

## 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> .....                                | 60,644                   | 8,070,619         | 56,493                   | 654,736,975      | 59,483                   | 152,151,978      | 54,804             | 6,567,654          |
| 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> .....                                | 65,686                   | 7,166,451         | 60,982                   | 317,916,402      | 64,139                   | 70,887,406       | 59,191             | 6,473,500          |
| 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              |

# REFORMED METHODIST UNION EPISCOPAL CHURCH

## STATISTICS

**Summary for the United States, with urban-rural classification.**—A general summary of the statistics for the Reformed Methodist Union Episcopal 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 this denomination includes those persons accepted into the local churches upon profession of faith and baptism.

**TABLE 1.—SUMMARY OF STATISTICS FOR CHURCHES IN URBAN AND RURAL TERRITORY, 1926: REFORMED METHODIST UNION EPISCOPAL 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</b> (local organizations).....          | 25       | 7                               | 18                              |                                |       |
| <b>Members</b> .....                                | 2,265    | 486                             | 1,779                           | 21.5                           | 78.5  |
| Average per church.....                             | 91       | 69                              | 99                              |                                |       |
| <b>Membership by sex:</b>                           |          |                                 |                                 |                                |       |
| Male.....   | 764      | 77                              | 687                             | 10.1                           | 89.9  |
| Female.....   | 1,501    | 409                             | 1,092                           | 27.2                           | 72.8  |
| Males per 100 females.....                          | 50.9     | 18.8                            | 62.9                            |                                |       |
| <b>Membership by age:</b>                           |          |                                 |                                 |                                |       |
| Under 13 years.....                                 | 100      | 14                              | 86                              | 14.0                           | 86.0  |
| 13 years and over.....                              | 1,963    | 472                             | 1,491                           | 24.0                           | 76.0  |
| Age not reported.....                               | 202      |                                 | 202                             |                                | 100.0 |
| Per cent under 13 years <sup>3</sup> .....          | 4.8      | 2.9                             | 5.5                             |                                |       |
| <b>Church edifices:</b>                             |          |                                 |                                 |                                |       |
| Number.....   | 28       | 9                               | 19                              |                                |       |
| Value—Churches reporting.....                       | 21       | 4                               | 17                              |                                |       |
| Amount reported.....                                | \$74,800 | \$29,450                        | \$45,350                        | 39.4                           | 60.6  |
| Average per church.....                             | \$3,562  | \$7,363                         | \$2,668                         |                                |       |
| <b>Debt—Churches reporting</b> .....                | 5        | 2                               | 3                               |                                |       |
| Amount reported.....                                | \$3,710  | \$2,800                         | \$910                           | 75.5                           | 24.5  |
| Churches reporting "no debt" on church edifice..... | 13       | 2                               | 11                              |                                |       |
| <b>Parsonages:</b>                                  |          |                                 |                                 |                                |       |
| Value—Churches reporting.....                       | 6        | 1                               | 5                               |                                |       |
| Amount reported.....                                | \$7,500  | \$2,000                         | \$5,500                         | 26.7                           | 73.3  |
| <b>Expenditures during year:</b>                    |          |                                 |                                 |                                |       |
| Churches reporting.....                             | 24       | 6                               | 18                              |                                |       |
| Amount reported.....                                | \$17,282 | \$7,064                         | \$10,218                        | 40.9                           | 59.1  |
| Current expenses and improvements.....              | \$14,744 | \$6,255                         | \$8,489                         | 42.4                           | 57.6  |
| Benevolences, missions, etc.....                    | \$2,538  | \$809                           | \$1,729                         | 31.9                           | 68.1  |
| Average expenditure per church.....                 | \$720    | \$1,177                         | \$568                           |                                |       |
| <b>Sunday schools:</b>                              |          |                                 |                                 |                                |       |
| Churches reporting.....                             | 19       | 3                               | 16                              |                                |       |
| Officers and teachers.....                          | 107      | 21                              | 86                              | 19.6                           | 80.4  |
| Scholars.....                                       | 673      | 78                              | 595                             | 11.6                           | 88.4  |

<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 25 active Reformed Methodist Union Episcopal churches, with 2,265 members. The classification of membership by sex was reported by all of the 25 churches and the classification by age was reported by 20 churches, including, however, only 8 which reported any members under 13 years of age. There was no debt on the 6 parsonages reported.

**Comparative data, 1906-1926.**—Table 2 presents, in convenient form for comparison, a summary of the available statistics of this denomination for the censuses of 1926, 1916, and 1906.

**TABLE 2.—COMPARATIVE SUMMARY, 1906 TO 1926: REFORMED METHODIST UNION EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

| ITEM   | 1926     | 1916     | 1906     |
|--|----------|----------|----------|
| <b>Churches (local organizations)</b> .....  | 25       | 27       | 57       |
| Increase <sup>1</sup> over preceding census: |          |          |          |
| Number.....                                  | -2       | -30      |          |
| Per cent <sup>2</sup> .....                  |          |          |          |
| <b>Members</b> .....                         | 2,265    | 2,196    | 4,397    |
| Increase <sup>1</sup> over preceding census: |          |          |          |
| Number.....                                  | 69       | -2,201   |          |
| Per cent.....                                | 3.1      | -50.1    |          |
| Average membership per church.....           | 91       | 81       | 77       |
| <b>Church edifices:</b>                      |          |          |          |
| Number.....                                  | 28       | 27       | 59       |
| Value—Churches reporting.....                | 21       | 27       | 57       |
| Amount reported.....                         | \$74,800 | \$35,500 | \$36,965 |
| Average per church.....                      | \$3,562  | \$1,315  | \$649    |
| Debt—Churches reporting.....                 | 5        | 6        | 27       |
| Amount reported.....                         | \$3,710  | \$2,740  | \$4,254  |
| <b>Parsonages:</b>                           |          |          |          |
| Value—Churches reporting.....                | 6        | 4        | 8        |
| Amount reported.....                         | \$7,500  | \$1,150  | \$2,275  |
| <b>Expenditures during year:</b>             |          |          |          |
| Churches reporting.....                      | 24       | 26       |          |
| Amount reported.....                         | \$17,282 | \$3,420  |          |
| Current expenses and improvements.....       | \$14,744 | \$3,335  |          |
| Benevolences, missions, etc.....             | \$2,538  | \$85     |          |
| Average expenditure per church.....          | \$720    | \$132    |          |
| <b>Sunday schools:</b>                       |          |          |          |
| Churches reporting.....                      | 19       | 25       | 54       |
| Officers and teachers.....                   | 107      | 117      | 204      |
| Scholars.....                                | 673      | 699      | 1,792    |

<sup>1</sup> A minus sign (-) denotes decrease.

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

**State tables.**—Tables 3, 4, 5, and 6 present the statistics for the Reformed Methodist Union Episcopal 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 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.

TABLE 3.—NUMBER AND MEMBERSHIP OF CHURCHES IN URBAN AND RURAL TERRITORY, AND TOTAL MEMBERSHIP BY SEX, BY STATES, 1926: REFORMED METHODIST UNION EPISCOPAL 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> |
| United States.....            | 25                 | 7     | 18    | 2,265             | 486   | 1,779 | 764                     | 1,501  | 50.9                                 |
| South Atlantic:               |                    |       |       |                   |       |       |                         |        |                                      |
| South Carolina.....           | 23                 | 5     | 18    | 2,176             | 397   | 1,779 | 740                     | 1,436  | 51.5                                 |
| Georgia.....                  | 2                  | 2     | —     | 89                | 89    | —     | 24                      | 65     | —                                    |

<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: REFORMED METHODIST UNION EPISCOPAL CHURCH

| 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> |
| United States.....  | 25                 | 27   | 57   | 2,265             | 2,196 | 4,397 | 100                     | 1,963             | 202              | 4.8                            |
| South Carolina..... | 23                 | 25   | 55   | 2,176             | 2,116 | 4,235 | 93                      | 1,881             | 202              | 4.7                            |
| Georgia.....        | 2                  | 2    | 2    | 89                | 80    | 162   | 7                       | 82                | —                | —                              |

<sup>1</sup> Based on membership with age classification reported; not shown where base is less than 100.

TABLE 5.—VALUE OF CHURCH PROPERTY, AND CHURCH DEBT, BY STATES, 1926: REFORMED METHODIST UNION EPISCOPAL CHURCH

| STATE               | Total number of churches | Number of church edifices | VALUE OF CHURCH EDIFICES |          | DEBT ON CHURCH EDIFICES |         | VALUE OF PARSONAGES |         |
|---------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------|-------------------------|---------|---------------------|---------|
|                     |                          |                           | Churches reporting       | Amount   | Churches reporting      | Amount  | Churches reporting  | Amount  |
| United States.....  | 25                       | 28                        | 21                       | \$74,800 | 5                       | \$3,710 | 6                   | \$7,500 |
| South Carolina..... | 23                       | 27                        | 20                       | 174,800  | 5                       | 3,710   | 6                   | 7,500   |
| Georgia.....        | 2                        | 1                         | 1                        |          |                         |         |                     |         |

<sup>1</sup> Amount for Georgia combined with figures for South Carolina, to avoid disclosing the statistics of individual churches.

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

| STATE               | Total number of churches | EXPENDITURES DURING YEAR |              |                                       | SUNDAY SCHOOLS                   |                    |                       |          |
|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|----------|
|                     |                          | Churches reporting       | Total amount | For current expenses and improvements | For benevolences, missions, etc. | Churches reporting | Officers and teachers | Scholars |
| United States.....  | 25                       | 24                       | \$17,282     | \$14,744                              | \$2,538                          | 19                 | 197                   | 673      |
| South Carolina..... | 23                       | 22                       | 17,282       | 14,744                                | 2,538                            | { 18               | 100                   | 650      |
| Georgia.....        | 2                        |                          |              |                                       |                                  |                    |                       |          |

<sup>1</sup> Amount for Georgia combined with figures for South Carolina, to avoid disclosing the statistics of individual churches.

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

### DENOMINATIONAL HISTORY

In 1884 a number of ministers and members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church withdrew from that body on account of differences in regard to the election of ministerial delegates to the General Conference. In January, 1885, a convention of delegates representing churches in South Carolina and Georgia was held, and the Independent Methodist Church was organized. The Rev. William E. Johnston was elected president, emphasizing thus the nonepiscopal character of the denomination. Later, however, in 1896, it was decided to make a change in this respect and create an episcopacy, on the ground that the body would thus acquire more permanent force and recognition among Methodist Episcopal churches, and the name "Reformed Methodist Union Episcopal Church" was adopted. In 1899 the Rev. E. Russell Middleton was elected bishop by the General Conference, and in December of that year he was consecrated by the Right Rev. Peter F. Stevens (white) of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

### DOCTRINE AND ORGANIZATION

The doctrines of the church are those of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In its polity also it accords with that church very fully, retaining the class meetings, love feasts, and the different conferences—quarterly, district, church, annual, and general. At first there were no presiding elders, each pastor being empowered (within his own charge) with the business that was defined as belonging to the distinctive office of presiding elder. The General Conference of 1916, however, took under consideration the question of adopting the full polity of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and, after being satisfied as to the consensus of opinion of the members of the church, established the office of presiding elder.

No report of the work of the denomination was received for 1926.

<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 Right Rev. E. R. Middleton, D. D., presiding bishop, Reformed Methodist Union Episcopal Church, and approved by him in its present form.