

PIONEER METHODISM.

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CHAPTER VII.—THE CAMP-MEETING.

EARLY on the Sunday morning of a Quarterly Meeting, on Goodwin's circuit, all the roads were crowded with people. Everybody was on horseback, and almost every horse carried "double." At half-past eight o'clock the love-feast began in the large school-house. No one was admitted who did not hold a ticket, and even of those who had tickets some were turned away on account of their naughty curls, their sinful "artificials," or their wicked ear-rings. At the moment when the love-feast began the door was locked, and no tardy member gained admission. Plates, with bread cut into half-inch cubes, were passed round, and after these glasses of water, from which each sipped in turn—this meagre provision standing ideally for a feast. Then the speaking was opened by some of the older brethren, who were particularly careful as to dates, announcing, for instance, that it would be just thirty-seven years ago the twenty-first day of next November since the Lord "spoke peace to my never-dying soul while I was kneeling at the mourner's bench in Logan's school-house, on the banks of the South Fork of the Roanoke River, in Old Virginny." This statement the brethren had heard for many years, with a proper variation in date as the time advanced, but, now, as in duty bound, they greeted it again with pious ejaculations of thanksgiving. There was a sameness in the perorations of these little speeches. Most of the old men wound up by asking an interest in the prayers of the brethren, that their "last days might be their best days," and that their "path might grow brighter and brighter unto the perfect day." Soon the elder sisters began to speak of their trials and victories, of their "ups and downs," their "many crooked paths," and the religion that "happifies the soul." With their pathetic voices the fire spread, until the whole meeting was at a white-heat, and cries of "Hallelujah!" "Amen!" "Bless the Lord!" "Glory to God!" and so on expressed the fervour of feeling. Perhaps you, sitting