



G. W. Johnson

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REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

From the Daily Advocate. SATURDAY, MAY 29. The Conference met at 8 1/2 o'clock...

Journals of the Annual Conferences. L M Lee, from the Committee on Itinerancy, submitted their report...

The report was considered and adopted. SECURITIES OF THE PUBLISHING HOUSE. J B McFerrin from the Committee on Books and Periodicals, returned their report...

THE CARROLL AND SMIZER BEQUESTS. J B McFerrin from the same committee, submitted their report (No 15) on the subject of the communication of William Barnhill, of Lagrange, Ky., recommending that the Book Agent be requested to receive and appropriate the bequests of Michael Smizer and James P Carroll, deceased.

DUTIES OF BOOK AGENT AND BOOK EDITOR. J B McFerrin, from the same committee, submitted their report (No 16) embracing an additional item for their report No 4, with respect to the duties...

with our beloved Superintendents, in view of the manner in which this subject had been sometimes discussed. He expressed surprise at the small figure reported for Louisiana—only \$250 falling to her share. He was really sorry that any part of this fund had been taxed upon the Missionary Society, and wished that the salaries of the Bishops had been raised, and that one or two more had been elected to help them in their work.

He objected, also, because it was a proposition to set up an independent Medical School, independent of the Church. J B McFerrin, in connection with other brethren, was appointed a committee to procure this charter.

EDUCATIONAL INTERESTS OF THE CHURCH. B M Drake, from the Committee on Education, submitted a report, in writing, setting forth in detail the several schools, academies and colleges under the patronage of the M E Church, South—the number of the pupils, extent of libraries, etc; showing that the amount of property held and used for educational purposes, upon a reasonable estimate, must be in the neighborhood of two millions of dollars.

1st. Expressive of the devout gratitude of the delegates to the General Conference for the general prosperity of our literary institutions. 2d. Setting apart the second Friday in October, of each year, as a day of fasting, prayer, and thanksgiving to Almighty God, for the abundant outpouring of his Spirit upon these and every department of the Church work.

3d. Recommending an increase of effort to sustain these institutions. 4th. Recommending the Bible as a text-book. 5th. Recommending the introduction of sacred music, as far as possible. 6th. That we receive the charter of the Central University of the General Conference of the M E Church, South, but defer final action thereon until the next General Conference.

7th. That while we approve the great object of the erection of a Central University, we recommend that be appointed a board of Commissioners to prepare a charter and plan of operations, procure information as to the best location, means of endowment, etc; and report to the General Confer-

ence meeting in 1862 their action in the premises. On motion of J E Evans, it was ordered that these resolutions be considered and acted upon as independent propositions, and the first five were adopted without debate. W J Sasnett opposed the sixth resolution. He was opposed to the reception of this charter, because if we accepted it, even with the qualifications expressed, we would be committed to it and to Nashville for its locality. He was in favor of a Central University, but opposed to adopting the idea by adopting this resolution.

A L P Green stated his connection with the procurement of this charter, which he represented as of the most favorable character—unalimited. There was but one other charter as liberal as this. If the Conference refused this charter, they would do themselves and the Church an immense damage. J Hamilton desired to take it out of the category of competition with other institutions. A diploma should be required in order to the admission of students.

Bishop Paine said a word as Trustee of the Greensboro University. An effort to establish a real University had been initiated within the limits of the Alabama Conference before this matter was agitated here. They had gone on there and raised a subscription of nearly three hundred thousand dollars —at the last accounts there were two hundred and sixty-eight thousand dollars, and an efficient Agent in the field. These subscriptions were heavy and paying interest. One man subscribed \$25,000. Another, who himself and his family had subscribed \$35,000, had said to us, "My part is in the bank now, and I would rather you would draw for it than to pay interest." We intend to build. Arrangements are made for a University complete, with the exception of a Medical Department. We intend to teach Christianity as Methodists. We intend to teach biblical literature and religion. Is it right in the Conference to prejudice this matter? We expect to come up here four years from this time and present you, in this institution, a noble specimen of the liberality of the Southern Church—quite beyond the contingency of failure—a permanent thing so far as insert the word "decline" for the word "defer"; and to insert at the end of the resolution these words: "It is therefore understood that the action of this body shall not be regarded as giving this institution the preference over any other which may present equal or superior claims to the next General Conference."

Table listing financial contributions to the Alabama Conference from various states including Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, St Louis, Kentucky, Louisville, Western Va, Virginia, N Carolina, Holston, S Carolina, Texas, East Texas, Wachita, Tennessee, and Memphis.

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Church, South. They take all the financial responsibility of building up the Medical Department. They have already \$50,000 to \$100,000 to begin upon. Are you going to reject that? We are not voting against Greensboro. If we live at the centre, it is no argument against our right of competition for this institution. The brethren came here and made the offer, and we accepted it. They asked us to do nothing but procure the charter. That we have done; and now, brethren, if we do not bring up something worthy of your notice four years to come, just drop us, and go anywhere you please, and we will go with you.

J E Evans, doubting whether we might not injure parties by accepting this charter. He moved the previous question, which was sustained by the House. The Chair—The first question is on striking out the sixth resolution. The resolution was stricken out. W A Smith remarked generally that we were not ready to enter upon such a work, and would not be for the next four years.

Bishop Soule—I hold in my hand the charter, and it is the first time I ever saw it. I see my name in this charter, with others. I never knew till this hour, sir, that my name was in this charter—I never heard of it. When the resolution just rejected came up before the Conference in the report of the committee, I felt myself like a mariner at sea, out of sight of land, and without the necessary instruments to determine his latitude and longitude—precisely in that situation. I did not know, sir, what was meant by proposing this charter. I did not know what was meant by organizing this Board of Trustees, and consequently felt myself perfectly at sea. I did not know how to act, nor hardly how to talk. But the Conference has settled the matter by striking out the resolution. Still I am not yet clear in my apprehensions with respect to what the Conference means to do precisely.—There is now before us a resolution providing for the appointment of a committee of this Conference to have this whole subject of a Great Central University under investigation, and report the result of their inquiries and examinations to the next session of the General Conference. Am I correct, sir?

Bishop Soule—Well, sir, I certainly have no objection to that. I feel no disposition whatever to make any further observations. A H Mitchell—Are these commissioners to procure a charter? B M Drake—To prepare a charter. G Jones—This subject has been under consideration before the committee for nearly four weeks. We have labored much and long upon it. Some of the best minds in the Conference have been at work in that committee. They have matured this thing as well as they could, and the report comes before us as a sort of compromise. We did not intend to endorse these corporations, nor commit the Conference to the University now, and the resolution laid on the table was designed to be noncommittal. The resolution now before us proposes to survey the whole ground, and to take action just where we want action, as indicated by every speaker on this floor.

J Hamilton did not expect the action of the Conference would go to the extent it has. If the Alabama Institution were not accepted, he and his colleagues would have no heart-burnings about it. A S Riggs demanded the previous question; under the force of which the seventh resolution was rejected. On motion by J E Evans, the report was now adopted as a whole. G W D Harris asked and obtained leave of absence for W McMahon, who had received afflictive intelligence from his family.

C K Marshall presented the following resolution, which was, after several ineffectual efforts to amend, adopted: Resolved, That we earnestly exhort all our people to sustain and patronize our own institutions of learning, and to consider the painful consequences that have befallen some who have most unwisely allowed their children to be placed in Roman Catholic and kindred schools. J J Hutchinson complained that his speech of yesterday was not reported in the Daily Advocate.

O R Blue said he had been slandered by the reporter, and set down for a fool. The reporter replied: The statement is not correct, and I protest against such misrepresentations of a man who has no right to speak here. The question on the boundary line between the North Carolina and Virginia Conferences now came up; and L M Lee and R T Heflin spoke at length on the subject. The hour for adjournment having come, notices were given out, and the Chair pronounced the benediction.

AFTERNOON SESSION. Conference met at three o'clock, pursuant to adjournment—Bishop Kavanaugh in the Chair. W P Ratcliffe opened the session with prayer.

The business before the Conference at the hour of adjournment was resumed. After some miscellaneous discussion, and a speech of fifteen minutes by G W Carter. On motion of T W Marshall, the question was now put. The substitute was rejected, and the original report was adopted.

Bishop Paine submitted the following: Resolved, That if within the next four years the Texas Conference should deem it best to divide and organize a new Conference within their bounds, and the Presiding Bishop shall concur, they may do so. After some conversation, J E Evans moved to substitute the resolution by a motion to reconsider the vote fixing the line between the Texas and Rio Grande Mission Conferences. J W Whipple—It was desirable to remove the line a little further east. J Boring had no question about the wisdom of the erection of the Rio Grande Mission Conference, but tho' it best to remove the eastern boundary eastward to the Guadalupe river.

Bishop Paine—I have no doubt but the Guadalupe would be better for the present; but if you postpone it a year or two, it might do very well as it is. The motion to reconsider was agreed to. H N McTyeire—I move now that the line be brought east to the Guadalupe river, running from its mouth up to where the road from San Antonio to Fredericksburg crosses said river; then as already described and fixed. Bishop Paine—How far up the river does that road cross? J W Whipple—One hundred and ten miles. I want to amend the motion, so as to include Fredericksburg in the Rio Grande Mission Conference. The amendment was accepted, and so the motion was adopted, and the boundary changed accordingly. GEORGIA AND HOLSTON CONFERENCES. L Pierce, from the Committee on Boundaries, submitted a report, changing the line between the Georgia and Holston Conferences so as to include in the Holston Conference, etc. E H Sevier proposed to substitute the report by these words: "That the line between the Georgia and Holston Conferences be defined as follows: beginning at the Tennessee river and the Alabama State line; thence south with said Alabama line to the eastern base of the Lookout Mountain; thence north with the base of said mountain to the Tennessee and Georgia State line; thence with the Georgia State line to where it meets the line running between the South Carolina and Holston Conferences." The substitute was accepted, and so the report was adopted.

MISSOURI CONFERENCE. W G Caples (the rules being suspended for the purpose) moved to take out of the description of the boundary of the Missouri Conference [page 200 of the Discipline] these words: "And also the city of Quincy, Ill." The motion was agreed to, and the words were stricken out. THE CHURCH EVANGELIST: A WEEKLY TRACT. On motion by C K Marshall, the Conference now took up the consideration of the report of the special committee for the establishment of the weekly newspaper suggested by his memorial submitted at an early day of the session. The report recommends the establishment of a weekly newspaper for general and gratuitous circulation, to be "of the highest order known to Christian literature," and prescribes a plan for getting up the same, embracing seven items, heretofore described. C K Marshall spoke fifteen minutes on the objects of the paper, and the methods by which it is proposed to be put into circulation. The several propositions were then adopted, upon separate consideration. On motion by C K Marshall, it was ordered, that "The Church Evangelist: a weekly Tract," be the name and style of said weekly newspaper.

J E Evans submitted the following: Resolved, That the Book Committee be authorized to employ an Agent of said paper, if they deem it expedient. Several members proposed to amend, by appointing C K Marshall to that Agency. H H Montgomery submitted a resolution to that effect. J E Evans withdrew his resolution. The hour of adjournment having now arrived— On the motion of E H Myers, this subject was laid on the table for the present. B M Drake made an ineffectual motion for a recess till eight o'clock. F E Pitts moved to go now into the election of the Book Committee. And then, after some desultory conversation with reference to unfinished business of the General Conference, such as the place of holding the next General Conference, and a change of

the ratio of representation in the General Conference. The Conference adjourned till Monday morning, 8 1/2 o'clock. Benediction by Bishop Soule. MONDAY, MAY 31. The Conference met at 8 1/2 o'clock—the opening exercises by the Rev Dr Joseph Boyle—Bishop Kavanaugh in the chair. The journal of Saturday was read and authenticated. Bishop Andrew was called to the chair. The action of the Conference was had upon several points in the Discipline with respect to Conference boundaries, to make the Discipline conform to previous action of the body, and adding to the Kentucky Conference "Liberty," etc. RATIO OF REPRESENTATION. On motion of A L P Green, the Conference took up the consideration of the report, No 4, from the Committee on Revisals, namely, that proposing a change of the Discipline, pages 36 and 37, with respect to the ratio of representation in the General Conference, so that there shall be one member returned for every twenty-one members of the Annual Conference, and changing "two" to "three," so as to read, "no Conference shall be restricted to less than three representatives." On motion of H A C Walker, the latter proposition was laid on the table. G W Langhorne moved to indefinitely postpone the remainder of the report; which was not entertained. P P Smith advocated the change. L M Lee opposed, for the reason we have no lay representation in the Church at all. The safety of the interests of the whole Church, in his judgment, would be far better secured and subserved in a large representation.

Bishop Soule—With all due respect to the statement of Dr Lee, I beg leave to say that I have ever supposed that the whole Methodist Episcopal Church ministers and laity—are represented in this General Conference. Such has been my conviction from the beginning. L M Lee—In the sense to which the Bishop refers, I suppose I should view of Dr Lee, and to meet the expense complained of by Bro Smith, I propose to amend the Discipline in another place, so as to prescribe that the General Conference shall meet only once in eight years. The Chair—That cannot be entertained. A L P Green had noticed among the Annual Conference delegations, that a number of the old and moderate men are returned as the very last in the lists; and if the ratio had been as low as one to twenty one, he feared the old, moderate, safe men would have been left at home. He would prefer a medium between this proposition and the present ratio. He moved to amend the resolution by striking out 21 and inserting 17. The motion was agreed to on a division—affirmative 65, negative 55. The resolution reported, as thus amended, was now adopted.

ADMISSION OF CHURCH MEMBERS. On motion of A H Mitchell, that part of the same report which proposes to modify or do away with the principle of probation was laid on the table for the present. J Stacy desired to offer a substitute for that part of the report. The Chair—It cannot come in now. S Anthony proposed the following, by way of the substitute for the balance of the Report No 4 of the Committee on Revisals: WHEREAS, many changes of the Discipline have been proposed; therefore, Resolved, that no further change of our present Discipline be made by this General Conference, except such as shall be necessary to make the same conform to the changes already made. On motion by C F Deems, the substitute was laid on the table. CLASS MEETINGS. On motion by C F Deems, that part of the same report changing the section relating to class-meetings was laid on the table. LOVE-FEASTS. The Chair now directed the reading and consideration of that part of this report from the Committee on Revisals, proposing a change of the Discipline, by inserting matter to follow sec 2, chapter iii. D B Nicholson—Does the report propose to restrict reception to love-feast to those who are in full fellowship? T O Summers—No. G W Langhorne would strike out the words, "candidates may be received," because the discretion of reception of members was altogether with the preachers. But he did not press the motion. R T Heflin—It strikes me that a proposition similar to that has already been laid on the table. The Chair—No, sir; it was not the same. B M Drake moved to strike out the

love-feast restriction to one hour and a half. Levi Pearce and E Wadsworth never saw that restriction violated. J Boyle—I am very glad to meet with one man in my life who has never seen that rule violated. I have often felt that I would be doing injury to the cause of God by closing the meeting at the end of one hour and a half; and I trust now that this discretion will be left to those managing the meeting. D S Doggett—I differ very materially with Bro Boyle. I have observed the operation of this hour and a half rule, and I am decidedly of the opinion that it is founded in the maturest wisdom. I think there is a deep sagacity in it. I think the love-feast will accomplish all its legitimate objects, if conducted properly, in an hour and a half. Such is the result of my own observation; and I should deprecate any change of the rule. There is some discretion, which the rule itself allows. A L P Green—I concur with Dr Doggett. The rule is especially adapted to meetings in the country, where men, women and children come to worship. The love-feast begins at 9 o'clock, say, in the winter. It is very comfortable to the inside; but persons outside may be suffering with cold. I want them to be compelled to open the doors. C K Marshall—The difficulty is in the long, tedious openings of the love feast. A love-feast is a love-feast, brethren—that is exordium enough. E Wadsworth—It has been my custom in holding love-feast, to hold the love-feast proper one hour and a half. If there happen to be an outpouring of the Spirit of God, and it is desirable to continue, I close the love-feast, and open a prayer meeting. S P Richardson—Mr President, I do not want to stay here longer than to-day. I move that the question be now put. This motion being seconded by a majority of the House, the motion to strike out was rejected. And then this part of the report was adopted. It is in the following words: Question 1. How shall the love-feast be held? Answer—After singing and prayer, the minister may make a short address, setting forth the nature and design of this institution. Every member present in token of brotherly love, and a collection shall be taken up for the poor of the church whenever it is deemed necessary; candidates for church-fellowship may then be received into the church; after which the members shall give brief details of their religious experience; and the meeting shall close with singing and prayer. Question 2. Who shall attend the love-feasts? Answer—All the members of the church, and other serious persons who may be admitted by the preacher in charge. Question 3. How often shall the love-feasts be held? Answer—At every quarterly meeting, and at such other times as the preacher in charge may consider expedient; and they shall not be continued longer than an hour and a half.

INSTRUCTION OF CHILDREN. The Chair now directed the reading and consideration of that part of the same report proposing a change in sec iii, chap 3, page 99 of the Discipline, striking out cambuca language, and the same was adopted in the following terms: 5. Let the minister diligently instruct and exhort all parents to dedicate their children to the Lord in baptism as early as convenient; and in his pastoral visitations let him pay special attention to the children; speak to them personally and kindly on experimental and practical godliness, according to their capacity; pray earnestly for them; cause them to be faithfully instructed in the nature, design, privileges, and obligations of their baptism; and as soon as they comprehend the responsibilities involved in a public profession of faith in Christ, and give evidence of a sincere and earnest determination to discharge the same, see that they be duly recognized as members of the Church, agreeably to the provisions of the Discipline, chapter iii, section i. Let the second paragraph of section iv, page 103, be stricken out. PUBLIC WORSHIP. The Chair now directed the reading of that part of the same report proposing changes in sec vi, chap 8, pages 104 and 105 of the Discipline; and the same was considered and adopted in the following words: Question 1. Omit "among us, on the Lord's day." Omit answer 6 to question 1: "Let the society be met," etc. DRESS. The Chair now directed the reading and consideration of that part of the same report proposing to change the Discipline by striking out sec viii, chap 3, of Dress. J Stacy proposed a substitute for this part of said report, embracing a proposition to the effect that preachers in charge shall earnestly and frequently direct attention to the General

(See 4th page).