

A condensed history of early Methodism follows, of the journey to Georgia of the two Wesleys, of the influence of the Moravians, and how in the Aldersgate street meeting-house John Wesley felt his heart "strangely warmed" while listening to the reading of Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans, and received the assurance of the forgiveness of sins.

METHODISM IN AMERICA.

An interesting account is given of the beginnings of Methodism in the New World through the inspiration of Barbara Heck, and the ministry of Philip Embury, Captain Webb, and Robert Strawbridge. The portrait of Barbara Heck reveals a strikingly winsome countenance. It seems strange that there should have arisen any controversy as to the identity and influence of this mother in Israel, yet the theory has been maintained that her name was not Heck, but Hick, that she died not in Canada but in New York, and a marble tablet to that effect exists in old John Street church. Dr. Buckley, however, disposes of this extraordinary theory and confirms the now universally accepted record of the early migration of the Palatine Methodists to Canada, and the great and providential part she played as the mother of Methodism in this land as well as in the United States.

Dr. Buckley also sustains the precedence of the New York Methodism above that of Baltimore or Philadelphia. He recounts the heroic story of the pioneer Methodist preachers of the New World, the ranging of Whitefield throughout the continent, the labours of Boardman and Pilmoor; the frequent visits of Coke, the father of Methodist missions; the consecrated labours of Francis Asbury, the first bishop of American Methodism, as heroic a figure as any in the annals of the Christian Church.

The blended romance and reality of this conquest of the continent for Christ and His Church form a stirring chapter. In graphic phrase Dr. Buckley thus describes those days:

"Methodism had now for eighteen years run like a fire to and fro in this continent, here through dry stubble, there almost quenched in swamps and along watercourses, again kindled at distant points by wind-blown sparks, until the land was dotted with societies, none of which dared to call themselves

churches, and whose members were without the sacraments except as they received them from clergymen of the Church of England, who in many instances regarded them with indifference."

The early history of Methodism is written on the tombstones of the pioneers and path-finders of civilization. Some of these early itinerants were men of marvellous powers, as Benjamin Abbott, Jesse Lee, Freeborn Garretson, William Black, the founder of Methodism in Nova Scotia, the others whose names, unrecorded on earth, are written in the Lamb's book of life.

There are a number of incidental references to

CANADIAN METHODISM

in these volumes. Asbury, and Hedding, and Bangs, and Elder Case, traversed as missionaries this land, then an almost pathless wilderness. During the war of 1812-1815, Methodism in Canada suffered exceedingly. The circuits in Upper Canada were manned, but those in Montreal, on the St. Francis and Ottawa were without regular supplies. The church in Quebec had no regular pastor for two years of the struggle, but a Methodist surgeon in a British regiment preached there efficiently, and when his regiment was removed a local preacher was developed.

When peace was declared the membership in Canada had been reduced to little more than half the number at the beginning of hostilities. The Genesee Conference resumed care of the country. William Case was made presiding elder of the Upper Canada, and Henry Ryan of the Lower Canada district. The British Conference, however, sent over three missionaries for Montreal and Quebec.

The increase of members in the United States in 1815 was but thirty-six, and of preachers, seventeen, justifying Wesley's aphorism that "war is always a foe to true religion."

The second volume describes the irrepressible conflict between the anti-slavery and slavery sentiment, and what Dr. Buckley mildly calls the "bisection of the Methodist Episcopal Church." That he has been eminently fair and impartial, weighing the evidence and giving judgment, is shown in the cordial acceptance of his statement by the leading journal of the Southern Church.

Then follows the record of the fratricidal War of Secession and its sequels,