

11-24-1908

The South Carolina Conference Thirty-Eight Years Ago

J. Sidney Beasley

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.wofford.edu/histaddresses>



Part of the [Church History Commons](#), and the [History of Christianity Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Beasley, J. Sidney, "The South Carolina Conference Thirty-Eight Years Ago" (1908). *Historical Society Addresses*. Paper 15.
<http://digitalcommons.wofford.edu/histaddresses/15>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Methodist Collection at Digital Commons @ Wofford. It has been accepted for inclusion in Historical Society Addresses by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Wofford. For more information, please contact stonerp@wofford.edu.

The South Carolina Conference Thirty-Eight Years Ago

BY

REV. J. SIDNEY BEASLEY

An Address Delivered Before the Historical Society of
the South Carolina Conference, Methodist
Episcopal Church, South, in Laurens,
S. C., November 24, 1908.

It seems passing strange to me to be about to write of events with which I was personally familiar thirty-eight years ago. My feelings have persisted in keeping me amongst the young men of the Conference, and the calendar must be consulted to establish it otherwise. If any one is skeptical as to the truth of what Saint James says "For what is your life, it is a vapor that appeareth for a little while and then vanisheth away," you need not be disturbed about him—time will correct his views.

The South Carolina Conference thirty-eight years ago. Why that particular time and not some other? For two good reasons:

First, that was the time when my name first appeared in the records of the Conference, and when I received my first appointment. No other Conference can ever be quite as impressive in the life of a Methodist preacher as his first. There is interest about everything, and a charm in everything that is measurably lost by repetition; and while the time of reading the appointments never ceases to be full of interest, and generally of nervousness, no other hour in his life can ever be as that when he sits down for the first time to wait for his appointment. And who can describe the sensation when his is read? He has an appointment, he is the preacher in charge of a work. It is not about the character of the appointment that he is concerned, but the fact that he has one. Difficulties there may be, but with the red blood of young manhood coursing through his veins, the full tide of consecration consciously in his soul, he is undisturbed by them. He has faith to believe that he can overcome all difficulties and surmount all obsta-

cles. The supreme joy is that he has an appointment. No tide that comes in in after life ever rises quite so high.

The second reason for writing about this period is that this is the beginning of the history of the Conference, with boundaries co-terminous with State lines. In 1830 Georgia was set up into a Conference of its own; in 1850 a large part of the territory in the lower part of North Carolina was cut off, but still left a considerable portion of the State in this Conference, and it so remained until the General Conference of 1870, when State lines were made Conference boundary lines. so that the Conference of 1870, thirty-eight years ago, constitutes a distinct epoch in its history.

This accounts for two things otherwise inexplicable:

First, there was a large falling off in membership. The Conference which met in Cheraw in 1869 reports a white membership of 42,926, while at this Conference there was reported only 32,371, a loss of 10,553, taking no account of the few colored members, now rapidly diminishing every year.

These members had been transferred to the North Carolina Conference by the change in boundaries.

The second thing explained is the large number of transfers to and from the Conference. By the change of boundary lines several preachers were left in each Conference, whose sympathies and affiliations were on the other side. It was simply adjustment to changed conditions. This latter fact ought to need no explanation, and would not, but for its unusualness. It would be for the good of Methodism that transfers should be more frequent than they are. The prejudice against the exercise of the transfer power of our Bishops, and often against the men transferred, is unreasonable, unwise, and hurtful. Ours is the only great Church that practically must look within any given territory for its ministerial supply. State, Synodical, Associational, Conventional lines have nothing to do with it in other Churches. A preacher of the Baptist, Presbyterian, Congregational, Episcopal Churches is just as likely to receive and accept a call from a Church outside as within the bounds of his own State. This gives them great advantage in the adaptation of men and charges. The principle ought to have larger practice amongst us.

TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING.

The Conference of thirty-eight years ago met on December 7, 1870, in old Trinity Church, Charleston. Starting from the organization of the Conference in 1787, this was the twenty-seventh time it had met in our "City by the Sea." Either the Conference liked Charleston, or Charleston liked the Conference; I venture to say it was mutual. In recent years it has not gone there so frequently as in the earlier years, for the reason that many other large towns have grown up and clamored for it, but I voice the sentiment of the members of the Con-

ference, that up to this day Charleston is one of the most pleasant places for our annual meetings.

TRINITY CHURCH.

If at this time the schism in which Trinity was founded had not been entirely forgotten, no one thought to speak of it in the presence of one young preacher there, and he did not know until years after that such was the case. It came about in this way. In the early part of 1791, Dr. Coke brought over with him from England one Mr. Hammet, a man of considerable pulpit ability, and arrived while the Conference was in session in Charleston, the session having been continued one day to await Dr. Coke's arrival. Hammet was appointed to preach, and preached greatly to the delight of Charleston Methodists. The appointments had already been made and James Parks had been appointed to Charleston. After hearing Mr. Hammet they were clamorous to have Bishop Asbury make a change and give them Hammet instead of Parks. The Bishop firmly refused to do it. There was great dissatisfaction, which was encouraged by Hammet, and resulted in the building of Trinity as a Primitive Methodist Church, on Hasel street. Mr. Hammet served this Church until early in 1803, when he died, and after several years and great trouble, the Church came back into the regular ranks, and for many years has been one of the most loyal and deeply spiritual of our larger city Churches. When the Conference met there in 1870 the schism, which had created much bitterness at the time, was as a troubled dream forgotten.

THE OFFICERS OF THE CONFERENCE.

Over this Conference Bishop George F. Pierce presided, and F. Milton Kennedy was Secretary. This was Bishop Pierce's fifth official visit to the Conference, and the last, but one. He presided over the Conference the year he was elected Bishop—1854—in Columbia; Sumter, 1863; Newberry, 1864; Charlotte, 1865, and Union, 1881, three years before he finished his work on earth. He was greatly loved by the South Carolina Conference; his assignment to it was always hailed with delight, and his presidency always gave great satisfaction. He went to his reward twenty-four years ago, but with the older members of the Conference his name is still as ointment poured forth. At the time of this Conference, 1870, he was yet in the undecaying ripeness of his splendid manhood. One of the qualifications laid down by Martin Luther for the making of a great preacher he possessed in an eminent degree. Then fifty-nine years of age, he was still a very handsome man, with a personal presence magnetic, and every way commanding. Of medium height, erect in form, graceful in every movement, prominent forehead, piercing black eye, large mouth, firmly set chin, he was nature's model for the sculptor. His voice was clear, full, musical. I cannot recall that he preached at Trinity, or who did

preach there on Sunday morning, but he preached to a great congregational at Bethel on Sunday afternoon, and preached a great sermon. His text was John 7:38: "He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." Many of the preachers were deeply stirred, and shouted aloud to the praise of God. From any point of view Bishop Pierce was a great man. A young preacher, seeing and hearing him for the first time, could never forget it.

F. MILTON KENNEDY.

I said that F. Milton Kennedy was Secretary of the Conference. He had filled this important position at two sessions before this, and filled it one session after. His honored father, William M. Kennedy, had filled the same position, in all, fourteen years. Milton Kennedy was a Christian gentleman of exalted type, an attractive man, and an eloquent preacher. He knew how to tell and how to enjoy a clean joke. He was the centre of every circle in which he might be, and his association was sought and enjoyed by a large circle of friends. He was my first Presiding Elder, and one of the best friends I have ever had.

To his wise counsel, his words of encouragement, his judicious management, as Presiding Elder, and his personal friendship, I am greatly indebted. He entered the itinerant ministry in 1854, and after twenty-five years of service, died in Macon, Ga., February 5, 1880. He attended the Conference the last time which met in Charleston again in December, 1879. His last work was as Editor of the *Southern Christian Advocate*, which was at that time the organ of the Georgia and South Carolina Conferences. Here his health failed, he lingered for a few years, then in his very prime, at the age of forty-six, laid down the weapons of his warfare and passed to his reward. How I loved him!

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS.

Dr. Lovick Pierce, the father of Bishop Pierce, was at this Conference also. It was his last visit to our Conference. During the following year he was at the Bamberg District Conference, held at Binnaker's camp-ground, in Barnwell County, and preached twice with great clearness and power, sermons which made a deep and lasting impression. He was a native of Barnwell County, and was converted there in 1799 under the ministry of Rev. James Jenkins. It was said when James Jenkins was sent to the Edisto Circuit that he would ruin the work. This was the way he ruined it—saving such men as Lovick and Reddick Pierce, his brother. Dr. Pierce had now been long a prominent figure in American Methodism and in Southern Methodism from the time of its organization, having been a member of the General Conference of 1844, when the division took place, and having taken an active part in the effort to prevent the division, and then in the organization of the Southern branch of the division. He was the first fraternal messenger from the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to

the Methodist Episcopal Church, but was refused a hearing by the General Conference. Verily the times have changed.

At the time of his last visit to our Conference he was ninety or more years of age, but preached with a mental grasp and spiritual fervor of a man in his prime. He preached only once—on Friday, I think. It was a sermon to young preachers. His text was second Timothy, 2:15, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." The sermon made a deep impression upon the Conference and upon me, and has had to do, in some measure, with all the years of my life since. While he advised the preachers so to study the Bible as to be always ready to preach, he expressed regret that he had not formed a habit of keeping notes of his sermons. This every preacher ought to do. Methodist preachers, going as they do from place to place, are often accused of carrying an odor of mustiness about them, and of reaching full growth much earlier than most men. This is told of a certain Presiding Elder up North: He had been a long time on districts, the people were tired and urged the Bishop to make a change. The Bishop told him he would have to take him off the district. The preacher, grieved and hurt, demanded to know the reason. "Well," said the Bishop, "the people say you can't preach." He said: "Bishop, that is not true; they used to say I was a great preacher, and I am preaching the same sermons I preached forty years ago." That is one extreme to which no preacher ought to allow himself to go. The other is of failure to preserve in permanent form his best thoughts. I have known some preachers to fail too early because they had not done so.

There were several other distinguished visitors at this Conference. Dr. Thomas E. Bond, Jr., Editor of the *Baltimore Christian Advocate*; Dr. Harrison, Editor of the *Southern Monthly*, and Dr. E. H. Myers, of the Georgia Conference, and then Editor of the *Southern Christian Advocate*, published in Macon, Ga., and the official organ of the South Carolina and Georgia Conferences. Drs. Bond and Harrison made speeches before the Missionary Society on Friday night, and preached in Spring Street Church on Sunday strong, attractive sermons. Dr. Myers undertook to raise a collection for the missionary debt then on the Church, failed utterly, lost his temper, and said some hard things, for which he afterwards apologized. Dr. Myers was a strong man, a Christian hero of the highest type, and in the end became a genuine martyr to his convictions of duty.

Bishop W. M. Wightman, though at home, was also a visitor at this Conference. He had just returned from a tour of the Pacific Conferences, and was in the Conference room part of the time. On Sunday he occupied the pulpit with Bishop Pierce. Bishop George F. Pierce and Bishop M. Wightman in the same pulpit, was a picture not soon to be forgotten. This was a good Conference for a young preacher to get his start. He was permitted to come in contact with several of the foremost men of the Church.

THE CLASS ADMITTED AT THIS CONFERENCE.

The class admitted at this Conference consisted of seven, namely: Geo. M. Boyd, Geo. W. Gatlin, E. Toland Hodges, W. Davies Kirkland, Richard D. Smart, R. Newton Wells, and myself. It proved to be a remarkable class in at least one particular, the persistency of its members. For twenty-four years there was not a break in it, and now, after thirty-eight years, there are still on the effective list R. D. Smart, now an honored member of the Virginia Conference; E. T. Hodges, and myself. Boyd and Gatlin, after long, arduous and successful service, have come to the time when they must rest, and on the honored roll of the "old guard" are submissively and sweetly awaiting the will of their Lord.

R. NEWTON WELLS.

R. Newton Wells, easily the strongest man physically of the class, was the first to break the ranks. He was also the best preacher of the class. Nature had done much for him in attractiveness of person, brilliancy of intellect, a most retentive memory, a musical, well modulated voice, buoyancy and cheerfulness of disposition, that indefinable charm which, for the lack of a better word, we call magnetism, a great big loving heart, which, because always giving, was always receiving; and to these natural gifts was added culture. He was educated in part at Wofford College, but finished his course and obtained his diploma from the South Carolina College. He came to his work well prepared. He was greatly gifted in speech. His powers as an orator were recognized while he was yet a boy in his preparatory course. When I was pastor of his home Church, in 1882 and 1883, it was matter of common remark that Newton Wells could mount bench or desk in the school-room and make your hair rise by his eloquence of speech. On December 11, 1895, after twenty-four years of continuous work, five on circuits, fifteen on stations, and four as Presiding Elder, in his very prime, at the age of forty-eight, he fell on sleep. He was buried in Greenville, where he died.

W. D. KIRKLAND.

W. D. Kirkland was the second one of the class to be called away, and only about six months later than Wells. He died in the city of Asheville, N. C., May 31, 1896, at the age of forty-seven. He was a man of unusual parts. Reared in the home of an itinerant preacher, the son of Rev. W. C. Kirkland, educated in Wofford College, he came to his work well equipped. He was a strong preacher from the beginning, had a burning zeal for souls, and was like his father, a weeping prophet. While yet a young man great audiences were moved by his pathetic appeals. He rose rapidly in the Conference, although, after his first four years, always handicapped by uncertain and failing health. After serving circuits and stations for twelve years, in the beginning of his thirteenth year he was appointed Presiding Elder. He was

young for this important and responsible position, but from every standpoint he made good. At the close of his third year on the district, he was elected Editor of the *Southern Christian Advocate*. This position he filled for seven years, and until he was elected Sunday School Editor by the General Conference in 1894. While a strong preacher, an excellent pastor, it was as Editor that he found his most congenial work and reached his highest mark. Long before his election to the Editorship of *The Advocate* its readers had learned, from his frequent contributions to the paper, that he was a vigorous and graceful writer. He developed rapidly in his work and by his work, and soon came to be recognized as a very strong man on the tripod. When he came into the larger sphere of Sunday School Editor he made himself felt throughout the Church. He filled well this responsible position for two years, then, worn out by disease and suffering, after twenty-five years of active work in the Conference, he dropped life's burden and went to his rest. Davies Kirkland was a man whom to know well was to love fondly. Our class has always felt honored to have his name upon its roll.

THE COMMITTEE OF EXAMINATION FOR APPLICANTS.

The Committee of Examination for Applicants was composed of J. T. Kilgo, Paul F. Kistler, and Sidi H. Browne, a remarkable trio. It is quite certain a stronger and better committee in every way for this most important work could not have been made from the Conference.

J. T. KILGO.

J. T. Kilgo was the first of this trio to finish his work and enter upon rest. He died in the home of his daughter, Mrs. Anna Campbell, at Blenheim, in Marlboro County, on January 4, 1888, aged sixty-eight years, and was buried at Parnassus Church near by. He entered the Conference in 1850, and had given thirty-seven years to the service of the Master in the active ministry. He was a man of sterling worth. He was a strong preacher. His love was as tender as a woman's. He served well his day and generation. In all the years of his ministry he never received a large salary, yet he educated in the colleges all of his five children, and left to take his place when he fell out of the ranks, three sons, of whose worth it would not be proper to speak here. They are yet amongst us. I wonder if the spirits of the departed are cognizant of the things of earth? If so, J. T. Kilgo is well pleased as he looks on. I loved him as a father. It was my happy privilege to be closely associated with him the last year of his life. I saw him when his strength failed and his feet turned into the downward road. The grace of God gloriously triumphed. I am glad of this opportunity to pay tribute to one of the most guileless, noblest, purest men I have ever known.

SIDI H. BROWNE.

Sidi H. Browne was the next of this committee to go home. He was known to most of the members of the Conference, having died only eight years ago, but known by but few of us as he was in the days of his prime. He was my Presiding Elder my second year. I thought of him then as an old man, but now know that he was only fifty-two and in the very prime of his splendid manhood. His mind was cast in a large mould. He would have made a statesman of ability had he chosen to enter politics. He was a good man. Always a good preacher, he sometimes preached with great power. He is a conspicuous example for and encouragement to young men who are obliged to make their way through difficulties, and who are denied the opportunity of classical training in their early years. He never attended college, but he was a clear, strong thinker, and after the first few years you would have had to be told, or would not have known that technically he was not an educated man. During the time that the *Southern Christian Advocate* was published in Georgia, believing there was need for a local Church paper, and desiring a medium for the advocacy of the principles of universal peace, in which he believed with all his heart, he began the publication of the *Christian Neighbor*, which he came to love as his own life, and continued to publish until his death. It was a good paper, and he made a good Editor. He was born in Anderson County September 23, 1819, and died at his home in Columbia, September 13, 1900, aged eighty-one years, after a membership of fifty-five years in the Conference.

PAUL F. KISTLER.

Paul F. Kistler was the last of this distinguished trio to go to his reward. Nature was lavish in blessings upon him. He was my pastor when I was a boy, and one of the most efficient and popular I have ever known. He made everybody feel that he was their special friend, as indeed he was. He had a wonderful memory, seemed never to forget anything. He had the much to be coveted gift of remembering names. In large families he could soon call each child by name. They all loved him, the parents loved him, and believed he was a great preacher. And, in fact, he was, if we judge preaching by the ability to stir the souls of men and lead them to Christ and a better life. He knew and was loved by every member of the Conference through the time of his active ministry. On July 13, 1901, aged seventy-four, and after fifty-five years of membership in the Conference, fifty of which were spent in the effective ranks, he fell on sleep and went to his reward.

THE PRESIDING ELDERS.

The Presiding Elders who composed Bishop Pierce's cabinet at this Conference were: A. M. Chreitzberg, S. H. Browne, W. H. Fleming, D. J. Simmons, John W. Kelly, T. G. Herbert, and R. P. Franks. All

gone now except our venerable, much loved and honored friend, A. M. Chreitzberg, who, at the age of eighty-seven, still lingers on the "borderland" a wonderful old man.

The Presiding Elders appointed to districts at this Conference were the same, minus D. J. Simmons and plus F. M. Kennedy and Henry M. Mood. Only one Presiding Elder went back into the pastorate at this Conference, D. J. Simmons. Two new ones were appointed, but there was a new district, the Sumter, formed at this time. D. J. Simmons was sent from the Bamberg District to the Branchville circuit. Of Kennedy and Browne I have already spoken.

W. H. FLEMING.

W. H. Fleming was for many years a conspicuous figure in the Conference, one of the leaders. He died in 1877 at the age of fifty-six, and is buried in the Bethel Cemetery in Charleston, where he was pastor at the time of his lamented death.

D. J. SIMMONS.

He was of Irish descent. A good preacher, devoted Christian, genial companion. He was born in Charleston in 1818, died at 1887, aged nearly sixty-nine years, and after a membership of forty-six years in the Conference.

R. P. FRANKS.

R. P. Franks was a Laurens man. He was a man of clear judgment, the courage of his convictions, a clear, deeply spiritual preacher. After many years of service he died suddenly in Lowndesville in 1895, and is buried in the old Smyrna Cemetery nearby.

JOHN W. KELLY.

John W. Kelly was Presiding Elder of the Marion District, from which I came into the Conference. He carried up my name and carried me through. He was then in the prime of a vigorous manhood. Physically he would be a marked man in a company of a thousand. Gigantic in size, commanding in manner, you were obliged to take notice of him. His mind and soul were as great as his body. As perhaps no other member of the Conference in his day, he was the master of assemblies. He was best in his element on great camp meeting occasions, and on such occasions often preached with well nigh irresistible force. His sermons were not prepared after the methods of the scholar, but, an omniverous reader of good books, in the pulpit he drew from his stored funds of information, and if his mind was in good working trim, and the afflatus of the Spirit was upon him, he was a preacher of great power. He was generous to a fault. He would sometimes at the sessions of the Conference give away all he had and have to borrow money to get home on. He was the friend of the

unfortunate, the comforter of the sad hearted. He was always on the side of the weak. He died suddenly, yet I think he had seen the shadow approaching. I was with him for several days not many months before the end came. Sometimes he would brighten up and there would be the spark of the oldtime; then a cloud would seem to come over his spirit and he would be silent and appear to be sad. At the age of sixty, and after forty-four years in the active ministry at the parsonage of the Providence Circuit, in February, 1885, he ceased at once to work and live.

THOS. G. HERBERT.

What of T. G. Herbert? He was not a great preacher in the popular acceptation of that term, did not aspire to be, but he did aspire to be a good one, wrought diligently to that end, and succeeded. His ministry was edifying in a high degree. He knew well the King's highway, and how to point others to it, and help them to keep in it. He was a man to whom you felt like telling your faults, confessing your sins; sure he would know how to sympathize with and help you. After a long and very useful ministry, twelve years of which were spent in the office of Presiding Elder, six years ago, while our Conference was in session at Newberry, he fell on sleep and was buried in the cemetery of the Lutheran Church in Leesville. How I have missed him since he went away! When I get to heaven, as I hope by the infinite mercy of God and the fullness of the atonement of Jesus Christ to do, I shall expect to find Thomas G. Herbert, perfectly at home, in the presence of God and the company of Angels and the spirits of just men made perfect, and I expect to spend with him many happy hours, recounting the experiences we have had together here. His was in a high degree a successful life, and leaving us he bequeathed to the Conference three sons—all he had—worthy successors of a noble father.

HENRY M. MOOD.

Henry M. Mood was born in Charleston in 1819, and died in Sumter in 1897, aged seventy-eight years. His ministry, and a useful one it was, stretched through more than fifty years.

NEARLY ALL GONE.

Of the one hundred and twenty-four ministers that composed the conference in 1870, all have crossed the river except fourteen. As I have written these pages many names and faces have passed before me of men just as good, and just as worthy, of a place in this record as any of whom I have written, and clamored for a place. I have heard voices and seen forms coming up from the vanished years, but I have been obliged to adhere to a plan, and this plan has necessarily left them out. Their memory is enshrined in the hearts of their brethren and in my heart.

Of the fourteen remaining, two only are still on the firing line, T. J. Clyde and J. B. Traywick. S. A. Weber is on the supernumerary list—all the others are on the honored roll of the "Old Guard." As brief as seem the years, almost an entire Conference has passed away since I came in thirty-eight years ago.

THE TITHE SOCIETY.

There was organized at the Conference of 1870 the Tithe Society of the South Carolina Conference. At the Conference which met in Cheraw the year before, Dr. A. E. Williams, a prominent layman of Colleton County, had greatly stirred the Conference as to the matter of tithing, and now at this Conference an effort was made to give practical turn to the deep impression which had been made. H. M. Mood was made President of the Society. He was himself for many years a tither. Unlike the vast majority of Methodist preachers, he had in his old age a comfortable competency. I once asked him and his wife how it was that they had been able, out of their meagre income, to have it so. She replied, "Brother Beasley, I do not know how it is, unless it is because we have given a tenth to the Lord. When we began to do that we had not saved anything at all." He said, "The second blessing came to me in new views and new practice in the matter of giving to the Lord." The object of the Society was to relieve necessitous cases amongst the preachers. So far as I know, this was the beginning and the end of the Society and its noble purpose. Like everything else ever undertaken for the relief of the helpless old age of our preachers, it fell through, and now, after thirty-eight years of marvellous progress, this deserving class is but little better provided for than it was then. Will it ever be that our great Church will throw off the reproach of accepting the service of her preachers at salaries barely sufficient to meet their current needs through all their active years, and when they can no longer go to the front, leave them to dire and helpless poverty.

THEN AND NOW.

In closing, let us take a brief comparative view of then and now. These have not been idle or fruitless years. The men who have toiled through these years have wrought well, and God has blessed their labors.

Then there were eight Presiding Elders' districts, averaging a little over thirteen appointments to the district. The Presiding Elders, with one possible exception, traveled their districts in buggies. They were expected to preach Saturday and Sunday at every quarterly meeting, and did. If there was then any opposition to the Presiding Eldership I never heard of it. The Presiding Elder was next to the Bishop, the biggest man in the Church.

Now we have twelve districts averaging twenty appointments each. All honor to them—the Presiding Elders have lost the prestige of being

considered the biggest men in the Church. Yet I dare believe that relatively they are as great men now as they were then. Not in South Carolina alone, but all through the Church, there has developed a spirit of dissatisfaction with the Presiding Eldership. Of the motives that lie back of it, I will not judge, but it arises from two things: the length of time the same men are frequently kept in the office, and the salaries paid them, in comparason with the average salaries paid to the man_w in the pastorate.

Then we had one hundred and six pastoral charges, now we have two hundred and thirty-five. Then we had forty-eight parsonages, now we have one hundred and ninety, an increase of one hundred and forty-two. Then we had 32,371 members, now we have, as reported at the last Conference, 85,761, an increase of 52,790, nearly treble. Then there were three hundred and eighty-six Sunday schools, now six hundred and eighty-one. Then officers and teachers 2,502, now 4,813. Then 15,837 scholars, now 44,612.

Then the grand total paid for the support of the ministry, pastors and Presiding Elders was \$59,526.00, now \$197,044.00, nearly three and a half times as much. Then we paid for missions, all told, \$2,909.68—think of it—now we pay for the same purpose from all sources about \$60,000.

In 1870 there was one small mill town in the State, Graniteville, with a population of about 500, where we had a mission. Now about one-fifth of the population of the State is composed of mill people, and we have at least fifty pastoral charges made up in whole or in part of cotton mill operatives.

All this I have seen transpire during the years of my ministry. I am constrained to exclaim, "What hath God Wrought!" Truly the Lord has done great things for us, and we are glad.

What of the future? If as a Church we shall prove ourselves true to the trust committed to us, the imagination can hardly picture the wonders of the next thirty-eight years. What will these young men, standing now where your speaker stood thirty-eight years ago, behold when they stand where he stands tonight? Opportunity has never before been so great as now. The times call for prepared men. My young brethren, the responsibility is upon your shoulders. We shall soon slip from under and leave you alone.

"Quit you like men, be strong," and the Lord be with you.