his youth, and piety

quicken and developed his intellectual powers in a marked degree. Truly it may be said that the itinerancy, with the study and prayer and suffering and work that are in it developed him. His heart and mind were concentrated upon the one work, that of the gospel ministry. He was a conservative man, following closely in all his work old plans. The pulpit was the throne of his power. Arminianism was his theology, and his humility and simple dignity of manner invited all men to him for counsel and sympathy in times of conflict and doubt. For the tasks imposed upon him he was fitted by nature and by grace; therefore he ever stood ready to answer the call of his Church and his God. The builder of a pure and noble character is posterity's greatest benefactor, for he erects a monument which marks the way through this wilderness of sin and shadow to the Canaan of the skies. He lived almost through the greatest century, and witnessed its great events. When he began to live, there were less than seven hundred and fifty traveling preachers in the United States and Canada and less than two hundred and fifty thousand members in the Methodist Church. Now there are about thirty-five thousand traveling preachers and five million members. The first missionary society of the Methodist Church was organized in 1819. When Melville B. Cox was sent to Africa, L. B. Stateler was preaching the gospel in Missouri. In 1835, when Fountain E. Pitts was on his way to South America, L. B. Stateler was preaching to the Indians near where Burlington, Iowa, now stands.

Nearly five years ago he retired from active service, and truly may it be said: "He grew old gracefully." To the last in the social circle he was reasonable, agreeable, and helpful, and in the pulpit brief, pointed, and unctuous. He was a faithful servant of God and the Church in the relations of pastor and presiding elder. Twice was he delegate to the General Conference of the Church.

In many respects he was a model man, commanding the esteem of all classes, and with unremitting devotion, unfaltering courage, and unabating zeal served the Church and his country in a public capacity for sixty-five years. His faith in Christ was unbroken to the last.

Usually it is not allotted to a generation to see more than one man like him. Shall we ever see his like again? All in all, I think not.

Rev. W. O. Waggener, in the *Alabama Christian Advocate* :

TRIBUTE TO L. B. STATELER.

Brother Stateler was the prince of "pioneer preachers." He was a great man, as God sees greatness. All his life he was at the front. He went from Kentucky to Missouri, from Missouri to Kansas, from Kansas to Colorado, from Colorado to Montana, and from Montana to heaven, and in heaven he is well to the front. His time, talents, and money were all laid freely on God's altar for God's work. He helped build all our churches and parsonages in Montana, he gave \$5,000 as a loan fund to the Church Extension Board, and he had been supporting for several years a missionary in Japan. When the Board of Missions at one time failed to make an appropriation for Montana, Brother Stateler out of his own pocket kept the men in the field.

Driven across the plains, God was with him, as he was with Abraham. He became the founder of our Church in Montana, and to him more than to any other man Southern Methodism owes her success in that difficult field. "Full of faith and of the Holy Ghost," he wrought well for God and Southern Methodism. Full of years and honored and loved by all, he has "fallen on sleep." From the lovely Bitter Root Valley, with its crystal streams, lofty mountains, and vernal verdure, he has gone up to a yet fairer land and "better country, even a heavenly." This generation will not on earth see his like again. We hope to greet him in glory.

Rev. R. S. Clark, in funeral sermon :

Those of us who have labored with him in this field for nearly twenty-five years know something of what was here and of what was not here that concerned the preacher directly, and hence something of this self-sacrificing toil to meet the needs of building up our Zion in Montana by "contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." For

many long and doubtful years, with but little support from any human source, he contended with all the difficulties incident to frontier life, where gold was chiefly sought by all. No palace cars in which to go in comfort and save the fatigue of cayuse ponies and stage travel; no organized societies or church edifices and parsonages that invited him to their service and occupancy. Few were the homes with comfortable arrangements presided over by good sisters who invited the weary itinerant to share its comforts. Few persons indeed that he found held up his hands in prayer and true Christian sympathy. But instead he found skepticism and an indifference begotten of that unsettled state and craze of gold-seeking. Long stretches of road between houses, mountains to pass over by the use of the cayuse or stage, streams to cross, often on treacherous ice or through their cold, dashing waters. Places to preach were often a matter of troubled concern; the barroom or dining room in hotels, private rooms, courthouses, schoolhouses, etc., the latter very scarce when we came to Montana in 1871. When congregations were obtained, they were usually small, for the people were all absorbed in gold-hunting; and hence the "pearl of great price" which the pioneer preacher offered them, which can be obtained only by selling all and then buying the field in which it is found, seemed foreign to their concern and purpose. But in all this he was depositing truth germs in the life of Montana that he carried in his life and presented in his sermons; and that he watered with his tears and made effectual by his prayers, and the fruits of this service we see and enjoy to-day. We never heard Brother Stateler preach a poor sermon, one that did not carry the elements of salvation enforced by pathos and "in demonstration and power of the Holy Spirit."

We have heard him preach many sermons which, if they had been favored with prestige, would have been received as excellent. Yet alas! the prestige was lacking, and hence this man of God did not have the hearing that his talents, zeal, and labors entitled him to. Though prestige does not, cannot give potency to its utterances or to the truth, yet people will attribute merit to what it says on its account, while they are wont to receive as tame and commonplace what is

said by those who do not possess it, just as if celebrity had anything to do with truth whatever. Yet this error was more prevalent and did more to destroy the truth in the hands of the early minister in Montana than we ever knew it to be or do anywhere else. But out of all this Stateler came and lived to see his talents respected and his labors crowned with gratifying success. And in this relation he died to his risen Lord or withdrew from the sense relations of life where he started up the moral forces, the results of which we see in the life of Montana and elsewhere to-day. But he lives in conscious existence to the risen Lord in the spiritual and true relations of life, and lives also and will live to the end of time in the ongoing results of his life below. "For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the living and the dead."

Press Notices of "Rambles in Wonderland."

N. Y. CHURCHMAN:

We commend the volume as one which, in the first place, has an abundance of things which every American ought to know, and one which, in the second place, is unusually readable.

N. Y. EVENING POST:

The book is briskly written, and may be read with interest. Some of its descriptions are very graphic and picturesque, and, with its excellent illustrations, it is a travel-sketch of much interest and value.

N. Y. CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE:

An account of the summer rambles of a Methodist preacher in the wondrous Yellowstone region. The numerous chapters are vivid pictures of the journey to and through that enchanted land.

WESLEYAN CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE, A. G. Haygood, Editor:

There is much in the book to interest and instruct. It is pleasant reading for a man; it would delight a boy with any soul in him.

N. Y. HOME JOURNAL:

The famous canyons, the hot springs and geysers of the Yellowstone Park; the Indian agencies; the tribes of Sioux, Crows, and other aboriginals; Indian fighting; the massacre of pleasure parties; hunting, fishing, and the usual adventures in a wild country—are the subjects treated.

HELENA (Mont.) HERALD:

The late edition of Rev. E. J. Stanley's "Rambles in Wonderland" is a marked improvement over the first given to the reading public. Besides the more artistic binding, an additional chapter is added, as also a neat and comprehensive map of the National Park. The "Rambles" are written in the best style of the well-known Montana author, and no library or home seems disposed to remain without a copy of this very attractive and readable book.

BUTTE (Mont.) MINER:

One of the most interesting publications for readers who have never been in the National Park, as well as for those who contemplate making a trip to that wonderful region. It describes the scenery and all the other sights that go to make the Yellowstone Park the most interesting piece of nature's handiwork in existence. The book is filled with maps and illustrations that serve to make the subject as clear as if the reader had been there.

WESTERN NEWS, Hamilton, Mont.

By many it is pronounced the best book yet written about the Yellowstone Park.

J. L. Kirby, Editor of the SUNDAY SCHOOL VISITOR:

Like all others who have read the volume, no doubt, I found it as fascinating as a romance and as instructive as an encyclopedia.

Mrs. Sue F. Mooney, in CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE:

The whole book is replete with grandeur and beauty, both of the things described and the style of description.

This book is a large 12mo and handsomely bound in cloth. Price by mail, postpaid, \$1. A liberal discount to dealers. Address REV. E. J. STANLEY, WHITEHALL, MONT.