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The Background of Methodism in America

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AN ADDRESS

BEFORE THE

Historical Societies

OF THE

Upper South Carolina Conference
Newberry, S. C.

AND

South Carolina Conference
Kingstree, S. C.

OCTOBER 30, 1923
NOVEMBER 27, 1923

By REV. J. W. DANIEL, D.D.

This address was delivered before the Historical Society of the Upper South Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, on the evening of October 30th, 1923, at Newberry, S. C., and again at Kingstree on the evening of November the 27th before the Sixty-eighth annual session of the Historical Society of the South Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. I regret that the time naturally allotted to me was not sufficient to develop fully a few of the thoughts relative to Connectionalism and the influence of that conception by the founders of our Church on the establishment of the United Colonies and ultimately in the guiding of the policies of these United Colonies in the building of these United States. "The United Societies," the "United Colonies" and the "United States" coming in the order of time as suggested in the order in which I have written them are worthy of greater amplification which I hope at some future time to bestow on the historic sequences imperfectly developed in the body of the address. The usage of the Societies before which the address was delivered calls for its publication in pamphlet form. I, therefore, submit it in all of its imperfections.

J. W. DANIEL.

Bamberg, S. C., January 14th, 1924.

THE BACKGROUND OF METHODISM IN AMERICA

Mr. President; Gentlemen of the Society for the Preservation of Methodist History in South Carolina:

The Anniversary addresses, delivered through a long number of years, before this society have dealt with almost every phase of Methodist History. That fact makes the selection of a subject on my part rather difficult; I have, therefore, chosen to speak of facts closely connected with and vital to the introduction to Methodism into America. The moral and religious state of the colonies, and that of the young states which first composed our Republic was exceedingly favorable to the introduction of a vital type of Christianity having no connection in any way with the thread-bare dogmas and the time-worn controversies of the European churches. I am persuaded, also, that this fact had as much to do with the marvelous growth and development of our church on American soil as any other fact connected with our history, doctrinally, economically or otherwise. The debut of Methodism in America, all of us must admit, was timely, whether or not all Christian students of history may admit that it was providential. I shall, therefore, speak during this hour on

The Back-Ground of Methodism in America

The products of men, civil, military and moral, have to grow mellow with age before they take on the real charm of history. Annals are the materials of history, the stated order in which events occurred, the bare records of any age, the states of human society, civil transactions, the religious attitude of a people, their military movements and political achievements. When the paper on which these annals is written turns yellow with age then the facts contained in them, like a

become

cantaloupe, becomes food for the discriminating historian who may then take the data of the annalist and write history. By age the annals of a people are taken out of the excitement and prejudice in which they were born, lifted out of all local coloring and environment and made available for the equitable judgments of a calm mind. The data of the annalists may then be weighed in the balances of unalloyed truth. A history of Methodism in America may be written a hundred years hence, not earlier. Therefore, when I speak of The Back-ground of Methodism in America I deal with moral states a century older than the introduction of Methodism into the American colonies, and this back-ground was the product of several preceding centuries of English history. The moral state of the colonists, and later of the young states which first composed our Union, was a challenge to any religious reformer. It called for heroism and involved real self-sacrifice. Deism and infidelity were widespread, loose morals and profanity were results of social conditions. Religion was at a discount intellectually and morally. Franklin was a deist, Jefferson was a libertine and even Washington, himself, had only the form of godliness without the power thereof. He had an abiding faith in God, so did Abraham and Jacob, but their morals were rather shady at times. He ranks religiously with some of the heroes of the Old Testament who had more faith than spiritual refinement. He was more polite than religious on more occasions than one. During his administration he issued two proclamations. Congress recommended that he issue these "Calling on the people to give thanks to God for their blessings and to pray for remission of their sins." This request was agreed to by the Senate so far as history records without objection. In the first proclamation dated October 3rd, 1789, in the seventh month of the new government's existence, Washington, in carrying out

the request of the Senate, wrote of the "Civil and religious liberty" which had come to the people as a cause for thanks and requested them adroitly to supplicate "That great and glorious Being who is the beneficent author of all the good that was, that is and that shall be." Alexander Hamilton drafted the second proclamation which was issued January 1st, 1795, this advised the people to give thanks to the "Great Ruler of nations." It is a fact that the great father of our country purposely worded both these proclamations so that they would not give offense to anyone who believed in a God of any kind and did so in violation of the recommendation of Congress which used expressly the name of God and asked that the people pray for the remission of sins. In 1798 John Adams was more Christian in the wording of his proclamation, for he set apart a day of public fasting, humiliation and prayer and exhorted the people to implore God "through the Redeemer of the world." Jefferson issued no proclamation at all of this nature. He was at least consistent with his practice.

I do not speak of the moral and religious character of these leaders in those days to detract in the least from their secular greatness, God forbid! but merely as illustrations of the real spirit of the times in which they lived, times of almost universal drinking and drunkenness and of gambling countenanced and practiced by the government itself and alas! by the church, for every student of history knows that the lottery was used to finance church enterprises, to build churches, roads, schools and hospitals. The government itself, after our independence, resorted to the lottery to prop up its tottering finances. These great leaders were not Christians in the true sense of the term, they were great in spite of the spirit of the times. Alas! however, it is the weakness of sinful humanity to crown all their heroes with sainthood. The real annals of the

Correct

past corrects the error. Even now intelligent men are beginning to smile at the politico-religious propaganda proclaiming Washington and Abe Lincoln saints worthy to be enshrined in the hearts of all young Americans; yes, even to smile at the imbecility of the writers who have sometimes protruded their forged stuff into the columns of religious papers edited either by prejudiced partisans, or weak men who have no background of historic information.

This parenthetic remark relative to the Lincoln propaganda is only illustration. Men cannot write history without the facts, nor can they distort even the commendable features of a man's life into the real virtues of a man of God. Men must be born into the Kingdom of God. That was the specific declaration of Christ, and that was the message that the pioneer itinerant Methodist preacher brought to the godless settlements of America. Some of the settlers, and even many born on American soil, thought they had religion and under the preaching of these evangels of the Traders Paths discovered their error. In May 1788 Bishop Asbury held the first conference west of the Alleghanies at the home of Stephen Keywood whose home was in Washington county, Southwest Virginia. On Sunday morning before the conference opened John Tunnel preached. Under the influence of this sermon Madame Elizabeth Russel, wife of General William Russel of Revolutionary fame and sister to Patrick Henry, "was convinced that she was the veriest sinner on earth, although up to that period, she had been exemplary as a member of the church of England and thought she was a child of God." She invited the preachers home with her to pray for and instruct her. They complied and in the afternoon she emerged from darkness into light, praising God with a loud voice. "This good woman, yea, great woman," says Lewis Preston Summers, the historian of Southwest Virginia, "became

a flame of Christian zeal, and to the day of her death, which occurred in 1825, she served God and her generation with a zeal not surpassed in ancient or modern times." Mrs. Russel's first husband was General William Campbell of King's Mountain fame, who died in the service of his country at the early age of thirty-six. Her daughter, Miss Sarah B. Campbell, married General Francis Preston. Honorable William C. Preston and John S. Preston of South Carolina were her sons. Thomas L. Preston of Virginia and Mrs. John B. Floyd, who was a life long Methodist, were also the children of this great woman. This allusion again is merely illustrative. It shows how religion in the most intelligent circles of the oldest colony had retrograded, or at least it exhibits its low estate, and there were innumerable examples like the one I have just used, in the day that Methodism came to America.

Creeds like everything else grow old and wear to a frazel and new ones have to be born in consecrated hearts and brains to take the place of the old. The coming of Methodism to America was opportune, the sequel proves it. The old religious ideals brought from England were growing threadbare and the ministers who were supposed to cultivate them were usually of a low order and gave more time to sporting than to preaching. Cock-fights frequently had more fascination for them than pulpits. A new country needed a new ministry. A faded patch never looks well on a new garment, nor does a new piece serve very well to patch an old garment. Methodism was under God the whole cloth, all wool and a yard wide for a new ecclesiastical suit for young America domiciled in a new country. I am proud to say that young America has worn it well and has had the good sense to renew it occasionally out of the same material to keep it in style. This ecclesiastical bride of English birth and American adoption looks young yet, she is

young; though she has reared a large family there are no streaks of silver in her wealth of tresses, for her family has been orderly and has given her but little trouble. May she never need the historian's pen to tell of what she once practiced and has forgotten, but may she ever live up to date in progress and never forget her God-given mission to men—a favored Daughter of Heaven and the espoused of Christ" the Lord.

The Methodist Church in America has been a phenomenal success and that fact challenges inquiry relative to the causes which have commended it to the people and also invites research into that interesting and unique back-ground which gave it nourishment, opened its soil to receive the seed scattered by the pioneer Methodist preacher, gave the vital forces of the virgin soil to produce not only its rapid growth but to give permanency to its institutions.

When Methodism came to America everything was new but its religion. The old contentions of European bigotry, church polity, traditional dogmas and genuine religious hatred of one sect for another made ugly patches of faded and threadbare ecclesiastical rags into a cloak for the far-flung and scattered settlements or a virgin country, vast in extent and pregnant with inexhaustible possibilities and resources. It was a veritable Joseph's coat faded beyond recognition, and too much worn to stand the muscular tension, the growing propensities and the hilarious romplings of a giant having grown from infancy to adolescence, in a virgin country, in the open air, separated from his forefathers by three thousand miles of ocean, becoming a stranger to the mists and fogs of his fathers' country and really ashamed of the old clothes of his progenitors. He wanted a new suit in keeping with his environments. The pattern he had received from his fathers was too tight, it bound his legs and arms and at every step it

split. It was musty and eaten by the moths of ridiculous bigotry, stained with superstition and spotted with human blood drawn by a thousand stabbings in the name of religion. It did not smell good, the scent of it brought a protest from his brain and restricted his heart. He was a larger man than his trans-Atlantic father, had traveled more, at least farther, and had seen more. He had stood upon the highest peaks of the Alleghenies and Blue Ridge and magnificent distances had unrolled before him, inestimable wealth, wherever he stood, lay at his feet, vast landscapes to be had for the asking. He could not be narrow, the country was too big for that, the atmosphere of liberty was all around him and he breathed it into his lungs and it became a part of his corporal being. The little cities on the Atlantic coast could not restrain him. They were mostly populated by Englishmen to the manor born and who kept in touch with the fatherland and wore the same old clothes religiously that their fathers wore. They preached mostly a sterilized morality, sectarian bigotry, and sometimes a little gospel. The young giant tore himself away from them and plunged into the illimitable forest, threw away the clothing of his fathers and donned a buckskin hunting shirt, discarded knee breeches and adopted Indian shoes; freedom was sweet to him. He was brave and honorable. He believed in God but was unclothed religiously, there was no priest to marry him if he should find a wife, and no altar at which he might kneel. The forest was his temple and the log cabin was his elysium after his long hunting tours. He lived happily with his wife and they both expected to be married if ever a preacher or magistrate should come along, one came after awhile in the person of a Methodist itinerant preacher and they were married, and the children sometimes witnessed the ceremony; they were good witnesses and the man who made their fath-

er and mother man and wife was never forgotten by the witnesses to the ceremony. All this may sound strange and the man of today may think these happenings were exceptions. They were not especially in the interior and on the border. They were brave men and brave women and did the best they could under the circumstances, but they longed to be clothed upon. God did clothe them with a suit made to order by the hand of John Wesley and Francis Asbury.

A youth passing out of the chrysalis state known as the knee pants period of life, suddenly disappeared from Sunday school. The Superintendent met him on the street, "Charlie," said he, "I have missed you from Sunday school, what is the matter?" "I have quit," the boy answered. "Ah, and why have you quit?" "Because ma says I am growing and the Sunday school is not." That was a clever answer and truly in keeping with American ideals from the first settlements to this good hour.

New England had her Puritans, Blue laws, witches, witch trials and witch executions. Together with her superstitions transplanted from England, her code of morals was very narrow and thoroughly sterilized. There is no tyranny like the tyranny of type, therefore, men who had sought freedom to execute unmolested peculiar dogmas had made themselves tyrannical and despotic from a religious point of view. As they had made themselves tyrannical it is not strange that their offspring should claim freedom as their fathers did. But a tyrant never allows his fellows the same privilege. If there were conscientious tyrants, religiously speaking, why should not their heirs throw off the restraint and become conscientious disciples of freedom? Their fathers had done the same thing. Therefore, the death of Puritanism and the birth of the New Congregationalism. Was it not also perfectly

natural and logical that many of them passed into the modified Episcopalianism of the new Methodism? Virginia and South Carolina were settled on the coast especially with genuine Church of England people. They brought with them the religious bigotry of the mother church. They, especially South Carolina, were intolerant of all other sects, discriminated against them in their colonial laws, denied them the right of suffrage, at least in South Carolina. They brought with them the low religious ideals of England during that period and discriminated against all men who dissented from their views. It is remarkable, and at this day impresses the genuinely pious that it was Providential, especially so in the light of after developments, that the remarkable tide of men who had been at least partially weaned from the bigoted ideal of the Church of England in their colonization in North Ireland began to pour into Pennsylvania and move Southwestward parallel with the Blue Ridge mountains, settling Piedmont Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and then onward westward acted as a wedge to separate perfectly the coastal settlements, not only from the upper section of these states but even from the religious ideals and social customs of the coastal cities which kept in constant contact with the mother country and, therefore, steeled themselves against the wave of spiritual visitations flowing into the great interior. The predominating influence of these coast cities was emphatically English, the low and narrow religious ideals of the England of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and therefore they stubbornly discriminated against all men who dissented from their type of worship, for they had been reared under its tyranny.

Lecky, though educated for the ministry, was perhaps the most secular of all writers of English history. The character of his history was the natural effect and influence of the facts which he was forced to record. Some of us are inclined to boast of our Scotch

descent ignorantly flattering ourselves that those dour people of the hills were somewhat superior at least religiously to the ordinary English stock. As late however as 1726 the Scotch Highlanders were still cattle-dealers, and their business was profitable, for they appropriated the herds of the Lowlanders and drove them to their mountain fastnesses—they were all profit except the trouble of taking them. In 1726 Marshal Wade undertook to make the Disarming Act a reality, and at the same time to strike a death-blow to the power of the marauding chiefs of the Highlands of Scotland by building a road into the mountains of Scotland. Engineers and surveyors under Captain Burt were brought from England. "Troops were employed on extra pay to make the roads, and after eleven years of patient labor, the greater part of the Highlands were made thoroughly accessible." "The place which this enterprise occupies in history," says Lecky, "is not a great one, but very few measures have contributed so largely to the moral, material and political civilization of Scotland." Buckle in his History of Civilization tells us that in the later part of the sixteenth century Edinburgh was an aggregation of one roomed stone and pole cabins, mostly, with dirt floors and thatched roofs. In 1665 Liverpool had only one hundred and thirty-eight houses and cabins, mostly cabins. In the midst of his career as a playwright Shakespeare put on a play in London that called for the firing of a four pounder cannon, when the gun was fired the wadding set fire to the thatched roof and burned down one of the popular theatre buildings of the city. Contemporaneously with these facts, exhibiting the poverty as well as the low estate commercially and economically of England and Scotland, the church of England had a Calvinistic creed, a Popish liturgy and an Arminian ministry; neither the secular or religious outlook in England, Scotland or Ireland was

very promising, the whole realm was submerged by floods of vice, infidelity and drunkenness.

Therefore, the wedge driven by the tides of emigrants from Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia and North Carolina, having had time as they had been domiciled in those states, amid new surroundings, to quiet their minds from the religious toils in the old country, moved westward, settling the country between the coastal cities and the almost illimitable country westward. They had become a prepared people for better religious thought and aspiration, both by their colonial life in Northern Ireland and their settlements in America—disgusted at least with the old controversies between Catholics, Episcopalians and Presbyterians, they were now open to a spiritual gospel bringing a knowledge of a present salvation. If nothing was accidental then this movement of settlers, taken together with subsequent developments, must have been providential. Methodism, having been established as we shall see, by a prepared people in this Piedmont belt, by reflex influence rebounded from the interior and strengthened the struggling efforts of the Methodist Societies in the coastal cities and has continued to do so till this day.

Another factor within the compass of this dividing wedge was the restlessness of the rural population. The settlers were moving men. The inhabitants of the cities were stable. Where the settlers of the interior had fixed their cabins was fine, plenty of game, fertile soil, salubrious climate, vast forests of timber and refreshing springs of pure water. The hunter and trader, however, proclaimed the territory better further on. The hills and fertile valley there gave place to grass covered plains where cattle increased and grew fat without care. The plains were inexhaustibly fertile. The drudgery of clearing away heavily timbered lands to make cultivated fields was not to be met with there

as in the East, nothing to do but burn away the grass and turn the sod with the plow and then nature did what remained to be done to perfection. Wealth in cattle and horses and barns, bursting with plentiful harvests, were there waiting to be accumulated without much effort. To these first settlers the beckoning opportunities were as fascinating as the songs of ancient sirens, and they moved further on, and on, into the depths of a vast and unsettled country where magnificent plantations lay waiting for some one to appropriate them. These pioneers were movers and that fact called for a moving religion to keep up with them. The ministry of the New Way were fearless shepherds of wandering sheep. Magnificent pastures beckoned to the sheep but the sheep, themselves, had a wonderful fascination for the shepherd. Luke tells us that the Jews called the earliest followers of Christ "Men and women of the New Way." These men, pioneer Itinerant preachers, were indeed "Men of the New Way." They endured many hardships, Indians peeped from the shaded coves by the pathway at the peculiar trader; he drove no pack-horse, carried no firearms and wore a round, flat-crowned hat, a shad-bellied coat, knee-pants and leggings. His horse had been selected for endurance and easy gait, saddle-bags were flung across the old English saddle. One wallet contained a change of underclothing and an extra shirt and the other a hymn-book, a Bible and a curry comb. Ticks were plentiful and his noble steed was liable to pick them up on every day's journey. He carried, figuratively speaking, another curry comb under the crown of his round brimmed hat—ticks might get into the fleece of the wandering sheep and he had a passion for combing them out and mashing them under his boots. This courier of the New Method had himself been a pioneer further back east. He was one of the people—the people of the new world with a new re-

ligion in a new heart to be preached to, a new people building a new government, new institutions and a new church which was predestined to send a new hope, new ideals and a new life to the uttermost bounds of the oldest civilizations of the old world. They carried the news verbally and frequently bore letters from relatives and friends back in the older settlements for people on the border. They were serious in person and deportment but not actic or mystical; they had already taken on a new style of humor, American-born, broad and frequently grotesque. They became clerical in manners but their mannerisms were not copied from the clergy of the old country, they were original. They were new men of the New method, therefore, unique from every point of view. The great composer, Handel, had drifted into England and was contemporary with Wesley, his attention was drawn to the Wesleyan hymns and he composed music adapted to these new hymns pulsating with the great doctrines of the Gospel of Christ, the music and the hymns blended under the hand of the great composer into one and went on the wings of the wind around the world, therefore, these old pioneers were superior in singing to the best choristers of today, not because their music was better but because it was spiritually adapted to the soul of the hymns they sang. They made melody in their hearts and frequently mingled their songs with the silvery notes of the wood-lark as they plodded along the pathways which afterwards became roads. They sang to beguile the weary hours of travel and, therefore, vast areas of forests, savannahs, hills, valleys and the virgin earth itself were all baptized for the first time with the melody of "twice-born men."

These men were weaving a suit, not of many colors but of one material and tasteful hues properly matched for the young giant, Methodism, who was setting up house-keeping for himself. It is wonderful how they

so completely blended all the hues of sectionalism and congregationalism into one beautifully unified garment. All of its parts were securely connected by that Prince of ecclesiastical tailors, Francis Asbury, who also proved himself a great artist as there was not one slip in the blending of the colors.

In Luke's account of Saint Paul's Second Missionary Journey as recorded in Acts XVI, fourth verse, there is an allusion to the Connectional character of the Apostolic church. I quote from Weymouth's translation. Paul had just returned from the Conference of the Apostles and Elders at Jerusalem and as Paul and Silas "Journeyed on from town to town, they handed to the brethren for their observance the decisions which had been arrived at by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem. So the churches went on gaining a stronger faith and growing in numbers from day to day." This utterance of Luke shows that he regarded the enactments of the Conference at Jerusalem as a part of the Inspired record of God, and that the Apostles and Elders assumed as their prerogative the authority to send out their enactments as Decrees to be observed by the churches and that under this Connectional Government "The churches went on gaining a stronger faith and growing in numbers from day to day." The Connectional character of Methodism may, therefore, be based on Scriptural teaching and the practice of the Apostolic Church. The adjective Connectional, as used by Methodist, can never become ineffective or thread-bare in the minds of men conversant with Methodist history and usage. The adjective, however, cannot be construed grammatically, strictly speaking, it does more than merely modify the noun. It has become technical in its signification. Analytically speaking, and keeping its technical meaning in mind, no word in the English language has played a larger part in the building of the American government and its institutions.

Around Connectionalism the analytical thinker, as well as the analytical historian, is forced to group all the profoundest and most effective thought of American statesmen. "The United Colonies," "The United Societies." Personify the term and give it gender and it becomes the heroine of the one thrilling romance of the constructive history of the world. The Prince of Peace wooed her symmetrical beauty and led her up to His throne and sat her down beside Himself and proclaimed that every divided house is doomed to fall and every divided kingdom will pass into weakness and decay. "I make request for those who trust in Me through the teaching of the Apostles that they may all be one, even as Thou art in Me, Oh! Father, and I am in Thee; that they also may be in Us,—and the glory which Thou hast given me I have given them, that they may be one, just as we are one: I in them and Thou in me; that they may stand," perfectly united, "into one." Paul seizes the Master's ideal and compares the connecting bond of unity to the human body with Christ as the head. Again Luke's account of one of Paul's journeys reads like a primitive Methodist Bishop's journal; "After awhile Paul said to Barnabas, 'Suppose we now revisit the brethren in the various towns in which we have made known the Lord's message—to see whether they are prospering.' Paul chose Silas as his traveling companion; and set out, after being commended by the brethren to the grace of the Lord." They went out on a long journey, they "Passed through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches," they journeyed on from town to town giving out the decrees of the Conference at Jerusalem. They came after awhile to the frontier, "they passed through Phrygia and Gallatia to the frontier of Mysia." Neither the Connectional Apostolic Church or the Connectional Methodist Church were ever afraid of frontiers with their crudeness and separation from the centers of civilization.

The Colonies of America seized the truth of Connectionalism from a governmental point of view and formed the "United Colonies" for defense and mutual help. Prior to that event, however, the genius of Wesley delegated to Asbury the plan of a corporate union of the churches in the scattered settlements, and those in far separated states making possible symmetrical doctrine, unity of purpose and ever widening visions of divine truth interpreted by the best spiritual scholarship of the world. Not least, however, among the results of this new connectional ideal patterned, as we have seen, after the Apostolic ideal, was the thrill given to intellectual development. This intellectual quickening of the settlers was inspired by the preachers orally, by their preaching, talks around the hearth-stones of log cabins, reading of good books other than the Bible, to these bookless throngs of people buried in the forests of America, then in the wake of the itinerant minister followed schools. All this was made possible to a people drifting farther and still farther westward followed by a moving preacher.

Under the then existing state of separated units scattered over a vast area of territory, which was afterwards divided into what are now great states, if there had been no agency such as Methodism supplied, it is easy to see how these separated units would have developed into godless masses, with crude ideals untempered by religion and education and by all moral influences from without. They would have lost step with the more wealthy and better equipped settlements eastward—they would have lost their moral, religious and intellectual birthrights. What might have been the consequences? Verily Connectionalism was an angel of mercy. The spiritual garments to clothe these scattered units, the primal builders of America, would have been the most ridiculously unique mantle the world has ever seen; not only would it have been

of many styles, cut and tailored by local fancies and each colored by the local stains obtainable by the local settlements, red-oak-bark tan, walnut-hull brown, wild-Indigo blue, poke-berry crimson, maple-bark black, and every other color produced by bark of tree, leaf of shrub and juice of weed, and to cap the climax there would have been no congruity of hues in combining the colors. Aye, the ideal of Connectionalism in Church and State, and they both came from a divine source, man was not made for the government but the government should be made for men, men were not made for the Church but the Church was divinely organized for men, for mutual blessings, liberty of thought social benefits and intellectual uplifts, yes, the great ideal of Connectionalism not only made possible the history of Methodism on American soil but also our great Democratic government under which the Church of God has so marvelously developed. And, strange to say it—Connectionalism—was unconsciously fostered by the people of the far-flung and isolated settlements. No matter how far the pioneers pushed themselves into the almost illimitable forests of the back-country there were always beckoning hands behind them. They never forgot the folk they had left behind. Daughters had been separated from mothers and the companions of their youthful days; their vigorous and youthful husbands had also snapped home ties and were far beyond contact with their kindred. Even what would now be estimated a short distance was then an almost impossible journey. There was no way of communication but by horse-back along dangerous and lonely trails—not even mail routes. The Itinerant Preacher, therefore, was frequently the only means of communication. He was often the bearer of messages from people back at home, he carried letters and bore to the settlers the current news of the outside world. It is easy to see, therefore, how he became

a connecting link between them and the older settlements. His coming was looked for with pleasure and anticipation along other lines than those purely religious. So it is easy to see how the natural situation made the pioneer preacher an unconscious agent of enlightenment and of social pleasure. The frequent changes of the minister widened this unrecognized and purely accidental function of his office and these "Knights of the Saddle Bags" became connecting links between the isolated settlements as well as carriers of information from the older and more developed settlements along the coast from Boston to Charleston. Verily, Connectionalism was and is not only the spirit of union but the evangel of social uplift and the bond of an ever increasing brotherhood.

The social condition of the interior of every state in the original thirteen, was, to say the least, destitute of many of the refining and spiritualizing forces of human society before the introduction of Methodism. I speak in general terms, there may have been, doubtless were exceptions to the rule, as there are to all rules; but I am dealing with a prevalent fact then existing which must be recognized by the careful historian. In the fall of 1755 when there were many scattered settlers in Piedmont Carolina, Hugh McAden, a missionary to the settlers of North Carolina from farther northward, came to the little settlement on Broad river, he was a Presbyterian minister and paid only this one visit, seems just to have been only passing through the settlement. On Monday, November 2nd, 1755, he records, "Preached to a number of these poor baptized infidels, many of whom I was informed, had never heard a sermon in all their lives before, and yet several of them had families." About this same date while Governor Glen was on a visit to the upper part of our state to form a treaty with the Cherokee Indians, an old man met the Govern-

or at Ninety-Six and in the course of their conversation the old gentleman remarked to the Governor that he had, "Never seen a shirt, been in a fair or seen a minister in all his life." The Governor promised to send him up a minister that he might "hear one sermon before he died." The minister came and preached and this was all the preaching that had been heard in the upper part of South Carolina before 1755." The moral and religious conditions of the interior settlements prior to the Revolution were pathetic when viewed from the high plain of the religious ideals that obtain today. The real pioneer died and was buried in a plain pine box in the depths of the great forests, without a song, prayer or ministerial service of any kind. Even for long periods of time the ministrations of a civil magistrate were denied the settlers. They married and brought up hardy sons and daughters, but the marriage vows were never sealed by magistrate or minister, they just mated like the birds of the air, they loved and were sincere and honest and they were true to each other for life. It was not their choice to do so and live so but necessity was the mother of their doings. Pickett the historian of Alabama records many marriages after this enforced custom of the country. One he alludes to is amusing and instructive too if we read it in the light of the times. It took place as late as the year 1800 in the great state of Alabama. "Upon the Tombigbee and Lake Tensaw the people still lived without laws and the rite of matrimony. For years the sexes had been in the habit of pairing off and living together, with the mutual promise of regular marriage, when ministers or magistrates should make their appearance in the country." The historian gives one account of an unusual marriage, "The house of Samuel Mims, a wealthy Indian countryman, was the most spacious in the country, and hither the young and the gay flocked to parties, and danced to the music furnished by the

Creoles of Mobile and others, for the country abounded in fiddlers, of high and low degree. Daniel Johnson and Miss Elizabeth Linder had, for some time, loved each other. She was rich and he was poor, and, of course, the parents of the former objected to a pairing. On Christmas night a large party was assembled at 'Old Sam Mims', and the very forests resounded with music and merry peals of laughter. In the midst of the enjoyment, the lovers, in company with several young people, of both sexes, secretly left the house, entered some canoes, paddled down Lake Tensaw, into the Alabama, and arrived at Fort Stoddart, an hour before daylight. Captain Shaumberg, who had risen early to make his egg-nog, was implored to join the lovers in the bonds of matrimony. The proposition astounded the good-natured old German, who protested his ignorance of such matters, and assured them that he was only a military Commandant, having no authority whatever to make people man and wife. They entreated, telling him, with truth, that the Federal government had placed him there as a general protector and regulator of affairs, and that the case before him demanded his sanction and adjustment. After the egg-nog had circulated pretty freely, the commandant placed the couple before him and, in a stentorian voice, pronounced the following marital speech: "I, Captain Shaumberg, of the 2nd regiment of the United States Army, and commandant of Fort Stoddart, do hereby pronounce you man and wife. Go home! Behave yourselves—multiply and replenish the Tensaw country." The happy pair entered their canoes, rowed back to the Boat Yard and were pronounced, by the whole settlement, "the best married people they had known in a long time."

We may smile at the military scheme of Lord Cornwallis to gain recognition for the "King's Cause" as late as 1780 in Piedmont Carolina. Col. Patrick Furguson

was dispatched to the old Ninety-Six district to build up and organize the Tory element. Major Hanger of the British Army was commissioned to go along with him to administer certain civil matters and chief among them was the right to perform the marriage ceremony. That was one of the pressing needs of the settlers of the Piedmont as late as 1780. The women of the Hills, however, did not give the marrying Major a very warm reception, or perhaps, it was too warm. The Major soon folded his commission to marry people, placed it in his military wallet and returned to Charleston somewhat chagrined. Those who were already paired, though there were many Tories among them, preferred not to have their matrimonial alliances completed by a swearing, dram-drinking, and card playing military officer. The Major afterwards published what he intended to be a reflection on the brave women of Piedmont Carolina. "In the back parts of Carolina," says the Major, "you may search for an angel with as much chance of finding one as a parson. There is no such thing—I mean when I was there." Ah, it was a part of the price the women of the Piedmont paid for higher social and religious ideals. A low social order satisfied with its attainments is a thousand times more hopeless than a low social and religious state with higher ideals. God sent Methodism to meet exigencies arising from units of men and women scattered over a vast territory and almost entirely without religious instruction. God gathered from England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland, a people, domiciled them for a few generations in Northern Ireland, then sifted them of the best they had produced and sent the sifted element to America. They constituted the stream from Pennsylvania fed by lesser reservoirs in Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina, which poured into the Hills of South Carolina, crossed the mountains into Tennessee and Kentucky, flowed south-

west into Piedmont Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi and watered these primal territories until they grew under the culture of the Itinerant Preacher of the "Traders' Trails" into a garden of God. At first they constituted settlements largely without magistrates or ministers, and there they would have remained without spiritual guidance and the results that would have followed may be easily forecast by any thoughtful man, when he takes into consideration the inability of England, Ireland or Scotland to supply a ministry adequate to the religious and moral training and development of these scattered units. The United Colonies sprang up over night with hearts pulsating for political, civil and religious liberty, won their cause and established the government of these United States with laws adequate to Colonial expansion. It was all something new in the world's thought. Simultaneously the Pioneer Preacher following the Traders' Trails was weaving an ecclesiastical garment for the United Colonies and the United States. It was a beautiful fit. It could not have been otherwise for the same thought that gave rise to the "United Societies" ushered in the conception politically of the "United Colonies." The same wise statesmanship that guided the United Colonies into the United States with ample laws for expansion was the same ecclesiastical statesmanship that guided the United Societies into a great Connectional body which stands second to no ecclesiastical organization on earth. I take great pleasure, ladies and gentlemen, in presenting to you Uncle Sam and his colaborer Connectional Methodism, gigantic twins and clothed with the same material and in the same style, the greatest political and religious wonders of the Nineteenth Century.

Some Macauley may yet arise to write of childhood's ties that bound the twins together in the days of tender youth, trace the development of those ties as they grew

into world renowned governmental principles in the days of the gigantic manhood of the twin brothers and then culminated in uniting great states into one majestic Union, the admiration of the world, and binding far-flung and scattered units into one conquering, Connectional Church—the world's admiration and heaven's joy. Think of the twins!

His "and yours the story
Think of it, oh, think of it"—

Think of "All the faith that took" our fathers "forth to seek" the heavenborn ideal, Liberty and Union.

"Shadows come and shadows go," but let no shade of doubt "dissolve, cloak, or cloud, or keep apart," two Unions born of the same womb and whose prayers, statesmanship and efforts were and are, and May God grant, ever shall be the same—a United Church in a Union of States—the heart of real Democracy in Church and in State and the greatest boon politically and religiously that ever came to America.