

# A HISTORY

## OF THE

### METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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#### INTRODUCTION.

IN presenting a history of this denomination of Christians to the reader, it seems proper to introduce it by a few historical sketches of the first settlements of the country, accompanied with an account of the civil and religious state of the people at the time Methodism was introduced.

The discovery of America by Columbus in 1492,\*

\* The reader is doubtless aware that the first discovery of America has been attributed to the Norwegians, by whom Iceland was peopled. It seems indeed indisputable, especially from the documents which have been recently brought to light by "The Royal Society of Northern Antiquarians," that as early as 986 Greenland was discovered by a company of Norwegians from Iceland, and a settlement effected there by emigrants from that place. And it is equally true, by the same authority, that these persons, assisted by some of their countrymen from Norway, from the year 1000 and onward to near the close of the 13th century, discovered various portions of the coast of North America, from Nova Scotia along down as far south as the Chesapeake Bay, if not even as far as Florida. It seems also that landings were made at a number of places, and a traffic carried on for short seasons with the natives. But it is equally certain that no permanent settlements were made, nor any right acquired to the soil from the aboriginal inhabitants.

Whether Columbus had any knowledge of these facts, as