

## METHODIST BODIES

### GENERAL STATEMENT

The Methodist churches of America, in common with those of England and other lands, trace their origin to a movement started in Oxford University in 1729, when John and Charles Wesley, George Whitefield, and a number of others began to meet for religious exercises. Finding as they read the Bible that, as John Wesley expressed it, they "could not be saved without holiness, they followed after it, and incited others so to do." During the succeeding years the little company was derisively called "The Holy Club," "Bible Bigots," "Methodists," etc.; and this last term, intended to describe their methodical habits, seems to have been accepted by them almost immediately, as the movement they led soon became widely known as the "Methodist movement." The next step and its outcome are described by John Wesley as follows: "They saw likewise that men are justified before they are sanctified, but still holiness was their object. God then thrust them out to raise a holy people. \* \* \* In the latter end of the year 1739, eight or ten persons came to me in London and desired that I would spend some time with them in prayer, and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come; this was the rise of the United Society."

About this time, the Wesleys came into intimate relations with the Moravians, first on a visit to America<sup>1</sup> and subsequently in London, and at their headquarters in Herrnhut, Saxony, and to the influence of these conferences may be traced much of the spiritual power of the new movement.

The three leaders, although ordained ministers of the Church of England, soon found themselves excluded from many of the pulpits of the Established Church on the ground that they were preachers of new doctrines, and they were obliged to hold their meetings in private houses, halls, barns, and in the fields. As converts were received they were organized into societies for worship, and as the work expanded class meetings were formed for the religious care and training of members. Then the circuit system was established, by which several congregations were grouped under the care of one lay preacher; the itinerancy came into existence, as the lay preachers were transferred from one appointment to another for greater efficiency; and finally, in 1744, the annual conference was instituted, in which Mr. Wesley met all his workers. Thus the principal distinctive features of the Methodist organization grew out of the necessities of the work.

As was natural, the doctrinal position accorded in the main with that of the Church of England, and the Articles of Religion were largely formulated from the Thirty-nine Articles of that church, although no formal creed was accepted save the Apostles' Creed. The stricter doctrines of Calvinism, predestination, and reprobation were cast aside, and the milder emphasis of Arminianism on repentance, faith, and holiness was accepted. As John Wesley said: "The first of these we count as it were the porch of religion; the next, the door; the third, religion itself." This acceptance of Arminianism caused a divergence, though not a permanent breach, between the Wesleys and Whitefield. Whitefield was Calvinistic, though not of the extreme type, and became identified with the Calvinistic Methodists, both the Welsh body<sup>2</sup> and the Countess of Huntingdon's Connection. He afterwards withdrew from the leadership of the latter body, and gave himself to general revival work in England and America.

<sup>1</sup> See Methodist Episcopal Church, p. 926.

<sup>2</sup> See Presbyterian bodies, p. 1112.

Though the Wesleys lived and died in full ministerial relations with the Church of England, serious differences arose, as already noted, between that church and the Methodists. In 1745 John Wesley wrote that he was willing to make any concession which conscience would permit, in order to live in harmony with the clergy of the Established Church, but he could not give up the doctrines he was preaching, dissolve the societies, suppress lay preaching, or cease to preach in the open air. For many years he refused to sanction the administration of the sacraments by any except those who had been ordained by a bishop in the apostolic succession, and he himself hesitated to assume authority to ordain; but the Bishop of London having refused to ordain ministers for the Methodist societies in America, which were left by the Revolutionary War without the sacraments, Wesley, in 1784, by the laying on of hands, appointed or ordained men and gave them authority to ordain others. He thus ordained Thomas Coke, D. C. L., who was already a presbyter of the Church of England, to be superintendent of the Methodist societies in America, and set apart for a similar purpose in Great Britain Alexander Mather, who had not been episcopally ordained.

The development of church government, while following the general lines laid down by Wesley, was somewhat different in England and in America. In England the conference remained supreme, and the superintendency was not emphasized. In America the superintendency was in fact an episcopacy which, while not corresponding exactly to the episcopacy of the Church of England, became a very decided factor in church life. In each country, but especially in America, considerable opposition has developed at different times in connection with some features of the parent body, and divisions have resulted. In every case, however, the general principles of the founders have been preserved, and, notwithstanding the various separations, the Wesleyan Methodist Connection in England and the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States remain the strongest representatives of the movement initiated in Oxford nearly two centuries ago.

It is to be noted that the influence of the Methodist doctrine and church organization has not been confined to those bodies which have adopted the name Methodist, but has been manifest in the development of a number of bodies which use modified forms of the episcopal, presbyterial, and congregational systems. In the United States several bodies, including the Evangelical Association and the United Evangelical Church (now one denomination), the United Brethren bodies, and particularly the large number of organizations emphasizing the doctrine of "holiness," or entire sanctification, claim to be true exponents of the doctrines of the Wesleys, while their polity is generally Methodist in type. On the other hand, the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists, with whom Whitefield identified himself, were Presbyterian in polity, though Methodist in every other respect, as are the Wesleyan Methodist and some other Methodist churches in England and America.

#### STATISTICS

The denominations grouped as Methodists in 1926, 1916, and 1906 are listed in the following table with the principal statistics as reported for the three periods. Since 1916 there have been some changes. The African American Methodist Episcopal Church has disbanded. Other bodies have been added—the Reformed Methodist Church, the Independent African Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Holiness Methodist Church, the last an organization listed in 1916 as the Lumber River Mission under the Evangelistic Associations. For general convenience of reference the Negro bodies have been grouped together in 1926, as in 1916. There were 15 independent churches reported at the 1890 census, with a membership of 2,569; these were not reported as a group, however, at the two succeeding censuses, probably having been absorbed by various denominations.

## SUMMARY OF STATISTICS FOR THE METHODIST BODIES, 1926, 1916, AND 1906

DENOMINATION AND CENSUS YEAR	Total number of churches	Number of members	VALUE OF CHURCH EDIFICES		EXPENDITURES DURING YEAR		SUNDAY SCHOOLS	
			Churches reporting	Amount (dollars)	Churches reporting	Amount (dollars)	Churches reporting	Number of scholars
<b>1926</b>								
<b>Total for the group</b> .....	<b>60,644</b>	<b>8,070,619</b>	<b>56,493</b>	<b>654,736,975</b>	<b>59,483</b>	<b>152,151,978</b>	<b>54,804</b>	<b>6,567,654</b>
Methodist Episcopal Church.....	26,130	4,080,777	25,290	406,165,659	25,790	89,422,307	24,730	3,796,561
Methodist Protestant Church.....	2,239	192,171	2,064	16,817,278	2,160	3,137,211	1,917	173,438
Wesleyan Methodist Connection (or Church) of America.....	619	21,910	555	1,804,719	585	773,981	561	34,314
Primitive Methodist Church in the United States of America.....	80	11,990	79	1,676,800	80	326,598	78	15,190
Methodist Episcopal Church, South.....	18,096	2,487,694	16,443	161,986,430	17,798	41,651,150	15,525	1,802,464
Congregational Methodist Church.....	145	9,691	110	127,775	120	29,529	80	4,807
Free Methodist Church of North America.....	1,375	36,374	1,140	4,921,760	1,269	1,617,802	1,026	69,549
New Congregational Methodist Church.....	26	1,229	21	23,900	19	1,234	3	126
Holiness Methodist Church.....	7	459	7	18,500	7	2,073	7	531
Reformed Methodist Church.....	14	390	13	26,300	13	9,176	12	356
African Methodist Episcopal Church.....	6,708	545,814	5,829	32,092,549	6,492	7,600,161	5,884	288,247
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.....	2,466	456,813	2,370	18,515,723	2,464	4,757,066	2,429	267,141
Colored Methodist Protestant Church.....	3	533	3	36,000	3	6,685	3	98
Union American Methodist Episcopal Church.....	73	10,169	64	478,951	68	222,621	69	4,240
African Union Methodist Protestant Church.....	43	4,086	40	476,269	43	99,563	42	2,851
Colored Methodist Episcopal Church.....	2,518	202,713	2,341	9,211,437	2,477	2,428,234	2,351	103,523
Reformed Zion Union Apostolic Church.....	48	4,538	45	184,075	44	37,601	42	2,882
Reformed Methodist Union Episcopal Church.....	25	2,265	21	74,800	24	17,282	19	673
Independent African Methodist Episcopal Church.....	29	1,003	28	98,050	27	11,704	26	663
<b>1916</b>								
<b>Total for the group</b> .....	<b>65,686</b>	<b>7,166,451</b>	<b>60,982</b>	<b>317,916,402</b>	<b>64,139</b>	<b>70,887,406</b>	<b>59,191</b>	<b>6,473,500</b>
Methodist Episcopal Church.....	29,315	3,717,785	28,134	215,104,014	28,791	43,993,681	27,549	3,872,264
Methodist Protestant Church.....	2,473	186,908	2,266	7,944,467	2,393	1,509,243	2,081	177,918
Wesleyan Methodist Connection of America.....	579	20,778	514	787,731	525	329,294	500	29,850
Primitive Methodist Church in the United States of America.....	93	9,353	91	829,035	92	147,695	90	14,918
Methodist Episcopal Church, South.....	19,184	2,114,479	17,133	62,428,433	18,751	17,139,398	16,308	1,688,559
Congregational Methodist Church.....	197	12,503	195	166,932	139	13,806	147	8,034
Free Methodist Church of North America.....	1,598	35,291	1,205	2,236,325	1,426	772,038	1,150	58,553
New Congregational Methodist Church.....	24	1,256	18	14,450	16	1,372	6	302
African Methodist Episcopal Church.....	6,633	548,355	6,232	14,631,792	6,516	3,413,395	6,084	311,051
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.....	2,716	257,169	2,475	7,591,393	2,641	1,700,737	2,535	135,102
Colored Methodist Protestant Church.....	26	1,967	16	52,733	23	12,129	24	870
Union American Methodist Episcopal Church.....	67	3,624	59	182,305	65	40,664	54	1,982
African Union Methodist Protestant Church.....	58	3,751	53	205,825	53	47,231	49	2,813
Colored Methodist Episcopal Church.....	2,621	245,749	2,490	5,619,862	2,613	1,736,692	2,541	167,880
Reformed Zion Union Apostolic Church.....	47	3,977	47	79,325	41	13,156	42	2,505
African American Methodist Episcopal Church.....	28	1,310	27	6,280	28	13,455	6	200
Reformed Methodist Union Episcopal Church.....	27	2,196	27	35,500	26	3,420	25	699

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS FOR THE METHODIST BODIES, 1926, 1916, AND 1906—Con.

DENOMINATION AND CENSUS YEAR	Total number of churches	Number of members	VALUE OF CHURCH EDIFICES		EXPENDITURES DURING YEAR		SUNDAY SCHOOLS	
			Churches reporting	Amount (dollars)	Churches reporting	Amount (dollars)	Churches reporting	Number of scholars
1906								
<b>Total for the group</b> .....	<b>64,255</b>	<b>5,749,838</b>	<b>59,077</b>	<b>229,450,996</b>			<b>55,227</b>	<b>4,472,930</b>
Methodist Episcopal Church.....	29,742	2,986,154	27,888	163,357,805			26,809	2,700,742
Union American Methodist Episcopal Church (Colored).....	77	4,347	59	170,150			76	3,372
African Methodist Episcopal Church.....	6,608	494,777	6,299	11,303,489			6,056	292,689
African Union Methodist Protestant Church.....	69	5,592	68	183,697			66	5,266
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.....	2,197	184,542	2,104	4,833,207			2,060	107,692
Methodist Protestant Church.....	2,825	178,544	2,442	6,053,048			2,118	141,086
Wesleyan Methodist Connection of America.....	591	20,043	480	637,117			475	21,463
Methodist Episcopal Church, South.....	17,683	1,638,480	15,859	37,278,424			13,846	1,040,160
Congregational Methodist Church.....	324	14,729	250	194,275			181	8,785
New Congregational Methodist Church.....	35	1,782	33	27,650			27	1,298
Colored Methodist Episcopal Church.....	2,365	172,996	2,264	3,017,849			2,207	92,457
Reformed Zion Union Apostolic Church (Colored).....	45	3,059	41	37,875			35	1,508
Primitive Methodist Church in the United States of America.....	96	7,558	93	630,700			91	13,177
Free Methodist Church of North America.....	1,541	32,838	1,140	1,688,745			1,066	41,443
Reformed Methodist Union Episcopal Church (Colored).....	57	4,397	57	36,965			54	1,792

# CONGREGATIONAL METHODIST CHURCH

## STATISTICS

**Summary for the United States, with urban-rural classification.**—A general summary of the statistics for the Congregational Methodist Church for the year 1926 is presented in Table 1, which shows also the distribution of these figures between urban and rural territory.

The membership of the Congregational Methodist Church includes all adult communicant members and children under the care of the Church.

**TABLE 1.—SUMMARY OF STATISTICS FOR CHURCHES IN URBAN AND RURAL TERRITORY, 1926: CONGREGATIONAL METHODIST CHURCH**

ITEM	Total	In urban territory <sup>1</sup>	In rural territory <sup>1</sup>	PER CENT OF TOTAL <sup>2</sup>	
				Urban	Rural
<b>Churches (local organizations)</b> .....	145	10	135	6.9	93.1
<b>Members</b> .....	9,691	930	8,761	9.6	90.4
Average per church.....	67	93	65		
<b>Membership by sex:</b>					
Male.....	4,020	352	3,668	8.8	91.2
Female.....	5,671	578	5,093	10.2	89.8
Males per 100 females.....	70.9	60.9	72.0		
<b>Membership by age:</b>					
Under 13 years.....	299	43	256	14.4	85.6
13 years and over.....	7,347	836	6,511	11.4	88.6
Age not reported.....	2,045	51	1,994	2.5	97.5
Per cent under 13 years <sup>3</sup> .....	3.9	4.9	3.8		
<b>Church edifices:</b>					
Number.....	110	8	102	7.3	92.7
Value—Churches reporting.....	110	8	102	7.3	92.7
Amount reported.....	\$127,775	\$15,000	\$112,775	11.7	88.3
Average per church.....	\$1,162	\$1,875	\$1,106		
Debt—Churches reporting.....	5	1	4		
Amount reported.....	\$998	\$264	\$734	26.5	73.5
Churches reporting "no debt" on church edifice.....	81	6	75		
<b>Parsonages:</b>					
Value—Churches reporting.....	1	1			
Amount reported.....	\$5,000	\$5,000		100.0	
Debt—Churches reporting.....	1	1			
Amount reported.....	\$1,000	\$1,000		100.0	
<b>Expenditures during year:</b>					
Churches reporting.....	120	8	112	6.7	93.3
Amount reported.....	\$29,529	\$4,124	\$25,405	14.0	86.0
Current expenses and improvements.....	\$22,557	\$3,473	\$19,084	15.4	84.6
Benevolences, missions, etc.....	\$6,662	\$651	\$6,011	9.8	90.2
Not classified.....	\$310		\$310		100.0
Average expenditure per church.....	\$246	\$516	\$227		
<b>Sunday schools:</b>					
Churches reporting.....	80	7	73		
Officers and teachers.....	515	48	467	9.3	90.7
Scholars.....	4,807	667	4,140	13.9	86.1

<sup>1</sup> Urban territory includes all cities and other incorporated places which had 2,500 inhabitants or more in 1920, the date of the last Federal census; rural territory comprises the remainder of the country.

<sup>2</sup> Per cent not shown where base is less than 100.

<sup>3</sup> Based on membership with age classification reported.

The data given for 1926 represent 145 active Congregational Methodist churches, with 9,691 members. The classification of membership by sex was reported by 145 churches and the classification by age was reported by 117 churches, including, however, only 38 which reported any members under 13 years of age.

**Comparative data, 1890-1926.**—Table 2 presents, in convenient form for comparison, a summary of the available statistics of this denomination for the censuses of 1926, 1916, 1906, and 1890. The figures for 1890 include nine organizations of the Congregational Methodist Church (Colored), not reported in 1906, probably having united with this body, with which it corresponded in all particulars of doctrine, polity, and usage.

TABLE 2.—COMPARATIVE SUMMARY, 1890 TO 1926: CONGREGATIONAL METHODIST CHURCH

ITEM	1926	1916	1906	<sup>1</sup> 1890
<b>Churches (local organizations)</b> .....	145	197	324	223
<b>Increase <sup>2</sup> over preceding census:</b>				
Number.....	-52	-127	101	-----
Per cent.....	-26.4	-39.2	45.3	-----
<b>Members</b> .....	9,691	12,503	14,729	9,084
<b>Increase <sup>2</sup> over preceding census:</b>				
Number.....	-2,812	-2,226	5,645	-----
Per cent.....	-22.5	-15.1	62.1	-----
Average membership per church.....	67	63	45	41
<b>Church edifices:</b>				
Number.....	110	195	262	155
Value—Churches reporting.....	110	195	250	-----
Amount reported.....	\$127,775	\$166,932	\$194,275	\$42,205
Average per church.....	\$1,162	\$856	\$777	-----
Debt—Churches reporting.....	5	10	19	-----
Amount reported.....	\$998	\$4,353	\$9,477	-----
<b>Parsonages:</b>				
Value—Churches reporting.....	1	-----	1	-----
Amount reported.....	\$5,000	-----	\$1,500	-----
Debt—Churches reporting.....	1	-----	-----	-----
Amount reported.....	\$1,000	-----	-----	-----
<b>Expenditures during year:</b>				
Churches reporting.....	120	139	-----	-----
Amount reported.....	\$29,529	\$13,806	-----	-----
Current expenses and improvements.....	\$22,557	\$10,442	-----	-----
Benevolences, missions, etc.....	\$6,662	\$2,019	-----	-----
Not classified.....	\$310	\$1,345	-----	-----
Average expenditure per church.....	\$246	\$99	-----	-----
<b>Sunday schools:</b>				
Churches reporting.....	80	147	181	-----
Officers and teachers.....	515	790	1,146	-----
Scholars.....	4,897	8,034	8,785	-----

<sup>1</sup> Statistics for 1890 include those for the Congregational Methodist Church (Colored), reported separately at that census.

<sup>2</sup> A minus sign (—) denotes decrease.

**State tables.**—Tables 3, 4, 5, and 6 present the statistics for the Congregational Methodist Church by States. Table 3 gives for each State the number and membership of the churches classified according to their location in urban or rural territory and the total membership classified by sex. Table 4 gives for selected States the number and membership of the churches for the three censuses from 1906 to 1926, together with the membership for 1926 classified as under 13 years of age and 13 years of age and over. Table 5 shows the value of church property and the debt on such property, for 1926 alone. Table 6 presents, for 1926, the church expenditures, showing separately the amounts expended for current expenses and improvements, and for benevolences, etc., and also gives the data for Sunday schools. Separate presentation in Tables 5 and 6 is limited to those States in which three or more churches reported the principal items shown (values or expenditures), in order to avoid disclosing the financial statistics of any individual church. The States omitted from these tables can be determined by referring to the complete list which appears in Table 3.

**TABLE 3.—NUMBER AND MEMBERSHIP OF CHURCHES IN URBAN AND RURAL TERRITORY, AND TOTAL MEMBERSHIP BY SEX, BY STATES, 1926: CONGREGATIONAL METHODIST CHURCH**

GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION AND STATE	NUMBER OF CHURCHES			NUMBER OF MEMBERS			TOTAL MEMBERSHIP BY SEX		
	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Male	Female	Males per 100 females ( <sup>1</sup> )
<b>United States</b> .....	145	10	135	9,691	930	8,761	4,020	5,671	70.9
<b>East North Central:</b>									
Indiana.....	4		4	214		214	76	138	55.1
<b>West North Central:</b>									
Missouri.....	8	1	7	361	50	311	144	217	66.4
<b>South Atlantic:</b>									
North Carolina.....	3		3	209		209	101	108	93.5
Georgia.....	23		23	1,839		1,839	762	1,077	70.8
Florida.....	2		2	97		97	38	59	
<b>East South Central:</b>									
Tennessee.....	7		7	490		490	214	276	77.5
Alabama.....	31	2	29	2,664	351	2,313	1,046	1,618	64.6
Mississippi.....	20	2	18	1,362	258	1,104	568	794	71.5
<b>West South Central:</b>									
Arkansas.....	7		7	287		287	100	187	53.5
Louisiana.....	7		7	407		407	173	234	73.9
Texas.....	32	5	27	1,755	271	1,484	794	961	82.6
<b>Mountain:</b>									
New Mexico.....	1		1	6		6	4	2	

<sup>1</sup> Ratio not shown where number of females is less than 100.

**TABLE 4.—NUMBER AND MEMBERSHIP OF CHURCHES, 1906 TO 1926, AND MEMBERSHIP BY AGE, 1926, BY STATES: CONGREGATIONAL METHODIST CHURCH**

[Separate presentation is limited to States having 3 or more churches in either 1926, 1916, or 1906]

STATE	NUMBER OF CHURCHES			NUMBER OF MEMBERS			MEMBERSHIP BY AGE, 1926			
	1926	1916	1906	1926	1916	1906	Under 13 years	13 years and over	Age not reported	Per cent under 13 <sup>1</sup>
<b>United States</b> .....	145	197	324	9,691	12,503	14,729	299	7,347	2,045	3.9
<b>New Jersey</b> .....		5	5		201	403				
Indiana.....	4			214			62	152		29.0
Missouri.....	8	12	27	361	676	1,118	3	291	67	1.0
<b>North Carolina</b> .....	3			209			28	181		13.4
Georgia.....	23	37	47	1,839	2,385	2,656	27	1,284	528	2.1
Florida.....	2	9	4	97	249	156		97		
Tennessee.....	7	12	21	490	508	977	5	250	235	2.0
Alabama.....	31	38	59	2,664	3,073	3,355	17	2,276	371	0.7
Mississippi.....	20	31	38	1,362	2,148	1,640	96	1,232	34	7.2
<b>Arkansas</b> .....	7	1	26	287	14	684	5	132	150	3.6
<b>Louisiana</b> .....	7	18	18	407	1,281	711	8	259	140	3.0
<b>Oklahoma</b> .....		1	6		26	107				
<b>Texas</b> .....	32	30	71	1,755	1,896	2,759	48	1,187	520	3.9
<b>Other States</b> .....	1	3	2	6	46	163		6		

<sup>1</sup> Based on membership with age classification reported.

**TABLE 5.—VALUE OF CHURCH PROPERTY, AND CHURCH DEBT, BY STATES, 1926:  
CONGREGATIONAL METHODIST CHURCH**

[Separate presentation is limited to States having 3 or more churches reporting value of edifices]

STATE	Total number of churches	Number of church edifices	VALUE OF CHURCH EDIFICES		DEBT ON CHURCH EDIFICES		VALUE OF PARSONAGES		DEBT ON PARSONAGES	
			Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Amount
United States.....	145	110	110	\$127,775	5	\$998	1	\$5,000	1	\$1,000
Indiana.....	4	3	3	6,300						
Missouri.....	8	6	6	9,000	1	40				
North Carolina.....	3	3	3	6,900	1	600				
Georgia.....	23	21	21	20,200						
Tennessee.....	7	5	5	7,100						
Alabama.....	31	28	28	30,525	3	358				
Mississippi.....	20	18	18	17,350						
Arkansas.....	7	3	3	2,400						
Louisiana.....	7	5	5	4,250						
Texas.....	32	16	16	22,850						
Other States.....	3	2	2	900			1	5,000	1	1,000

**TABLE 6.—CHURCH EXPENDITURES AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS, BY STATES, 1926:  
CONGREGATIONAL METHODIST CHURCH**

[Separate presentation is limited to States having 3 or more churches reporting expenditures]

STATE	Total number of churches	EXPENDITURES DURING YEAR				SUNDAY SCHOOLS			
		Churches reporting	Total amount	For current expenses and improvements	For benevolences, missions, etc.	Not classified	Churches reporting	Officers and teachers	Scholars
United States.....	145	120	\$29,529	\$22,557	\$6,662	\$310	80	515	4,807
Indiana.....	4	4	2,950	450	2,500		4	20	180
Missouri.....	8	8	1,395	1,295	100		6	42	238
North Carolina.....	3	3	2,711	2,461	250		3	20	239
Georgia.....	23	20	4,910	4,114	496	300	11	66	551
Tennessee.....	7	5	412	257	155		4	21	216
Alabama.....	31	27	6,104	5,223	881		23	172	1,060
Mississippi.....	20	18	3,027	2,102	915	10	10	55	494
Arkansas.....	7	4	470	375	95		3	11	135
Louisiana.....	7	6	765	420	345		5	31	221
Texas.....	32	22	6,704	5,804	900		10	71	817
Other States.....	3	3	81	56	25		1	6	56

## HISTORY, DOCTRINE, AND ORGANIZATION<sup>1</sup>

### DENOMINATIONAL HISTORY

The same general influences that led to the organization of the Methodist Protestant Church in 1830, two decades later led to the establishment of the Congregational Methodist Church. Soon after the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, separated from the Methodist Episcopal Church, there arose in Georgia considerable objection to certain features of the episcopacy and itinerancy, and

<sup>1</sup> This statement, which is substantially the same as that published in Part II of the Report on Religious Bodies, 1916, has been revised by Mr. D. M. Boozer, of Anniston, Ala., and approved by him in its present form.



a number of ministers and members withdrew in order to secure what they considered a more democratic form of church government. A conference was held in Forsyth, Monroe County, Ga., in May, 1852, and was presided over by a layman, the Hon. William L. Fambro, while its secretary was a clergyman, the Rev. Hiram Phinazee. This conference adhered strictly to the doctrine of Methodism, but adopted the congregational form of government, although modified to a certain degree of connectionalism, and the name chosen was Congregational Methodist Church.

In a few years the movement extended into the neighboring States of Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi, and at present churches are to be found in most of the Southern and some of the Northern States.

The denomination suffered a considerable loss in 1887-88, when nearly one-third of its churches joined the Congregationalists. Later a number of them returned and the church gained in strength for a time, but within the past two decades has suffered heavy losses, apparently through general disorganization.

#### DOCTRINE AND ORGANIZATION

The doctrinal position of the church is distinctly Methodistic and its polity, while congregational in some respects, coincides very closely with that of the Methodist Episcopal Church of to-day.

The local church has large powers, and calls its own pastor, while every minister is free to accept or reject any call that comes to him. Its internal affairs are controlled by the church conference, over which the pastor presides and which includes the other church officers—class leaders, stewards, deacons, and secretary. The action of the church conference, however, is reviewable by the district conference, which is subordinate to the annual conference, and that in turn to the General Conference. The district conference, which convenes once or twice a year, is composed of representatives from the local churches, who may be either ministers or laymen. Representatives are elected by the district conferences to the annual conferences, and by the annual conferences to the General Conference, which meets quadrennially. Each of these conferences constitutes a church court, and may condemn opinions and practices considered to be contrary to the Word of God, cite offending churches and ministers for trial, and admonish, rebuke, suspend, or expel from its membership.

The ministers are licensed and ordained by the district conference, on the recommendation of the church conferences and after proper examination.

#### WORK

The missionary work of the denomination is carried on through a general Missionary Union, composed of annual or State unions, which in turn are composed of local societies. The Missionary Union operates through a mission board which has immediate supervision of all work done. There is no foreign missionary work, and no record of the home missionary work was secured. The denomination has a church paper called *The Messenger*, published at Anniston, Ala.