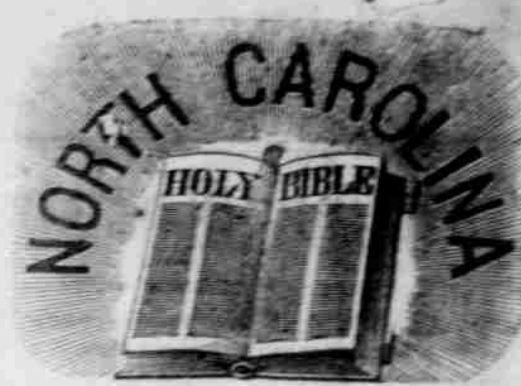


CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE.

G.W. Johnson



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Poetry.

A Song for the Day of Trouble.

BY R. BETHUNE DUFFIELD.

Brother! when the storm descends
And beats upon thy head,
When thy wounded spirit bends
Like willow o'er the dead;
When thy heart is faint and sore,
And thy tears no flow no more,
Lift, lift thine eyes
Up to the skies—
Thy troubles all will soon be o'er.

Have the flames swept down thy cot?
Or the floods thy vessel wrecked?
Have garlands, which thy heart has sought,
Thy rival's forehead decked?
Has wealth, like sea-fog on the sand,
Vanished from thy strong right hand?
Look up, and hear
These words of cheer
Dropping from the heavenly land.

Have thy bright illumined halls
Echoed to the tread of death?
Has he on thy nursery walls
Turned the poison of his breath?
Changed to ice upon thy knee
The tale whose eyes were lights to thee?
Oh! still look up!
That bitter cup
Was mingled by divine decree.

Is thy path a dreary one?
Through clouds, and waves, and night?
Is thy life a weary one,
A storm and an afflict?
Doth an ever-raging sea
Roll its tide of care round thee?
If thro' the dark
Christ steer thy bark,
It soon must find a peaceful lee.

As the warrior smitten down
Amid the piles of dead,
Ere his life's last drops are gone,
Lifts his bruised head,
Where his flag still blazes bright,
As the foe breaks into flight,
Sends to the sky
His battle cry,
Then gladly bids the world "good night."

So brother! when the storms descend,
And beat upon thy head,
Like to that warrior's, thy end
With joy shall be expressed;
Let Faith still hold her vantage ground,
And soon the silver trump shall sound
Thy battle done,
Thy victory won,
And heaven's sweet consolation found.

From the Daily Advocate.

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

TUESDAY, MAY 11.

Bishop Paine called the Conference to order. The opening exercises by B M Drake.

The minutes of yesterday were read and approved.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES—GEORGIA CONFERENCE.

Bishop Pierce being now called to the Chair, announced the order of reports from Committees.

L Pearce, from the Committee on Boundaries, submitted their Report, (No 4.) recommending a change in the boundary of the Georgia Conference, proposing that said Conference shall include all the State of Georgia except that part lying south of a line commencing at Gaines and terminating at the Altamaha river.

TEXAS CONFERENCES—BOUNDARY.

L Pearce, from a majority of the Committee on Boundaries, submitted their Report, (No 5.) adverse to the memorial asking for a change of the boundary line between the Texas Conferences.

J W Fields—I have a minority report from the Committee on Boundaries which I wish to offer as a substitute for that report.

The minority report proposes for the boundary between these Conferences, a line beginning at the east pass of the Galveston Bay; thence through the town of Cincinnati, along the northern boundary of Walker and Gaines counties, etc.; thence due north to Red river; and it is signed by nine out of the nineteen members of the Committee, also by the balance of the delegation from the East Texas Conference on another part of the same paper.

The Bishop—The names of delegates, not members of the Conference, ought not to have been placed on the same paper.

J W Fields—I am willing to have them erased.

These reports lie on the table one day, under a provision in the rules of Order.

MISSION TO WESTERN COAST OF AFRICA.

J Boring, from the Committee on Missions, submitted their report, (No 4.) declining at present to establish a Mission on the Western Coast of Africa, but recommending that the Bishops proceed to organize such a mission whenever, in their judgment, it shall become expedient so to do.

J Boring said these reports were of such a character that the Conference would be fully prepared to act upon them on the present reading. The resolution referred to the committee directed their attention to the establishment of a Mission on the Western Coast of Africa. The committee had ascertained, to their satisfaction, that the Western Coast was not now an eligible field, but that an eligible field could perhaps be found farther in the interior; and therefore they had submitted this report, referring the matter to the discretion of the Bishops.

On motion by H N McTyeire, the report was adopted.

MISSIONS TO THE SLAVES.

J Boring, from the same committee, submitted their report, (No 5.) to the effect that they cannot recommend the adoption of any resolution for the appointment of a Superintendent of Missions to the slave.

J Boring stated that the report of the Alabama Conference, from which this application came, had not reached this General Conference, and, as a matter of course, was not before the Committee; and that, therefore, the report submitted was the best they could do under the circumstances.

MISSION TO CENTRAL AMERICA.

J Boring, from the same committee, also presented their report, (No 5.) unanimously recommending the establishment of a Mission at some point in Central America or New Granada, at as early a day as practicable.

The report was adopted.

J Boring presented a paper, as a substitute for our present plan of Missionary operations.

H N McTyeire moved its reference to the Committee on Missions. He said it was the great business of that Committee, and perhaps the chief business of the General Conference.

It was so referred.

H A C Walker presented another plan; which was, in accordance with his request, referred, without reading, to the same committee.

N H D Wilson and D B Nicholson presented a resolution, proposing a mere verbal change in the Discipline; which was read and referred to the Committee on Revisals.

W Barringer, R T Hefflin, and D B Nicholson offered the following:

Resolved, That the Committee on Revisals be requested to inquire into the expediency of preparing a new chapter on the Rules of Evidence in Church trials, to be inserted in the Discipline, as a guide in the administration of discipline.

It was moved to refer the resolution to the Committee on Itinerary.

C F Deems proposed to substitute Revisals for Itinerary.

W A Smith said it was an important movement. The Committee on Revisals had a great deal of business. Every thing was dropped into that well, from which he apprehended few things would come up again.

N F Reid proposed a special committee as an amendment, which he subsequently withdrew.

J F Hughes moved to lay the matter on the table, which was lost.

W J Parks proposed, as a substitute, that the subject be referred to the Board of Bishops.

C F Deems objected. The Bishops had enough to do to preside over this body, and look into the other matters committed to their care. If the resolution should go to the Committee on Revisals, and that committee should find itself overburdened, they could either select the papers which they deem most important to report upon, or suggest the appointment of a special committee. The speaker thought that when a committee was raised for this special purpose—the revival of the Discipline—all such motions should first be referred to that committee.

A H Mitchell thought it very doubtful whether the committee could comprise in a short chapter what would be valuable and profitable on the subject of evidence. We wanted a book, could not put every thing in the Discipline. But he hoped the matter would go to the committee.

W J Parks—Whoever does the work—whether the Committee or the Bishops—it will be reported here, and must be sanctioned by this body; so that it will be at last the action of the General Conference.

The substitute prevailed, referring the matter to the College of Bishops.

G W Carter and W W Bennett presented the following:

Resolved, That the Committee on Revisals be requested to inquire into the expediency of preparing, for insertion in the Discipline, a formula for Church trials, and report the same to this Conference.

J W Phillips opposed the resolution. The last resolution covered the ground, and rendered this unnecessary. If every thing were inserted in the Discipline, it would make the book too large.

G W Carter offered the following:

Resolved, That a committee be appointed to prepare for publication in permanent form, by the Book Agents, an Ecclesiastical Digest, embracing,

1. The Judicial Reports and Decisions of the several General Conferences from 1812 to 1858 inclusive.
2. The Decisions of the College of Bishops on appeals to them from the Annual Conferences since 1854.
3. The Decisions of the College of Bishops on other than appeal cases, when such decisions are approved by the General Conference.

Mr Carter sustained the resolution in a very lucid and able speech, setting forth the necessity and utility of such a compilation.

A L P Green was opposed to the resolution. It would be a troublesome, difficult piece of work to compile the thing; it would involve a good deal of expense to publish it, and when pub-

lished there would be no market for it.

J Hamilton confessed his own misgivings, in view of a disposition here to multiply forms and technicalities. In this way, he feared, it would become next to impossible to get a bad minister or layman out of the Church. It was but the other day that the decision of an Annual Conference was reversed here upon the application of a rule of construction which many had never heard of before. He took exceptions particularly to the last part of the resolution. He did not believe in the propriety of investing this body with the power of supervising and correcting the decisions of the Bishops. This body had claimed and exercised judicial functions, for want of a tribunal of final resort, but he should regret to see this function of the General Conference recognized and legalized in this form.

The idea of giving judicial functions to a legislative body was without a parallel, unless it might be found in the British House of Lords, or perchance, on one occasion in the Legislature of the State of New York. The legislative and judicial function were distinct, and ought to be kept so, especially in the Church. He thought we might safely place the judicial functions of the Church in the hands of the Episcopacy. Besides, the judicial session of the General Conference would take up a great deal of time, and discussions and debates of intricate and important questions would be introduced into a body which, by reason of its numbers, would be far less competent to decide them than five or eight sober, intelligent, godly men.

G W Carter—It is not susceptible of that construction. I consider that all the decisions of the Bishops not reported for the action of the General Conference stand as laws. Certainly I do not mean that the General Conference shall take up and formally pass upon every decision of the Bishops. The resolution does not propose to perpetuate these views, but only to have respect to the past.

J Hamilton—The explanation of Bro Carter does away with a great deal of my objection.

A L P Green added, that if he could see any necessity for this thing, he would be willing to submit to the expense. He never felt the need of such a book himself, and did not think it necessary. If the book were published, it is likely that nine-tenths of it would be a compilation of repeated decisions and laws. The very principles and cases necessary in administration were already in the archives of the church. Those desiring to know more might go into the old manuscripts and hunt them up. He regarded the decisions of the Bishops, in regard to all questions of law, as the end of strife. But still, the General Conference had the power to get clear of the decisions and the interpretation both; so that we were in no danger of the encroaching power of the Bishops.

L Campbell—The Holy Scriptures were the supreme law, and we never claimed authority to legislate for the spiritual government of the church. Not only were the Holy Scriptures of supreme authority, but they were adapted to administration by holy men. It seemed to him that to take rules of evidence and modes of interpretation which belong to the world, and impose them upon holy men, would be most incongruous. He concurred in the remark of Dr. Hamilton, that the old forms could not be improved without involving difficulties at every step. He believed that all we wanted was to come down to the simple administration of the New Testament in the hands of holy men. This was a government that could not be patched up by human hands. The tendency of such propositions was to involve ourselves in labyrinthine difficulties. He hoped the resolution would pass into the Lethaean pocket.

W A Smith felt some anxiety that his friends from Virginia might be gratified, but thought the proposition ought to be amended, so as to authorize the committee which shall prepare the decisions, to publish only such of them as they may deem of practical utility. He inclined to the belief that they would find very few such. It was only a few years since that the reports of the General Conference began to be published; and they would have to go into the manuscript journals of the Conference to find a good deal of the information which the resolution contemplates. Then, no doubt, they would find a number of conflicting decisions. He could himself testify to votes in the General Conference on judicial questions in total conflict with decisions of former years. The publication of these conflicting decisions could do no good. A legislature the interpreter of its own laws was an idea unheard of. A legislative body was more or less a popular body. It was impossible for such a body to make consistent judicial decisions, tied up as they are by personal considerations and party influences. This showed the necessity of having a body separate and apart from the legislature, to expound and interpret the law. He had no objection if a committee could be found to wade through the masses of the matter, that they should publish the result of their labors. Up to the time of the last

General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, the General Conference had been considered the final judge of all questions at law. That Conference commenced a modification of this. By a rule then established, the nature of a constitutional feature, the College of Bishops was constituted a co-ordinate branch of the church government, in facts as they are uncontestedly so in theory; and in accordance therewith, the Episcopal Committee reported a rule, which was adopted, requiring the Bishops to report and publish their decisions. Carry out this principle, and the General Conference was no longer the final judge of the law, but simply the lawmaker. He did not propose to discuss the propriety of this, but simply to show the ground the Conference was taking. He had no objection to this. The Bishops' decisions should be accompanied with a report of the circumstances on which they are founded.

C K Marshall thought the resolution would be lost; but to obviate one of Dr Green's objections, he said, the decisions could be published in one column of the great central newspaper organ without charge.

L M Lee alleged that all this matter had been published. The General Conference of 1850 had authorized him to go to the General Conference at the North and get a copy of the history of Methodism from the old Conference records. That body would not come out in a manly way and allow him to copy; but they authorized the publication of these old records. This had been done; and whatever they contained of importance was not printed at our hands. He had examined these records as far back as 1844, and there was very little in them that could avail anything in accomplishing the object aimed at in this resolution. So far, then, as the acts of the Conference in the past are concerned, we had them. It was our Methodism as well as those who published the book. Whatever was Methodist and legal now; and what has occurred since that time, we have published. If this committee were appointed, he did not think it would be very great labor for them to make a digest of the kind spoken of; for the records were published, and in his judgment every Methodist preacher ought to have a copy of them.

JOHN CARR.

The Bishop now introduced Father John Carr, of Tennessee, standing upon the steps of the forum with him, who, the Bishop said, was the oldest living member of the Methodist Church in the State, and might have something to say to the body.

The members of the Conference then rose up, and Father Carr said: "I have been a member of the Methodist Church, since 1790, and have been living in Summer county ever since. I feel very grateful indeed, indeed, in being spared to come into this hall and to see so many of God's preachers. In early times I used to guide the preachers from one fort to another, to hear them preach. I feel grateful to God for the results, and for what I see to do. I thank you, brethren, for your attentions."

Bishop Pierce then repeated these words in a distinct voice, and, on his suggestion, it was ordered that Father Carr be invited to a seat in this Conference, and to take part in its deliberations.

DRESS.

J Lusk submitted a resolution (signed also by Levi Pierce) to the effect that the 8th section of Chapter III, p 106, of the Discipline be stricken out.

Bishop Soule—What is the section?

J Lusk—It is the section on Dress.

I would not oppose the scriptural restrictions on dress; I do not know how our people dress, if they do not exceed the bounds set by St. Peter and St. Paul. The rule in the Discipline is put down with a good deal of stringency; still, many Methodists are as magnificently dressed as any body else. The rule has become, it seems to me, altogether inoperative. Our preachers and Bishops wear gold-headed canes and gold spectacles; and I should not be surprised if some of our reverend fathers were to look up through their gold spectacles at the brother now proposing this change. After further remarks in this vein, he moved that the resolution lie on the table.

The motion was agreed to.

SLAVERY.

C C Gillespie—If in order, Mr President, I wish to read an extract from the Journal of the East Texas Conference with reference to the general rule of the Discipline on the subject of slavery.

The Chair—We will hear it.

C C Gillespie then read the report of a special committee of the East Texas Conference, memorializing the General Conference and urging the removal of said regulation from the Discipline.

On motion by Levi Pearce, the paper was referred to the Special Committee raised upon the Alabama resolutions.

THE DISCIPLINE IN THE GERMAN LANGUAGE.

On motion by J B McFerrin, the Conference now took up the consideration of the Report, (No 1) from the Committee on Books and Periodicals, recommending the adoption of such measures as shall secure the translation and publication of the Discipline in the German language.

J W Phillips moved the adoption of the report.

The motion was agreed to.

J E Edwards and A Hunter presented a resolution advising the abolition of the system of probation for church-membership; and another, proposing a substitute for that system, if the change should be deemed expedient; both of which were referred to the Committee on Revisals.

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The following is the committee on the plan for supporting the Bishops.

H N McTyeire, J E Evans, T J Koger, J H Linn, W G Caples.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 12.

Bishop Paine called the Conference to order, the opening exercises being conducted by the choir.

The journal of yesterday was read and authenticated.

Bishop Early now assumed the chair, and announced the order of reports from committees.

NEW ORLEANS STATION.

L M Lee, from the Committee on Itinerary, submitted their report (No 1) on the resolution from the Louisiana Conference, recommending the striking out of that part of the Discipline, on page 48, which excepts the city of New Orleans from the appointing duties of the Bishop; recommending its adoption.

The report, under the rules, lies over one day.

DISTRICT APPOINTMENTS.

L M Lee, from the same committee, to whom was referred the subject of the formation and size of Districts and Annual Conferences, reported (No 2) their recommendation of such a modification of Sec 5, Rule 14, on page 52 Discipline, as that "no District shall contain more than twelve (instead of fourteen) appointments."

The report lies over one day.

MINISTERIAL APPOINTMENTS.

L M Lee, from the same committee, to whom had been referred a resolution of inquiry into the propriety of changing the Discipline regarding the limitation and restriction of the Episcopal power of appointment, submitted their report (No 3.) embracing a resolution, by the common law of the Church, the Presiding Elders are regarded as the Advisory Council of the Bishops, and since the Bishops recognize that relation in their late Pastoral Address, it is the judgment of the committee that there is no necessity for any change of the Discipline (on page 47) with reference to the appointment of ministers.

H A C Walker moved a suspension of the rules and the adoption of this report now.

L M Lee stated the purport of the amendment of the Discipline which the committee had reported against. In the second answer to the third question, on page 47 of the Discipline, are these words: "To fix the appointment of the preachers for the several Circuits; provided," etc. The amendment was to add, after the word "Circuit," these words: "Stations, Missions, and Districts, by and with the advice and consent of the Elders of the Conference."

F G Ferguson—I would be perfectly willing for this, in common with all the reports, to lie over one day, and come up in the regular order of business; but, as it is the purpose of Conference that it shall come up now, I suppose we may be indulged with looking briefly into its merits. For twenty-eight years and better, I have given practical evidence of all due loyalty to the powers that be. I glory, sir, in the well-understood machinery of our Church—the Episcopal prerogatives, the self-sacrificing itinerancy, and all that. But the time may come when such a law as that proposed here to be rejected, may be necessary to the protection of what we call the inalienable rights of the Church. The reason of the committee for giving it the go-by seems to be, that, in their opinion, there is nothing in it. Still, the same committee reports a restriction on the Episcopal authority as to the number of appointments in a District, etc.—But they say, the Presiding Elders are the advisory council of the Bishops, by the common law of the Church. If this be true, I grant that there is no use for the proposed law. But then the binding force of the common law might be denied. Can there be any harm in affirming in our Discipline what you have said here by way of a common law reference? I wish the Conference to look at this question without reference to men. The very best men sometimes err; and, to restrain ourselves from errors, we should have laws.

L M Lee explained the views and objects of the committee. There were two parts in the resolution referred to. The first was to add the words "Stations, Missions, and Districts." The second part of the resolution was not simply to constitute the Presiding El-

ders an advisory council of the Bishops, as they are now recognized by the common law of Methodism, and by the Bishops themselves, in their late Pastoral Address; but it proposed to go beyond that, and to insert a law in the Discipline that would effectually tie up the hands of the Episcopacy with reference to every appointment, unless it be made with the advice and consent of the Presiding Elders. The committee did not think proper to bind the Episcopacy in such a manner, but preferred to leave the appointing power where it has always resided—in the hands of the Bishops; believing that, under the common law of the Church as to this matter, the Bishops do and will advise with the Presiding Elders.

W E Wiley moved to lay the matter on the table, which was lost.

W J Saanet moved an indefinite postponement.

W A Smith asked if the question was postponed until he was opposed to Mr. Saanet—If the motion is to be debated, I withdraw it.

Mr Smith—Then the motion is on the adoption of the report. The object of the resolution on which the committee has reported is evidently to put us in a position in which we may not suffer from the errors of the administration. The movers in this matter propose that the administration shall be controlled by the Presiding Elders, as a safe remedy against the evils apprehended. Is this the safe or effectual remedy? Will this afford us ready relief? I say not. The relief which we have sought is to be found only in the appointing power of the General Conference. We want to provide against injury, not from the legal decisions of the Bishop, but from the party influences and personal considerations which may betray him into an abuse of the appointing power. Your present system is to make the episcopacy directly responsible to this body for the moral aspects and influence of their authority—for the exercise of abuse of their power. Vote down the resolution, and what remedy have you? An injury is done to some good brother in his appointment; can you hold the Presiding Elders accountable? The Presiding Elders are an irresponsible body. Instead of guarding against abuses, this measure throws the door wide open to fathers, holding the Bishops directly and immediately responsible to the General Conference for the manner of their administration. That is your remedy, your only safe remedy—not in passing a law that an irresponsible body shall control the Bishop.

Bishop Soule desired to hear again what the Bishops said in their Address as to their constitutional advisers.

L M Lee read the portion of the Bishops' Address referred to.

H A C Walker moved that the question be now put.

J B McFerrin hoped that the motion would be withdrawn. He wanted to propose an amendment.

It was withdrawn.

J B McFerrin proposed to amend by substituting the words, "common usage," for the words, "common law of the Church."

L M Lee said he would accept the amendment, provided none of the committee objected. The committee unanimously assented.

The reading of the whole report was now called for, and was read and adopted.

BOUNDARIES.

L Pearce presented Report (No 6) from the Committee on Boundaries, recommending that the Indian Mission remain undivided, which was adopted.

Also Report (No 7) recommending that Mount Washington, in Kentucky, be put down as included in the Louisville Conference which lies on the table under the rule.

VOTE ON THE ALABAMA RESOLUTION.

T W Dorman presented Report (No 1) from the committee to ascertain the vote of the Annual Conferences on the Alabama and Holston Resolutions, to expunge the general rule on "the buying and selling of men, women, and children, with the intention to enslave them." The vote stands as follows:

Conference	Concurring	Not Concurring
Holston	79	4
Texas	72	0
Virginia	116	0
Florida	50	0
Missouri	1	46
North Carolina	24	0
South Carolina	117	0
Memphis	68	12
Mississippi	79	7
Louisville	14	15
Georgia	135	0
Kentucky	17	43
St. Louis	17	42
Tennessee	15	87
Louisians	48	0
W. Virginia	22	12
Alabama	115	0
East Texas	53	0
Arkansas	27	15
Wachita	18	0
Pacific—no action		
Kansas Mission—no action		
Indian Mission—no action		

Whole number of votes concurring, 1150; being 60 votes over the constitutional majority.

The Chair announced that the report would lie on the table one day, under the rule.

(See Fourth Page.)