

METHODIST BOOK CONCERN, NEW YORK.

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THE history of Methodism in the New World is replete with interest. Its progress has been marvellous, and its present position may well call forth the inquiry, "What hath God wrought?" Among all the factors which have contributed to the success of Methodism, not the least important is the Book Concern.

This institution was commenced in 1789. The first Book Steward, as the agent was then called, was John Dickens, who began the enterprise with a capital of \$600, of which he was the lender. Philadelphia was the seat of the "Concern," but for some time its career was far from successful, inasmuch as that at the end of nine years debt had accumulated to the amount of \$4,500 and at the same time Mr. Dickens died. No blame was attached to him for the lack of success.

Rev. Ezekiel Cooper was elected successor to Mr. Dickens and found himself in an unenviable position, but in two years he reduced the debt one-half. Some wanted the

"Concern" to be removed to Baltimore, and doubtless would have succeeded, but for the opposition of Mr. Cooper, who did not want to remain in the city of Brotherly Love, where he had endured much anxiety, but had succeeded not only in making the Concern solvent, but had secured a net capital to meet all demands.

New York was chosen as the home of the Book Concern, but it does not appear that any of the citizens of the "empire city" were anxious about receiving it. The "Concern" has now become one of Mammoth dimensions, but for several years it was only a sojourner and had no certain dwelling-place. In 1830 five lots were purchased in Mulberry Street, on which premises were built, which were occupied from 1833 until 1839, and was continued as a printing-house until 1890. In three years after the Mulberry House was opened it was burned to the ground at a loss of \$250,000. Only a small amount of insurance money was received, but the Methodist people