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The History of the USA Presbyterian Church in Texas and Louisiana, 1868-1920.

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THE HISTORY OF THE U.S.A. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

IN TEXAS AND LOUISIANA, 1868-1920

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

by

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B.A., Trinity University, 1947
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August, 1967
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Warmest thanks should be extended to Mr. Jay Clark, Archivist of the Trinity University Library, Mr. Chester Kielman, Archivist of The University of Texas Library, and to the Rev. Mr. Thomas B. Campbell, president of the Memphis Theological Seminary. Finally, my most earnest appreciation goes to Dr. John Loos and other members of the History Department of Louisiana State University whose patience and encouragement made this work possible.
The purpose of this work is to trace the history of the U.S.A. Presbyterian Church in Texas and Louisiana from 1868 to 1920.

The U.S.A. church was introduced into Texas in the 1830's, and by the time of the Civil War was a prospering institution. During the war a majority of Southern churches broke away and formed the Presbyterian Church, C.S.A., and following that conflict refused to reunite with the mother church. Instead, they organized the Presbyterian Church, U.S., or Southern Presbyterian Church.

The beginning date of 1868 has been chosen, because this is the date when three ministers organized the Austin Presbytery, U.S.A. The earlier history of the church must be sketched to make the later narrative comprehensible. The Rev. Mr. W. S. Red narrated the story of the U.S. denomination in his The History of the Presbyterian Church in Texas. The U.S. and U.S.A. churches had a common history before 1860, and Red has adequately traced the earlier years of the U.S.A. denomination.

The terminal date of this history, 1920, was chosen because the problems relating to the union of the U.S.A. and the Cumberland Presbyterian churches had been largely resolved by then. They had few major conflicts during the 1920's.

Unquestionably, the great majority of ministers in the U.S.A. organization, as in most denominations, were sincerely dedicated to
the welfare not only of their church, but of the general cause of
religion as well. But not all ministers, or the members of their
churches were so dedicated. The records reveal bitter conflicts
within the U.S.A. church, between the U.S. and U.S.A. denominations,
and within individual congregations inside the U.S.A. church. While
such conflicts may appear at times to dominate the narrative, these
must not be construed to reflect on the character of the church as a
whole.

This history does not claim to be definitive. It confines
itself to the general history of the synod, and the histories of
individual churches have been treated only when their activities
affected the general narrative.

Louisiana is included in this work because the Bayou State was
under the jurisdiction of the Synod of Texas, U.S.A., but its repre-
sentation has been slight since the Civil War. Primarily then, this
is a study of the church in Texas. However, those events in Louisiana
which from time to time attracted the attention of the synodical assem-
bly and its lower courts have been discussed.
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ABSTRACT

This is a history of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., from 1868 to 1920. The Texas Synod also included Louisiana, but that area was officially less important and played a relatively minor role in the narrative.

The first church court of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., or National Presbyterian Church, was organized in Texas in 1840, and by the time of the Civil War a large establishment had been built up. During the war, however, most southern ministers and churches severed their ties with the national church, and after the conflict organized the Presbyterian Church, U.S. The great majority of ministers and congregations in Texas joined this newly organized denomination.

Some ministers in Texas, however, retained their allegiance to the national church. Consequently, in 1868 three Presbyterian ministers met and organized the Austin Presbytery, U.S.A., thus perpetuating the representation of the U.S.A. denomination in the state. One of the greatest handicaps of this newly organized judicatory was the fact that the Presbyterian Church, U.S., styled itself the southern Presbyterian Church and so could stigmatize the U.S.A. denomination as the northern Presbyterian Church. In spite of this and other difficulties, the Austin Presbytery enjoyed a slow growth so that in 1878 it was reorganized as the Synod of Texas, U.S.A.
Between 1878 and 1906 the national church suffered from many difficulties, including a severe drought in West Texas in the 1880's and the Galveston hurricane of 1900 that destroyed a long-established church and drowned half of its congregation. A conflict between the Synod of Texas and one of its ministers in New Orleans finally resulted in the elimination of the national church from Louisiana for a number of years. In spite of these and other problems, however, the church enjoyed a slow but steady growth during this period.

Soon after the turn of the century, negotiations were undertaken between the U.S.A. and Cumberland Presbyterian churches looking toward an organic union. Since the representation of the Cumberland Church in Texas was much larger than that of the U.S.A. denomination, such a merger nationally would augment the Texas Synod, U.S.A., by many new members and churches. In 1906 the General Assemblies of both denominations voted to unite the two churches under the name of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. Unfortunately, a sizable minority inside the former Cumberland Church refused to accept the merger and reorganized their church, retaining the name of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. A struggle then broke out between the reorganized Cumberland Church and the U.S.A. denomination over control of the property of the former Cumberland Presbyterian Church. A number of bitter court fights in Texas and throughout the nation resulted in the almost unanimous triumph of the U.S.A. Presbyterian Church, and almost all of the seven million dollars worth of property went to that denomination. Meantime, the Synod of Texas, U.S.A., was so increased by new members
and churches that it became a serious factor in the religious life of Texas for the first time.

Perhaps because of its augmented strength, this synod between 1906 and 1920 began to have serious conflicts for the first time with the Synod of Texas, U.S. Although the majority of these disputes were settled through amicable negotiations, two were of so serious a nature that they could not be resolved by Christian statesmanship. One was a quarrel involving a U.S.A. mission station in the Latin-American community of El Paso, while the other concerned a U.S. minister, the Rev. Mr. J. C. Barr of New Orleans, who transferred with his church into the U.S.A. denomination. The latter conflict was significant primarily because it reestablished the representation of the national church in Louisiana. Between 1906 and 1920 the general history of the U.S.A. synod was marked by few dramatic events.

The recital of the conflicts and misunderstandings that developed between the U.S.A. and U.S. synods seem to demonstrate the necessity of uniting these two branches of the Presbyterian Church. However, in the negotiation of any such future merger the bitter struggles and antagonisms shown by the earlier union of the U.S.A. and Cumberland churches suggest the need to protect the property and other rights of any minority within either church that might wish to retain its independence.

While the Synod of Texas, U.S.A., showed some concern for Mexican and Bohemian Americans, its neglect of the colored population remains a rebuke to the church. Although willing to wage crusades
against non-controversial evils such as drunkenness and violation of the Sabbath, U.S.A. ministers were reluctant to take strong stands on some of the great social movements of the time. Finally, the inability of the U.S.A. denomination to evangelize more than a small fraction of the population of Texas and Louisiana indicated the inarticulateness of the church in modern times.

The material for this study was drawn largely from official church records and manuscripts located primarily in Texas and Tennessee, although some judicial documents were also employed. Books, newspapers, pamphlets, and periodical articles were also consulted.
CHAPTER I

GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND HISTORY OF THE

AUSTIN PRESBYTERY, 1867-1878

Although attracting little attention at the time, on July 16, 1868, in the city of Austin, Texas an event occurred which was to have significant results in the religious history of the Lone Star State. Three ministers, the Rev. Mr. John McMurray and the Rev. Mr. Thaddeus McRae of the Presbytery of West Texas of the Presbyterian Church, U.S., and the Rev. Mr. Henry P. Young, formerly of the Brazos Presbytery of the same denomination, met by previous arrangement in the small, wooden building of the First Presbyterian Church of Austin. Their purpose was to organize the Austin Presbytery which would, by affiliating itself with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., continue the representation of the U.S.A. denomination in Texas.¹

To begin with, however, since this is the history of a particular Protestant denomination, an adequate definition of the term "Presbyterianism" must be found. This task is not as easy as it might appear to one unfamiliar with the literature on the subject. Either the

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¹Minutes of July 16, 1868, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Austin of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1868-1887," 1. In church papers (University of Texas Archives, Austin, Texas).
authorities retreat behind a smoke screen of generalizations or they contradict each other when they do attempt to be specific. For this reason the author is compelled to formulate his own working definition of the term.

The term Presbyterian derived from the Greek word presbuteros, meaning elder. Thus, the Presbyterian Church is a church ruled by elders and held by the communicants to be closely patterned after the polity formulated in New Testament times. Its members therefore believe that their denomination most closely resembles the earliest Christian Church.²

This is, of course, not very helpful. In order to obtain a more pragmatic definition, two statements are necessary. The first is that the government of the Presbyterian Church is a hierarchy of assemblies, having as its base the local congregation and as its apex the General Assembly. The second statement is that Presbyterians adhere to a system of beliefs imposed by Calvinist doctrine as represented by the Westminster Confession of Faith.

Each of these pronouncements must be examined in turn. First, inclusion of notice of the hierarchical structure of church courts is essential in order to distinguish Presbyterians from Puritans, later known as Congregationalists. These Puritans endorsed the Westminster Confession as their foundation of doctrinal belief at the meeting of

the Cambridge Synod in 1646, but they refused to abandon the congregational system of church government earlier adopted by them.³

As one of England's leading scholars pointed out, the term Puritanism had different meanings at different times. Originally the word referred to English Protestants who wished to purify the established Anglican Church by removing the trappings of Catholicism. United in opposition to the established denomination, they were by no means in agreement on doctrine and polity. By the beginning of the seventeenth century they had divided into three fairly distinct schools of opinion with regard to church government.

One group of Puritans wished to retain the Episcopal structure but wanted to subject it to further lay control. The second group believed in the Presbyterian form of polity with the individual churches subject to the authority of a hierarchy of church assemblies. The third group, a miscellany of Congregationalists, Baptists, Quakers, and others, believed in the autonomy of individual congregations under the greater or less control of higher assemblies, according to the beliefs of the individual sects.⁴

When the Massachusetts Bay Colony was founded, some of the Puritans had Presbyterian views of church government. However, the majority


of the Puritan leadership in this colony adopted the congregational system already perfected in the Plymouth Colony by the Scrooby Separatists. At first under this system any congregation could organize itself and ordain its own minister. Later it was necessary to gain consent of other established congregations and previously ordained ministers before a new congregation could be constituted. While synods or church councils were called from time to time to solve mutual problems, these assemblies never had the authority over the individual churches that Presbyterian bodies exercised over the congregations under their jurisdiction.  

In the Presbyterian Church only a presbytery can ordain a minister and assign him to a church. Newly organized churches are officially enrolled and placed under the jurisdiction of the presbytery within whose bounds they are located. In unusual circumstances a church might be declared independent and subject to no higher authority than its own session; however, such a congregation is subject to the shadowy authority of the General Assembly of the denomination.  

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5Sweet, Story of Religions, 66, 67ff.


The second part of the definition of Presbyterian deals with the subject of doctrine. As the creed of this church rests upon Calvinist doctrine as represented by the Westminster Confession of Faith, it must be defined and placed in its historical setting.

In the course of the English Civil War in the 1640's the Puritan-controlled Parliament in its struggle against the king wished to win the support of the Scots. Being largely Presbyterian in faith, the Scots demanded the imposition of religious uniformity in the Presbyterian mold for the British Isles as the price for their assistance. Consequently, in 1643 the hard-pressed Parliament capitulated to the demands of the northerners and appointed the famous Westminster Assembly. This assembly, composed of eight Scottish commissioners, 121 English ministers, ten peers, and 20 members of the House of Commons, sat for five years.

In the course of its deliberations the assembly produced the Directory of Worship as a substitute for the Book of Common Prayer, and it also framed the Long and Short Catechisms. Later ordinances established the Presbyterian church government throughout both kingdoms. As far as Presbyterian history is concerned, the greatest work of the conference was the Westminster Confession of Faith which was a distillation of Calvinist doctrine.

Presbyterians, however, were always a small minority in England itself, not only of the general church population but also among the dissenters. As a result, Presbyterian polity never took firm root there, and Parliament never accepted the Westminster Confession.
Nevertheless, the Directory of Worship, the Long and Short Catechisms, and in particular the Westminster Confession have become the expressions of the creedal foundation of English-speaking Calvinists.

The Westminster Confession is technical in content and obscure in expression. Sections that can be fathomed appear excessively harsh and dogmatic to many modern readers. It may be doubted that many ordained ministers living today can adhere to all of the statements in this work. Tradition and sentimental attachment have resulted in its retention as the doctrinal standard of English-speaking Presbyterians. One branch, the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, made modifications in the Westminster Confession so substantial that it may be debated whether they clung more to the shadow than to the substance of the document. In spite of radical renovations, this denomination continued to live in the creedal mansion of the Westminster Confession so that the definitions framed above may apply to them.

Many authorities on the history of the Presbyterian Church indicate that Protestants with Calvinist leanings might be classified as "Presbyterians." The Dutch Reformed Church, avowedly Calvinist in polity and doctrine, is said by these writers to fall into the Presbyterian category. As the Dutch denomination adopted the Presbyterian structure of church government, it would fall under the first segment

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of the definition under examination. In 1619 this church formulated the largely Calvinist Canons of Dort which remain the doctrinal base for the denomination to this day. Having adopted their own standard of dogma some twenty-five years before the Westminster Confession was framed, this church never saw the necessity of adopting the later document. It, therefore, cannot be classified strictly as a Presbyterian Church by the second statement of the definition.

One authority on the history of Presbyterianism who insisted that the Dutch Reformed Church was a member of the Presbyterian family later contradicted himself. He declared that in the seventeenth century Presbyterianism had difficulty entering the colony of New York because it was frozen out by the Dutch Reformed Church already entrenched there. Perhaps the best reason for placing this Dutch denomination outside the boundaries of Presbyterianism is the fact that it remains a thriving separate institution within the borders of the United States, being particularly strong in the state of New York and in the Ohio Valley. The above rule-of-thumb definition of Presbyterianism may serve for the limits of this paper.

As the Presbyterian Church is an hierarchy of church courts with the pastor and local congregation its base and the General Assembly


11 Loetscher, A Brief History, 36. [The Dutch Reformed Church is now holding merger negotiations with the US Presbyterian Church, but this does not invalidate the definition under discussion.]
its apex, the function of the minister or pastor in this ecclesiastical apparatus must be examined. The Constitution of the U.S.A. denomination in 1934 stated:

The pastoral office is the first in the Church, both for dignity and usefulness. The person who fills this office hath, in Scripture, obtained different names expressive of his various duties. As he has the oversight of the flock of Christ, he is termed bishop. As he feeds them with spiritual food, he is termed pastor. As he serves Christ in his church, he is termed minister.\textsuperscript{12}

When ordained, a Presbyterian minister is not recognized in the church as a religious superman. Although set apart from other members of the church to perform a specific function, he is not raised above other men because of the office conferred upon him. Thus the apostolic succession of the priesthood means something different to a Calvinist from what it means to many other Christians. For Presbyterians, a pastor follows the apostolic mission conferred upon his disciples by Christ, but ministers do not embody the church itself.\textsuperscript{13}

In order to receive ordination rites, a candidate for the ministry must satisfy the members of his presbytery that he has an adequate competence in the various fields prescribed by the Book of Discipline of the U.S.A. Church. After ordination he accepts a pastoral charge at the call of a congregation. However, he can be installed as pastor

\textsuperscript{12}"Form of Government," \textit{USA Constitution}, 336.

\textsuperscript{13}Mackay, \textit{The Presbyterian Way of Life}, 124.
only by the members of his presbytery, and he continues to hold office at the pleasure of that body.\textsuperscript{14}

Interestingly enough, the Presbyterian minister can never be a member of a congregation. Although he may be a seminary professor and be a secretary of a synodical board, he can neither be a communicant of his church nor be elected to any congregational office. His wife may be a member, but a minister's relationship is to his presbytery alone.\textsuperscript{15}

Once a man is installed in a pastorate, he can be forcibly removed from his station only by official judicial proceedings in the presbytery. He may at any time request a dissolution of the pastoral relationship. Since judicial proceedings were often difficult and disagreeable, the presbyteries in the period 1870-1900 increasingly adopted the practice of appointing a minister as the "Stated Supply" of a church. By this procedure, an individual received charge of a local congregation for a year. A Stated Supply must be an ordained minister, but a "Temporary Supply" may be a licentiate, temporarily licensed to preach. A Stated Supply can perform all the functions of a pastor in his church for the prescribed time, but a licentiate is only licensed to preach and cannot perform other pastoral functions. At the termination of the year's service of the Stated Supply, his presbytery may either appoint him for another year or refuse his reinstatement. This

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., 123; "Form of Government," USA Constitution, 361, 367-68.

\textsuperscript{15}Mackay, The Presbyterian Way of Life, 120.
type of appointment was not always employed because the presbytery had reservations about a man's character or qualifications, but often in order to provide him a temporary connection until he should be called to some permanent pastoral service.  

Elders elected by the congregation are key figures in the government of the local church. The deacon is a secondary elected official. Elders and deacons are expected to have a certain knowledge of church history and doctrine, to share with pastors in the administration of spiritual and temporal affairs of the church, and to symbolize the considerable element of non-clerical control over the local service and worship program. Some elders attend higher church judicatories and help assert a lay voice in affairs of the denomination as a whole.

The governing body of the local congregation is known as the session. Composed of all the ministers and elders of a church, it varies greatly in number according to the size of the church. However, it must be made up of at least one minister and two elders.

Among other powers, the session exercises judicial functions. Like the other judicatories of the Presbyterian Church, it has no civil jurisdiction and cannot inflict civil penalties. Its power is "wholly

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16 Minutes of May 30, 1887, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA (Philadelphia: MacCalla & Company, Printers, 1887), 171; Minutes of May 24, 1895, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA (1895), 102.

moral and spiritual." Nevertheless, the session has the authority to
gather evidence and inflict censure on members of the congregation.
The harshest punishment it can impose is to exclude the impenitent
offender from the sacraments and the fellowship of the congregation.
The church session has full authority over the spiritual affairs of the
church. Except under unusual circumstances, the minister serves as
moderator at the meetings of the session.18

Most local houses of worship after 1752 had, in addition to the
session, an elected board of trustees, although this was not a provi-
sion of the earliest constitution of the church. Trustees, laymen who
may or may not be elders of the church, control the financial policy of
the church and may constitute themselves a holding company so that the
congregation can own property in accordance with state laws. The board
further symbolizes lay control of the church. While the minister may
sit on the board, he is not necessarily a member by constitutional
right.19

Next above the session in the hierarchical structure of the
church is the presbytery with jurisdiction over all the churches within
a given district. Composed of ministers and elders, it must be made up
of at least five, formerly three, ministers and one elder. Additional
presbyteries composed of linguistic or racial groups may be formed

18"Form of Government," USA Constitution, 340-43.

19Mackay, The Presbyterian Way of Life, 119; "Form of Govern-
ment," USA Constitution, 360, 367.
within the boundaries of already established presbyteries. Ordinarily, these new organizations can be formed only with the consent of the racial or linguistic groups concerned.

Presbyteries have the authority to examine ministerial candidates and to ordain, install, try, censure, or depose ministers. In short, the presbytery deals with all matters relating to the morality or theological orthodoxy of its component ministers. It has, in addition, complete authority over church sessions and requires them to keep full records which it regularly examines. Representatives of presbytery may also visit local churches to redress evils found in them. They can unite or divide and form new congregations at the request of the people. Presbyteries can pronounce on points of doctrine or order or whatever else pertains to the spiritual welfare of churches within their care. Finally, the presbytery is required to keep a full record of its proceedings and present it to synod for examination.20

Presbyteries are authorized to petition the General Assembly on matters pertaining to the general welfare of the church. In order to be operative, all changes in the constitution of the church must have the approval of the majority of presbyteries. In most Presbyterian denominations, two-thirds of the presbyteries are needed to secure amendments or changes, but in some, three-fourths of the presbyteries are required to give their sanction. While presbyteries may vary

20 "Form of Government," USA Constitution, 343-46.
greatly in geographical area, number of members, or frequency of meetings, they differ very little in general structure and function.\textsuperscript{21}

The synod is the next judicatory in the hierarchical scale. Composed of at least three presbyteries, synod boundaries tend to follow state lines. This is not universally true, however, for the Synod of Texas of the U.S.A. Presbyterian Church also incorporates the state of Louisiana. More than one synod can be established within a state. Two different types of synods are allowed. In one a representative system is established under which each presbytery may send only a prescribed quota of ministers and elders. In the other type, all the elders and pastors may attend.

Synods have the authority to adjudicate all appeals from lower church courts. Original jurisdiction is also accorded them. Authorized to review the books of presbyteries, they can either censure or approve them. They also can redress injuries against Presbyterian order and violations of the church constitution by the presbyteries. Subject to approval of the General Assembly, synods can create new presbyteries or unite or divide those already created. Synods may overture the General Assembly on matters relative to the general advantage of the church. In short, their prerogative extends over all matters within their bounds that do not deal either with the doctrine or the constitution of the church. Finally, they must keep a full record of its proceedings.

\textsuperscript{21}Mackay, \textit{The Presbyterian Way of Life}, 134.
which must be presented annually to the General Assembly for examination. 22

The General Assembly is the highest judicial body in the Presbyterian Church and represents all the individual churches, presbyteries, and synods of the denomination. Every presbytery is allotted a quota of ministers and elders who may attend the annual meeting of the General Assembly with the representation varying according to the size of each presbytery.

Although not vested with the authority given the General Assembly of the Scottish Church, the counterpart judiciary of the U.S.A. denomination has extensive powers. It can hear and decide all "appeals, complaints, and references that affect the doctrine and interpretation of the church that are regularly brought before it by the regular judicatories." It may rule on any matter relating to the doctrine or the interpretation of the constitution of the church and is able to redress all errors of creed or immorality in any church, presbytery, or synod within the denomination. It can create new synods or unite, divide, or change the boundaries of old ones, and it can sanction or disapprove alteration of presbytery boundaries recommended by synods. Through the mode of procedure prescribed in its "Form of Government," it can unite with other ecclesiastical bodies. It corresponds with other religious bodies and superintends the general welfare of the entire denomination.

Finally, it can suppress schismatical conflict and heretical disputes and impose necessary punitive measures.\textsuperscript{23}

This background of church government is necessary to an understanding of the history of the U.S.A. Presbyterian Church. In seventeenth-century America, Presbyterianism failed to get a firm foothold in New England because the Congregational Church already occupied the field. Although a few Presbyterians entered Virginia and Maryland, the establishment of the Anglican Church as the state church in the southern colonies militated against Calvinism's taking root in the older settled areas of that region. As a result, the middle colonies became and remain today the stronghold of Presbyterianism in America. Between 1640 and 1700, southward migrating New Englanders erected a number of churches on Long Island and in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. At first Congregational houses of worship, these churches later became Presbyterian. They formed the foundation of the denomination organized in the following century.

By 1700 Presbyterian congregations could be found widely scattered throughout many of the colonies. Without an organized structure of church government, the denomination could not be effectively established. Traditionally honored as the father of American Presbyterianism, Francis Makemie organized the first presbytery in America. From its inception the official history of the Presbyterian Church in America may be said to have begun. He came to America in 1680, in response to

\textsuperscript{23}"Form of Government," \textit{USA Constitution}, 348-50.
an appeal written by Colonel William Stevens, a member of the Council of Maryland, to the Presbytery of Laggan in North Ireland. Stevens urged that Presbyterian ministers be sent across the Atlantic to cultivate the neglected missionary fields of Maryland and Virginia.

Responding to this appeal, the church court sounded out Francis Makemie, a young Irish theological student trained in Scotland, on his willingness to accept the Macedonian Call. He was ordained by the presbytery and soon thereafter boarded ship for the New World.

Upon his arrival in America, Makemie supported himself by a variety of non-clerical jobs which permitted him to travel from New York to the Carolinas preaching the gospel without financial compensation. An indefatigable evangelist, he organized, beginning in the 1680's, a number of congregations in Maryland and elsewhere.

The work for which he will be remembered, however, was his organization of the first church assembly in America, known simply as "the presbytery," or "the genuine presbytery." It was composed of seven ministers, three from Ireland, one from Scotland, and three from New England. Although the first page of the minute book was lost, the earliest meeting apparently took place sometime in 1706, because the second regularly called meeting occurred in December of that year.

Originally composed of congregations in Maryland, Delaware, and Philadelphia, in succeeding years it enrolled churches in New Jersey and Long Island. The assembly grew so rapidly that by 1716 the number of ministers had expanded from seven to seventeen. Even with an augmented membership, this church court was compelled to grapple with
formidable problems. The Presbyterian population was widely scattered, and connecting roads were primitive or nonexistent.

Presbyterianism was saved from dying by the great migration of the Scotch-Irish. Beginning with the restoration of the British monarchy in 1660, this influx reached floodtide after 1700. Settling in great numbers in Pennsylvania, they migrated into the Piedmont of Virginia and the Carolinas through the Shenandoah Valley corridor. In 1716 their numbers justified the establishment of a synod in the Middle Colonies composed of three presbyteries.  

Since so many of the Calvinist divines composing the American Presbyterian Church came from Scotland or northern Ireland, the church as a whole tended to take on the dour character of the Scottish kirk. "Grant that I may always be right, for Thou knowest I am hard to turn," was the recorded prayer of a colonial Presbyterian minister. This statement may be said to symbolize the nature of the church itself in the early eighteenth century. One example of the mental hardening of the denominational arteries during that period was the traditional reverence for the Westminster Confession of Faith. Every phrase of that document had to be subscribed to before a minister could be ordained, and no mental reservations on the part of the candidate could

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25 Thompson, The Presbyterian Churches in America, 25.
be tolerated. Unfortunately, some of the more abrasive pronouncements of that work were alien to many ideas of society in the middle of the eighteenth century, and particularly society in Colonial America. Many of the ministerial graduates of Harvard, Yale, and the log colleges had been exposed to liberal philosophies of their day, and they protested being compelled to choke down bitter drafts of undiluted Calvinism before being permitted to take ordination vows. Consequently, in 1729 the American Presbyterian Church promulgated the Adopting Act which required a candidate to subscribe to the Westminster Confession as a whole but permitted him to harbor scruples about many sections of the document. The act remains in effect to this day.26

The history of the Presbyterian Church from 1730 through the American Revolution, having no relation to the subject of this dissertation, will be omitted. At the beginning of the Confederation period the highest governing body of the denomination was styled The Synod of New York and Pennsylvania. In 1785 this body decided that a General Assembly was needed as the cornerstone of a truly national church in America. Framing a constitution for the revamped church, in 1788 the synod created the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, composed of four synods and sixteen presbyteries. Further, the Westminster Confession was modified to provide for the separation of church and state. It also altered the catechism

framed by the Westminster Conference, and so heavily amended the Directory that it was for all practical purposes transformed into a new document. Subsequently the first General Assembly met in the Second Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia in May, 1789. These events may be said to mark the inception of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, or the U.S.A. Presbyterian Church, as it is sometimes styled.\(^{27}\)

At the end of the War of Independence, the newly organized church exercised a predominant influence on American religious life. This fortuitous state of affairs was due to the peculiar exigencies of the times. Rivals of Presbyterianism were either crippled by the war, isolated sectionally, or immature in growth. Congregationalism was limited to New England and unable effectively to spread beyond this island of strength. The Anglican, later Episcopal, Church entered the American Revolution as one of America's strongest denominations only to emerge after the conflict as one of its weakest and most discredited. Its ministry was widely believed to have harbored treasonable sympathies for the British cause. Disestablished throughout the nation, the church was further stricken by having much of its property confiscated. Consequently, the Episcopal denomination that survived could offer no effective resistance to insurgent Calvinism. The Methodist Church was in its infancy, and for a time was associated with Anglican Toryism. Baptist houses of worship were to be found in many areas in the South

\(^{27}\)Loetscher, Brief History, 65.
and in New England. Although it had advanced its membership markedly
due to the Great Awakening, the Baptist denomination suffered from sev-
eral handicaps. It was looked down upon in many areas of the country
because its communicants came from the poorest and most uneducated
element of the population. Further, it licensed uneducated preachers
so that it was a church of lowly shepherds, ministering to the lowly.
Due to the language barrier, many German sects found themselves iso-
lated from the current of American religious life. The Freewill Bap-
tists, Shakers, Universalists, Unitarians, and others contrasted the
greatness of their hopes with the feebleness of their true strength.

The Presbyterian Church, on the other hand, enjoyed many tempo-
rary advantages. With its principal strength centrally located in the
middle states, it could easily expand either into the South or the West.
Its evangelists were highly regarded, due to the insistence of the
church on a well educated ministry. With its polity and tight disci-
pline over its pastorates, the U.S.A. Church demonstrated a martial
vigor and efficiency. Finally, it was able to capitalize on the
church's support of the cause of independence. Although Scotch Presby-
terians living in Piedmont North Carolina supported the Tory cause,
their allegiance did not adversely reflect on the church as a whole.
With its large Scotch-Irish membership moving into the southern and
western frontier, the constant growth and predominant influence appeared
destined to continue. If only the church should show a reasonable
adaptability to changing conditions, there seemed no reason why a new Golden Age should not dawn for American Calvinism.28

Unfortunately, as the years slipped by, it became painfully apparent that malleability was the virtue signally lacking when the church encountered frontier conditions. Backwoods farmers preferred both their liquor and religion raw, but the church insisted upon a formal service without emotionalism. Even more unrealistic, the denomination insisted that its ministerial candidates be competent in Greek and Latin so that pastors often burdened their sermons with classical allusions.

The church's devotion to the Westminster Confession as its doctrinal standard also served it ill. Some of the tenets of Calvinism little accorded with the spirit of American life. Particularly objectionable was this document's declaration that a handful of individuals known as the elect were predestined for salvation while all others were condemned to hell's fire. By the end of the eighteenth century, however, the British document had been hallowed, if not mellowed by age. Although candidates for the ministry could harbor minor scruples, the Confession as a whole had to be subscribed to, and evidently many Presbyterian divines accepted its propositions with few or no reservations.29

In the early years of the nineteenth century the American Presbyterian Church was rent by two unfortunate schisms, both of which

28 Thompson, Presbyterian Churches in America, 68-69.
29 Ibid., 70.
relate to the history of the Presbyterian Church in Texas. The first of these two splits concerned the formation of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

One of the most notable events in American religious life at the turn of the century was the religious revival that took place in Tennessee and Kentucky in the 1790's. Instigated largely by a Presbyterian minister, the Rev. Mr. James McGready, this movement known as the Cumberland revival, was marked by emotional excesses never before witnessed in America even in the days of the Great Awakening. Due to a serious split that rent American Calvinists, the movement, although begun by Presbyterians, primarily augmented the membership of the Methodist and Baptist churches.

In 1802 the Cumberland Presbytery was organized in Tennessee under the authority of the Synod of Kentucky. Because of the greatly increased demand for preachers brought about by the revivalistic movement sweeping the West, the Cumberland leaders began licensing and ordaining ministers who did not have the educational background traditionally demanded by the U.S.A. Church. This presbyterial action brought into the open a factional split which had developed in western Presbyterianism. The conservative element in the Kentucky Synod abhorred the noise and disorder of revival meetings, while another element strongly supported the evangelical movement. At the regular annual meeting of the Kentucky Synod in 1805, the conservative majority denounced the innovations of the revivalists and appointed a special commission to investigate the presbytery. As a result the synod
dissolved the Cumberland Presbytery. Revivalistic ministers formed themselves into a council and appealed for redress to the General Assembly at its 1809 meeting. This body sustained the order of Synod, however, and in 1810 the insurgents formed the independent Cumberland Presbytery.

This assembly grew into the Cumberland Presbyterian Church which adopted the circuit system and camp meetings developed by the Methodists. The evangelical approach of their less educated ministers and their radically modified Calvinistic doctrine proved highly popular in remote rural regions. Consequently, this new denomination grew with remarkable rapidity, particularly in the South, where two-thirds of its membership were found by the time of the Civil War.30

The second dispute that divided American Presbyterianism had its origin, ironically enough, in the commendable desire to stimulate Christian unity. Cooperation between Presbyterians and Congregationalists in the United States came easily and readily. Harmonious relations had existed between the two denominations during the colonial period. Being generally restricted to separate sections of the country, these churches had had no occasion to develop animosity and acrimonious rivalry. Both denominations subscribed to the Westminster Confession and other Calvinist reform doctrines and employed a similar Puritan

30 Ibid., 74-75; Statistics and Presbytery Rolls, Annual Meeting of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath-School Work, 1860), 12-49.
church service. Almost the only difference between the two denominations was their church government. Understandably, many members of both churches demanded closer cooperation and even federation.

When the revival movement developed in the 1790's, there was an increased demand for preachers to fill the spiritual need. When Presbyterian missionaries arrived in central and western New York State, they discovered Congregational evangelists. Could not some plan be formulated to prevent dangerous competition from developing?

Jonathan Edwards, the younger, a Presbyterian delegate to the Congregational General Association of Connecticut in 1800, determined to resolve the problem. He proposed an ingenious plan of union whereby communicants could be members of both Calvinist denominations and be served by pastors of either. Federated churches, subject to the authority of the governing bodies of both sects, would be established in the West. The Presbyterian Church would be represented in the local Congregational associations while the Congregational Church sent delegates to regional presbyteries. Disputes could be settled by a special council in which both denominations were represented. The Congregational Association and the U.S.A. Presbyterian General Assembly adopted the plan in 1801, and for a time it worked well. In 1808 the Middle Association of Congregationalists in New York State, upon invitation, became an integral part of the Presbyterian Synod of Albany without ceasing to be Congregationalists. Indeed, the Congregationalists were so well satisfied with the arrangement that for many years they made no attempt to set up a separate organization of ministers in New York State.
In time, however, the plan proved impractical. Congregations could not place themselves under the authority of the governing agencies of two denominations, wholly independent and in important particulars completely different. Critics scoffingly referred to these churches as "Presbygational." It might have proved feasible to have formed an organic union of the two churches into a new denomination that was a cross of Presbyterianism and Congregationalism. With the passage of time, the plan collapsed under its own weight.31

Contention over this 1801 plan of union resulted in a further disruption of American Presbyterianism. As the years slipped by, two parties known as the Old School and the New School developed within the U.S.A. denomination. The Old School faction leveled its criticism primarily at the federation plan.Protesting that the new federated churches were not truly Presbyterian, they demanded that all future congregations be placed under the sole authority of Presbyterian judicatories. They also insisted that Presbyterians should have their own church boards responsible alone to the General Assembly instead of operating through interdenominational boards. The New School men, on the other hand, often with Congregationalist backgrounds and well satisfied with the plan of union, pointed with pride at the accomplishments of the interdenominational boards. Differences in doctrine also developed. In the course of the earlier Great Awakening in the middle of the eighteenth century, Jonathan Edwards ha: modified--the New

31Loetscher, A Brief History, 69-71.
School said improved--the tenets of Calvinism. Such were the major sources of friction within the mother church.

In 1835 some of the members of the Old School party, becoming alarmed, circulated through the church a statement entitled, "The Act and Testimony." This document warned of unsound doctrine and laxity of discipline. Finding themselves in a majority in the General Assembly of 1837, the Old School men voted to abrogate the agreement of 1801. Declaring that this abrogation was retroactive, the 1837 assembly then dissolved the four synods of Western Reserve, Utica, Geneva, and Genessee. This action effectively expelled the New School party.

When the General Assembly met the following year, the ousted delegates presented themselves and demanded admittance. When their credentials were not accepted, they formed a separate denomination with its own General Assembly. The former Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., now was rent into two almost equal denominations, having nearly identical polity and doctrine. Since they also covered largely the same territory, mutual animosity was inevitable in the lamentable years of division from 1837 to 1869.\(^\text{32}\) Instead of the vigorous, united Presbyterian Church of the early years of nationhood the country now witnessed the strange spectacle of three mutually hostile Calvinist denominations competing for the same field--the Cumberland Presbyterian Church; the U.S.A. Presbyterian Church, New School; and the U.S.A. Presbyterian Church, Old School.

\(^\text{32}\)Ibid., 78.
Men who founded the U.S.A. Presbyterian Church in Texas were members of the Old School. New School representation came very late and remained so slight that the early history of the U.S.A. denomination in this region relates solely to the activities of the Old School.

The earliest Presbyterian penetration of Texas occurred in 1794 when a young man illegally entered this Spanish province. Living for four months among the Indians, he mended their firearms and accompanied them on their hunting expeditions. At the end of the period, however, he was captured by an expedition of Spanish soldiers sent out from Nacogdoches and carried handcuffed to San Antonio de Bexar where he was cast into prison. A few days later he was arraigned before the governor who plied him with the following questions:

"What is your name?" "John Calvert." "What is the Spanish meaning for the word Calvert?" "I do not know." "What is your age?" "On the 12th of October, next I will be 28 years of age." "Where were you born?" "In the Province of Pennsylvania." "What is your religion?" "Presbyterian." "What do you mean by Presbyterian?" "Presbyterian is the same as Protestant." "What do you understand by the 'Protestant Religion?' What are its tenets? Explain them as far as you can." "I cannot explain them well, but I am a Christian as well as all those who follow the Protestant religion; I have been baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Our belief is like that of the Catholics with the exception that we do not acknowledge the Vicar of Christ on earth."

The young interloper was then expelled from the province.33

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33 W. S. Red, A History of the Presbyterian Church in Texas (Austin: Steck Company, 1936), 1; Quaderno, January 4, 1794–June 25, 1794. In Bexar County Archives material (University of Texas Archives, Austin, Texas); The Western Texian, May 15, 1856.
While the first Presbyterian minister to preach in Texas was Henry R. Wilson, a Cumberlander who arrived in the fall of 1832,\(^3^4\) the founder of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Texas was Sumner Bacon. He entered this Mexican province in 1826, held prayer meetings, and delivered sermons. Bacon was acting as a layman, however, not being ordained until 1835.\(^3^5\) In the years preceding the independence of Texas he was serving as the representative of the American Bible Society. The spiritual destitution of the state was apparent in this board's annual report for 1834.

To the Province of Texas, in Mexico, a grant of Spanish Bibles and Testaments has been made, and also a few copies in the English tongue. These books were first solicited by our agent in Louisiana, Rev. Benjamin Chase, who made a temporary visit to Texas and found a lamentable destitution of the Scriptures to prevail. Application was soon after made for books by Mr. Sumner Bacon, a resident in the province, who felt deeply anxious that the word of God should there be distributed, and who offered his own services as Agent, even should it be without compensation. He had traveled extensively through the province, and learned the number and moral situation of its inhabitants. "There are," he says, "in the jurisdiction of Nacogdoches, about six hundred American families and three hundred Spanish, and the households destitute of the Bible are as nine to one. Therefore, not less than 500 Bibles are wanted immediately towards supplying this jurisdiction alone. In the jurisdictions farther in the interior, where I am also personally acquainted, there are fewer copies of the Word of God in circulation than in this region. . . ." Mr. Bacon, having been recommended by judicious men, as one who would well perform

\(^{3^4}\)The Texas Presbyterian, October 13, 1876.

the duties of an Agent, your Board have cheerfully furnished him with commission.\[36\]

The Mexican ban on Protestant services in Texas made it difficult to supply the province with non-Catholic ministers. In spite of this handicap, in March, 1834, the Rev. Mr. Peter Hunter Fullinwider moved to Texas, where he and his wife taught school in San Felipe de Austin. He was the first representative of the U.S.A. Presbyterian denomination to arrive there. Other Calvinist divines soon followed, for by this time the Mexican statutes prohibiting the Protestant religion were little heeded.

With the fall of the Alamo, however, most of these ministers took hasty leave of the territory in what is known in Texas as the "run-away scrape." The Rev. Mr. Fullinwider stayed, and Sam Houston, as soon as he was made commander of the Texas forces, ordered him to collect the women and children at Fort Sam Houston, near Palestine, while their sons and husbands marched off to fight at San Jacinto. With the restoration of peace, only two Presbyterian ministers remained in the field, Fullinwider and Bacon.\[37\]

Even before the outbreak of the Texas insurrection, a Presbyterian house of worship had been erected in Texas. It was organized by the Rev. Mr. Milton Estill, a Cumberland minister in Shiloh, a small community near Clarkesville in East Texas. When the hamlet of Shiloh


\[37\] Red, History of the Presbyterian Church in Texas, 3.
declined, the church was moved to Clarkesville, and there it has enjoyed a vigorous life to the present day.38

U.S.A. Presbyterians also took an interest in Texas. As the southern frontier moved steadily westward, the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia followed the migrating pioneers by sending missionaries into Mississippi Territory in the fall and winter of 1800. Taking note of this Presbyterian population, on October 6, 1815, the Synod of Kentucky, U.S.A., created the Presbytery of Mississippi with its boundary extending indefinitely westward. Since its limits were not rigidly circumscribed, the presbytery assumed authority to send missionaries into Arkansas, the Indian Territory, and even Mexican-held Texas, where they were legally excluded. When in 1829 the presbytery was reconstituted into the Synod of Mississippi, its western limits remained restricted only by the setting sun and the ambition of the church fathers.

At the beginning of its missionary labors, the Presbytery of Mississippi operated through an executive committee of the U.S.A. Board of Domestic Missions located in Natchez, Mississippi. When the synodical organization replaced the presbytery, it continued to work through this same mission committee. The committee in 1857 licensed the first four missionaries to preach in Texas: the Revs. A. H. Phillips, W. C. Blair, Hugh Wilson, and P. H. Fullinwider.

38 Campbell, History of the Cumberland Church in Texas, 21; Raymond Judd, "Toward a History of the First Presbyterian Church in Clarkesville, Texas, Organized in 1833-34," in "Histories of USA Presbyterian Churches." In (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas).
It took truly heroic dedication to the service of God to fulfill the role of missionary in Texas in the early days. The missionary traveled on horseback with a Bible, hymn book, and other light articles in his saddle bags. There was no need to carry a large supply of provisions, for every evangelist worth his salt could count on a hearty welcome and a free meal in almost any lonely farmhouse along his route. It was not considered unconventional for him to carry the traditional long-barreled rifle and perhaps even a pistol or Bowie knife. He used the weapons to bring down game and defend himself from outlaws or renegade Indians who preyed upon lonely sojourners in this sparsely settled country. At night the itinerant preacher stretched out upon the ground, cushioning his head upon his saddle and covering himself with a rough shawl, blanket, or buffalo robe. For companionship he fell in with any Conestoga wagon or mounted traveler he might happen to meet.39

One of the first Presbyterian missionaries, the Rev. Mr. Hugh Wilson, left Texas for a short time, returned, and organized a church at San Augustine in the eastern part of the state. Consisting of twenty whites and two Negroes, this was the first congregation organized under the authority of the U.S.A. denomination in Texas.40

Earlier evangelists had been licensed to preach for a brief season in the Texas Republic, and some citizens demanded a ministry to

39Red, History of the Presbyterian Church in Texas, 9-12.
40Dallas Morning News, June 3, 1951.
reside there permanently. Such a demand came to the Rev. Mr. A. B. Lawrence of the Synod of Mississippi from a businessman named "Martyn" in a letter printed in the religious press.

I have been a citizen of the Republic of Texas about one year; during which time I have traveled extensively through almost every part of the country in which it is considered safe to travel; and although my business has been of an entirely secular nature, I have not been unmindful of the interests of Zion. I have found persons who have not heard the gospel preached for many years. ... There is a great amount of intelligence in this country, and hence the necessity for an intelligent ministry. Such a ministry alone can be useful in this country; any other would do more harm than good. There are now more clergymen ... in Texas than in any other country within my knowledge, and yet a very small proportion of the population attend the preaching. Why? The ministers are uneducated and unintelligent, and cannot interest the people. ... When they know a man of talent is to preach, then they flock out in great numbers. As an evidence of this, look at the reports of the Methodist ministers who have recently come to this country from their Missionary Society in the United States. I am truly glad that they have come to our Republic and rejoice sincerely in their success. But I am a Presbyterian and I honestly and candidly avow my preference for that church, above all others, and especially of its ministry above the ministry of any other denomination; and I mention the success of our Methodist brethren, not because I envy their success--far from it--but in order to stir up the Presbyterian church and ministers to their duty in relation to this country. Cannot the Missionary Society of the Mississippi Synod send more men into this field immediately?41

At its 1838 annual meeting the General Assembly of the Old School denomination harkened to these and similar appeals by issuing the following resolution:

Whereas in the providence of God, a door is now opened for introducing into Texas the Missionaries of the Cross, the "spiritual control of the Romish priesthood, having ceased"

41The Western Presbyterian Herald, May 3, 1838, as quoted in Red, History of the Presbyterian Church in Texas, 13-14.
there; and whereas, the eyes of the people are directed to Protestant churches in the United States, and their cry is "Come over and help us"; and whereas, many of the members of our churches are there as sheep without a shepherd, who with their fellow-citizens earnestly petition for the ministrations of the sanctuary; therefore

Resolved, that the General Assembly strongly recommend to its Board of Missions the country of Texas as a highly important field for their efforts, and that they adopt the earliest practicable measures to send forth into this inviting harvest efficient and devoted laborers.42

Accordingly the Board of Domestic Missions and the Board of Foreign Missions of this denomination sent ministers and evangelists who were willing to live among the people.43

Since Texas at the time was an independent republic, the relationship between the resident clergymen and the mother church in the United States had to be determined. However, for these Presbyterian agents to operate with maximum efficiency, it was necessary for them to function through a church court. Either they must organize an independent judicatory in Texas or attach themselves to an established church court in the United States.

With this end in view, the Rev. Mr. John Gray of the Newton Presbytery, in the spring of 1838, persuaded the General Assembly to pass the following resolution:

1. That in the judgment of this Assembly the ministers who are located as foreign missionaries permanently out of bounds

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of their respective Presbyteries ought, where they are sufficiently numerous, and where they are so located as to render occasional intercourse possible, in all cases to organize themselves into Presbyteries, and gather themselves and gather the converts whom God may give them into Presbyterian Churches, ordaining elders in them all.

2. The Synods are hereby enjoined to take needful order on this important and interesting subject.  

Encouraged by this statement, the ministers in Texas introduced a resolution in the 1838 fall meeting of the Mississippi Synod requesting the establishment of a presbytery in Texas. The synod then drew up the following petition to be presented to the General Assembly:

... in the judgment of the Synod, a Presbytery ought to be formed in the Republic of Texas as soon as possible; and although the Synod is of the opinion that the name and style of our Church does not limit our operation to the United States of America, yet the Synod hereby overture the General Assembly ..., and respectfully ask their advice as to the course to be pursued. ... And if the General Assembly approve, and as the necessary number of ministers is already in Texas, the Synod will, ... proceed to organize such a Presbytery, with the consent of the brethren in Texas.  

After taking due cognizance of this resolution, the 1839 General Assembly referred the whole matter to the Mississippi Synod, advising it to organize a presbytery in Texas "as soon as the interest of religion seem to require it." Consequently, at its next stated

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44 Minutes of June 1, 1838, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America from A. D. 1838-A. D. 1847, Inclusive, 43.

45 Minutes of October 27, 1838, Extracts from the Records of the Synod of Mississippi from the year 1838-1847, Inclusive (New Orleans: D. Davis and Sons, 1849), 18. In microfilm collection (Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary Library, Austin, Texas).

46 Minutes of May 22, 1839, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, A. D. 1838-A. D. 1847 Inclusive, 81.
meeting in the fall of 1839, that synod authorized four ordained min-
isters living in Texas to meet at their convenience to form a presby-
tery to be placed under the authority of the Mississippi Synod. 47

Acting upon the authorization both of the General Assembly and
the Mississippi Synod, three of the four designated prelates met at a
schoolhouse near the small town of Independence, Washington County,
Texas, in April, 1840. These men were the Revs. William Y. Allen, John
McCullough, and Hugh Wilson. An elder, John McFarlane, was also pres-
ent. After inscribing a lengthy resolution into a minute book in which
they announced their loyalty to the doctrines of the (Old School) Pres-
byterian Church, U.S.A., they cited the authorizations of the higher
courts of that church and proceeded to organize what later came to be
known as the Brazos Presbytery. 48 On the second day of this first meet-
ing the members drew up the following resolution:

Resolved--That it is the opinion of Presbytery, it is at pres-
ent inexpedient to make application to be admitted into the
Synod of Mississippi. 49

This latter action taken by the Brazos Presbytery established
it as a wholly independent church court not subject to the U.S.A.

47 Minutes of October 25, 1839, Extracts from the Records of the
Synod of Mississippi from the year 1838-1847, Inclusive, 22.

48 Minutes of April 3, 1840, "Presbyterian Church in the U.S.
and U.S.A., Minutes of the Presbytery of Brazos, 1840-1845," 1-5. In
microfilm collection (Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary Library,
Austin, Texas). Hereafter styled, "Minutes of the Presbytery of
Brazos."

49 Minutes of April 4, 1840, ibid., 10-11.
General Assembly or any of its lower judicatories. As Texas was an independent republic, these members believed their work would be compromised if they remained a mere missionary appendage to this American church. Unfortunately, the reasons that motivated the Texas brethren to take this action were not understood in the Mississippi Synod. It will be recalled that the judicatory authorized the ministers living in the Lone Star Republic to form a presbytery which would place itself under the jurisdiction of the Mississippi Synod. Affronted by what it considered an illegal and insulting repudiation of its authority, the Synod appointed a committee which drew up the following resolution:

The reasons assigned to for this course appear to exhibit a feeling of distrust for their brethren in the United States and to the judicatories of the church in which is altogether unsuitable to, and inconsistent with, fraternal action. . . . This cause also indicates a disposition to slight the protection, wisdom, experience and counsel of the brethren and fathers of the Church, from which they had gone out, and by whose bounty they had been able to labor with any degree of success in Texas. . . .

It is a matter of regret, that they have taken this unfortunate course, because by the constitution of the Board of Missions, its Benefactors are limited to churches and bodies in connection with the General Assembly, and they thus place themselves out of the pale of our missionary efforts, and either exclude that Board from Texas, or else make a separation between the few and feeble Churches of the Republic.50

As predicted by the Synod, the Texas ministers were cut off from all pecuniary aid from the mother church. Compelled to turn to farming or teaching school to support themselves and their families, they could preach or hold prayer services only on Sundays or in spare

50Minutes of October 31, 1840, Extracts from the Records of the Synod of Mississippi, 1838-1847, Inclusive, 35-36.
moments snatched from their work. Unfortunately, having to spend most of their time earning their daily bread, they could not ride circuit. This seriously impaired their effectiveness in a country such as Texas where the population was so thin and widely scattered that a spiritual agent must spend most of his time traveling to preach. If services were not held every day of the week in schools, homes, or barns, as well as in churches, the mission of the evangelist was doomed to failure.51

In spite of acute economic distress, the members of Brazos Presbytery evidently found time to keep old animosities alive. At the time of the organization of this new assembly, the Rev. Mr. Henry Reid was teaching school in Houston. Although in principle a New School Presbyterian, he was a member in good standing in the Old School denomination. Hearing of the formation of the Brazos Presbytery, he applied for admittance, but the Old School clergymen who had organized it rejected his application.52 The Rev. Mr. Reid's indignant protest soon appeared in the religious press.

The spirit that presided at the organization of the new Presbytery . . . is very similar to that that presided over the excision of 1837. With its principles I have no fellowship; they are so deeply tinged with suspicion that their natural

51 Watchman of the South, September 29, 1842. In microfilm collection (Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary Library, Austin, Texas).

52 Minutes of April 4, 1840, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Brazos, 1840-1845," 11-12, 14.
tendency is to destroy confidence among brethren; and they
strike at the very roots of Presbyterianism.53

While Texas Calvinists raised the bars to exclude undesirables,
the financial plight of the Presbytery remained as critical as ever,
but with the annexation of Texas to the United States in 1845, the
horizon brightened for the Brazos Presbytery. No reason remained why
this body should not end its independent existence and place itself
under one of the higher judicatories of the U.S.A. denomination. By
such action the purse strings of the national church would be loosened,
and Texas evangelists with ample financial support could spend their
full time riding circuit, greatly increasing their effectiveness.

Accordingly, Brazos Presbytery, in the spring of 1845, asked
the U.S.A. Presbyterian General Assembly to place it under the Synod of
Mississippi or otherwise to dispose of it as the General Assembly
thought best.54 This request was honored when the Mississippi Synod
placed the presbytery under its jurisdiction.55 Thus, the 1845 spring
meeting proved to be the last session of the Brazos Presbytery as an
independent church court.

In the course of its brief history, the presbytery had grown
from three ministers and six churches with seventy-eight members in

53 Christian Observer, September 3, 1840.
54 Minutes of April 3, 1845, "Minutes of the Presbytery of
Brazos, 1840-1845," 84-85.
55 Minutes of October 22, 1845, Extracts from the Records of the
Synod of Mississippi from the year 1838-1847, Inclusive, 77-78.
to ten ministers and thirteen churches with about 282 communicants in 1846. Although placed under the paternal care of the Mississippi Synod in the U.S.A. denomination, other difficulties appeared in the report spread on the minutes of the 1848 fall meeting:

Our organized churches are few & feeble, scattered over an immense territory, & with few exceptions, unable to sustain the gospel. Our ministers (only 10 in number) are consequently separated far from each other & have but little opportunity of counseling & aiding each. . . . Our hands are more than full with our immediate congregations. It were greatly desirable that we had more ministers, at least enough to hunt out these scattered members & gather them [into churches]. Our abiding prayer is that God may send us more laborers, yes, active and efficient ministers of the New Testament.

In spite of these handicaps, the presbytery grew apace, so that in the fall of 1850 the members resolved to petition the Synod of Mississippi to give its blessing to the erection of a synod in Texas. The Rev. Mr. McCullough was appointed to carry this overture to the fall session of the Mississippi Synod meeting in Vicksburg. Carrying the petition and minute books of the Brazos assembly, the minister-delegate arrived at the meeting, the first and last member of the Brazos Presbytery ever to present himself before the Mississippi

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56 Minutes of April 3-4, 1840, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Brazos, 1840-1845," 1-10.

57 Aggregate of Presbyterial Statistics, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America from A. D. 1838 to 1847, Inclusive (1847), 529.

58 Minutes of April 6, 1848, "Presbyterian Church in the USA, Presbytery of Brazos, Texas Minutes, 1846-1854," 51-53.

59 Minutes of November 14, 1850, ibid., 95-96.
Without referring to past misunderstandings, the synod resolved to sponsor the request. At its annual spring meeting in 1851, the U.S.A. General Assembly received the original overture from the Brazos Presbytery. Responding affirmatively to the appeal, the General Assembly decreed that it would be erected into the Synod of Texas. Under it would be placed the Presbyteries of Brazos, Eastern Texas, and Western Texas.

For the year 1852 the statistical records showed that the Presbytery of Brazos had eleven ministers and 358 communicants, including 52 colored brethren. These church members contributed a total of $3,526 for all purposes. The Presbytery of Eastern Texas was composed of five ministers and 247 communicants, including five colored. For all purposes the membership contributed $1,144. The Presbytery of Western Texas was made up of ten ministers with 101 communicants, including three colored. Money raised for all purposes totaled $467.

At its 1856 annual meeting, this newly constituted Synod of Texas heard a report from its committee on narratives, whose duty it was to relate the general history of the church for the preceding year. The committee stated that missionary activity was successfully pressed in many areas of the state, and a number of new churches were founded.

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60 Minutes of November 30, 1850, Extracts from the Records of the Synod of Mississippi from the year 1838-1847, Inclusive, 43-44.

61 Minutes of May 23, 1851, The Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America from A. D. 1848 to A. D. 1858, Inclusive, 187.

62 Aggregate of Presbyterial Reports, 1852, ibid., 247.
In addition, several revivals had been held with a gratifying outpouring of religious spirit. The committee also reported on the "low state of piety in many parts of our land, that the Sabbath is desecrated, intemperance is doing its fearful work, and the coldness & indifference is found even among the . . . friends of God."\(^63\)

By the year 1857 the sectional hatred tearing the nation apart found expression among Texas Presbyterians. The old cry from the South and West, "send us more ministers," was replaced by "send us the right kind of ministers, not such as consider it a part of their mission to abolish slavery."\(^64\)

Meantime, on the national scene a number of individual Presbyterian ministers in the North took courageous stands against the peculiar institution of the South. One such, the Rev. Mr. Elijah P. Lovejoy was murdered by an infuriated mob in Illinois in 1837 for printing a protest against slavery.\(^65\) However, the Old School denomination, anxious to preserve the unity of the church at any cost, at first not only refused to attack slavery but also denied that any stand was necessary. Later, at the regular annual meeting of the U.S.A. General Assembly in 1845, it reluctantly admitted that there was evil connected with

\(^63\)Minutes of November 6, 1856, "Minutes of the Synod of Texas, US, 1851-1871," 38-39. In microfilm collection (Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Austin, Texas).

\(^64\)Personal Reminiscences of Rev. William M. King in the Texas Presbyterian, July 5, 1878.

\(^65\)Thompson, The Presbyterian Church in America, 132.
the practice of slavery. The judicatory also mildly denounced "those
defective and oppressive laws" passed by some of the states to regulate
it. The Assembly lamented the traffic in human flesh whereby husbands
were separated from wives, and children from parents, for the sake of
"filthy lucre." The church also admitted and regretted that slaves
were often cruelly mistreated. However, the denomination recognized no
responsibility on the part of the church to eliminate such evils except
that it recommended that ministers exhort slaveowners to treat their
Negro charges with humanity. Furthermore, they did not admit that it
was the Christian duty of the masters to emancipate their servile
laborers. This resolution was adopted by a vote of 168 to 13.66

At the 1849 meeting of the national governing body, the Presby-
tery of Chillicothe, Ohio, memorialized the Assembly requesting that it
denounce slavery as a sin. It further urged that the lower courts use
vigorous methods to purge this evil from the church. Without a divi-
sion the General Assembly resolved that it would be "improper and inex-
pedient" for it to propose measures of emancipation.67

By 1861, however, sectional passions were so inflamed, both in
the North and the South, that American Calvinists, in spite of them-
selves, were forced to face the burning issues of the day. By the time

66 Minutes of May 20, 1845, Minutes of the General Assembly of
the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America from A. D. 1838
to A. D. 1847, Inclusive, 387-90.

67 Minutes of May 25, 1849, Minutes of the General Assembly of
the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America from A. D. 1848
to A. D. 1858, Inclusive, 89-90.
the Old School General Assembly met in Philadelphia in the spring of that year the lower southern states had already seceded, Abraham Lincoln had been inaugurated President, and Fort Sumter had been fired upon.

In May, 1861, when the national governing body of the Old School denomination assembled, few delegates from the South were in attendance. The dangers of travel and the fear that they would not be cordially received prevented the attendance of the Southerners. Only 16 representatives from synods of the Confederacy made their appearance, including two from the Synod of Texas. On the third day of the meeting, Dr. Gardner Spring of the Brick Presbyterian Church of New York proposed that a resolution be introduced swearing loyalty to the Union and to the federal government. On the twelfth day of the session after acrimonious debate Dr. Spring's resolution carried by a vote of 156 to 66. The resolution stated in part:

That this General Assembly . . . do hereby acknowledge and declare our obligation to promote and perpetuate, so far as in us lies, the integrity of these United States, and to strengthen, uphold, and encourage the Federal Government in the exercise of all its functions under our noble Constitution; and through this Constitution, in all its provisions, requirements, and principles, we profess our unabated loyalty.68

Reacting to this resolution, in the summer and fall of 1861, presbyteries in the Confederate States passed resolutions renouncing

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68Ibid., 564; Robert Ernest Thompson, Presbyterian in the South (Richmond: The John Knox Press, 1963), I, 564; Minutes of May 18-28, 1861, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America from A. D. 1859 to A. D. 1864, Inclusive, 138, 162-63.
the authority of their General Assembly. In response to an August invitation from a convention in Atlanta, Georgia, delegates from ten synods composed of 46 presbyteries gathered in Augusta, Georgia, on December 4, 1861, to constitute the Presbyterian Church of the Confederate States of America.69

At the time these events were occurring, statistically the Texas Synod included the Presbyteries of West Texas, East Texas, Central Texas, and Brazos. The synodical assembly included 47 ministers, 69 churches, 2,103 communicants, and the total amount given for all purposes was $24,615.70

In July, 1861, the Presbytery of West Texas spread on its minutes its indignation at the passage of the Spring resolution. The church court officially repudiated the "deliverances of the General Assembly 'on the state of the country.'" This statement was, "unconstitutional, unscriptural and anti-Presbyterian, and we do hereby declare it null and void."71

In the fall of that same year the other Texas judicatories also made their views known. Since the Presbyterian U.S.A., denomination

69 Thompson, The Presbyterian Church in America, 155-56.

70 Aggregate of Presbyterial Reports for 1861, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, from A. D. 1859 to A. D. 1864, Inclusive (1861), 194.

71 Minutes of July 19, 1861, "Presbyterian Church in the US and the USA, Presbytery of Western Texas Minutes, 1851-1871," 168. In microfilm collection (Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary Library, Austin, Texas). Hereafter styled "Presbytery of Western Texas, Minutes."
had required "of its members in the Confederate States to do that which would be treasonable against the powers that be" the Presbytery of Central Texas declared that no course was possible but to separate from its General Assembly and in concert with other southern presbyteries to organize a new and autonomous church. 72

The Presbytery of Eastern Texas joined its sister assemblies by spreading on its minutes the following resolution:

Whereas in the views of this Presbytery the last General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. in session in Philadelphia in May last passed the following resolutions, whereas in the views of this Presbytery said General Assembly violated the constitution of the church in attempting to decide a purely political question and violated the command of the Bible in enjoining upon the members and ministers of our churches their performances of acts which would be in direct conflict with those parts of scripture which enjoin upon us obedience to the government under which we dwell.

Therefore, resolved that this Presbytery hereby declares its connection with the said General Assembly of the U.S. to be dissolved. 73

Not until its annual meeting of 1863 was the Synod of Texas able to take cognizance of the foregoing events and resolutions. Following the lead of its component presbyteries, its members resolved:


Whereas the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the
U.S. did in 1861 pop [sic] resolutions on the state of the
country which we believe unconstitutional, and which required
such action on our part as would be false to the Southern
Confederacy of which we are a part. We therefore at this
first meeting of Synod since the passage of said resolutions
Resolved that we hereby declare our ecclesiastical relation
to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the
U.S.A. dissolved and further that we hereby declare our adhe-
sion to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the
Confederate States of America.

This statement was unanimously adopted.74

Four years later, in the spring of 1865, with the imminent ter-
mination of hostilities, the Old School General Assembly dashed all
hopes for an immediate cordial reunification of American Presbyterianism
by issuing the following resolution:

Resolved, 1. That this Assembly regards this civil rebel-
lion for the perpetuation of Negro slavery as a great crime,
both against our national government and against God, and the
secession of these Presbyteries and Synods from the Presby-
terian Church, under such circumstances and for such reasons
as unwarranted, schismatical, and unconstitutional.

Resolved, 2. That the General Assembly does not intend to
abandon the territory in which these churches are found, . . .
On the contrary, this assembly will recognize such loyal per-
sons as constituting these churches, Presbyteries, and Synods
in all bounds of the schism, and will use earnest endeavors to
restore and revive all such churches and church courts.75

The assembly also turned its attention to southern ministers
who gave aid and comfort to the "atrocious" rebellion against the gov-
ernment of the United States for the preservation of Negro slavery. In

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74 Minutes of November 11, 1863, "Minutes of the Synod of Texas
of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S., 1851-1900," 109.

75 Minutes of May 29, 1865, Minutes of the General Assembly of
the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America from A. D. 1865
to A. D. 1869, Inclusive, 42.
the same vein of Christian charity and forgiveness, the church court stated that any Presbyterian divine who had given the Confederate government such support and comfort or who believed that the institution of slavery was ordained by God, must confess the errors of his transgressions and humbly beg the pardon of the church. Any such clergyman who failed so to confess his sins and sue for forgiveness would be deposed from the ministry and be denied all communion with the church.\textsuperscript{76}

As Union armies moved into the South, federal officers seized the property of disloyal church groups and offered to transfer it to northern denominations. In line with its stated policy, the Old School church laid hands upon the property of the C.S.A. Church, and deposed from their pulpits clergymen with Confederate sympathies. The U.S.A. denomination installed pro-Union ministers who lectured indignant southern congregations on their transgressions. With an equal disregard of sectional sensitivities, the U.S.A. Presbyterians also attempted to form synods and presbyteries throughout the conquered South.\textsuperscript{77}

Owing to the devastation of the war, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, C.S.A., could not hold its scheduled meeting in the spring of 1865. In December of that year, however, the postponed session was held. Partially as a consequence of the behavior of the northern denomination, the feeling at the meeting was almost unanimous for maintenance of the separate establishment of the southern

\textsuperscript{76} Minutes of May 30, 1865, \textit{ibid.}, 44-45.

\textsuperscript{77} Loetscher, \textit{A Brief History}, 83.
church. After a prolonged debate, the name of the denomination was changed from the Presbyterian Church, C.S.A., to the Presbyterian Church in the United States. The members of this "U.S." denomination then demonstrated their ill will toward their northern brethren by drawing up a series of resolutions which included the statement that the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., would be accorded no more courtesy than would be shown to any other foreign religious body. Moreover, all the presbyteries under the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church, U.S., were instructed to insure that only ministers whose principles accorded with those of the southern church be installed in churches under their supervision.\textsuperscript{78}

At the same time the sectional division within the church was being perpetuated, another schism within American Presbyterianism was ended. In 1864 the New School denomination in the South united with the Presbyterian Church, C.S.A., in spite of the fact that the C.S.A. denomination was strongly Old School in its principles and refused to compromise to secure this merger. The New School men in the South, by accepting the terms of the C.S.A. Church, demonstrated that they had either changed their views on points at issue or that they were never strongly attached to the so-called Auburn Declaration which had earlier delineated the principles of the New School Assembly.\textsuperscript{79}


\textsuperscript{79} Thompson, \textit{History of the Presbyterian Church in the United States}, 159.
Soon after the Civil War, the Old School and the New School denominations in the North also reunited. This fusion was in part made possible by the patriotic enthusiasm of the North which developed in the course of the conflict. Both churches by uniting in supporting the war effort naturally achieved a feeling of kinship. They had moved closer together in other respects as well. Ceasing to operate through voluntary interdenominational organizations, the New School Church had by the 1860's largely conducted its missionary endeavors through its own committees. These were similar to the boards through which the Old School Presbyterian denomination functioned. A new generation of Old School ministers was also less intransigent in insisting upon theological differences. The result of this meeting of minds was that in 1869, after five years of negotiation, the two churches merged. The reunited assembly took the name "The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America," which had been the name of the church before the division of 1837, and of both churches throughout the period of division.  

As a result of this religious realignment, in 1870 there remained only three major divisions within American Presbyterianism: the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, and the Presbyterian Church in the United States. Admitting its sectional origin, the U.S. Presbyterian Church also called itself the "Southern" Presbyterian Church. This name permitted it to label the U.S.A. denomination as the "Northern"

\[80\text{Loetscher, A Brief History, 85.}\]
Presbyterian Church. Little action could be taken with regard to the Cumberlanders who had a strong establishment in the South and Southwest. Many members of the U.S. Church were determined to exclude the reunited U.S.A. denomination from Dixieland. The Presbyterian Church of the U.S.A., on the other hand, believed it was the national church, and, consequently, that it had as much right to evangelize the Southland as any other religious body. These contrasting prejudices and viewpoints reappear repeatedly in the later history of Presbyterianism.

The U.S.A. Presbyterian Church in Texas achieved an important objective on the evening of July 16, 1868, when John McMurray and Thaddeus McRae, formerly of the Presbytery of Western Texas, and the Rev. Mr. Henry P. Young, formerly of the Presbytery of Brazos, met in the First Presbyterian Church of Austin to organize the Presbytery of Austin within the U.S.A. denomination. As their first order of business the three ministers unanimously subscribed to the Westminster Confession and the Catechisms as the doctrinal standard of the Presbyterian Church. They also adopted the "Form of Government" of the U.S.A. denomination. Extracts read from the session records of the First Presbyterian Church in Austin, the First German Presbyterian Church in Galveston, and the Georgetown Presbyterian Church stated the determination of those three congregations to remain a part of the national church. They
were accordingly then enrolled in the record book of the new Austin
Presbytery.81

Two days later, in order to justify their course of action, the
ministers drew up the following resolution:

We the members of Presbytery declare to the world, that it has
been without our consent and contrary to our convictions that
we have been cut off from the church of our own choice and
that we deny the right of any persons whether in an organized
or unorganized capacity to attempt to bind our consciences in
this matter or to control us contrary to our religious convic-
tions—to declare with what church we may or may not connect
ourselves; or where we may or may not labor. And further—in
taking this step toward union with the church of our former
adoption we do so altogether from a sense of religious duty,
feeling that as each one of us must answer for himself to the
Great Head of the Church in regard to this matter we ought and
are in duty bound not only to discourage but to heal as far as
we ourselves are concerned this division that has been made in
the Body of Christ which division we hold should not have been
made and therefore pronounce sinful. And still further in
organizing this Presbytery we neither aim nor intend to place
ourselves in opposition to our southern Brethren of the Presby-
terian Church but rather to put ourselves in union with our
brethren from whom we had been violently separated, desiring
however to live in peace and harmony with all brethren in
Christ providing it can be done without violating our convic-
tions as to what our duty to our God is in regard to this mat-
ter and we sincerely invite and earnestly plead with our
brethren of the Southern Presbyterian Church to unite with us
in restoring and maintaining the unity of the church seeing
that the issues that rent it asunder are now dead and buried
leaving no reason that we should longer continue estranged one
from another giving the world the occasion to reject the offer
of mercy through our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ and to
whom we commend ourselves and his cause, praying for His
Spirit's influences and sustaining grace.

81 Minutes of July 16, 1868, "Minutes of the Presbytery of
Austin of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America,
The three ministers then resolved to send commissioners to the next annual meeting of the U.S.A. General Assembly in the spring of 1869. Reporting what had been done in the capital city of Texas at the July, 1868, meeting, the commissioners requested the incorporation of the Austin Presbytery into the U.S.A. denomination. The session then adjourned.\textsuperscript{82}

In the 1869 spring meeting of the General Assembly the stated clerk reported to the delegates that a presbytery had been organized in Texas without previous direction of the General Assembly. Although a commissioner from Texas was present, the clerk stated that no official notice of the formation of that church court had as yet been presented.\textsuperscript{83} In spite of this rather confused report, the Austin Presbytery was tentatively listed under the Synod of Nashville in the statistical record of the church.\textsuperscript{84}

The following year the General Assembly listed the Austin Presbytery under the Synod of Tennessee. This same report named the Rev. Mr. Henry P. Young as Stated Supply of the First German Presbyterian Church of Galveston. The total number of communicants of this church was said to be 70, while the Sunday School membership was 125. The Stated Supply of the Georgetown Presbyterian Church was listed as the

\textsuperscript{82}Minutes of July 18, 1868, \textit{ibid.}, 5-7.

\textsuperscript{83}Minutes of May 20, 1869, \textit{Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America from A. D. 1865 to A. D. 1869, Inclusive}, 431.

\textsuperscript{84}\textit{Ibid.}, 428.
Rev. Mr. John McMurray; the communicants of this church numbered 20, while the Sunday School listed 50 members. Funds contributed for all purposes were $1,251.20. The Rev. Mr. Jerome Augustine Williams was listed as Stated Supply for the First Presbyterian Church of Austin. The total number of communicants was given as 67, while the Sunday School was composed of 75. For all purposes through the year the congregation contributed $1,209.04. 85

Perhaps at this time it would be well to consider the question raised by the Austin Presbytery in its resolution of April, 1885:

The Presbytery of Austin most respectfully overtures the General Assembly urging that the General Assembly call the attention of the editors and the Boards of the Church & the public generally to the fact that the term "Northern Presbyterian Church" or the "Presbyterian Church (North)" is not the name of our church & request that this term not be used since it is so offensive & injurious.

1. It is a misnomer for church boasts of knowing no North or South no East no West, but is simply the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. without suffix or prefix.

2. Recommended use is incorrect as our church has
   6 Synods
   24 Presbyteries
   527 Ministers
   676 Churches
   50,000 Communicants in that portion of country usually called "The South."

3. Because the use of this word is calculated to injure our work in the south since it conveys the impression that we as a sectional church, are at work in a territory not belonging to us & the use of the term "northern" by our papers, Boards, etc., is readily seized upon by those who would injure our work as proof that we are a sectional church.

85 Statistical Records and Presbytery Rolls, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., Vol. I (1870), 879.
Because the use of this term is also calculated to keep the memories of divisions and war, We would suggest that if any other term is necessary than the Presbyterian Church, the expression "the National Presbyterian Church" be used.

Since this issue appeared time and again, the question naturally arises, how northern was the U.S.A. denomination during the period of this study? Was this opprobrious term justified or was it without any basis in fact?

In seeking the answer one might naturally ask where were the sympathies of U.S.A. ministers during the Civil War? Although views of all are not available, what testimony did remain disclosed a clear trend of political affiliation. There was strong evidence to demonstrate that these men supported the Union cause, sometimes at great personal risk to themselves and their families.

Two examples will illustrate this point. The first is the Rev. Mr. Thaddeus McRae. He was born October 10, 1831, in Marion, now Dillan County, South Carolina. His parents were of Scotch Highlander descent. After the Indians were removed west of the Mississippi, the McRaes moved into Kimper County, Mississippi, where Thaddeus attended what schools existed. The family then moved to Dekalb, the county seat where the schools were of higher calibre. Later he attended Salem High School in southern Mississippi, finishing a four-year course in two and one-half years at the expense of his health which had always

been precarious. Being of a sensitive and retiring nature, he did not make friends easily with the rougher type of frontier youth.

After leaving Salem he taught in Newton County, Mississippi for a short time. He then went to Hanover College, Hanover, Indiana where he remained for about six months. This was his only formal college training, but he had a fine intellect that enabled him to make the most of available opportunities. In 1853 he began studying under the Rev. Mr. John Morrow of Columbus, Mississippi, a minister of some wealth. On the completion of his training he was licensed to preach at the age of twenty-four by the Tombigbee Presbytery in 1858. He then served in several small churches in Newton County, Mississippi where he met and married Miss Annie F. Bradshaw.

In 1854 the new presbytery of East Mississippi ordained him. Having no official pastoral charge, he served a church in Jackson, Louisiana for a time. In 1860 he went as a commissioner to the Old School General Assembly meeting held in Rochester, New York.

When the Civil War broke out he unhesitatingly announced his opposition to secession. During those stormy days he served several small churches in Louisiana. McRae was present at the secession convention in Louisiana and was dismayed at the action taken.

Accepting a call from the Presbyterian Church in Port Lavaca, Texas, he traveled there and assumed the pastoral charge.87 There

87 C. G. Bissell, "History of the First Presbyterian Church, USA, of Austin, Texas," (Handwritten MS), 33-35. (Property of the First Presbyterian Church, 4200 Jackson Avenue, Austin, Texas.)
McRae showed considerable vacillation in his political principles. For instance, as pastor of the Port Lavaca Church, he was under the jurisdiction of the West Texas Presbytery. In April, 1861, at its regularly called meeting, that body passed a resolution stating that since war had broken out between the sections, it would be unwise to send a commissioner to the Old School General Assembly meeting. The Rev. Mr. McRae dissented and refused to sign the statement.\(^88\) When this church court heard of the Spring resolution, it drew up an indignant protest renouncing the authority of the Old School denomination. This pronouncement already cited was drafted and signed by a committee with McRae as its chairman.\(^89\) Twenty-three years later the Rev. Mr. McRae denied that he was either a member of the committee or that he signed the draft resolution.\(^90\)

In the meantime, he worked diligently as a minister of the Port Lavaca Church, but the confusion of war compounded his difficulties. Political turmoil rent his congregation asunder. The pastor's political predilections were responsible, at least in part, for his troubles. When Texas seceded, he held true to the Old School Presbyterian Church.

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\(^88\) Minutes of April 27, 1861, "The Presbyterian Church in the US and USA, the Presbytery of Western Texas Minutes, 1860-1871," 163.

\(^89\) Minutes of July 19, 1861, ibid., 168.

\(^90\) Red, History of the Presbyterian Church in Texas, 109.
in spite of the West Texas Presbytery resolution which he had signed. His decision divided his church membership. 91

Forced out of the Port Lavaca pulpit, he fled to Mexico for a time. Reappearing later in New Orleans, he served as chaplain to a Negro regiment in the federal army. After the war he attempted to return to the Port Lavaca church, but while his old congregation was willing to accept him back, the West Texas Presbytery was not. His indignant colleagues erased his name from the roll of Presbytery because he had deserted his pulpit and joined the Federals. His name would remain stricken until he acknowledged the sinfulness of his past deeds. McRae, in turn, renounced the jurisdiction of the Presbytery, declaring that it had become wholly "political" in its policy.

He then traveled to Austin where he became secretary to E. M. Pease, a prewar governor of Texas. Mr. Pease later became the first Republican governor of the state under Congressional Reconstruction. Although not a member, McRae took an active part in the Reconstruction Convention that framed a new constitution for the state. The minister also became one of the most enthusiastic supporters of E. J. Davis, the most hated of the Radical Republican chief executives. 92

The minister associated himself with the First Presbyterian Church of Austin. By December, 1865, the Presbytery of Central Texas,

91 Bissell, "History of the First Presbyterian Church, USA, in Austin, Texas," 35.
92 Red, History of the Presbyterian Church in Texas, 118-19.
together with the others composing the Synod of Texas, had renounced the authority of the Old School General Assembly, U.S.A., and declared its allegiance to the newly established U.S. General Assembly. Largely through McRae's influence, however, in January, 1866, a majority of the congregation of the First Presbyterian Church of Austin drafted the following resolution:

Whereas, the Presbytery of Central Texas did in 1861 separate from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States:

and

Whereas, This church has never recognized the jurisdiction of said Presbytery since its separation from the Assembly (not having been represented by either pastor or ruling elders) or any other ecclesiastical organization in connection with the Southern General Assembly

Therefore

Resolved 1. That we, the Presbyterian Church of Austin City, Texas in congregation assembled, do disclaim all connection with the Presbytery of Central Texas.

Resolved 2. That we favor a restoration of our former relation to the national church as soon as practicable, and

Resolved 3. That in the meantime we put ourselves under the care of the Board of Domestic Trustees at Philadelphia, and the session is hereby authorized to solicit aid from said Board for the support of our minister, Rev. Thaddeus McRae, now unanimously chosen pastor of this church and the session is authorized to notify him of his election.93

Although never serving officially as pastor, McRae supplied the pulpit of the Austin Church from June 27, 1866, to October 31, 1869. While ministering to this congregation, he was one of the three men who organized the Austin Presbytery that perpetuated the representation of

93Minutes of January 27, 1866, "Minutes of the Session of the First Presbyterian Church, in Austin, Texas, 1851-1886," 51-52. In church papers (First Presbyterian Church, Austin, Texas).
the national Presbyterian Church in Texas. 94 Nothing is known of his later career save that he left the Lone Star State.

A second man, Edward B. Wright about whose views on the Civil War there could be no doubt, was also connected with the First Presbyterian Church of Austin. The eldest of the three sons of Mr. and Mrs. Silas B. Wright, he was born in Hudson, Ohio on May 11, 1838. His father, who was a professor at Western Reserve University, died when Edward was only six years old. As a child he flew into such uncontrollable temper tantrums that his mother warned him that if he did not control his fiery disposition he would certainly end up on the gallows.

He spent much of his youth with an aunt and uncle in Detroit. Enrolling as a student in Western Reserve University, he attempted to defray his expenses by working under the supervision of George B. Meade, later the Union hero at the Battle of Gettysburg, on the United States Lake Survey. Then he began his study for the ministry at Union Theological Seminary in New York City.

His studies were interrupted by the outbreak of the Civil War. An ardent Unionist, he enlisted as a lieutenant in Battery B., First Michigan Light Artillery. In a battle in north Georgia in 1862 he had his right shoulder shot partially away by Confederate bullets. He recovered from his fearful wound and served the remainder of the war with the Federal army. Obtaining a captain's commission, he accompanied General Sherman in his famous march to the sea.

94 Bissell, "History of the First Presbyterian Church, USA of Austin, Texas," 35.
After the war he completed his studies at Union Theological Seminary, and on September 28, 1868 was ordained into the ministry. He accepted the pastorate at a small church in Stillwater, Minnesota, where he labored for five years before assuming pastoral duties in the First Presbyterian Church of Austin in November, 1872. There was considerable feeling about a federal officer occupying a pulpit in the capital city of a former Confederate state. His sense of humor demonstrated itself when he chose as the text of his first sermon, Acts 17:6, "Those that have turned the world upside down have come thither also."

On March 5, 1878, he married Evelyn Hunter Bell. They had two daughters. After a home for Confederate veterans was established at Austin, Wright preached there every Sunday afternoon. Having great tact, a keen sense of humor, and a lovable personality, he soon endeared himself to the men in gray. To show their affection for him they unanimously elected him an honorary member of the John B. Hood Camp of Confederate Veterans. This honor was unique. As far as is known, no other Union officer was so honored.

During the thirty years of his pastorate to the little church, its 70 members grew to a congregation of over 400. His fiery temper remained with him, but he triumphantly subdued it through force of will power. The Rev. Mr. Wright visited every family in his congregation regularly several times a year. On these occasions, heedless of how his hosts might try to avoid the subject, he always brought religion into the conversation. As an example of his natural consideration, he
made it a point to write a personal letter of greeting to every new minister who took up a station under the Synod of Texas, U.S.A.

The Austin pastor never lost an opportunity to ask a messenger boy to what Sunday School he belonged. He kept an eye out for new recruits for the gospel ministry. Many a startled boy recalled how the beaming minister placed his hand on the boy's head and asked, "You are going to be a preacher are you not"?

In addition to the affairs of his own church, he tirelessly interested himself in the activities and welfare of Austin itself. Because of his strong personality, the community called him "everybody's pastor." One Austin laborer said, "I don't believe much in God but I believe a whole lot in Dr. Wright."

His activities reached out to the Salvation Army, the State Institute for the Blind, and The Trades Council of Workers. In particular, he took a lively interest in the affairs of The University of Texas. For a time he conducted Bible classes in two of the fraternity houses. A member of the Ohio Chapter if Phi Beta Kappa, he was successful in helping to bring this organization to Austin, and was made an honorary member in The University of Texas chapter.

On April 5, 1908, he announced his determination to retire five weeks later on his birthday. Seventy years old at that time, he gave his advanced age as the reason for his decision. The church honored him by conferring on him the title of "Pastor Emeritus," a title he retained until his death on January 4, 1914. As requested, he was buried in
Austin in the Oakwood Cemetery at the feet of Dr. Daniel Baker, one of the great pioneer preachers of Texas and an idol of Dr. Wright.95

From other biographies available, there is no evidence that any U.S.A. minister gave aid or comfort to the Confederacy. Pro-Unionists naturally equated the national Presbyterian Church with the Union they cherished.

Another measure of the extent of the "northerness" of the national Presbyterian Church is the number of U.S.A. preachers who were born in the area of the Confederacy. Although no single work containing the biographies of all U.S.A. ministers has been compiled, through scattered sources the lives of sixteen of these men of God in the Synod of Texas, U.S.A., have been discovered. They reveal that fifteen of them were born and reared in the North. After attending northern seminaries, they were sent by the national church into the Lone Star State. The one exception was the Rev. Mr. Thaddeus McRae, who was born in South Carolina, raised in the South, and received his religious training there. All the others, save perhaps for brief visits, never set foot in Texas until they were ordained and accepted the call to evangelize this field.

Aside from these sixteen prelates, one other minister enrolled in the Texas Synod, U.S.A., was among the three founders of the Austin Presbytery in 1868. In spite of his anglicized name the Rev. Mr. Henry

P. Young was born in Germany, and upon his arrival in Texas before the Civil War, concentrated upon evangelizing among the Germans in Texas. Although his views on the Civil War were not indicated in the surviving records, the Germans in Texas as a whole were predominantly anti-secessionist.

There was then some basis for calling the U.S.A. denomination the "northern" Presbyterian Church, but it had just as much right to evangelize in the South as any other religious body from north or south of the Mason-Dixon Line. Nevertheless, the northern background and predilections of many of its pastors explain in part why this church had an uphill struggle in Texas.

To avoid conflict with the southern Presbyterian Church, the Austin Presbytery developed the policy of founding churches in rural areas of the state where no U.S. houses of worship were to be found, or of moving into large metropolitan areas where there was room for both denominations of the Presbyterian Church. In 1876 the General Assembly listed churches founded in such obscure hamlets as Decatur, Aurora, and Cambridge. Also individual ministers were cited as having the oversight of numerous houses of worship. For instance, the Rev. Mr. Brainerd T. McClelland was in charge of churches in Brownwood, Adora, Galveston, Georgetown, Lawrence, Dallas, St. Joe, Jacksboro, and

96 Minutes of October 24, 1885, "Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1878-1900," 195. In manuscript collection (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas).
McKinney. From the evidence it was clear that many of these frontier ministers had to spend much of their time riding circuit.

Presbytery records during this period were unusually barren of vital or interesting information. During 1869-1878, due to the great distances separating ministers and the poor transportation facilities available, attendance at meetings of the presbytery was very irregular. At many scheduled meetings the Austin body was compelled to adjourn for lack of a quorum. When a working number of clergymen were present, these ministers transacted little business of importance. The records do demonstrate that, in spite of dedicated efforts, the work of the presbyteries progressed slowly. Yet many new ministers were enrolled to labor in this missionary field, and a number of churches were founded.

At its spring meeting in 1873 in Austin, the church court asked the General Assembly to transfer it from the Synod of Tennessee to the Synod of Kansas until such time as a synod could be organized in Texas. The reasons given were the great distance between the Austin Presbytery and the remainder of the Tennessee Synod and the time and expense to attend the meetings. These factors, it was pointed out, had hitherto prevented any member of the Texas judiciary from attending a meeting of the Tennessee court. In fact, up to that time, there had been no official correspondence between the two bodies. Moreover a new

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97Statistical Records and Presbytery Rolls, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., Vol. IV (1876), 326.
railroad recently connecting Texas and Kansas through the Indian Terri
tory would make it relatively easy to attend the meetings of the Kansas Synod.98 This request was granted by the General Assembly at its annual meeting in May, 1873.99

While these events were transpiring, American theologians were agitated over the issues of evolution and its relation to the scriptures and the higher criticism of the Bible. There is no hint in the records that the prelates in the Austin Presbytery were aware of these currents in American religious life. This, however, need not be a matter of surprise. Evangelists circuit-riding from twelve to sixteen hours a day and holding innumerable prayer meetings and church services would hardly bewilder their rural communicants by introducing such topics into their sermons. The few surviving sermons from this period deal with traditional themes.

Important social movements were sweeping the Lone Star State during this period, and momentous economic events were taking place, but there is no extant evidence of the effects on the activities of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. The 1870's was a period of acute economic distress for the farmers, and the agrarian unrest so evident in other sections of the nation had its counterpart in Texas. There were strong

98 Minutes of March 28, 1873, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Austin of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1868-1887," 23-24.

99 Minutes of May 24, 1873, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., Vol. II (1873), 525.
Granger and Greenback movements in the 1870's and 1880's. Indeed, the
Greenback Party joined with the Republicans and for a time threatened
the Democratic control of the state. However, with the growing pros-
perity of the 1880's farmer discontent abated.¹⁰⁰

Since many of these newly founded congregations lay in remote
rural areas, the ministers bringing spiritual food to their flocks must
have been cognizant of the economic blight impoverishing their communi-
cants. Not only is there no statement of sympathy or concern for these
distressed husbandmen, there is no hint in the records that the clerics
were aware of these conditions. There were complaints about the pau-
city of contributions and requests that the boards of the General Assem-
bly make up deficits in ministers' salaries, but this is as close as
the official proceedings come to acknowledging events transpiring about
them.

This was also the period of the open-range cattle kingdom and
the long drives to Kansas or Missouri railheads. Oil wells were drilled
for the first time in the Lone Star State and railroad construction
after the Civil War was rapid, but of all these matters the church
records say nothing. While one would expect to find little discussion
of such affairs in the minutes of the presbyteries, there appears less
justification for omission of all mention of agrarian discontent of the
period.

¹⁰⁰Rupert N. Richardson, Texas the Lone Star State, 2nd ed.
At any rate, the church grew slowly during these years. As a consequence, in the fall of 1877, the presbytery drew up a resolution requesting the Synod of Kansas to ask the General Assembly to reconstitute the Austin judicatory as the Synod of Texas, composed of the Presbyteries of Austin, Trinity, and North Texas. The reasons given were the expense and difficulty in attending the meetings of the Kansas Synod and the sufficient increase of churches and ministers in Texas to authorize the establishment of a synodical assembly. In the spring of 1878 the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly reported that he had received notice that the Synod of Kansas had divided, as requested, the Presbytery of Austin into three presbyteries. Upon motion of the Kansas Synod, the General Assembly established the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., over these three church courts.

During the decade from 1868 to 1878 in which it was the sole governmental agency representing the U.S.A. denomination in Texas the Austin Presbytery experienced a modest growth. In 1868 it contained only three ministers and three churches; whereas, in 1878 it listed nine ministers and eight churches with 425 communicants. These 425 church members contributed for the year for all purposes $6,719, which

101 Minutes of September 28, 1877, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Austin of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1868-1887," 77-78.

102 Minutes of May 24, 1878, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., Vol. IV (1878), 57.
averages slightly over ten dollars per year for each communicant. An annual church revenue of $6,719 was certainly not enough to pay the salaries of nine clergymen. It was evident that the boards of the U.S.A. General Assembly invested far more in the missionary field of Texas than the denomination was able to collect. Indeed, Texas was to prove a financial liability to the U.S.A. church throughout the entire period of this study.  

103 Statistical Records and Presbytery Rolls, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America from A. D. 1865 to A. D. 1869, 495.

104 Statistical Records and Presbytery Rolls, ibid., 367.
CHAPTER II

THE HISTORY OF THE U.S.A. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

IN TEXAS AND LOUISIANA, 1878-1906

Many of the problems faced by the Synod of Texas from 1878 to 1906 were similar to those confronted by churches in general in other frontier regions of the United States. The lives of the U.S.A. ministers stationed in Texas during this period clearly illustrate this. Brief biographies will be given of two of the more colorful U.S.A. ministers living in Texas during this period. These men might or might not be typical of the Texas Presbyterian divines of their day.

The first was William B. Bloys, known as the "Cowboy Preacher," "Father of the Hills," and "A friend to everyone."\(^1\) Although born on January 26, 1847, at McLemoresville, Tennessee, he evidently spent most of his boyhood in Illinois. Studious and ambitious, he began working his way through school even as a boy.

While a student in an Illinois academy he met Dr. and Mrs. Warren, returned missionaries from India. Under their influence he was

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inspired to enter the ministry and prepare himself for a foreign mission field by working his way through college and Lane Theological Seminary in Ohio. However, his years of toil and privation had so undermined his health, that when he completed his studies, he was unable to engage in foreign missionary labors. He then volunteered for home missionary work.

Bloys began his ministry by filling the pulpit of a small Presbyterian Church in Coleman, Texas in 1879. His first church services were held in a room over a rowdy saloon, the only place available, but a house of worship was soon erected. In addition to the church at Coleman, he supplied churches in Brownwood and other northwest Texas towns.

One evening in 1887 after ministering to some friends in Reynolds who were afflicted with measles, Bloys held a church service and then drove home facing a cold north wind. He became critically ill, and he barely escaped pneumonia. After he recovered, a doctor advised Bloys that he must move to a higher altitude if he were to escape tuberculosis. Consequently, he gave up his work in Coleman in 1888 and moved to Fort Davis. At that time he had a wife and four small children, and he faced difficulties that would have defeated a less determined man.

Bloys soon organized a Presbyterian Church in Fort Davis and also served as chaplain in the nearby army post. An indefatigable evangelist, he organized churches in the nearby towns of Alpine, Marfa, Shafter, and Balmorhea and preached at Marathon, Sanderson, and
Valentine whenever he could make arrangements for a service. At first, Dr. Bloys rode horseback, often in the coldest weather, and over rough mountain roads. Later he drove a team of horses, and still later, a Ford automobile which was given him by a friend.

In 1889 some friends who lived on ranches west of Fort Davis met with Dr. Bloys to plan the establishment of some central place of worship for ranch people who lived too far from town to attend church. They selected as the rendezvous site Skillman Grove, fourteen miles from Fort Davis. There Dr. Bloys held the first of the famous meetings under a fine, big tree with only four or five church members present. The minister used an Arbuckle coffee can as a pulpit. Since hymn books were missing, he had to do most of the singing himself. Soon the fame of this camp site spread, and ranchers on horseback and families in covered wagons came from miles around. They erected a brush arbor for the meetings. Many farm and ranch children, even those already in their teens had never before attended a religious service.

Dr. Henry S. Little, State Synodical Superintendent for Home Missions of the U.S.A. Synod, came from Denison, Texas, to help with the work. Dr. Lally Millican, a pioneer Baptist preacher also began to cooperate. Soon Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, and Christians were working together in one of the most effective religious programs in the West. These groups formed an association and bought a section of land on which they built a large tabernacle. As the renown of the camp meetings grew, thousands gathered, not only from all parts of Texas, but from other states as well.
As Dr. Bloys grew older, he limited himself to the posts of pastor in Fort Davis and Alpine, giving each church two Sundays a month. After his death in March, 1917, Dr. Bloys's followers erected a beautiful marble shaft to his memory at the camp site and changed the name of the association to The Bloys Camp Meeting Association.  

The Rev. Mr. Henry S. Little was the associate and friend of Dr. Bloys. A powerful preacher with histrionic abilities, he had a distinctive type of strenuous personality that impressed all with whom he came in contact. A born story teller, troops of children followed him about as if he were a Pied Piper to hear his fascinating anecdotes.

Little was born in Cincinnati, Ohio on March 28, 1837. His father before him served for fifty years as home missionary in the wilds of the section now comprising the states of Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, and Tennessee. His three brothers also entered the ministry. He chose his two wives from the homes of ministers, and his only son and two grandsons also followed the profession of parson.

Working his way through school by hard manual labor, Henry was graduated from Wabash College, Crawfordsville, Indiana, in 1863, and completed his theological training at Lane Seminary in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1866. He was ordained a Presbyterian minister on April 11, 1866. Later Wabash College and Washington and Jefferson College conferred upon him the Doctor of Divinity degree. His early pastorates were in Indiana, Michigan, and Missouri. The call to Texas reached him while

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he was minister at Carondelet, Missouri. At this time his "fellow presbyters" expressed their esteem for him by drafting the following resolution:

Having learned that the Rev. Henry S. Little, the pastor of the church at Carondelet, has been appointed by the Board of Home Missions, Synodical Superintendent of Missions for the state of Texas, we, his brethren in the ministry and his fellow-Presbyters, cannot permit our Brother to leave us without some expression of the high place he holds in our confidence and affection. During the years in which he has been associated in the ministry of this city, Brother H. S. Little has shown such a union of courage and prudence, zeal and moderated wisdom, as gives us assured promise of all his future...

And while we cannot but express our sorrow that we shall so rarely see his face in the coming years, we must confess our gratitude to know that one so well qualified by historic and family influence, by mental and spiritual gifts, should have been called to look after the few sheep in the wilderness and to lay the foundation of her churches of the future.

We rejoice that one demanding so little for himself, so willing to stand behind the cross, so courteous and yet so firm, so charitable and yet so gifted with common sense, so earnest in his conviction and yet so willing to learn, so enthusiastic and yet so tempered by modesty and prudence, has been called by our Lord and His Church, to the greater work to which he purposes to give the remainder of his life.3

Appointed Synodical Superintendent of Home Missions by the U.S.A. Board of Home Missions, Dr. Little and his family arrived in Texas in the spring of 1879. He established his family in Denison, Texas where educational advantages were available to his children. He occupied the post of synodical superintendent for twenty-seven years, and in this position made his name famous among Texas ministers.

3"The Life of Henry S. Little." In "Autobiographies and Biographies of USA and C.P. Ministers." In (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas).
Soon after his arrival in Denison, Little set out on a tour of his mission field in a makeshift spring wagon drawn by two hardy Texas ponies for which he had paid eight dollars each. In his early years of service he crossed and recrossed the entire state, an area of some 265,780 square miles.

His first trip over the primitive roads and trails covered 1100 miles and found him many nights with "... the prairie for an ample bed and the sky for a boundless roof..." Notations from one of these journeys casually mentioned "sleeping in the open every night for three consecutive weeks." He carried no protection save a heavy whip.

Frequently lost in the many miles of unfenced ranches, he was compelled to make many weary detours, and had many harrowing adventures amid flood and storm. With many miles between farm or ranch houses, loneliness, as well as every manner of bodily discomfort, often marked these journeys. To occupy his mind, one of Little's favorite pastimes was to count the hoofbeats of his horses and calculate the differences in their strides. "His very real affection for his ponies was manifested" by the care he took to keep them fit and well matched in spite of grueling hardships.

On one occasion Dr. Little commented to a group of friends that he often entered a church at night, bedding down on one of the unoccupied pews. A Presbyterian elder commented that while he had often heard of communicants dozing in church, that was the first time he ever heard of a minister doing so.

In addition to traveling in his wagon, Little occasionally rode in stagecoaches. Once a band of highwaymen halted the carriage and
told the occupants to get out and stand and hand over their personal belongings. When one of the robbers ordered Dr. Little to yield up his most precious possession, he proffered him his next Sunday's sermon. This the horrified outlaw rejected. He did take the minister's watch, but overlooked a sizable quantity of money concealed in Dr. Little's hat which he had dropped carelessly beside him on the road. The desperadoes pulled down a number of mail sacks from the top of the coach, but found them valueless. One of them then cried, "Look here, parson, come over here and load on the sacks again." Under cover of the bandit's guns Dr. Little did so. When friends of the minister heard about this experience, three better watches were given him to replace the stolen one.

When Little entered Texas, there were few Presbyterian churches in the state. As he traveled about his rounds he prayed and preached in brush arbors, homes, and schools. Often he ministered to the sick, the dying, and the bereaved. Whenever he found enough Presbyterians in a neighborhood, a fifty-mile square area, he organized them as the nucleus of a Presbyterian Church. In many communities he visited Little was the only preacher to make an appearance, and many who listened to him had not heard a church service in their lives.

Little must have had remarkable ability as a preacher. When he attended the General Assembly meeting in 1884 in New York City, the New York Observer commented: "It is something splendid to see and hear men from the farthest corners of the land. One of the best speeches of the whole was made by a man from Texas." That man was Henry Little.
Dr. Hays, moderator of the Assembly, said that Dr. Little had made the finest speech at the meeting and, in fact, it was "the speech." His sermons were the product of a profoundly logical mind, well-versed in theology. "He had his own peculiar and in its right meaning, sensational way of carrying on his work. It is certain it was . . . one of the formative influences in the religious life of the West." Because of his dramatic ability, contemporaries said that when Dr. Little entered the ministry the stage lost a potentially great actor.

Dr. Little was particularly famous for his participation in the camp meetings promoted by the Rev. Mr. W. B. Bloys, "Sky-pilot of the Big Bend country." Dr. Arthur F. Bishop, who sometimes accompanied Dr. Little to this camp ground, graphically described the latter's role at these three- or four-day meetings:

There were seven ministers of various denominations present, and they all took part in the meetings, but, as one of our hosts expressed it, "Mr. Bloys was the ramrod, and Dr. Little was the trigger."

And with wonderful skill did "Parson" Bloys arrange the numberless details connected with the camp and the meeting and with such success that it proved to be a camp meeting and not a camp picnic or a camp frolic. And with admirable tact and remarkable success did Dr. Little shoot to Bro. Bloys loading. He seemed to be the guardian angel of that meeting and its inspiring genius as well. Whether preaching one of his strong sermons, or tenderly pleading with the people, or engaging them in delightful conversation, which he used as the vehicle of Divine Truth, he was ever the same—inimitable! As Synodical Supt. of Home Missions for the State of Texas, he is everywhere—the right man in the right place. But upon the camp ground he seems even more than that.4

4Ibid., 2-3.
Texas' rapid progress brought constantly changing conditions and new methods of work. As roads improved Dr. Little was able to travel greater distances, and it was recorded that in one year he journeyed twenty-five thousand miles. He yielded to demands for assistance above his physical and financial powers. Because of newly awakened religious interest, there was need of Christian statesmanship and interdenominational cooperation. Church school problems called for his attention, and he was always needed to organize new churches and support old congregations.

In the closing years of Dr. Little's life, the proposed union of the U.S.A. and Cumberland churches attracted his zealous support. With his usual zeal, he spent many hours in correspondence and conference in an attempt to further this objective. Before he died, Little realized that the merger would be effected, but he did not live to see the joining of the Cumberland and U.S.A. Synods. He died on July 29, 1906.

Only a few months before his death, Dr. Little had been reelected Synodical Superintendent of Home Missions for the twenty-eighth time by the Synod of Texas. This made his term of service in that station the longest in the history of the U.S.A. denomination. A resolution in regard to this re-election stated:

It is more than probable that this will be the last meeting of this Synod as presently constituted. The Synod of Texas desires to place on record a public recognition of the long and faithful service of this devoted servant of God ... in this delicate and arduous position among our churches.
As a token of the affectionate regard of his many friends, in Dr. Little's home church, the First Presbyterian Church of Denison, there hangs an appropriate tablet to his memory with the inscription from Job 4:3: "Behold, thou hast instructed many, and thou hast strengthened the weak hands."  

As for the general social environment from which these preachers came, the biographies available are too sketchy to permit generalized deductions. Such men as W. B. Bloys and Henry S. Little and some of their U.S.A. colleagues had to work to achieve their academic training. However, all sixteen of whom there is any record indicate that these men all had adequate academic opportunities. With few exceptions, they were able to obtain at least one college degree and seminary training. It is improbable that men with such educational advantages came from the most impoverished class of society. It may be speculated that these men came from either the middle class or lower middle class.

Considerable information is available as to what their lives were like in nineteenth century Texas. The Rev. Mr. J. W. Allen wrote

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feelingly about the trials and tribulations of a Presbyterian minister evangelizing in Texas in the 1870's. He denied the charge widely believed in his day that Texans were generally less law-abiding than citizens in other sections of the nation. This impression arose because a scattered population made it difficult to impose law and order on the community. Reckless or irresponsible individuals were prone to give free play to their natural evil propensities in a society which tended to be disorganized, because men did not readily settle down with their families in homes as in older sections of the country. In such conditions people became worldly-minded. A despairing missionary told Allen that he was convinced that the only way to get the eyes of his people directed heavenward would be for him to attempt a balloon ascension.

As a result of these conditions, Allen noted that he and many of his U.S.A. colleagues could not help longing for their former distant homes and their many cherished associations. Accustomed to a more highly organized society and citizens more responsive to spiritual appeals these clergymen could not help being dismayed at much that was uncongenial in their present environment.

Although recognizing the difficulties, Allen could contemplate future rewards. Noting the heavy immigration pouring annually into Texas, he could witness new towns and communities springing up throughout this land. Why should any adventurous missionary choose to live in the East where cities and governments were already well-established and where there was little opportunity for the church to influence the shape
of things to come? Was it not far more challenging and rewarding to work in a territory where social patterns were being formed and where men of God had a chance to influence the mold? Allen stated that he gained renewed strength and joy by overcoming the obstacles in his way.  

Another minister writing under the pseudonym Aliquis vividly described the trials and tribulations of a pioneer preacher in the 1870's. Arriving in the small town of McKinney in northeastern Texas in the spring he spent the night with a U.S.A. minister. The next day being Sunday, he agreed to accompany his host to a small farm community four miles distant to perform the Sabbath service. As the two men rode along, Aliquis noted that this was the country of the "Black Waxey" land of Texas. It was perhaps the most difficult soil in Texas to farm, for during dry weather it was so hard few plows could break it, and in wet weather it turned into sticky bottomless mass. On the way a driving rain descended, turning the road into a quagmire, and the newcomer's horse shied and almost threw its broadclothed rider into a mud hole. However, Aliquis regained his balance, and the two men reached their goal without further mishap.

When the two ministers arrived in the hamlet, they went to the schoolhouse where twenty or thirty persons were assembled, some to see and be seen, others to while away the lonely hours, and a few primarily to worship. As the newly arrived preacher entered the room he observed

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6St. Louis Evangelist, April, 1877. [When this newspaper first began publication it was a monthly, but it later changed to a weekly journal.]
for the first time the practice of dipping snuff. Although it was truly a disgusting and filthy habit, he thought that more than half of the ladies in Texas practiced it. It made him sick to see the lips of the women stained by tobacco and their teeth discolored. Amber saliva sometimes escaped from the corners of their mouths, oozing down onto their dresses until it finally reached the floor. Occasionally there was a sudden, rapid movement forward by one of the women. With a power that would have done credit to a force pump, a stream of the fluid flew toward a waiting cuspidor. A man later told the visitor that he had once seen these women sitting ten feet from a fireplace, and spit into the flames with such unerring accuracy that the tobacco passed through the grate without once spattering the iron slats. The shocked listener did not show the expected admiration for this prowess. When the morning services were over, he was doubtless glad to leave this community.7

The next day the McKinney pastor gave Aliquis a horse, and the visitor set out for his assigned station in Gainesville, Texas. Since hotels or inns did not exist in that sparsely populated territory, the minister had to find accommodations in farmhouses along the way. Aliquis described a typical night's accommodations as consisting of a rough hewn bed with rawhide for slats placed in a corner of the frontiersman's cabin. The wall of the cabin served as a headboard, and two or three bobtailed cats perched on the bed to hold the cover down. A few friendly

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7Ibid., January, 1878.
pigs also shared the room. Upon crawling into his bed, Aliquis discovered that the bedstead and covers were too short by several inches, leaving his feet bare. The sojourning minister must have cut a comical figure.

Proceeding on his way the next day, Aliquis became anxious about the absence of habitations alongside the road. At last on seeing a rough wooden fence, he concluded that a house was not far distant. A short time later he rode into a farmyard swarming with children, pigs, and chickens. Making his way up to a neatly constructed log cabin, he called, "hello." This summons brought a tired-looking, bedraggled farmwife to the door and also succeeded in awakening a pack of very noisy dogs.

"Can you give me directions to Gainesville?"
"Well, Mister, I don't know as I can," she whined. "Haven't been living here but four or five years, and I ain't much acquainted with these parts and with the roads in this country. I reckon if you keep the plainest, straight-forward, it will take you there."

As a circuit rider, he was to find losing his way a fairly common experience. In traveling a dozen miles, he often found as many roads leading to different places. Since each trail appeared equally plain and straight-forward, many times he became lost four or five times in the course of a fifteen-mile journey. Laboring under such trying conditions, a minister certainly had need for all his Christian patience.8

8Ibid., February, 1878.
Further illuminating the history of the U.S.A. denomination, several rather famous individuals were connected with the church in Texas during this period. In particular, they were associated with the First Presbyterian Church of Austin. Two of them were William Sidney Porter, later known as O. Henry, and Ben Thompson.

William Sidney Porter lived for a number of years in Austin and worked at the State Land Office. While here he edited the *Rolling Stone*, a newspaper, and later worked in a bank. Arrested for alleged fraud in the bank, he served a prison term. Many now believe him to have been innocent. While he was incarcerated, his wife, April Estes, became afflicted with tuberculosis, and Porter was given a parole to nurse her in her final illness. Every Sunday Porter and his wife would ride in a buggy over to the First Presbyterian Church and park on the eastern side of the building. Since it was summer and the windows of the church were open, they could sit in their carriage and hear the congregation singing during the evening service. Mrs. Porter evidently revered the pastor, and from their vantage point both she and her husband could see and hear Dr. Wright. After the service the future writer drove his wife home. After his wife died, Porter returned to prison to serve out his sentence.9

Ben Thompson was one of the renowned gunmen of his day. He was a dumpy little man with mild blue eyes and a constabulary mustache.

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9C. G. Bissell, "History of the First Presbyterian Church, USA of Austin, Texas," 63.
Always neatly dressed, he looked like a moderately prosperous grocery-man rather than a Western bad man. Possessed of greater intelligence than the average gunslinger of his day and absolutely fearless, he could draw with lightening-like speed and shoot with cold and deliberate accuracy.10

The population evidently believed that the local crime wave could best be ended by putting the most notorious criminal in charge of law enforcement, and Ben Thompson was appointed federal marshal for Austin. Still unable to control his violent temper and reckless nature, he was killed in a gunfight in San Antonio, in the spring of 1884. He was only forty years old at the time.11

Dr. E. B. Wright knew Ben Thompson well. Evidently the minister had some influence over him because Ben often came to the First Presbyterian Church to talk with him. On one occasion he even collected money for a missionary project in which Dr. Wright was interested. The pastor laughingly said later that that was one time he and Ben Thompson were partners in business. Many people in Austin believed that as a young man Ben demonstrated real ability, and Dr. Wright hoped to bring out his better nature.

One communicant in the Presbyterian Church remembered Thompson's funeral very well. The day that Ben was buried, a funeral


11San Antonio *Daily Express*, March 12, 1884.
procession was also being held for William Smyth, one of the officers of the church and a highly respected man in the community. Two biers, one holding Smyth and the other Thompson, moved up Congress Avenue side by side, each drawn by a team of horses. Behind them the two funeral processions mingled.12

Turning from the general nature of the Texas ministry and some of the more prominent individuals associated with the history of the Presbyterian Church in this region, it is necessary to examine some of the events that occurred in the Texas Synod, U.S.A., and its subsidiary units. In October, 1878, the newly created synod was constituted with most of the members present for this first meeting. Because of high railroad fares, most of the ministers came in their own conveyances. Many had to travel between 150 and 400 miles to reach Austin. One brother was two weeks en route. When he was within 75 miles of his destination, one of his two horses gave out. Unhitching the other from his buggy, he rode it into town.13

At this first meeting, largely routine business was transacted; however, the committee on narrative delivered a rather interesting report on the state of religion within the bounds of the judiciary. While the committee learned that no extensive revivals had taken place in any section of the state, they heard evidence of a gradual and

12Bissell, "History of the First Presbyterian Church, USA of Austin," 89.
13St. Louis Evangelist, November, 1878.
steady growth in several fields. Many churches had been "strengthened and edified" and a number of new communicants enrolled. New congregations had been organized and houses of worship erected. In some sections family worship was increasing and home altars were coming into use. Sunday schools also demonstrated a healthy and vigorous growth.

While the church could rejoice at these developments, there were reasons for discouragement. Many ministers reported that desecration of the Sabbath prevailed throughout the state. Skepticism and religious indifference were prevalent to such degree that it was all but impossible to reach the masses of the unconverted who seldom attended church services. Another cause for gloom was the Southern prejudice against the denomination and suspicion of its design in entering the state.14

Other committees noted additional obstacles in the path of the U.S.A. denomination. Frequent shifts in population, crop failures, business instability, and friction with other denominations hindered evangelization.15 The poverty of many church members living in rural areas and the scattered nature of the Presbyterian population made it difficult to organize effective congregations.16 Church government likewise failed to meet the standards of "The Book of Church Order."

14Minutes of October 12, 1878, "Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1878-1900," 10-12.

15Minutes of October 25, 1879, ibid., 34.

16Minutes of October 30, 1886, ibid., 262.
The committee in charge of reviewing session records reported to the North Texas Presbytery in 1881 that the minute book of the Presbyterian Church in Jacksboro had never before been presented to Presbytery for review. Upon examining it, the horrified committee discovered singular "proceedings" by Elder George S. Dougherty whose behavior it found had been not only irregular but highly disreputable and injurious to the church. The information revealed was of so "improper" a nature that the committee recommended that the pages of the minute book dealing with the Dougherty case be expunged. To prevent his material from ever again coming to the light of day and causing the denomination irreparable shame and embarrassment, the offending pages were burned. One wonders what information was so scandalous that these men felt obliged to destroy official church records to conceal it.

In the same year the Rev. Mr. W. L. Miller compared the establishment of the national church in Texas with that of other denominations. At the close of the Civil War only the Georgetown and Austin Churches affiliated with the U.S.A. Church, and the denomination did not seriously attempt to expand until 1872. The U.S.A. Board of Home Missions waited to see if the southern Presbyterian Church could effectively evangelize the field. If so, the national church would not attempt to intrude. By way of comparison, in 1872 the U.S. denomination had only 51 ministers in the state and twelve were without pastoral

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charges. It claimed 92 churches, 19 of which had vacant pulpits, with a total membership of 2,914. In that same year the Austin Presbytery consisted of five ministers, three churches, and 168 communicants.

The U.S.A. national board also examined the financial resources of the U.S. Church to determine what were the prospects for them to bring Presbyterianism to the Lone Star State. At that time the average annual salary of U.S. ministers was $503, but the average in Texas was only $318. However, the real average was still less. Ten ministers received $12,316 of the $27,180 which was spent. When one subtracted those ministers without pastoral charges, the average annual wage was $225. What was the hope for a redress of this financial predicament in the foreseeable future? The U.S. Board of Home Missions complained that 27 per cent less money was contributed in 1872 than the previous year, yet from funds available this board was expected to supplement the salaries of 150 ministers. Six hundred feeble churches were dependent on the fund, and 100 churches were looking to it for aid to build. In addition, the vast work among the colored population of the South had to be fostered from this source. The large number of churches in Texas lacking pastors, the small membership of a great majority of the functioning churches, the poverty of the people, and the large number of communicants suspended from church rolls convinced the U.S.A. board that the Presbyterian Church, U.S., was unable to cultivate the field alone.

Consequently, after 1872 the U.S.A. national church began to move into Texas with both men and money. By 1880 another comparison
between the two churches was possible. In that year the U.S. Church boasted 86 ministers, of whom ten were without pastoral charges. It had 153 churches, 49 of which were vacant, and a total church membership of 6,004. By 1880 the Austin Presbytery had grown into the Synod of Texas, U.S.A., with 27 ministers, three of whom were without pastoral charges; 39 churches, none of which were vacant; and 1,103 members. Between the years 1872-1880 the southern synod had gained 106 per cent in members, nearly 70 per cent in ministers, and over 66 per cent in churches. The U.S.A. Synod, on the other hand, gained 520 per cent in ministers, 1,300 per cent in churches and 666 per cent in members.

Unfortunately the U.S. ministers misunderstood and resented the decision of the national church to move into the state. The Rev. Mr. Miller admitted that the U.S.A. church was not without blame for friction between the two branches. For instance, in 1880 two rival churches existed in the Texas towns of Weatherford, Georgetown, Gainesville, and Coleman where only one church could prosper. This situation caused deep animosity between the U.S. and U.S.A. ministers in these communities. This was not only a waste of money and effort on the part of both branches of the denomination, but a great moral loss to Presbyterianism in general. Many individuals living in these communities who might ordinarily have joined the Presbyterian Church were repelled by the bickering and infighting among the ministers. As a result, many forsook not only Presbyterianism but Christianity as well.

It was plain that the division in Presbyterian ranks permitted other evangelical churches to far outstrip both denominations in
membership. In 1880 the U.S. Synod had 6,004 members while the U.S.A. had only 1,103 communicants. However, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South claimed 90,000 communicants; the Southern Baptist 100,000; the Cumberland Presbyterians 20,000; and the Campbellites, a strength equal to the Cumberland branch. It was obvious that both major branches of the Presbyterian Church had sadly neglected this vast and rich state.18

In 1885 the Committee on Home Missions reported additional statistics on Texas Presbyterianism to the U.S.A. Synod. From April 1, 1884, to April 1, 1885, the national Board of Home Missions spent within the bounds of the synod $23,312 equally divided among the Presbyteries of Austin, North Texas, and Trinity. Contributions from Texas congregations to this board totaled $758, or 41-2/3 cents per member. In comparison, the U.S. church members gave $3,591 during the same year to their sustenation and evangelistic fund, an average of 45-1/5 cents per member. The U.S. judicatory contributed an average of $9.61 per member for pastors' salaries and congregational expenses as contrasted with $9.67 per member for the U.S.A. Synod. The synodical committee declared that these figures were creditable to the U.S.A. membership considering that the other synod occupied the larger towns and wealthier fields in the state.

18 St. Louis Evangelist, March, 1881; Statistics and Presbytery Rolls, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, VI (New York: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1880), 432-35.
However, this evaluation could not disguise the fact that maintenance of the Texas Synod was a drain on the national treasury of the U.S.A. denomination. In fact, the committee admitted that far too many congregations expected money like manna from heaven to rain down from the national boards, and for that reason they saw little need to contribute to the support of their own churches. Ministers complained about the devout Christian who had his hands so tightly clasped in prayer he could not get them unclasped in time to drop money into the collection plate.\(^{19}\) The committee noted in 1886 that the nationwide U.S.A. membership contributed to the Board of Home Missions an average of $1.18 and for ministers' salaries and congregational expenses $11.54 per communicant.\(^{20}\) It was obvious that in giving, Texas Presbyterians fell far short of the national average. They, however, more nearly approached this average in congregational contributions than in donations to the miscellaneous boards of the denomination.

In 1885 a dispute broke out between the U.S. and U.S.A. denominations involving the activities attributed to the Rev. Mr. Henry S. Little, Synodical Superintendent of Home Missions, U.S.A. In August the Christian Observer, a U.S. Presbyterian newspaper, published an unsigned article entitled "Whose Ox is gored?" in which the following charge appeared:

\[^{19}\text{Minutes of October 24, 1885, "Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America, 1878-1900," 176, 181-84.}\]

\[^{20}\text{Minutes of October 30, 1885, ibid., 236.}\]
In 1876 the presbytery of Central Texas, in connection with the Southern General Assembly, organized a church in Brown County, Texas, the name (we think) known in the Minutes as "Salt Spring," and sent it to a preacher who served it once a month. In the year 1882, Dr. Little, "the agent of the Northern Presbyterian Board of Home Missions, for such work," approached the Presbyterians and people of that church with a proposition. It was represented to them that organic union would soon be effected, and therefore there was no longer reason for adhering to the Presbytery of Central Texas. Then the offer was made to them, that if they would transfer their connection to the Northern Assembly, its Board of Missions would furnish three-fourths of the money needed for the erection of a church building, the people raising one-fourth. The deed to the house was taken in the name of the Board of Missions of New York, and a preacher by the name of McClelland was sent to preach there statedly.

In 1885 the Presbytery of Central Texas sent one of its number to look after its interests in Brown County. When he arrived, the people told him these facts and added: "The Northern Assembly has furnished us a house, so that we now have a church home, and is furnishing us a preacher."21

These statements were convincingly and categorically repudiated by Little in a letter published in the same newspaper.22 To these "false impressions" and "injurious aspersions" the indignant members of the Synod Texas, U.S.A., replied that their church was not in Texas as a "northern" church, but was there to prosecute the work begun by the U.S.A. denomination before the Civil War. There was no attempt to take a church from the other denomination by bribery, and the body cordially endorsed the work of its superintendent. It had been the policy of the national church to occupy destitute fields, left hopelessly vacant by the southern Presbyterian Church, and to organize by invitation,

21 Christian Observer, August 26, 1885.

22 Ibid., September 23, 1885.
churches in certain cities where there was room for a second congregation. The affair ended with publication of this statement by the U.S.A. Synod in its semi-official newspaper. Such petty squabbles and misunderstandings were likely to recur as long as there were two Presbyterian churches evangelizing the same field.

In the fall of 1886 the Austin Presbytery appointed a four-man committee with the Rev. Mr. B. T. McClelland as chairman to write its history. The so-called history proved to be an unimaginative copying, word for word of selected items from the minutes of the Austin Presbytery. Unfortunately, the writers chose the most unimportant and uninteresting material and carefully screened out what little information there was that might have been of interest to the layman. This pedestrian work was all the more unfortunate because the men who composed it helped build the church in Texas when the state was largely an unpopulated frontier region. Many adventures and anecdotes involving

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23 Minutes of October 24, 1885, "Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1878-1900," 193-95.

24 St. Louis Evangelist, November 19, 1885.


pioneer ministers must have been known to the chroniclers, but they were scrupulously careful to ignore them.

A momentous development of the 1880's was the unparalleled drought that struck West Texas in 1886. For decades after this event, old-timers referred to things that happened either before or after the "drought," just as Civil War veterans cited events before or after the war. In a limited area it was a catastrophe equal to the devastation of the Civil War or the Indian Wars. It earned Texas the reputation of a desert country, a land of relentless winds and driving dust.

Although Texas had known dry spells earlier, the drought of 1886 was unique. The drought really began in June, 1885. The spring rains had been fairly plentiful that year, and the early crops of sorghum, corn, and spring grass had been made. Lakes, ponds, and water holes were filled from earlier showers. Then month after month passed without a drop of rain, but with little anxiety shown until January, 1886. At that time the surface moisture had given out in various sections of West Texas. By May the drought had spread its withering hand over the entire country. Grass for the stock was seared and stunted, and wheat, oats, millet, potatoes and garden truck were either dead or dying. Other crops showed equally little promise, but hope still lingered.

As June stretched into July without perceptible rainfall, the peoples' faces began to wear a habitual haunted, anxious expression. Throughout the region people could be seen scanning the sky day after day for some sign of a break in the weather. Billowing white clouds
would form only to sail majestically across the sky, leaving nothing behind save their shadows. As the ponds and creeks dried up, the fish were easy to catch. One had but to scoop them out by hand from the mud holes or shrinking streams.

As the dry spell continued, industries and local improvements were paralyzed. Immigration ceased. Many desperate families offered their horses, cattle, tools and land to provide money enough to subsist on, but there were no buyers. Cattle bogged in mud holes fighting to find water. Finding none they died by the thousands. People began to leave the country. At first, only a few of the less courageous departed, but gradually the evacuation took the form of a panic-stricken flight. Entire sections were depopulated as if the inhabitants were fleeing from a raging epidemic. It was estimated that perhaps as much as half the population of West Texas either permanently or temporarily left the region.27

John Brown, a U.S.A. minister of the small town of Albany in northwest Texas, described the conditions he saw around him. The tillers of the soil had been able to raise nothing due to lack of rain, and their distress was pitiful. Yet, as bad as conditions were there in Shackelford County, the people had been established for several years and had limited resources to fall back upon. In the adjoining counties of Eastland, Young, and Stephens, however, the inhabitants

were mostly newcomers who were poor at the time of their arrival.
Their suffering was indescribable. The minister cried that unless mas-
sive aid came quickly, imagination could not picture the misery that
would result.\textsuperscript{28}

Brown was selected as a member of the relief committee of
Shackelford County to solicit aid in Chicago and New York.\textsuperscript{29} Upon arriv-
ing in Chicago, he was blocked by counterpropaganda of Texas ranchers.
The ranchers asserted that the minister was exaggerating the effects of
the drought. He then went to New York, where he enlisted the aid of
Presbyterian ministers. Again enemies libeled him as an imposter. In
spite of determined opposition, he was able to send several carloads of
seed wheat to destitute farmers of Shackelford County. He said that
"perhaps one hundred thousand families throughout the West and Northwest
would require aid, more or less, before next summer."\textsuperscript{29}

The Presbytery of North Texas noted in April, 1887, that church
construction throughout much of West Texas had halted owing to the
drought. Contributions were meager, because thousands of individuals
were living on nothing save state charity payments.\textsuperscript{30} The following
year, although the dry season had ended, the country had not recovered
from the effects of the blight. The same agency reported that, because

\textsuperscript{28}St. Louis Evangelist, August 26, 1886.

\textsuperscript{29}Holden, "West Texas Droughts," \textit{op. cit.}, 116-18.

\textsuperscript{30}Minutes of April 22, 1887, "Minutes of the Presbytery of
North Texas of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America,
1878-1900," 181.
many communicants had fled from the stricken region, many congregations had perished, and the names of the churches were stricken from the rolls. In some cases the church buildings alone remained "as witnesses of the devotion and labor of those who have gone to other scenes."

Still other churches were so reduced by the economic adversity that they struggled to exist. Nevertheless, the presbytery was glad to note that gradually returning prosperity was quickening the life of the plains and bringing hope of better days to come.31

In the summer and fall of 1886 the roads leading toward the east were crowded with wagons filled with fleeing families. As the dry weather continued into the early spring, it appeared that the winter of 1886 would be continued in 1887. In March, 1887, inhabitants held mass meetings throughout West Texas to pray for rain. Then in April light showers dotted various sections of the country, and in May a general rain blanketed the region, breaking the drought. The dry weather had lasted twenty-three months—from June, 1885 to May, 1887.32

In 1887 the U.S.A. denomination noted that Texas contained 196,380 Negro women of whom 140,285 were illiterate. Moved by the pitiable condition of so vast a number of helpless and ignorant women, as well as by the promise of this growing state, the national Presbyterian Church established the Mary Allen Seminary for Negro girls located in Crockett in the "black belt" of the state. White citizens

31Minutes of April 20, 1888, ibid., 203.

donated land for the school and construction of a four-story building was begun January, 1886. A Negro minister, the Rev. Mr. J. B. Smith, became president of the institution. This boarding school offered instruction in housekeeping, cooking, dressmaking, millinery, and other useful arts.\(^3\) By 1892 this school had fourteen faculty members and 264 students.\(^4\)

Information on the general evangelistic work among the colored population is sketchy and incomplete; however, a general outline of events emerges. In 1885 the Committee on Freedmen reported to the U.S.A. General Assembly that there was not a single colored evangelist of this denomination in the states of Mississippi, Alabama, or Texas. This demonstrated an unforgivable neglect, because these three states combined held a Negro population of 1,644,778. The committee believed that in two places in Texas churches for colored people could at once be organized if the denomination were willing to employ the men and means.\(^5\) In 1888 the Synod of Texas, U.S.A., noted that the White River Presbytery had organized a colored judicatory, the Texas Presbytery, "independent," to supervise the spiritual welfare of the colored

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\(^3\)Boards and Permanent Committees, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, X (Philadelphia: McCalla & Stavely, Printers, 1886), 241.

\(^4\)Boards and Permanent Committees, ibid., XV (1892), 347.

\(^5\)Minutes of June 1, 1885, ibid., VII (1885), 683.
population of the state. Unfortunately, because this group was autonomous, the statistical records of the U.S.A. General Assembly do not reveal the scope of its work. From indirect references in the records, it seems that this presbytery was composed of a very small number of Negro evangelists and perhaps two or three churches each with a handful of communicants.

In 1892 the Committee on Freedmen reported to the General Assembly, U.S.A., that it had only twenty colored ministers working in Kentucky, Tennessee, Missouri, and Texas. The operation of the Board of Freedmen showed little progress in these states year after year. Whether the difficulty lay in the policy of the church toward Negroes or in other circumstances, the committee could not say. Whatever the answer, it had to be admitted that the evangelization of the southern Negro represented a marked failure by the U.S.A. church. Such was the state of affairs when in 1895 the Texas Presbytery, "independent" evidently foundering in economic difficulties, made an overture to the Synod of Texas, U.S.A., for admission as a Presbytery under its jurisdiction. This meant that colored congregations would be enrolled in the record book of the synod, and Negro ministers would be entitled to sit with their white brethren at the meetings of this judicatory. In

36 Minutes of October 27, 1888, "Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1878-1900," 292.

37 Minutes of May 23, 1892, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, XV (1892), 47.
answer the synod noted the small number of church members in the pres-
bytery, and said it believed that it would be unwise to admit this
church court into the synod. Instead it believed that the best inter-
est of the presbytery would be served by attaching it to the Synod of
Missouri, U.S.A. Acting upon this policy decision, the Synod of
Texas in 1897 requested the U.S.A. General Assembly to permit a pres-
bytery to attach itself to another synod within the denomination even
though that presbytery might be within the natural bounds of another
synod. The national governing body rejected the request stating that
presbyteries had to be placed under the jurisdiction of the synod
within whose boundaries they lay. This attempt of the Synod of Texas
to dump the Texas Presbytery into the lap of a sister body having
failed, the Texas brethren refused to consider the matter further.

Baffled and overwhelmed by its difficulties and frozen out of
the national Presbyterian Church, the Texas Presbytery apparently dis-
integrated, because no further trace of it could be found in the church
records of the period. Perhaps members of the Texas Presbytery might
have anticipated their fate had they been able to read the minute book
of the Trinity Presbytery in 1897.

That body noted in regard to the colored population of Texas:

38 Minutes of October 26, 1895, "Minutes of the Synod of Texas
of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1878-1900,"
410.

39 Minutes of May 28, 1897, Minutes of the General Assembly of
the Presbyterian Church in the USA, XX (1897), 132.
An alien race is among us in large proportions, is inseparably among us, where native preachers, teachers, and leaders are very largely unworthy and incompetent, where influence is nevertheless very great. The influence of this people upon the destinies of the Republic, civilly, socially, and morally are far greater than we imagine. This evil influence upon many of the white race is very manifest. In Texas at least, and probably elsewhere the proportion of criminals from the colored race is far in excess of that of the white. Yet these people are very susceptible to good influences. They are remarkably docile. Their capacity for good has been demonstrated very greatly. As a people we are not doing what we could for they greatly need moral elevation. Only the gospel of Christ is sufficient to accomplish this. The gospel as taught by the Presbyterian is their especial need.40

Although the members of the Trinity Presbytery wished Texas Negroes to be converted to Presbyterianism, this statement conveyed the impression that the members had no burning desire for a closer personal association with their black brothers.

Southern Presbyterian Negroes, however, had other problems. In 1906 the Committee on Freedmen reported to the U.S.A. General Assembly that the standard of living of its Southern colored ministers was a disgrace to the denomination. The average annual salary did not exceed $325 or $350. With the advent of industrialization and other changes, the cost of living in the South had materially increased. Since there had been no corresponding rise in the income of the preachers, they were compelled to take positions as schoolteachers which made them less effective in the ministry. Perhaps that was one of the reasons the

40 Minutes of April 13, 1897, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Trinity of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1896-1906," 361. In church papers (University of Texas Archives, Austin, Texas).
national Presbyterian Church had so little success in winning the mass of the southern black population to its standards.\footnote{Minutes of May 21, 1906, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., VI (Philadelphia: Office of the General Assembly, 1906).} In 1906 the Board of Freedmen had on its rolls 222 ministers, 369 churches and missions, and 22,997 communicants. The board admitted that out of the 222 colored ministers only 130 devoted their full time to preaching.\footnote{Appendix, ibid., 369-70.} Of all the Negro congregations in the nation, Texas had only one, Mary Allen Chapel, with 35 communicants. The Rev. Mr. J. B. Smith, president of the Mary Allen Seminary was pastor of this church attached to the school.\footnote{Forty-second Annual Report of the Board of Missions for Freedmen of the Presbyterian Church in the USA (n.p. May 1907), 38.} Work among other minority groups in the state during this period was negligible. In 1889 the U.S.A. Synod spoke of the desirability of establishing schools for Mexicans in El Paso and Eagle Pass,\footnote{Minutes of October 26, 1889, "Minutes of the Synod of Texas in the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1878-1900," 312.} but apparently did nothing in this regard. In spite of the large Latin population in the state, no Spanish-speaking congregations of record were organized and no Mexican pastors enrolled. Work was begun in a small way among the Czechs, or Bohemians but more will be said of this in the last chapter.
The U.S.A. Church demonstrated its traditional interest in education by establishing a number of academic institutions. By 1889 the U.S.A. Synod had a girls' seminary at Gainesville, The San Antonio Academy for boys in the same city, The Glen Rose Collegiate Institute in the hamlet of Glen Rose, and Daniel Baker College in Brownwood.\(^{45}\) These institutions appeared to have been built through joint efforts of the local community and the U.S.A. Board of Education. Although the desirability of establishing other schools was discussed from time to time, these were the only ones founded during this period.

Considering the meager representation of the national Presbyterian Church in Texas, the wisdom of erecting as many institutions of learning may be questioned. Had the church built one school and poured all its financial resources into making it an outstanding academic organization, both the denomination and the state might have benefited far more. Like other denominations, the U.S.A. church yielded to the temptation of founding numerous seminaries, academies, and colleges without considering how they could be supported. In Texas as well as other states, the practice led to the proliferation of academic mediocrity.

Since the majority of the congregations of the U.S.A. Church in Texas were located in poverty-stricken rural areas, one might have expected to find that the Presbyterian ministers would be exercised about the plight of their parishioners. Disappointingly, the church

\(^{45}\) Minutes of October 26, 1889, \textit{ibid.}, 313.
records of the period provide no hint that the ministers were either aware of or interested in the reform movement sweeping rural America. It was not from a lack of articulateness because the church records were filled with fulminations against demon rum, and similar subjects. Indeed, at the height of the period of farmer unrest, the ministers were worked up about evils for which they could not possibly hope to effect remedies. For instance, in 1891 the Synod of Texas passed an indignant resolution denouncing the slave and liquor traffic in the Belgian Congo. Then in 1896 the Austin Presbytery by a standing unanimous vote adopted a statement which said in part: "Whereas, news has reached this Presbytery of the cruel sufferings of persecuted Armenians." The body most earnestly implored: "The God of nations to secure for them protection from the wicked wrongs they are suffer- ing." One would not expect church courts to meddle in local politics or to endorse any particular legislative program. Nevertheless, if they could draft resolutions regarding the slave and liquor traffic of an European colony in Africa, one might logically expect them to show some awareness of the suffering around them.

Although ministers were oblivious to the economic problems which beset their parishioners, the Texas Synod, U.S.A., was nevertheless aware of serious internal problems. Owen Riedy, the source of one

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46 Minutes of October 31, 1891, "Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1878-1900," 370.

47 Minutes of April 3, 1895, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Austin of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1895-1900," 13.
problem, was born of Pennsylvania Dutch parents in Heidleberg Township, Lehigh County in eastern Pennsylvania on September 16, 1827. At fourteen years of age he made a public confession of his faith and joined the German Reform Church in Heidleberg Township. After preparatory training, in 1853 Riedy entered the sophomore class of Lafayette College. An outstanding student of languages, in 1856 he was graduated with high honors.

Entering the Theological Seminary of Princeton in the fall of the same year, Riedy took the full three-year course—graduating in 1859. Going to South Carolina, he became a tutor in the family of Ben Bostick. When the Civil War broke out he hurriedly returned to the North, where he took graduate studies at Princeton. Then, on January 7, 1862, the Presbytery of Central Pennsylvania, U.S.A., licensed him to preach. Moving to Brooklyn, he divided his time between teaching school and laboring in a small missionary church.

Riedy served as a private in the Federal army from November, 1862 until October, 1863 during which time he was stationed in New Orleans. There, on April 14, 1864, he was ordained by an ecclesiastical council of the U.S.A. denomination. Since this commission was evidently an irregular body, the Austin Presbytery later questioned Riedy's ministerial status. From May 6, 1864 to April 10, 1866 he occupied the post of chaplain to a U.S. regiment stationed in the
Crescent City.\textsuperscript{48} According to another source, he rose to the rank of
Captain of the 126 Regiment.\textsuperscript{49}

In 1866 Riedy, by then out of the service, enrolled in a Pres-
bytery of New Orleans made up of three ministers. It had been or-
ganized during the war by the Old School, U.S.A. denomination. With an
annual salary of $600, he was sent as a missionary to the community of
Gretna, a town composed of Protestant and Catholic Germans, located on
the western banks of the Mississippi River, directly opposite New
Orleans. Laboring there for five years, he gathered a congregation of
thirty-three members. This congregation was received into the New
Orleans Presbytery, U.S.A., August 20, 1872. Then for some unexplained
reason the new presbytery, in May, 1873, severed its connection with
the Gretna Church. After surviving for some years as an independent
corporation, named the Evangelical Protestant German Church, the Gretna
Church was finally dissolved in 1880.\textsuperscript{50} Another Presbyterian church
was later organized in this same community by the Rev. Mr. J. C.
Barr\textsuperscript{51} and placed under the jurisdiction of the New Orleans Presbytery
of the southern Presbyterian Church, but that will be discussed in
Chapter VII.

\textsuperscript{48}Necrological Report of Princeton Seminary, III (May 6, 1905), 305; New Orleans Daily Picayune, November 5, 1904.

\textsuperscript{49}Louis Voss, Presbyterianism in New Orleans and Adjacent
Points (New Orleans: Presbyterian Board of Publication, Louisiana
Synod, 1931), 375.

\textsuperscript{50}Ibid., 375-76.

\textsuperscript{51}New Orleans Times Picayune, September 26, 1905.
Owing to the confusion of the Civil War, the New Orleans Presbytery did not come under the jurisdiction of the (Old School) General Assembly until 1867. This Presbytery was then composed of five ministers, three churches, and 173 communicants. Although the official report does not name the clergymen, Owen Riedy was undoubtedly among their number.\(^{52}\) The names of the ministers in the New Orleans Presbytery were listed for the first time in 1870. Riedy was among those enrolled, but no church was listed under his name.\(^{53}\) Throughout the early 1870's he continued to be mentioned as a member of this judicatory, but he remained without a pastoral charge. Then in 1877 dissension rent the Evangelical Lutheran Church on Milam Street. A number of members broke away and established an independent church, choosing Owen Riedy as their minister.\(^{54}\) In 1879 this newly-formed congregation was listed under the New Orleans Presbytery, U.S.A., which was then under the jurisdiction of the Synod of Tennessee. Riedy was given the title of "Pastor Elect," which meant that the congregation had chosen him

\(^{52}\)The Aggregate of Presbyterial Reports for 1867, Minutes of the General Assembly of the (Old School) Presbyterian Church in the United States of America from A. D. 1865 to A. D. 1869, Inclusive (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath School Work, 1869), 314.

\(^{53}\)Statistical Reports of the Synods and Presbyteries, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, I (1870), 311.

\(^{54}\)William R. Konrad, "The Diminishing Influences of German Culture in New Orleans Life Since 1865," Louisiana Historical Quarterly, XXIV (October, 1941), 145-46.
to fill the pulpit. The presbytery had not officially installed him as pastor.55

As the years advanced the Presbytery of New Orleans, U.S.A., steadily diminished in strength. A number of the churches that had been organized earlier disintegrated, and the discouraged ministers drifted away from Louisiana to find more fruitful fields. Consequently, in 1880 the U.S.A. General Assembly dissolved this court and attached the remaining members to the Austin Presbytery of the Synod of Texas, U.S.A.56

Riedy's church, known as The New Orleans German Presbyterian Church, had fifty communicants. Riedy retained the status of "Pastor Elect" under the Austin judicatory. In addition to this post, he was appointed Stated Supply in two small Presbyterian Churches in Georgetown and Taylorsville. He was the only minister of this defunct Presbytery still living in Louisiana to transfer into the Austin Judicatory, and his New Orleans congregation was the only church in that state to be enrolled.57 Although the accretion of strength to the Synod of Texas was slight, it did give this church body a foothold in the Bayou State. If it had so desired, it might have used Riedy's congregation as a

55 Statistical Reports of Synods and Presbyteries, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, V (1879), 968.

56 Minutes of May 31, 1880, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, VI (1880), 83.

57 Statistical Records of Synods and Presbyteries, ibid., 432.
beachhead. Through energetic proselytizing this base could have been expanded and other churches in southern Louisiana organized. The Texas brethren took little or no notice of the Louisiana field. Because Riedy's house of worship was so far from the other congregations of the Texas Synod, he seldom attended meetings either of the Austin Presbytery or the Synod of Texas. The New Orleans minister and his congregation were seldom mentioned in the official records, and the Texas prelates appeared almost to have forgotten the existence of this U.S.A. island in the Louisiana sea.

Riedy's two Stated Supplies in Georgetown and Taylorsville were soon taken from him and he was left with only his New Orleans congregation. In 1882 his church changed its name to the New Orleans Immanuel Presbyterian Church, and later it was cited simply as the Immanuel Presbyterian Church.

By 1892 Pastor-Elect Riedy had built up his congregation to 75 communicants, and his house of worship appeared well established. In the course of the years since its inception, the Immanuel congregation had acquired four lots of land in New Orleans, and, for reasons unexplained, in 1892 Riedy had the real estate transferred to his own name. A number of his outraged communicants filed suit in the civil courts of

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58 Statistical Reports of Synods and Presbyteries, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, VII (1882), 504.

59 Statistical Reports of Synods and Presbyteries, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, XV (1892), 702.
Louisiana to repossess the land titles. In 1898 the Immanuel congregation secured a judgment against the minister, and the lots were returned to the board of trustees of the church.60

At last becoming aware of the turmoil in Louisiana, the Austin Presbytery called upon Riedy to appear before the judicatory to stand trial. In December, 1897, he appeared before the church tribunal, and four charges with specifications were levied against him. He was accused of exercising the functions of an ordained minister since 1877, even though he had never been ordained by any presbytery either in the U.S.A. Church or any other Presbyterian denomination. He was further charged with illegally possessing himself of the lots of land belonging to his congregation, and grossly misappropriating church funds for his own benefit. In the trial, which took place in December, 1897, Riedy pleaded "not guilty" on all counts. Evidence was then produced by both the prosecution and the accused acting through counsel. The minister was placed on the witness stand and permitted to answer at length every item of the bill of particulars, every word of his testimony being taken down in shorthand. After both sides summarized their case the preacher was asked if he believed he had been given a fair trial.

"All I could ask for," he answered.

The members of Presbytery were then polled, and the aged accused was found guilty on all important specifications. Before

60. Immanuel Presbyterian Church v. Owen Riedy, Civil District Court Docket 52944 (Civil Court Building, 421 Loyola Avenue, New Orleans, Louisiana).
judgment was rendered, the counsel of the defendant asked permission to read a paper. When permission was granted, his acting attorney declared that Riedy admitted his guilt. The culprit then stated that he would return the church land to the trustees of the Immanuel Presbyterian Church. If the judicatory would show mercy, he would withdraw his appeal against the decision which he had filed with the Synod of Texas. The members of Presbytery said that they agreed to the plan proposed by the convicted. Riedy evidently expected that an agreement had been reached whereby he would be reinstated as a minister. Instead, the judgment of the court was that he was suspended from the ministry; however, he was not actually deposed, and hope was given him that he might be reinstated in the Immanuel pulpit if he produced proof of repentance and reform.

Several days later the members of the judicatory changed their minds. The ministerial relations between Riedy and his church were not only severed, but the defendant was also officially unfrocked and expelled from the U.S.A. Church, "until such time as he shall bring forth fruits, meet for repentance."

Since a harsher verdict had been rendered, the harassed clergyman reintroduced his appeal to Synod which agreed to hear it. The minister, supported by counsel, appeared to present his case in the fall of 1898. When the Synod convened itself into a tribunal, the preacher's

61 Minutes of December 4-8, 1897, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Austin of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1895-1900," 33-46.
counsel read a paper citing alleged specifications of error whereby the appellant claimed he had received an unfair trial. The clergyman was bitter in his condemnation of the members of the Austin Presbytery, declaring that he was "a man fallen among murderers." Among other things, he maintained that the counsel defending him before the Austin Presbytery had no authority to admit that he was guilty of any of the charges levied against him. He then claimed that he had been promised unofficially that if he returned the four lots of land to the trustees of the Immanuel Church he would be reinstated. Introducing proof that the property had been returned, he claimed that the synod should over-ride the verdict of the lesser church court and reinstate him in his pulpit in New Orleans. The poor minister was guilty of self-contradiction, because in one breath he claimed that he had never absconded with the church real estate, and in the next he declared the stolen property had been returned; therefore, the synod had no choice but to return him to his church.

Once again both sides argued their case. When all the evidence and testimony was in, the synod voted on all the specifications of error introduced by the appellant and sustained the judgment of the Austin Presbytery. Riedy was deposed from the ministry until he should present proofs of contrition and reform. This church court admitted that the original trial before the Austin Presbytery had been conducted in
an unconstitutional manner, but it did not believe this affected the validity of the original verdict. 62

Undeterred by this rebuff, Riedy appealed his case to the U.S.A. General Assembly in its annual spring meeting in 1899. Here at last the appellant won a favorable judgment. A judicial commission appointed by the Assembly stated that all concerned admitted that the original judicial commission appointed by the Austin Presbytery had not been constituted in accordance with the mandatory provision of the "Form of Government" in the U.S.A. Constitution. For this reason the Assembly's commission declared that the Synod of Texas erred in sustaining the judgment of the Austin judiciary. The findings of the original commission were reversed, and the Austin Presbytery was ordered to retry the case in accordance with the provisions of the Book of Discipline. 63

The irate members of the Austin Presbytery determined that another trial would be held, and this time it would be conducted in such a fashion that the sentence could not be questioned. Consequently, the Rev. Mr. H. F. Olmstead, Stated Clerk of the judiciary, wrote Riedy repeated letters demanding that he appear before the church court and stand trial. In response, the accused bombarded the Stated Clerk

62 Minutes of October 10-11, 1898, "Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1878-1900," 497-509.

63 Minutes of May 27, 1899, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., XXII (1899), 127.
with letters begging for mercy and pleading for more time to prepare his defense. However, Olmstead, speaking for the Presbytery, was inexorable and continued to demand that the New Orleans minister physically appear before the judicatory.

After many delays and postponements, the second trial took place in Galveston in September, 1900. The Presbytery evidently this time was exceedingly careful to insure that the legality and constitutionality of the trial could not be questioned later. When the trial began, Riedy introduced a protest against the action taken by the Presbytery in convening this tribunal; however, his objections were overruled, and the inquisition continued. The defendant attempted to introduce certain pieces of evidence, and entered into the record many complaints about the conduct of the trial. On the grounds that the material was either irrelevant or not certified, the presbytery rejected most of his evidence, and it brushed aside his many protests. When the accused was placed on the witness stand, he made a number of personal reflections about the prosecutor, Olmstead, evidently a bitter personal foe. He cried out, "I know the intention of this body, to convict me."

When the presbytery was polled, all the charges against the defendant were sustained, and he was declared guilty on all counts. The same grim sentence was then pronounced. Riedy was suspended from the Presbyterian ministry until he should give convincing proof of repentance.64

64 Minutes of August 14, 1899-September 7, 1900, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Austin of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1895-1900," 74-125.
Although Riedy attempted to appeal this decision, his efforts were without success.

In April, 1904, Riedy appealed to the Austin Presbytery to be restored to the ministry. The members discussed the request for a considerable length of time, then by unanimous action rejected it. They resolved, also unanimously, that Riedy, instead of demonstrating repentance had by many letters to various members of the group, showed quite the opposite spirit. Accordingly, he was not only suspended, but deposed from the ministry. The sentence was declared to be irrevocable. 65

This unhappy man died on November 4, 1904, in New Orleans. It was said that, in spite of the misfortunes he had suffered for the previous few years, he attempted to present to the world a brave and cheerful countenance. The day of his funeral was a dreary, drizzling fall day. The lonely bier was carried to the cemetery accompanied by only a handful of loyal friends. 66

In the meantime, the Immanuel Presbyterian Church in New Orleans had been demoralized and disorganized on account of the protracted litigation. In order to pay off the heavy legal fees incurred, the church was dissolved and the property sold with the proceeds used to

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65 Minutes of April 21, 1904, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Austin of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1900-1906," 254-55.

66 New Orleans Daily Picayune, November 5, 1904.
satisfy the financial obligations incurred. Consequently, in May, 1902, the church gave notice to the public of its official liquidation. 67

Whether the harsh treatment inflicted upon Riedy was justified is now impossible to say. Regardless of whether he received his just desserts, his enemies paid a high price for their victory. The deposition of this prelate and the dissolution of the Immanuel Presbyterian Church effectively eliminated the Synod of Texas, U.S.A., from the entire state of Louisiana for a number of years. The national church would again be given representation in the Bayou State by the actions of another controversial minister, the Rev. Mr. J. C. Barr.

A few days after Riedy's second trial in September, 1900 a catastrophe struck Galveston, the home of the Rev. Mr. Henry P. Young. Young was born in Germany in 1817 and emigrated to Texas in 1846 to labor among the Germans brought here under the leadership of Prince Solms. Two days after landing at Galveston, Rev. Young preached to a company of over a thousand who had gathered on the bay shore. For the next three years he preached to large numbers and held prayer meetings in homes in and around Galveston.

In 1849 Young went to New Braunfels, a German settlement where his parish was very large, extending between 150 to 200 miles in diameter. Like other pioneer preachers of his day, he rode circuit

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67 Immanuel Presbyterian Church in Liquidation, Civil District Court Docket, 67739 (Civil Court Building, 421 Loyola Avenue, New Orleans, Louisiana); Minutes of June 19, 1902, "Minutes of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1900-1906," 195-97.
over the primitive roads and trails of Texas. War parties of Indians
and robber bands abounded throughout his district. Countless buffalo
galloped across the plains, and large packs of wolves skulked in the
forest. He often had to ford swollen streams, and he frequently faced
driving rain or snow. Like other missionaries, he had to carry his own
corn meal and bacon and do his own cooking by the roadside. Camping
where night found him, he used his saddle as a pillow and a saddle
blanket for a coverlet.

After six years of such work, he returned to Galveston and
organized a German Presbyterian Church, later known as the St. Paul's
German Presbyterian Church, the first German church of any denomination
organized in that city. In connection with his church, he also opened
a school where he taught both German and English. His work prospered
greatly in that seaport city until it was interrupted by the Civil War.
During the insurrection he resided at a point half way between New
Braunfels and San Antonio, teaching and preaching. After the war he
returned once again to Galveston, gathered his scattered flock and
reorganized his school.

His work flourished again. His school had a considerable
influence, for many of the business and professional men in Texas and
elsewhere received their early training here. The physicians and sur-
geons who attended him in his final illness all received their first
training in Pastor Young's school. In 1885 the school and church,
valued at $10,000, burned but through great sacrifice and labor both
structures were rebuilt.
He was one of the three organizers in 1868 of the Austin Presbytery, and he was also its first moderator and first commissioner to the U.S.A. General Assembly. By 1900 St. Paul's German Church had a membership of 80, and the pastor doubtless felt that his final few years would be passed in viewing with tranquil satisfaction a long lifetime filled with adventurous achievements.

Such was the condition of affairs when on the morning of Saturday, September 8, 1900, the citizens of Galveston awoke to a day made dreary by a dark overcast sky. As they sat about their breakfast tables that morning, many probably noticed on page three of the newspaper a brief announcement about a tropical storm in the Gulf of Mexico. They had been reading about this disturbance for several days. Formed somewhere in the waters between South America and Africa, it had traveled five thousand miles, crossing Jamaica, Cuba, and Key West, Florida traveling west by northwest. The latest weather advisory stated that the fringe winds of the storm had done considerable damage on the Mississippi-Louisiana coast, and many communication lines were down. It was believed that it would probably strike land somewhere east of Texas, if it had not already blown itself out in the Gulf.

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68 Minutes of November 1, 1901, "Minutes of the Austin Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1900-1906," 174-76; Minutes of November 1, 1901, "Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1900-1906," 48-49.

69 Statistics and Presbytery Rolls, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., I (1900), 691.
The notice occasioned little anxiety among the townspeople of Galveston. They had survived many storms. Indeed, houses and stores were erected on stilts several feet above the sandy ground to permit the overwash of tides to flow underneath. When a blow struck in the vicinity, the city usually declared a general holiday. On such an occasion all the stores and city buildings were closed. Dogs and young children frolicked in the foot-deep water, and it was a day of general merriment similar to the celebrations of a heavy snowfall in the East. Consequently, as these Galvestonians glanced at the weather advisory, it was doubtless with mild interest.

At that time, Galveston, with more than 37,000 inhabitants, was the fourth largest city in Texas. It was, furthermore, a commercial, tourist, and cultural center. In proportion to population, it was the second wealthiest city in the United States with only Providence, Rhode Island surpassing the citizens in general affluence.

Nevertheless, since the latest advisories stated that there was a storm located approximately 200 miles south of Louisiana, storm warnings were posted advising ships in the Galveston vicinity to take cover. During the evening of September 8, in the office of the federal weather bureau located in the post office building, three men, Isaac M. Cline, his brother, Joseph L. Cline, and John D. Blagden, were on duty. From 7:00 P.M. on, these men recorded a steadily falling barometer. Yet, these trained weathermen perhaps had been even less apprehensive about the approach of a serious hurricane, due to the absence of a brick-dust-red sky which usually preceded a dangerous storm in that region.
In the handwriting of Isaac Cline, the impersonal history of the 1900 storm is still preserved in the office of the United States Weather Bureau.

At 7:00 P.M., Cline noted the approach of the hurricane. Yellow streaks and patches of strato-cumulus clouds flew before sullen, low hanging nimbus rain clouds. At 7:45 a light rain began to fall. Before the night was over ten inches of rain would have descended on the city. In the western hemisphere hurricanes are formed by winds revolving in a counter-clockwise direction around a low pressure center. The last advisory from the central weather bureau station in Washington, District of Columbia, predicted that the storm would strike land somewhere east of Galveston. This meant that the seaport would receive its westwardly sweeping winds which would not have been nearly so destructive. Instead, the eye of the storm moved inland about thirty miles southwest of the city. The town was then lashed by the full fury of the eastern semi-circle of the hurricane.

The storm leaned on the waters of the Gulf; the sea in turn heaved convulsively, throwing up geysers of foam, and the sea moved toward the land. Soon after midnight water began to flow into the low-lying sections of the town. Near 7:00 o'clock in the morning a great inundation occurred. Surmounted by whistling winds and shivered spray, black undulating waves rolled into the town, and the entire seaport was buried to a depth from between eight to fifteen feet of water. The federal post office building, considered the strongest building in town, rocked drunkenly on its foundations. At about 5:00 A.M. in the
morning of September 9, Isaac Cline left the building to warn residents to flee the city. It was too late.

The greatest damage and loss of life occurred in the southernmost district of the city, a residential area lying closest to the Gulf. A number of flimsily built structures straggled along the beach in this district, and they disintegrated at the first onslaught of winds and water. Seizing the boards and other flotsam and jetsam of this debris, the storm hurled them like battering rams with terrific force at buildings further inland. As they in turn crumpled before this pounding, their splintered wreckage was flung furiously at still other houses. People drowned in the swirling water or were killed by falling brick or timber. Some managed to save themselves by clinging to floating bits of debris.

The wind blew at a maximum velocity of 110 miles per hour, but gales reached perhaps 125 miles per hour. Brick and other loose debris drove horizontally before the wind, crashing like projectiles through any obstacle in their paths. The water, as if in an insane impulse, piled up a great mass of wreckage to the height of a two story building in the form of a grotesque cheveaux de frieze. This served as a sort of artificial barricade which prevented a great wall of water from swamping the downtown district of the city, causing a far greater loss of life.

Inhabitants of the town, however, doubtless could not believe the storm could have been worse. The barometer began to rise at about 8:00 A.M. on the morning of Sunday, September 9, and the winds abated
as rapidly as they had built up. By 10:00 A.M., the tide began to recede. Many of the day's survivors were half naked. A fully dressed person in the town was a novelty. The wreckage of buildings was strewn about in great heaps as if scattered by a careless hand. Jumbled rubble appeared like the splintered bones of so many prehistoric animals. The entire southern district of the city had been swept clean of houses, and it was difficult to believe that a large section of the town once stood there. In some districts of the port, water still stood two or three feet deep. Debris and thousands of bodies hardly distinguishable from it floated on the water's surface.

An inventory revealed that out of a total population of 37,000, over 6,000 were drowned, and 15,000 others were left absolutely destitute. Property damage was estimated in excess of thirty million dollars. Lower barometer readings have often been recorded and far greater velocity of wind clocked, but no other storm up to that time had resulted in so great a loss of life. Before the arrival of the hurricane, Galveston boasted of being the second wealthiest city in the United States; by the next day, however, it was difficult to find a town anywhere that was not better off economically. It was said to have been the greatest natural disaster of the twentieth century.70

St. Paul's German Church was swept away, together with all the church records. Twenty-three families of the congregation and a

majority of the communicants were drowned. Although he lost his house, the Rev. Mr. Young survived the disaster. With dogged determination the eighty-three-year-old pastor set about the task of rebuilding his church and congregation. Within a short time the house of worship was reconstructed, and the veteran minister had the satisfaction of standing in his pulpit and preaching to the remnant of his flock. However, he never completely recovered from the effects of the storm, and he died on September 12, 1901. Unfortunately, the demoralized and impoverished survivors of the congregation were unable to continue the St. Paul's German Church. After the resolute, guiding hand of the pastor fell slack, the congregation disintegrated. The church last appeared on the roll of presbytery in 1908.

In the meantime, in the fall of 1899 the Synod of Texas, U.S.A., took a dim view of religious conditions in Texas. This body had a copy of a resolution passed by the U.S. Synod's last annual meeting which declared in part that the southern Presbyterian Church court was grieved to have to admit that the church had fallen upon evil times in Texas. There was a sharp decline in the candidates for the ministry at the very time when men were most needed to evangelize in the southwest.

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71 Minutes of November 1, 1901, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Austin of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1900-1906," 174-76, 188.

72 Minutes of April 14, 1908, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Houston of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, June, 1907-March, 1928," 32. In microfilm collection (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas).
There was also a marked falling off of individuals joining the church by profession of faith. Family worship had decayed, and there was a growing spirit of worldliness among professed Christians. Finally, religious skepticism and indifference were growing apace. Since the state of affairs had reached such a sad pass the U.S. Synod asked that all the communicants in the judicatory set aside one day in December for fasting and prayer in order that God would "pour out His grace upon us and revive His work throughout His bounds." The U.S.A. Synod admitted that this was a perfect description of the state of affairs within its own bounds. This body then joined its sister synod in setting aside the first Thursday after the first Sunday of December as a day of fasting, humility, and prayer.73

The U.S.A. Synod, however, admitted that it had additional difficulties of its own. Although many new communicants had been enrolled in the churches of its presbyteries, their numbers were almost negated by those church members who had to be suspended because of non-attendance. Many ministers complained that "they were preaching to a procession." The judicatory admitted in so many words that many Texans used the U.S.A. churches as halfway houses before they moved into the Methodist or Baptist denominations. This was indeed discouraging, upon reflection but the judicatory could take dubious comfort. It could

73 Minutes of October 28, 1899, "Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1900-1906," 521-23.
rejoice "that we are a blessing to many other churches," for this was a gain to Christianity itself.\textsuperscript{74}

Nevertheless, great events were in the offing. Soon after the turn of the century the U.S.A. and Cumberland Presbyterian Churches would be united. This would greatly strengthen the representation of the national church in the Lone Star State and widen the fields of opportunity. This was not to be an unmixed blessing. Bitter controversies and serious problems would also be engendered by this merger.

\textsuperscript{74}Ibid., 526-27.
CHAPTER III

THE CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN TEXAS AND ITS UNION WITH THE U.S.A. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A definitive history of the Cumberland Church in Texas is outside the compass of this work. However, since this denomination merged with the national church after 1906, some words on the general history and character of the church are necessary.

A detailed history of the judicatories of the Cumberland Church in Texas would be unprofitable. Presbyteries merged with or divided into other presbyteries, and adopted new names and altered their boundary lines. In brief, the first lesser church court known as the Texas Presbytery was formed in San Augustine County, Texas, in November, 1837.\(^1\) This was followed by the formation of the Synod of Texas in October, 1843, at Nacogdoches,\(^2\) the Synod of Brazos in November, 1849,

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\(^1\)Minutes of November 27, 1837, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Texas of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church from its organization in November, 1837 to July, 1870," 5. In microfilm collection (Trinity University Library, San Antonio, Texas).

\(^2\)Minutes of October, 1843, "Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, 1843-1868," 1. In church papers (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas).
in Huntsville, the Synod of Colorado in November, 1854 at Bastrop, and the Synod of Trinity in October, 1878, in Denton County. These four later combined into the Synod of Texas in September, 1888, at Dallas.

Now a few words are in order with respect to the character of the Cumberland ministry in Texas. Since biographies of 96 Cumberland ministers have been preserved, some generalizations and deductions can be drawn from this material.

The great majority were born in the United States and came from rural areas of Texas or other parts of the South. Although they descended from the most economically underprivileged elements of society, the term "lower class" is hardly applicable to them. Many, if not most, were men of ability and self-sacrificing dedication. A sizable number were sons of Cumberland ministers, and almost all the rest came from humble but devout farm families. There was hardly an instance of

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3Minutes of November 1, 1849, "Minutes of the Synod of Brazos of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, 1849-1874," 1. In church papers (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas).

4Minutes of November 9, 1854, "Minutes of the Synod of Colorado of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, 1854-1887," 1. In church papers (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas). The name of the judicatory refers to the Colorado River in Texas and not to the state by the same name.

5Minutes of October 10, 1878, "Minutes of the Synod of Trinity of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, 1878-1887," 8. In church papers (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas).

6Minutes of September 13, 1888, "Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, 1888-1905," 3. In church papers (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas).
a Texas Cumberland preacher being the scion of a commercial or upper middle class family. There may have been a few, but the evidence abundantly demonstrates that the majority were humble men ministering to the lowly.7

Most of these men lived and founded churches in poverty-stricken rural areas of Texas. Many rode circuit continuously, holding prayer meetings and church services in widely scattered homes, barns, schools, and small churches. Others filled the pastorate of one or perhaps two houses of worship. Regardless of the function of their ministry, however, it was apparent that the vast majority received little more than spiritual comfort for their endless labors. The Rev. Mr. B. D. Austin reported that in 1881 he was preaching to four small churches in North Central Texas for a total annual income of $425. His income was usually far less. For instance, in 1883, it was only $100, and for three months of that year he received twenty-seven dollars, but only nine dollars of this sum was in cash.8 The Rev. Mr. Austin's plight was typical of these frontier ministers who were compelled to eke out a living through farming, school teaching, or other vocations to permit them to continue their evangelistic endeavors.

The burning religious faith that possessed these men was exemplified by the following statement by another clergyman:

7 "Autobiographies and Biographies--USA and C.P. Ministers." In church papers (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas).

When I was a child I never cared [sic] to play wild west Cow Boy or Police or Desperado. I would get our crowd [sic] and we would play Holding Meetings. When I was a lad working in the field I would preach to the Cotton and Corn. When I became a man, I would preach to the Finceposts [sic] along the road.

A typical example of simple, unaffected piety was the life of the Rev. Mr. James S. Groves. In 1871 he walked across the stage of Trinity University in Tehuacana, Texas, to receive his diploma, the first graduate of this institution which was founded in 1869. Forty-eight years later, on June 3, 1919, the Rev. Mr. Groves, deaf, gray, and feeble, and borne down by a long life of unremitting labor, stood on the stage of this same institution then located in Waxahachie, Texas. Tottering across the platform, he shook hands with the graduating class, wishing them well.

Born in Clark County, Illinois, in 1837, James Groves had come to Texas with his family in 1853. Settling in Ellis County in central Texas, his father resumed farming. Although originally from the North, the Groveses evidently sympathized with the Confederate cause, for James joined the Second Texas Infantry and saw action several times in Louisiana. In one of these engagements he was wounded in the hip, the bullet grazing the bone and severing muscles and arteries. Although he recovered, he suffered some discomfort from the wound for the rest of his life.

With the end of the conflict, a vocation had to be found for the young man. Being a Presbyterian elder, James’s father wanted one

of his sons to become a minister, and chose the injured veteran for this profession. Accordingly, he attended Trinity University where he was graduated in 1871. That same year he married, and the couple had one daughter.

Like many other Cumberland ministers, he was a circuit rider, habitually on horseback. With a Bible in one saddle bag and a suit in the other, he was ready for any ceremony whether it be a christening, a marriage, or a funeral. On a typical day he might stop his horse and try to convert a stranger on the side of the road or hold a prayer service in a lonely farmhouse on staying the night. He was his own church secretary, welfare committee, Sunday School leader and missionary board blended into one. He performed marriage ceremonies in every type of home from log house to palatial residence. After rejoicing at a wedding ceremony, he was ready a few moments later to comfort a bereaved family at a funeral.  

A moving example of a dedicated life is that of the Rev. Mr. Ed Hudson, one of Texas' unsung heroes. He was a well liked student in John Collier College in Bosqueville in east Texas from 1859 to 1860. When the Civil War broke out, like others of his generation, he joined the Confederate Army. Chosen chaplain of his volunteer regiment, he conducted singing and prayer services every night and preached on Sunday afternoons. When his outfit broke camp to move to the front, he

delivered a moving farewell address which closed with the following words:

Some of us may not return. O' the vicissitudes of war--Some will sleep the Long Sleep in coffined graves. Some may return battle scarred--Others with Armless Sleeves. Others On A Wooden Leg. In the name of your Friends, your Sons--your sweethearts:. I bid you a loving Farewell.

He was an indefatigable chaplain, holding prayer services on battle fronts and hospitals. He helped take care of the wounded and told the dying of a loving Savior. With pencil and paper always about him, he would take down the last words of some stricken warrior to sweetheart or parents. In January, 1865, while he was stooping over a wounded comrade, he was severely wounded in the hip. Carried from the field, he was taken to a nearby farmhouse to convalesce where he remained prostrate until November when he wrote a friend that he was able to travel. The friend brought a wagon in which he carried him back to Bosqueville. After many more months at home he was at last able to stand on crutches but could scarcely move his legs.

Ordained a Cumberland minister, he divided his time between teaching school in Bosqueville and in preaching. At last he was able to get about heavily with the use of canes. After several years he abandoned school teaching and became a full-time itinerant missionary for Bacon Presbytery in eastern Texas. He had a buggy especially constructed so that he could get in and out of it with ease, and he was continually on the road.

Unfortunately, his Civil War wound never healed, and for the remaining fifteen years of his life he was a living martyr. One can
imagine him jolting down country roads in his uniquely constructed rig
suffering from his nearly paralyzed legs and continually inflamed hip.
His motto was, "Ye have need of patience."\footnote{J. A. Hornbeck, "Memoir of Ed Hudson," 1-7. In "Autobiographies and Biographies--USA and C.P. Ministers."}

Many of these ministers led lives of high, if quiet, adventure. The Rev. Mr. B. D. Austin reported that one day in 1865 he visited a friend in Bear Creek Community in eastern Texas. As he left the house, he was met at the gate by a Negro named John, who worked for his friend. Pulling off his cap, John said, "Mars Ben we colored folks know we has to die, and we want to go to heavan [sic] and we want you to preach to us and tell us how to get there." The minister replied, "John, do you mean what you say?" "Yes sar, we do." Having an appointment open, the preacher said, "Well, I will preach for you people next Sunday week at the schoolhouse."

After the Negro left, the minister became disturbed about whether he had made a mistake, for he was well aware of the troubled conditions of the postwar South. Visiting an elder of the church, Austin asked his opinion. The elder gave the project his blessing, and with some trepidation, the evangelist proceeded with his plans. Meeting with the colored folk, he found them very attentive to his reading of the scripture. Later he held a second meeting, and at this time many of the Negroes came forward and pledged their lives to Christ.
On his way to the third meeting, he was stopped on the road by one of his white neighbors who told him that he would have to stop preaching to the Negroes or the whites of the community would hang him. The neighbor advised him of a storm of indignation that he had aroused by evangelizing among the colored. When the preacher reached the schoolhouse, he called a council of the leading Negroes and related what he had just heard. Professing their ignorance of the trouble, they begged him to continue his gospel work among them. Consequently, he proceeded with the prayer meeting, and a number of the freedmen were converted. On his way to the fourth meeting, he was stopped by three Negroes on the road. They told him he would have to stop preaching to them or the white people would kill him. The Rev. Mr. Austin replied that they would all go into the house. After singing a song they would pray together for one last time. Accordingly, they all entered the school building.

After singing a hymn, the preacher called upon an old colored man to lead the group in prayer. The preacher stated that in all his life he had never heard such a prayer as the old man delivered. The Negro prayed for his people and called upon his God in Heaven to save them. He then advised the Diety that the white people would not allow the gospel to be preached to them. Praying for the white people, he asked God to bless them. Then in an emotional voice he sobbed, "O, God, forgive them for they know not what they are doing." Although the Rev. Mr. Austin did not attend their prayer services again, the
persecution of himself and his family continued, so that they were
finally compelled to leave the community.  

Examples of humor in the early history of Cumberland Presbyterianism can also be discovered. For instance, before the Civil War a Rev. Mr. Travelsted preached in the small Presbyterian church in Clarksville, Texas. He had such a powerful voice that his bellowing could be heard outside the church a block away. When one of his communicants asked him why he roared so loudly he replied that the Lord "was a far piece off from this place." A few years later the Rev. Mr. James Latimer, pastor of this same church, was noted for his belief that the Diety was always scrupulous in answering his prayers. Therefore, when he prayed for rain, he would advise his maker just how much rain was desired. On one occasion he prayed, "Send us a cool, refreshing shower, but none of your gully-washers, Lord."  

A camp meeting was an expressive event in the early history of the Cumberland denomination in Texas. The Rev. Mr. John Collier called such a meeting in the fall of 1866 near the small town of Alvarado in east central Texas. When a farmer donated part of his land for the site, neighbors from miles around came to help him clear out the brush. Soon the rural folk began to arrive for the meeting. Wagons moved into

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a field covered by volunteer wheat and crab grass. Soon these vehicles stood under a grove of trees while nearby a white tent city flapped in the vigorous Texas breeze. With a small stream providing water, the horses and oxen were turned out to graze in an adjacent pasture. A number of families came in Conestoga wagons in which they lived for the duration of the revival meeting. Two Negro men were employed to keep the grounds in order and to kill and barbeque cattle, sheep, and goats for the hungry throng. To prevent fights from breaking out among the brethren, a deputy sheriff was present.

Beginning on Friday, the meeting lasted until Wednesday of the following week. A relay team of ministers delivered sermons and held prayer services in the afternoons and evenings. Every day clouds of dust on the horizon presaged the arrival of more horses and wagons, for in many rural areas these camp meetings were the only social gatherings available to lonely country folk.

Many battle-scarred former Confederate warriors were present. Having received their discharge papers, they had turned their faces toward home, leaving behind many comrades in graves or hospitals. With these facts in mind, on the second day the Rev. Mr. Collier, one of the spellbinders of his day, delivered a sermon ending with the following words:

The Christian will get his discharge and go home to Heaven. Will we see each other there? Shall I know my comrades that fell upon the field of battle who went off to our eternal home through the cannon's smoke... Yes, we will know them there.
He concluded by urging those present "to enlist under the blood-stained banners of the captain of our salvation." The effect of this sermon was marvelous. Backsliders were reclaimed, sinners converted, and the assembly gathered in the field was thrown into tumult.

An old man, a notorious drunk from the town of Coburn [possibly Cleburne] sat by the altar drinking with a group of his friends. Distressed at the example set by this aged reprobate and feeling that the religious climate was right for a reformation of his character, Collier knelt beside him and in a loud voice asked God to have mercy and save a repenting rebel. To the minister's consternation the old man leaped to his feet and in time to the tapping of his foot began roaring out the song "The Old Gray Mare Came Tearing Out of the Wilderness."

The elderly inebriate was joined by his friends, and then by the gathering as a whole, who began tapping their feet and clapping their hands as they also sang "The Old Gray Mare Came Tearing Out of the Wilderness."

The alarmed ministers and deacons ran about trying to get the derailed assembly back on the spiritual track.

At another session of this same revival meeting, Collier stood upon a platform exhorting the throng. He began his sermon by reading the names of the patriarchs of the church. When he concluded, he placed his hand to his ear and appeared to be listening intently. After a few moments of silence, he cried out in a loud voice, "I hear no answer. Those men are all dead." He then called the names of the prophets, the twelve apostles, and the fathers of the church in the first and second centuries. After the reading of each list he cried
out, "I hear no reply, those men are all dead." Facing his rural con-
gregation, he said in an emotional voice, "Of this vast throng here
tonight in less than a hundred years not one will be alive... .
Flee the wrath to come while it is yet to come."

Unknown to the evangelist, one of the two Negro laborers
assigned to police the grounds was kneeling behind the speaker's plat-
form in an agony of soul. Suddenly the light broke on this benighted
sinner. Leaping to his feet, he boomed out, "I have got religion.
Lord, spare me." Not knowing of the Negro's presence, the frightened
minister almost fell from his platform. Encouraged by the crowd, the
Negro came before the assembly shouting and singing. His antics stole
the whole show.

The camp meeting was scheduled to end on Wednesday morning.
After a brief address by the Rev. Mr. Collier, a number of those in
attendance came forward to testify to the blessings they had received
as a result of the meeting. A farmer, Mr. Taramare, and his wife had
originated the idea of the gathering and had spent much time and money
promoting it. Coming forward, Mr. Taramare said, "I had hoped that my
wife and I could get religion but the Lord passed by." His eyes filling
with tears, he said, "We are left without hope. But I am so glad that
so many did get religion."

Suddenly he cried, "Glory to God, I have got religion." His
wife began running about and waving her arms and shouting, "I have got
it. I have got it." Some began to cry for joy, while others began
singing, and it was afternoon before the assembly was calm enough for men to begin hitching the horses to the wagons and breaking camp.\textsuperscript{14}

This should be a sufficient glimpse into the human side of the Cumberland establishment in Texas. It seems that self-sacrificing, dedicated men such as Groves and Hudson must have predominated in the Cumberland Church. Although the records indicate that men of other character and principles were to be found in the church, it must be kept in mind that the trouble-making potential of these individuals greatly exceeded their actual numbers.

From the very beginning of its independent career in 1810, however, an element, perhaps a majority within the denomination apparently desired to end its autonomous existence. These clergymen sought liberty of conscience and a recognition and acceptance of their principles. Evidently many of them would have preferred to remain in the national church with their rights guaranteed. When between 1803 and 1810, the U.S.A. denomination demanded that the Cumberlanders abandon their practices in regard to interpretation of the Calvinist doctrine, the educational requirements of ministers, and other points at issue, the dissenters rebelled and organized a separate denomination. However, many did so with evident reluctance. In succeeding years there were repeated attempts by at least a large section of the church to put an end to its independent existence. They hoped eventually to achieve

\textsuperscript{14}J. A. Hornbeak, "Narrative of Dr. John Collier," 14-19, in "Autobiographies and Biographies--USA and C.P. Ministers."
their object by federating or uniting with another church which would guarantee the freedom of conscience desired by the Cumberlanders.\textsuperscript{15}

In 1810, before it gained the stature of a separate denomination, the Cumberland Presbytery in Tennessee in a "circular letter" gave its official version of the break between the Cumberland Assembly and the national church.

We have it in view as a Presbytery to . . . make another proposition to the Synod of Kentucky or some other Synod for a re-union. If we can obtain it without violating our natural and scriptural rights it will meet the most ardent wish of our hearts.\textsuperscript{16}

Frustrated in its first attempt to unite with another religious body, the Cumberland judicatory tried again the next year by framing the following statement:

\textit{Whereas, The Presbytery has seen a communication from a committee appointed by the West Tennessee Presbytery, to some of our brethren, the object of which is said to be an adjustment of our differences; therefore,}

\textit{Resolved, That Messrs. Bell and Porter are hereby authorized to inform said committee that this Presbytery agree to name a committee to meet a like committee appointed by the West Tennessee and Muhlenburg Presbyteries, conjointly at any time and place the said Presbyteries will appoint, in order to confer on the subject of reunion and other matters relative to that harmony that should exist among the members and people of Jesus Christ.}\textsuperscript{17}

\begin{notes}
\textsuperscript{15}\textit{Minutes of May 20, 1904, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in the USA} (Nashville: Cumberland Presbyterian Publishing House, 1904), 25.

\textsuperscript{16}\textit{Samuel King, "Circular Letter, 1810," The Cumberland Presbyterian Digest, ed. by Rev. J. V. Stephens} (Nashville: Cumberland Presbyterian Publishing House, 1899), 18, 235. [Hereafter this work will be referred to as \textit{Cumberland Digest}.]

\textsuperscript{17}\textit{Ibid.}, 235-36.
\end{notes}
This second attempt to resolve the difficulties between the two religious bodies was so far from producing a reconciliation that the West Tennessee Presbytery instructed its membership under no circumstances to share communion services with Cumberland Presbyterians. Association with members of that sect was "irregular and unpresbyterial."18

In November, 1812, the Cumberland Presbytery reported on its efforts to find an understanding with the assemblies of West Tennessee and Muhlenburg. According to the Cumberland judiciary, these two presbyteries rebuffed its attempt at a reconciliation and reunification, reporting: "Our brethren composing a majority of the above Presbyteries have judicially and officially shut the door against the two bodies coming together." In spite of this failure the Church Court resolved: "This presbytery has always been and expects always to be ready and willing for union with the general Presbyterian Church on gospel principles."19 Further efforts were made to regraft the Cumberland Presbytery onto the parent stem of the national church but still without success. In April, 1813, the assembly stated: "Cumberland Presbytery has made every reasonable effort to be reunited with the General Presbyterian Church."20


19 Cumberland Digest, 236.

20 Ibid.
By 1860 the Cumberland Presbytery had grown into a sizable, independent denomination, with a General Assembly of its own. The original expressed intention of this religious body evidently had not changed, as can be seen by the resolution adopted in this year by the Cumberland General Assembly:

That while we are ready to reciprocate fraternal feelings alike with all Christians, yet seeing that the great Presbyterian family hold alike the same church government, and that in their oral addresses they are doctrinally converging to the same standpoint, the sovereignty of God and the agency of man both alike exercised and secured in the salvation of the sinner, we cherish the fond hope that the day is not far distant when the entire family shall be represented in one General Assembly.21

Since about two-thirds of the membership of the Cumberland denomination lived in the South, it was logical for the unionists to sound out the U.S. Presbyterian Church on the possibility of merging the two religious bodies. Consequently, shortly after the Civil War, the Cumberland General Assembly appointed a committee of six ministers in 1867 to meet with a similar committee appointed by the southern Presbyterian Church to hammer out the terms of union. The committee appointed by the Cumberland denomination reported to its General Assembly on the results of this joint conference. The two committees met in Memphis, Tennessee, on August 5, 1867. "Believing that organic union on terms acceptable and honorable alike to both churches would be eminently conducive to the glory of God" the committee strove "earnestly" to reach an agreement. The Cumberlanders were ready to yield on all

21 Ibid., 233.
points at issue with the exception of the interpretation of Calvinist doctrine. They requested that they be permitted to retain the Cumberland Confession of Faith. If this was not acceptable, the Cumberland representatives asked only that the Westminster Confession be modified to eliminate all statements supporting the doctrine of fatality, or predestination.

Not being empowered to act without additional authority from its national governing body, the U.S. committee reported in November, 1867, to its General Assembly on the demands made by the Cumberlanders. That body rejected the concessions asked and voted to end all further discussions of union between the two religious bodies. The Cumberland committee in its report stated its view that "the failure to consummate the union your committee fully believes to be a matter of deep regret to many of the people of God in both churches."22

Perhaps one reason for the negative response of the U.S. Presbyterian Church to this union overture was the rivalry between the two denominations for the same field. Because of the evangelical character of the Cumberland Church, many southern Presbyterians looked upon the spiritual agents of this church as assistant Baptists. Hostility was intensified by the success of the Cumberlanders in the southern rural area. Many U.S. Presbyterian ministers believed that the South was preempted for their brand of Calvinism by their church. This antagonism

22Ibid., 242-44.
built up over a period of years likely influenced the decision of the U.S. General Assembly in 1867.23

The Cumberland Presbyterian Church in 1873 next attempted to unite with the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. The Cumberland Presbyterian committee submitted as the basis of union a plan whereby the form of government and the discipline of the U.S.A. denomination would be accepted by the United church. However, both the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Cumberland Confession of Faith should be maintained without modification and regarded as of equal value. In the licensure or ordination of ministers a candidate would be permitted to subscribe to whichever document his conscience directed. The U.S.A. committee was unwilling to accept union on this basis, insisting that the Westminster Confession remain the only doctrinal standard. Negotiations were concluded without the submission of any plan of union to the General Assembly of either church.24

Since a merger with one of the two major branches of the American Presbyterian Church had failed of fruition, the Cumberlanders next sought a fusion between non-Presbyterian denominations. The Cumberland General Assembly appointed a committee to negotiate a union with the Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. While favoring a close

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23 [The hostility of the southern Presbyterian Church toward the Cumberland Church can be seen in an article in this magazine.] Christian Observer, July 22, 1908.

24 Appendix, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1874), 62-63.
fraternal alliance with all Christian churches, the Lutheran Church stated the belief that organic union between the two bodies was impractical. Unless unanimous consent by all the churches within both denominations could be obtained, such an attempted merger would only fragment both denominations into feuding factions. The Cumberland Church resolved as a consequence that it would be unwise to press for further positive action at that time.  

In 1882 the Methodist Protestant Church, through a fraternal messenger sent to the Cumberland General Assembly, suggested that negotiations be undertaken looking toward unification. The Methodist Protestant Church had separated from the main body of the Methodists in 1828 over a refusal of the national church to honor its demand for lay representation at the annual conference. In 1886 a conference was held between a committee appointed by the Methodist Protestants and another appointed by the Cumberland Presbyterians. At this meeting, it was found that no serious impediment to union existed between the two denominations. There was no doctrinal difference except on the "preservation of believers." Since the Cumberland Confession of Faith was considered more full and systematic, it was accepted as the creedal standard of the common church. The question of the certainty or uncertainty of believers was to be left unexpressed. At its annual meeting

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25 Minutes of May 24, 1883, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1883), 30-31.

26 Appendix, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1882), 95.
in 1887, the Cumberland Presbyterian Church pronounced unfavorably on the scheme. It was unwilling to omit a doctrine so precious to Cumberlanders as that of the preservation of believers. This terminated the discussion.27

It can be seen that the Cumberland denomination frequently expressed an earnest desire to achieve Christian unity even if this meant its own destruction as an independent church. This determination may not have stemmed solely from non-sectarian zeal. Records of this church revealed that for a number of years it had foundered in serious fiscal difficulties. This was understandable, for while the Cumberland Church had a large constituency, the greater part of its establishment lay in the poorer rural areas of the South and Southwest. In 1891 a committee reported to the Cumberland General Assembly: "The past year has been one of great stringency in financial circles and collections have been small and difficult."28 Again in 1894 the committee on finance declared:

It may be out of the province of this committee, but we cannot refrain from recommending to this General Assembly and its various Boards the importance of economizing and wherever it is practicable to consolidate their work so as to employ as few persons on salary as possible.29

27 Minutes of May 25, 1887, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1887), 33-34.

28 Minutes of May 28, 1891, Minutes of the Sixty-first General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1891), 41.

29 Minutes of May 24, 1894, Minutes of the Sixty-fourth General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1894), 40.
The year 1894 was, of course, a depression year, but the Cumberland Presbyterian Church found itself in financial difficulties in good and bad years. In 1900 the same committee on finance reported that seven presbyteries were unable to meet their financial obligations to the Cumberland General Assembly. Although the amount of all the debts was not given, the obligations mentioned ranged between thirty and forty dollars for each judicatory. The recommendation of the committee was that the assembly acceded to the request for relief from payment but advised the synods to dissolve bankrupt presbyteries and attach them to more solvent church courts. Records of the presbyteries are also replete with complaints over the paucity of contributions and the critical shortage of funds.

Considering the economic status of the denomination, it was inevitable that many Cumberland ministers would look longingly in the direction of the populous and affluent U.S.A. Presbyterian Church. In spite of attempts to merge with other religious bodies, a majority of the unionists in the Cumberland Church apparently always favored a return to the national church if honorable grounds of union could be discovered. It must not be assumed that this pro-union sentiment was universal among Cumberland pastors. On the contrary, apparently a large element within the church favored retaining its autonomous status. The traditions and unique doctrinal standards of this religious body

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30Minutes of May 24, 1900, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Seventieth Meeting (1900), 77-78.
had deep meaning for them. Little opposition to earlier merger attempts had been indicated perhaps because many Cumberlanders believed that nothing would come of the frequent negotiations. In this belief they had always been justified. Any serious attempts to unite this church with another was bound to produce a bitter fratricidal conflict within the denomination.

So affairs stood in 1903 when the General Assembly of the U.S.A. Church adopted amendments radically modifying the Westminster Confession of Faith. Before examining the doctrinal revisions, it is desirable to examine several statements of the Westminster Confession which did arouse the deepest resentment of the founding fathers of the Cumberland Church.

The principal doctrinal quarrel centered about what was alternately called fatality, necessity, or predestination, most strongly stated in chapters III and X in the Westminster Confession. The following selections from Chapter III thoroughly set forth the definition of the term:

III, By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others fore-ordained to everlasting death.

VI, As God has appointed the elect unto glory, so hath he, by the eternal and most free purpose of his will, fore-ordained all the means thereunto. Wherefore they who are elected being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, are effectually called unto faith in Christ by his Spirit working in due season; are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by his power through faith unto salvation. Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved but the elect only.

VII, The rest of mankind, God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will, whereby he extendeth or
withholdeth mercy as he pleaseth, for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin to the praise of his glorious justice.³¹

Section III of Chapter X carried the argument even further, stating:

Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who worketh when, and where, and how he pleaseth. So also are all elect persons, who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word.³²

Taken in conjunction with the statements in Chapter III, Chapter X, Section III clearly implied that all non-elect children were condemned to eternal damnation through the irrevocable decree of a wrathful God.

In spite of complaints and criticisms, not only from Cumberlanders but also from others, the national church for a century and a half had refused to alter these basic pronouncements. In 1903, however, the U.S.A. General Assembly authorized the publication of certain revisions or modifications of the Westminster document. Two chapters breathing a more liberal spirit were added to the Westminster Confession, namely, Chapter XXXIV, "Of the Holy Spirit," and Chapter XXXV, "Of the Love of


³²Ibid., 57.
God and Missions. More important, the revision authorized in 1903 contained a "declaratory statement" which read:

While the ordination vow of ministers, ruling elders, and deacons, as set forth in the Form of Government, requires the reception and adoption of the Confession of Faith only as containing the System of Doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures, nevertheless, seeing that the desire has been formally expressed for a disavowal by the Church of certain inferences drawn from statements in the Confession of Faith, and also for a declaration of certain aspects of revealed truth which appear at the present time to call for more explicit statement, therefore the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America does authoritatively declare as follows:

First, With reference to Chapter III of the Confession of Faith: that concerning those who are saved in Christ, the doctrine of God's eternal decree is held in harmony with the doctrine of His love to all mankind, His gift of His Son to be the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, and His readiness to bestow His saving grace on all who seek it. That concerning those who perish, the doctrine of God's eternal decree is held in harmony with the doctrine that God desires not the death of any sinner, but has provided in Christ a salvation sufficient for all, adapted to all, and freely offered in the Gospel to all; that men are fully responsible for their treatment of God's gracious offer; that His decree hinders no man from accepting that offer; and that no man is condemned except on the ground of his sin.

Second, With reference to Chapter X, Section 3, of the Confession of Faith, that it is not to be regarded as teaching that any who die in infancy are lost. We believe that all dying in infancy are included in the election of grace, and are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who works when and where and how He pleases.

Anti-unionists within the Cumberland Church were later to argue that the revision took place in only one chapter and one section of another chapter in the Westminster Confession. The doctrine of unconditional election and reprobation was present, however, either

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33 Ibid., 138-138a.
34 Ibid., 138b.
implicitly or explicitly in no less than thirteen chapters. Moreover, the U.S.A. denomination was too attached to the Westminster document to void the statements in the two chapters that were revised. The Declaratory Statement merely said that the doctrine of predestination was to be held in harmony with the love of God for all mankind. How concord was to be attained between two such divergent statements was not made clear.\(^\text{35}\)

In addition to the official revision or modification of certain sections of the Westminster Confession authorized in 1903, the U.S.A. General Assembly at its 1902 annual meeting adopted a so-called "Brief Statement of the Reformed Faith." This creedal statement among other things said:

We believe that God, out of His great love for the world, has given His only begotten Son to be the Savior of sinners, and in the Gospel freely offers His all-sufficient salvation to all men. And we praise Him for the unspeakable grace wherein He has provided the way of eternal life for all mankind.\(^\text{36}\)

\(^{35}\)T. H. Campbell, Good News on the Frontier (Memphis, Tennessee: Frontier Press, 1965), 126-27; a good rebuttal presented by a pro-unionist Cumberlander is to be found in B. G. Mitchell, "My Reasons for Union," The Cumberland Presbyterian LXVIII (July 7, 1904), 7-8. For a more detailed discussion of the doctrinal differences as stated by the anti-unionists inside the Cumberland Church, see Minutes of May 24, 1905, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (1905), 78-80; J. J. McClellan, Brief of the Doctrinal Statements of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church, USA (Tullahoma: The Cumberland Presbyterian Banner Press, 1908), 1-6.

\(^{36}\)Minutes of May 22, 1902, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., II (1902), 94.
If Christ died to save all mankind, he obviously could not have offered up his life for arbitrarily selected individuals known as the "elect." Once again the mysterious and sinister dragon of predestination appeared to have been slain by a doctrinal re-statement.

Another barrier separating the Cumberland and U.S.A. Presbyterian denominations concerned the educational qualifications of ministerial candidates. Cumberland founding fathers objected to the requirement of a knowledge of the dead languages for entrance into the ministry. In 1893 by constitutional enactment the mother church took practically the same ground held by the Cumberland Church with regard to this question.37

By 1900 many members in both the Cumberland and the U.S.A. Presbyterian Churches believed that generally the two denominations shared a community of interests and that they had moved closer together in many respects. Both were thoroughly Presbyterian in polity, and both were evangelical church bodies exploiting roughly the same field. Only a catalytic agent to trigger a movement for organic union was needed. This was provided by the adoption of the U.S.A. General Assembly of the doctrinal revisions of 1902 and 1903, including in particular the Declaratory Statement and the Brief Statement. According to the majority report of a later appointed Cumberland committee on union, as soon as these changes were made public, a spontaneous movement developed. Individual presbyteries and synods in both denominations,

37"Constitutional Rules," USA Constitution (1904), 443.
without authorization, began sounding out individuals and church courts in the other church on the possibility of an ecclesiastical merger. 38

In an interview with a young Vanderbilt student, Treadwell Davis, in the 1930's a number of the anti-union Cumberland Presbyterians challenged this interpretation of the origin of the merger movement. At that time the Rev. Mr. J. D. Hudgins told Davis that the merger movement was begun in 1903 and forced through to consummation by a few of the leaders of the Cumberland denomination of whom the most active was Dr. W. J. Darby of Evansville, Indiana. Most instrumental in bring an overture for union before the Cumberland General Assembly in 1903, he continued to work industriously for acceptance of the union plan. 39

Whichever version is correct, the merger question came to the attention of the Cumberland General Assembly in Nashville, Tennessee, in the spring of 1903. Soon after this gathering assembled, nine presbyteries and two synods of this denomination introduced resolutions favoring negotiations toward reunification with the U.S.A. Church. The action was far from unanimous, as memorials from ten presbyteries opposing this action indicate. 40 All these resolutions being turned

38 Minutes of May 20, 1904, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1904), 25.

39 Treadwell Davis, "The Union of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church with the Presbyterian Church, USA" (Master's Thesis, Vanderbilt University, 1938), 21-22.

40 Minutes of May 22, 1903, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1903), 29.
over to a committee on overtures, that body subsequently issued a majority report which recommended that the General Assembly appoint committees to meet with similar committees of all other Presbyterian denominations in the United States looking toward a union of these bodies into a monolithic church. These committees in turn would report to the Cumberland General Assembly at its next annual meeting on the progress of the negotiations. The minority of the committee submitted a dissenting opinion in which they urged the abandonment of the plan because the one "suggested by the majority is unusual and contrary to the usages, precedents, and policy of our Presbyterian Government; that it would tend to arouse sectional feelings and engender personal strife." After a lengthy discussion the majority report was adopted.\(^4^1\)

On May 27, 1903, the U.S.A. General Assembly, meeting in Los Angeles, California, received a telegram advising them of the action of the Cumberland General Assembly. In response, the U.S.A. assembly authorized its moderator and stated clerk to send a telegram dated the same day advising the Cumberlanders that it would appoint a similar committee to meet with the Cumberland committee to discuss a possible organic union.\(^4^2\) An identical telegram was sent by the national governing body of the Cumberland Church to the U.S. General Assembly meeting at Mobile, Alabama. The southern Presbyterian Church, however, voted

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\(^4^1\) Minutes of May 27, 1903, ibid., 47-49.

\(^4^2\) Minutes of May 27, 1903, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., III (1903), 122.
that it was not willing at that time to take action on the proposed
unification of all Presbyterian Churches; and it, therefore, refused to
name a committee to meet with another committee of any other Presby-
terian denomination.\textsuperscript{43} That action meant, in effect, that negotiations
would be undertaken by the representatives of the Cumberland and the
U.S.A. denominations only, looking toward the framing of some plan of
union.

During the ensuing year the committee from the Cumberland
Church met with its counterpart from the U.S.A. denomination. The U.S.A.
representatives were anxious to conclude an agreement. Owing to the
secession of the southern Presbyterians during the Civil War, the U.S.A.
denomination had been restricted largely to the North and West. If an
organic union could be consummated with the Cumberland denomination,
the U.S.A. Church could extend its representation into the South to
become once again a truly national church as it proclaimed it always
had been. The committees held their first joint meeting on September 29,
1903. Remaining in session until October 2, the committees were unable
to reach a final concord. There were disagreements over liberty of
belief, race, and nationality questions which left them as far from a
final agreement as before they first sat around the same table.\textsuperscript{44}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[43] Minutes of May 28, 1903, Minutes of the General Assembly of
the Presbyterian Church in the US, Vol. XL (Richmond: Presbyterian
Committee of Publication), 485-56.
\item[44] Minutes of May 27, 1904, Minutes of the General Assembly of
the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., IV (1904), 132-34.
\end{footnotes}
consciences of the Cumberland committee members were still insecure in spite of the revisions of 1902-1903, and they demanded "liberty of belief" with regard to many doctrinal statements in the U.S.A. creedal standards. To this the U.S.A. representatives indignantly retorted that the Cumberland Presbyterians would not be allowed more liberty of belief than regular Presbyterian members.  

Work was continued in December, 1903, in Cincinnati, Ohio, by sub-committees appointed by both major committees representing the two denominations. Roadblocks that hitherto had hindered progress were brushed aside, and the sub-committees quickly reached agreements on the details of the union contract. These sub-committees completed their work and held a last meeting on December 31, 1903 in which they agreed to submit for consideration the union plan to their respective General Assemblies. The two full committees met together again in February, 1904. After a few changes were made, the document was signed on February 20, by the representatives of both churches.

Before attaching their names to the union plan, the Cumberland committee members had attempted to obtain further doctrinal concessions from the U.S.A. representatives. In this they were unsuccessful. In

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^45 Ibid., 134.

^46 Appendix 12, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1904), 60a; Minutes of May 27, 1904, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., IV (1904), 129.

^47 Appendix 12, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1904), 61a.
spite of their anxious desire to establish a firm foothold in the South, the U.S.A. committeemen took a hard line demanding that the Cumberland Church should "yield its name, adopt our Standards as an entirety, and find complete union with us."\(^{48}\)

This proposed plan of union and reunion embodied four points, eight concurrent declarations, and three recommendations. The document provided for the unification of the two churches under the name and style of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, and the union would be effected on the "doctrinal basis" of the Confession of Faith as revised in 1903: "The scriptures of the Old and New Testaments shall be acknowledged as the inspired Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice."

It was further provided that if the two national governing bodies approved of the joint committee reports, the General Assemblies should then refer this plan to the presbyteries of each denomination for consideration. If a majority of the presbyteries of both religious bodies voted affirmatively on the plan, the union would then be binding on both churches. One of the concurrent declarations stated that "it is mutually recognized that such agreement now exists between the systems of doctrine contained in the Confessions of Faith of the two Churches as to warrant this union--a union honoring alike to both."

\(^{48}\)Minutes of May 27, 1904, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., IV (1904), 134.
All ministers and churches in the two denominations were to have the same standing in the united church as they had in their respective connections in their former denomination. Furthermore, all the property and corporate rights of the two religious bodies would be transferred to the united church.49

It was further recommended that a change be made in the form of government of the U.S.A. church to allow additional or separate Presbyteries and Synods to be organized in exceptional cases, wholly or in part, within territorial bounds of existing Presbyteries or Synods respectively, for a particular race or nationality, if desired by such race or nationality.50

This last agreement was framed because the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, the greater part of whose establishment was located in the South, realized that its members would be incensed over the possible mixture of Negro and white congregations or church courts. At first separate Negro churches, presbyteries, and synods would be maintained only if colored communicants gave their consent. In later conferences between Cumberland and U.S.A. representatives, the national church conceded that separate church establishments could be organized if the white race alone in a presbytery or synod desired this arrangement.51

49Appendix 12, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1904), 62a-65a.
50Ibid., 64a.
This last provision introduced the Negro question which played such a large part in the discussions relative to the union plan. Before the Civil War the attitude of the Cumberland General Assembly toward slavery was similar to that of the national governing body of the Old School, U.S.A. denomination. Of the sixteen states into which the Cumberland Church had extended by the Civil War, eight were slave and eight non-slave; however, the membership in the slave states greatly exceeded that in the free. It was thus impossible for that religious body to take a strong stand against the peculiar institution of the South without risking the destruction of the church where its greatest strength was located. White southern communicants of the church were primarily drawn from the economically underprivileged classes. Few of them owned slaves or had any considerable financial connection with the institution. Nevertheless, when the sectional conflict began several decades before the Civil War, southern Cumberlanders, like other southerners reacted in violent opposition to abolitionism.

Thus, when the Synod of Pennsylvania of the Cumberland Church passed a resolution in 1847 denouncing Negro servitude, this action was certain to attract the attention of the General Assembly. The resolution stated: "the system of Slavery, in the United States, is contrary to the principles of the Gospel, hinders the progress thereof, and ought to be abolished." When the General Assembly held its annual

meeting the following year, the committee assigned to review the
records disapproved the action and expressed fear that such resolutions
would engender strife, produce distraction in the church, and thereby
hinder progress of the gospel. By a top-heavy vote the General Assem-
bly approved the sentiments expressed in the committee report.⁵³

No one knows just when Cumberlanders became interested in the
evangelization of the Negro, but it must have been at an early date, as
there were 20,000 colored communicants in that denomination by 1860.
Although Negroes and whites attended the same churches, they sat
separately. Slaves were permitted to attend religious meetings pre-
sided over by members of their own race. By southern law, in such
instances a responsible white man was supposed to be present.⁵⁴

At its annual meeting in 1866, the Cumberland General Assembly,
not without protest on the part of some of the members present, adopted
a resolution in regard to the Negro communicants which stated: "no
class of citizens are so well prepared, nor are those any more willing
to aid them, than those with whom this people have always lived."
Recommend that Bibles and religious literature be provided the col-
ored membership, the assembly urged the white members to provide their
Negro brethren with suitable houses of worship.⁵⁵ These resolutions

⁵³Minutes of May 19, 1848, Minutes of the Eighteenth General
Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1848), 12-13.

⁵⁴Campbell, Good News on the Frontier, 73.

⁵⁵Appendix, Minutes of the Thirty-sixth General Assembly of the
Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1866), 80-81.
implied that the whites contemplated separate congregations for the colored.

The Texas Presbytery was very explicit in regard to its views on the relation of the Negro communicant to the Cumberland denomination.

Resolved that until some plan be proposed by the church for the better organization of the colored people into a separate church, or proceed to ordain colored men to preach the gospel and administer the ordinances of the church to the people of their own color.... But in doing so we do not confer ecclesiastical relationship in our church judicatories. But will use our best efforts to promote their spiritual welfare and aid them in perfecting their organizations.56

While colored ministers might be ordained and employed to work among members of their own race under the authority of the presbytery, this by no means entitled them to sit with the white ministers at the regular presbytery meeting.

After the Civil War Negroes tended to organize into separate churches. One test of their newly found freedom was to separate from the churches of their white masters. Their former white masters encouraged them to establish independent religious organizations to the greatest extent possible.57

When the General Assembly of the Cumberland Church met in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, in the same city at the same time, a convention of colored Cumberlanders drew up resolutions requesting the

56 Minutes of December 10, 1869, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Texas of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, 1837-1870," 242-43. In microfilm collection (Trinity University Library, San Antonio, Texas).

General Assembly to provide for separate presbyteries composed wholly of the colored race. They further asked for a separate synod as soon as the requisite number of presbyteries could be formed and expressed the hope that all possible financial and other aid could be given them. The colored convention stated its view that "it would not be for the advancement of the interest of the Church, among either the white or colored race, for the ministers of the two races to meet together in the same judicatures." The General Assembly which enthusiastically concurred in this viewpoint acceded to the request for the erection of an independent presbytery.58

At their own request, the Negro constituency was formed into a separate church, a fact of which they were reminded on several later occasions. In 1871 the General Assembly noted that the original colored presbytery, known as Greenville Presbytery, had grown into three. The national governing body, therefore, provided for the creation of The First Synod of the Colored Cumberland Church. The first meeting of this judicatory was to be held in November, 1871, at Fayetteville, Tennessee.59

In 1874 a General Assembly of this new denomination was organized. In this year the corresponding delegate from the colored Cumberland Church to the white General Assembly reported that the Negro

58 Minutes of May 25, 1869, Minutes of the Thirty-ninth General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1869), 23-24.

59 Minutes of May 23, 1871, Minutes of the Forty-first General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1871), 28.
denomination was composed of 46 ordained ministers, 20 licentiates, 30 candidates for the ministry, and 3,000 communicants.60

One of the official historians of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church seemed to verify this by saying that only a small fraction of the 20,000 Negro communicants who belonged to the church before the Civil War were ever brought into the new denomination.61

In 1870, the year after the decision to erect a separate colored church, a colored minister, the Rev. Mr. Moses T. Weir, appeared with a commission from the Greenville Presbytery requesting a seat in the Cumberland General Assembly. The horrified judicatory rejected the request on the grounds that there was no proper information before the assembly concerning the Greenville Presbytery.62

In 1873 nine colored elders and members of Missouri Presbytery appealed to the General Assembly to determine whether they were members of Ozark Synod, a white judicatory, or of a colored synod in Kentucky or Tennessee. They wanted also to know whether they were entitled to representation in the General Assembly. Citing the action of 1869, the General Assembly informed the Negroes that they had "chosen their own status."63

60 Appendix, Minutes of the Forty-fourth General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1874), 66.

61 B. W. McDonnell, History of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (Nashville: Board of Publication of Cumberland Presbyterian Church, 1899), 436.

62 Ibid., 435-37.

63 Minutes of May 22, 1873, Minutes of the Forty-third General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1873), 31.
In 1883 the same General Assembly had before it a memorial from
the Synod of Central Illinois, a colored assembly, requesting that
negotiations be undertaken looking toward the organic union of the col-
ored Cumberland Church and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in the
United States of America. The white judiciary once again reminded
their colored brethren that a racial separation of the two churches had
been effected on the initiative of the Negroes, and the memorial was
subsequently rejected.\(^{64}\)

In time the Cumberland Presbyterian Church became known for its
rigid adherence to the principle of the separation of the races in both
congregations and church courts. Since the U.S.A. denomination was
located primarily in the North and West, it was generally referred to
by southerners as the "Northern" Presbyterian Church. Many people
below the Mason-Dixon line believed that should a union be consummated
between the two Presbyterian churches the national church would attempt
to abolish the separate racial establishments. Society in the South
would be disrupted, they feared, by the northern attempt to force a mix-
ture of the races on the basis of social equality. This irrational and
groundless fear is evident in the church records and literature of the
period.

Returning to the proposed plan of union of the two churches,
the report framed by the joint conference was submitted to the General

\(^{64}\) Minutes of May 23, 1883, Minutes of the General Assembly of
the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1883), 25-26.
Assemblies of the two denominations meeting in May, 1904. Easily the most interesting session was that of the national governing body of the Cumberland Church held in Dallas, Texas. As soon as the union plan was read to the judicatory, a heated debate took place. In spite of the sweltering heat and the din which at times almost prevented a speaker from being heard, the commissioners sat listening intently to the addresses given. At the termination of a long speech, the delegates would rise and enthusiastically join in the singing of "Blest Be the Tie that Binds" and other gospel favorites. There was an air of solemnity brooding over the hall, for all present appeared to realize the gravity of the issue to be decided. They truly bore the destiny of their beloved church on their shoulders.

By the time the delegates gathered in the Dallas Music Hall the union movement had gained considerable momentum. On the other hand, the anti-unionists in the Cumberland denomination ruefully told a young student many years later that they had failed to take the movement seriously, assuming that this merger attempt would burn itself out in fruitless debates and negotiations as previous attempts had done. They had failed to organize or rally support for the defeat of the proposition. Consequently, they were thrown into confusion and dismay by the strength of the union forces within their church and were never able to organize and offer effective resistance.

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66 Davis, "Union of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church with the Presbyterian Church, USA," 27.
The first commissioner to speak against the proposed merger was Judge F. A. Prendergrast from Marshall, Texas. After referring briefly to the doctrinal differences between the two churches, he turned his attention to the Negro question. Alleging a fear that the U.S.A. Church would attempt to force Negroes into all the congregations of the South, he declared:

The Negro question ought to be left as it is. If the South acknowledges them as belonging to our churches, we have lost our influence over the very people whom we wish to reach. We provide separate coaches and schools for the two races and are against their intermarriage. These provisions are good, and only evil will come from their removal.

Responding to the remarks of Judge Prendergrast, Judge E. E. Beard of Lebanon, Tennessee, a member of the committee that negotiated with the U.S.A. committee, commented, "As to the Negro it is a misfortune to the South that the Negro came, but a providential blessing to the Negro." America had Christianized and civilized the black man brought to this country, and for that reason he should be grateful. To argue that southern presbyteries would be compelled to accept Negro members was to declare what was not necessarily true. "It was possible to have too much of a good thing," he remarked satirically. Admitting that he was as much opposed to Negro equality as anyone, he, nevertheless, declared that the South owed a debt of gratitude to the Negro which ought to induce it to give this race a fair chance. His discussion also revolved about the doctrinal differences between the Cumberland and U.S.A. denominations.67

After two days of debate, a vote was then taken on whether or not to submit the plan of union to the presbyteries for their deliberation. In the Synod of Texas 20 ministers and 16 elders voted in favor of submission of the plan, while six ministers and five elders were opposed. In the assembly vote as a whole, the synods cast a total of 236 ballots. In order to carry the measure, a two-thirds vote (158 votes), were needed. The final tally revealed that 162 affirmative ballots were cast as opposed to 74 negative. Not all the delegates cast their ballots on this vital issue. Only 236 votes out of a voting membership of 251 were cast. Many of the older commissioners, both ministers and elders, found the day-long debates very strenuous. Assuming that the discussion would continue for several days, on the second day of the debate, May 25, many of these individuals retired early. Late in the evening of that day the delegates present voted to permit one more speaker for each position to deliver an address. After these speeches were concluded, a vote was taken near midnight with the results indicated. If all delegates had been seated, 168 votes would have been necessary to carry a resolution. At the time the balloting took place, a quorum was present, and, therefore, the tally was legally valid.

The decision of that evening later led to charges of fraud and coercion. Although there is no evidence to support such allegations,

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68 Minutes of May 25, 1904, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1904), 44-48.

69 Ibid.; Davis, "Union of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church, USA," 29.
it was probably an error on the part of the unionists not to insure
beyond the slightest question full participation in the balloting. The
actual procedure intensified the bitterness and suspicion between the
two opposing camps inside the denomination.

While the delegates in Dallas were pondering the future fate of
the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, the General Assembly of the U.S.A.
denomination was holding its annual meeting in Buffalo, New York.
There also a debate took place between the opponents and proponents of
union. The desperate and emotional character of the struggle within
the national governing body of the Cumberland Church was signally lack­ing in the discussion between the commissioners in the Buffalo assembly.

The debate began on Friday, May 25. The first speaker was Dr.
Francis L. Patton. Universally acknowledged as the "intellectual colos­sus" of the national church, he first had gained prominence by leading
an attack on the Rev. Mr. David Swing, one of the most brilliant men
ever to hold down a pastorate in Chicago. Dr. Patton's successful
prosecution of this popular individual in the Synod of Illinois brought
him to the attention of the denomination as a whole. He became editor
of The Interior, the most prominent publication of the U.S.A. Church,
and president of Princeton University, a post he held until 1902, when
he was replaced by Woodrow Wilson. At the time of the Buffalo meeting
he was president of Princeton Theological Seminary and the recognized
leader of the ultraconservative branch of the denomination. He was a
formidable antagonist in a debate, because when hard pressed he would
retire behind a smoke screen of Greek and Latin quotations which few theologians had either the wit or energy to attempt to dispel.

When Dr. Patton arose to address the gathering in opposition to the merger plan, there was a stir of anticipation among the delegates. Attached to Calvinism, pure and undiluted, he admitted his opposition to the revisions of 1902 and 1903. While he could live with these alterations in his cherished theology, he feared that bringing in thousands of Cumberland Presbyterians would lead to far more radical changes in the doctrinal standards of the church. He cried that bringing those individuals into the church would "amount to a revision that blots out completely the distinctive features of this Calvinistic confession." In conclusion he stated, "I am in favor of union if you do not pay too much for it." Although not clearly spelled out, he evidently favored bringing the Cumberland Presbyterians into the denomination if the church could insure that these prelates could never get their revisionist hands on his cherished Westminster Confession.

Dr. James B. Moffat, President of Washington and Jefferson College, replied to Dr. Patton. Tall and slender with black hair and a mustache, he was known as a preacher of extraordinary ability. When he arose to speak, the applause was deafening, and he had to wait for more than a minute to begin his address. When he secured the attention of the throng, he said that Dr. Patton, "the greatest theologian in the world, was hard to follow." Considering the obscurity of some of the arguments of the head of the Princeton Theological Seminary, that statement could have been interpreted in more than one way. Although
allegedly one of the leaders of the union movement inside the U.S.A. denomination, Dr. Moffat admitted, "I am not a special advocate of a union, I never thought of it; I did not know whether I wanted union or not--don't telegraph this to Dallas." After this dispassionate defense of his cause, he said:

It just seemed to me that when a body of Presbyterians propose to come into our church on the basis of the Confession of Faith and not otherwise it would be something less than grace that would close the door, (applause) something less than loyalty to Calvinism. (Thunderous applause.)

Another speaker was the Rev. Mr. J. Ross Stevenson, pastor of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York City one of the wealthiest congregations of the nation. Referring to the Cumberland denomination as a "church of paupers," he groaned when he contemplated the economic liability of such a religious body saddled on his church. He further argued that out of 2,900 churches in the Cumberland denomination in 1901, only 154 had settled pastors, while one-half of the whole number had no Sunday Schools. Even more frightening, women were eligible for the office of elder in the local churches. Of 1,616 Cumberland ministers in 1901, only one-fourth had attended a theological seminary, and one-half had never been to college.

The most eloquent defender of the union plan was the Rev. Mr. Robert F. Coyle of Denver, Colorado, who said:

The Cumberland Church proposes to give up its name, to give up its separate organization, give up everything distinctive to promote and glorify God. It seems to me an act sublime. Could anything be more magnificent than self-obliteration in the name of Christ?

Great applause greeted Dr. Coyle at the end of his address.
A Negro representative, the Rev. Mr. George P. Dillard of Columbia, South Carolina, spoke against the agreement providing for separate presbyteries and synods in the united church: "We don't want to be singled out and made special objects of mercy and prayer by the white man." Originally the Negroes had white ministers but they died away. "We could not keep them alive." This being the case, "we are for Negro leadership, but we are against separate presbyteries. Why not give us a chance to get higher by consorting with our superiors, the white man?"

He concluded by arguing that the fifty to sixty thousand Negro communicants in the U.S.A. denomination were extremely reluctant to move into separate church courts because the Negro in the United States was never more discriminated against than at the time he was speaking. 70

Not wishing to give the appearance of intimidating the lesser denomination, the U.S.A. assembly waited to take action until it received word from Dallas. When news of affirmative action arrived from Texas, the resolution was then introduced onto the floor of the U.S.A. Assembly. The merger scheme was recommended for the consideration of the presbyteries by a viva voce vote. Although no actual count was made, a reporter estimated that over three-fourths of the delegates gave their thundering approval. The amendment providing for separate presbyteries for racial or national groups was also accepted by voice ballot. When the moderator of the assembly announced that both propositions had been carried, hundreds of dignified delegates with tears in

70Buffalo Express, May 27, 1904.
their eyes leaped to their feet and clapped their hands. The assembly
then burst into joyous song, "I Love Thy Church, O God, the Home of
Thine Abode."

Before the vote was taken at eleven o'clock on Saturday morn-
ing, Dr. John Fox of New York, one of the opponents of union, made a
desperate move to delay consideration of the two propositions. Leaping
to his feet, he moved that in Resolution 2 the words "Calvinistic and
Reformed" be inserted before the words "doctrinal basis of the Confes-
sion of Faith." A murmur of impatience arose from the hall, and his
motion did not receive a second. Unwilling to concede defeat, he hur-
rried over to the Rev. Mr. Moffat and asked, "Does Dr. Moffat accept my
amendment?" Arising from his seat, Dr. Moffat glared at Dr. Fox and
snapped, "I do not." Great applause followed this statement. Shortly
after both measures were carried, Fox was once again on his feet
announcing that he would introduce a resolution of protest against the
action taken. He urged all those who supported his stand to meet with
him in a mass rally in the basement of the building. A storm of boos
and hisses greeted this statement. A short time later a reporter saw
Dr. Fox in the basement but he was alone. Undismayed, Fox introduced
his resolution of protest later that same afternoon. However, he had
inveigled Dr. Patton and others to attach their signatures to the docu-
ment. The resolution stated that the undersigned registered their
"emphatic protest" against the action taken by the Assembly.71

71Ibid., May 28, 1904.
A more detailed protest resolution was introduced and signed by John R. Davies and Elisha H. Perkins. These two men stated that they were opposed to the union for a variety of reasons. They feared that controversy would arise over disputes involving property rights and administration because the two churches differed so greatly in tradition, the training of ministers, methods of work, methods of dealing with significant social questions, and, above all, in doctrinal belief as set forth in their respective Confessions of Faith. Union between them would be a serious mistake. This document was voted down by an overwhelming voice vote, and the assembly ended its proceedings. 72

Opposition to the merger within the U.S.A. denomination was actually slight. This religious body had nothing to lose and much to gain. In addition to being augmented by hundreds of thousands of new communicants and millions of dollars of property value, the national church would be able at last to extend into the South. At the Buffalo meeting, it was pointed out in the course of the discussions that the U.S.A. church had no representation in the states of Arkansas, Alabama, and Mississippi, and only 7,232 members in Tennessee, and 3,379 in Texas. The Cumberland Church, well-entrenched in the Mississippi Valley and the Lone Star State, would permit the U.S.A. denomination to penetrate massively the region. In summary, it was argued the union would

72Minutes of May 27, 1904, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., IV (1904), 140-41.
give to the church a "national character commensurate with its name, its
history and responsibilities."\textsuperscript{73}

It was, however, a far different matter with the Cumberland
Presbyterian Church. The opponents of union were numerous, desperate,
and determined, and it appeared inevitable that a bitter fratricidal
struggle would occur within the denomination.

The struggle within the Cumberland denomination was clearly
illustrated by certain religious periodicals of the period. The offi-
cial organ of the Cumberland denomination was the weekly periodical,
The Cumberland Presbyterian. Although the editors were pro-union in
sentiment, they permitted all viewpoints on the subject to be spread on
the pages of their magazine. Another periodical, The Cumberland Banner,
was published for the first time in 1904 for the specific purpose of
defeating the merger. Published first monthly, then weekly, this peri-
odical permitted only anti-union literature to appear on its pages. To
begin with, those both favorable and unfavorable to union admitted that
the great majority of the leaders of the denomination unhesitatingly
favored union.

With one exception, all 21 of the living ex-moderators of the
Cumberland General Assembly favored the plan of union. They were sup-
ported by all but one of the presidents of the Cumberland colleges or
universities, and almost without exception all the faculty members and
boards of trustees of these institutions. Standing with them were

\textsuperscript{73}Ibid., 131-32.
every officer and member of the education society of the church, eight of the nine members of the board of ministerial relief, all eight members of the board of missions, all nine members of the board of publications, all ten members of the board of Sunday School and young people's work, two of the three supervisors of theological seminaries, all but five or possibly three, members of the board of evangelical work, and ten out of twelve trustees of the General Assembly. In spite of the adherence of the leadership of the church to the forces favoring merger, anti-unionists inside the Cumberland denomination threw up an obstacle course of arguments to block the union movement. Many Cumberland Presbyterians who cherished the history and traditions of their independent denomination deplored this loss. A minister succinctly stated this point of view in a pamphlet which had wide circulation at the time the debate was in progress: "We did not go because of hallowed memories of the sacred path along which would be found the heroic deeds and splendid achievements of devoted men." Those opposed to the merger called their opponents inside their church "Traitors who betray their country live in everlasting contempt, and to betray a sacred trust secures for one the execration of mankind. To

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74 I. F. Landrith, "Opposition Arguments and Accusations," The Cumberland Presbyterian, LXVIII (October 13, 1904), 457-58.

betray a church is worse than all; . . . "76 Answering this charge of treason unionists argued that the Cumberland Church could more effectively carry on its work united to the mother church.

Another criticism was that the union committee appointed by the Cumberland General Assembly in 1903 was packed with pro-unionists over-anxious to secure a merger at any cost. They were too willing to make concessions to the U.S.A. church, and reluctant to demand concessions in turn. It was plain that such men had no right to "sell" 185,000 Cumberland Presbyterians into another church.77

Sectionalism also played a large part in building opposition to the union plan. Cumberland presbyteries of the North and West almost universally supported the movement, while all the lesser judicatories of the former Confederate states except Texas were solidly opposed.

The sentiment of the Old South is summed up in the following statement:

I find opposition rising out of a pure prejudice against the North. They do not say so in so many words, but it is evident to anyone who keeps his ears and eyes open. There are men here in Nashville who opposed to it solely because it makes us a Northern church. . . . the southern people are so peculiar in their sentiment, . . . many . . . would go to other churches before going with the union. In other words, while some are opposed to union for doctrinal or other good reasons, very many are opposed because they still hate the North, and are not willing to have anything to do with a Northern Church. . . . All you have to do to some of these people is say "nigger" and they will have a fit all at once.78

76 Ibid., 5.
77 Ibid., 30, 33-34.
78 W. C. Logan to J. L. Hutchins, April 7, 1904, The Cumberland Presbyterian, LXXI (February 22, 1906), 248.
The anti-unionists were well aware that many people then living were alive during the Reconstruction period, while many more residing in the South were frightened by the traditional myth of black Republican rule. In this connection a minister was bitter in his attack on the U.S.A. denomination:

This is the same church which, through low political manipulations, in one period in the history of this country, aided and abetted the taking of the ballot out of the white man's hands and placing it in the hands of the Negro. It is the same church whose General Assembly demanded of Congress and the President that "to the Negro should be delegated the task of reorganizing southern society."79

In addition to these sectional arguments, rural Presbyterians put forth the contention that the national church was inclined to occupy large urban centers to the neglect of the countryside. This meant that the largely rural Cumberland Church would be permitted to die of inanition and neglect once union had been consummated.80

Not all of the arguments against the proposed union were as profound. For instance, the Rev. Mr. W. T. Dale noted with indignation that one of his Cumberland brethren favored the union because he believed it was like Jonah being swallowed by the Biblical whale. The pro-unionists argued that being swallowed proved to be the salvation of the prophet for he accomplished more after leaving the whale's belly than he ever had before he entered it. In reply to this, the Rev. Mr. Dale indignantly roared,


80Padgett, Why We Did Not Go, 22.
But this good brother "sidesteps the fact" that we were once in this whale and it puked us out, why should we seek to be swallowed again by it? The next time, instead of being vomited up, we may be digested by it. But in the case of Jonah and the whale, Jonah became nauseating to the whale, so much so that the whale got very sick and threw Jonah out upon the dry land.

So, if we should be swallowed by this Presbyterian whale again, I dare say it would not be long until there would be another very sick fish and another vomiting would occur.81

Another anti-unionist complained that the leadership of the Cumberland Church could not appreciate the superiority of the Cumberland Confession of Faith in comparison to the Westminster Confession:

The union propaganda is backed by the leading ecclesiastical and scholastic dignitaries of our church. But they have lost their wits. This is evidenced by the fact that they don't know the difference between real flesh and color and padding and paint. They want Cumberland Presbyterians to divorce a spouse [The Cumberland Confession of Faith] that surpasses in vivacity, beauty, and loveliness [sic] all others in the entire ecclesiastical family of Christendom for one [The Westminster Confession of Faith] that is red-headed, freckle-faced and cross-eyed. They tell us that the Presbyterians have revised their spouse with brief statements and new chapters until she is just as lovely and blushing as ours.

However, one had but to apply alkali and warm water to the U.S.A. Confession and the same old buck-teeth and crossed eyes would appear.82

One complaint of the anti-unionists was that they believed the U.S.A. denomination demanded unreasonably high standards of its ministerial candidates. It cannot be denied that a small element of the church glorified an untrained ministry. It was perhaps inevitable,

81 W. T. Dale, "Jonah and the Whale," The Cumberland Banner, I (April, 1904), 12.

considering the origin of the church, that some Cumberland ministers carried their rebellion to a logical extreme by arguing that little or no education was preferred. One spokesman even asserted that if the soul were awakened with religious fire, a good moral character was unnecessary.

One hundred and twenty-five years ago the Presbyterian Church had a prestige in this country; but by holding on to fossilized and impracticable standards it has dragged itself to rank fourth or fifth among American Protestant churches. Without money or education we have done immensely better work than she has done, in proportion to numbers and facilities. The Methodist church, the Baptist church and the Salvation Army are standing witnesses to the efficiency of an uneducated force. . . . Our church, with all she has and is and has been, was built by "uneducated men" and we are not ready to say that we are ashamed of their work. Jesus did his work among the people and did not boast about his education. . . . Jesus chose his disciples from among the common people--in order to reach the masses. Our standard should be high but it should be advisory, not compulsory. When God sets a man's heart on fire with a desire to carry a message to others no Presbytery or General Assembly or any other human power has the right to demand anything of him other than good common sense, good moral character and evidences of good faith; and it is to be doubted even if anybody has a right to demand even good character. Some of the people Jesus sent as preachers had unsavory reputations, especially the woman at the well. But they were in earnest and in good faith. The call of God outranks the Presbytery and Assembly. Of course a man with good education would probably do better work than he would do without education, but really this is not demonstrated.83

The anti-unionists evidently soon discovered that comparing the creeds of the two denominations and hair-splitting theological arguments left their communicants apathetic and bewildered. Feeling that their cause was a losing one and their beloved church faced destruction,

83Anon., "Editorial Brieflets and Excerpts," The Cumberland Banner, I (May, 1904), 11.
they yielded to the temptation of enrolling popular support through leveling unsubstantiated defamatory charges at their opponents. Judge J. N. Parker, one of the delegates to the General Assembly meeting in Dallas, attacked the principles and character of the leadership of his own church. The motives actuating the movement, he charged, were "prestige and power." Their reasons were "mercenary and ambitious" and their methods "political."

Evidently piqued by the resentment his remark made among pro-unionists in the Cumberland denomination, Judge Parker went further in levying accusations. He claimed that seven or eight delegates at the Dallas meeting were approached and offered salaries ranging from five thousand dollars down in the U.S.A. church if they would change their vote from a negative to an affirmative one. They claimed they were very hurt that any such offer should be made. There was the clear implication that if they voted against submission of the plan to the presbyteries, and the union was finally consummated, they would get nothing. Judge Parker further asserted his belief that members of the Cumberland committee that met with the U.S.A. representatives to frame the plan of union, being skillful horse-traders, struck a hard bargain. While he would not charge that the committee members actually pocketed money at the joint conference in St. Louis, he did believe that visions of larger salaries like sugarplums "floated across their mental

visions." He opined, "I do believe endowments were up for consideration."85

These allegations were bitterly resented by the pro-unionists in the Cumberland Church. The editor of the Cumberland Presbyterian took to task the editor of the Cumberland Banner for opening his pages to such slander, asserting that these charges were of "so gross and venomous" a character that they could not be overlooked. "How men calling themselves brethren can be guilty of such discourtesies and scandal-mongering is ... unexplained in my philosophy," he snapped.86

The editor of the Banner rebutted this attack by publishing five alleged instances of attempted bribery in the form of bonuses or other financial inducements, all allegedly made by the U.S.A. denomination to secure a favorable union vote.87 While no specific reply was given to these latter charges, an answer was supplied in general to such accusations. It was natural for the pro-unionists in the Cumberland Church to count among the other blessings that would stem from merger augmented income which would fill the empty Cumberland coffers and permit the church to carry out its evangelical mission more effectively.

87 Editor, "Some Testimony Concerning Endowments and Union Bonuses," The Cumberland Banner, I (March 3, 1905), 1.
But to take the remarks of men who believe, and rejoice in the belief, that union will enable us to accomplish much more through increased financial resources and to pervert such remarks into "bargains," are to affirm that the only, or chief, desire of those favoring union is to obtain money (to say nothing of the insinuation that they are planning to profit personally from the "dicker") is to turn truth into falsehood, and to turn righteous motives into sordid and sinful venality.

It little commended ordained ministers of the church to commit "tongue murder" by destroying the character of others through peddling unsubstantiated slander. "A gossiping woman is bad enough; a gossiping man is infinitely worse; there are not enough adjectives in the language to adequately describe a gossiping minister." 88

At first the anti-unionists press appeared reluctant to base its appeals on sectional and racial arguments. Apparently realizing the effectiveness of the Negro as an issue, particularly in the deep South, it gradually yielded to temptation and based its plea for the preservation of an independent Cumberland Church in large part on racist fears and hatred. In the heart of Dixieland, the Cumberland minister advised his flock that forty U.S.A. Negro preachers had white wives, and racial intermarriage would be one of the key objectives of the united church. 89

A Cumberland minister, H. C. Ferguson of Lubbock, Texas, carried the argument still further. In a letter to one of the editors of


the *Cumberland Banner*, he complained that too much emphasis had been placed on the doctrinal differences between the two churches. He felt this was secondary in importance to the relationship between the races in the church.

When you place your objections, as you write, on doctrinal and polity grounds, mainly or exclusively, you shut your eyes to the great mountain of truth that lays [sic] at the very threshold of our religion and the essential doctrine of racial purity. Without racial purity we have no religion, and we can have no national purity without distinct lines of racial separations, and cannot long maintain a national existence. Amalgamation is the door through which idolatry enters. Mark this expression. No people ever abandoned the pure faith in God and accepted idolatry until they first adopted the God despised practice of amalgamation, and no people ever retained their faith in God and followed his teachings who became amalgamated with an inferior race.90

The editors of that periodical, themselves, yielded to the temptation to kindle the smoldering fire of racial hatred. Noting that the national Presbyterian church had a special board which dispensed funds for the schooling and spiritual uplift of the Negro, the editors declared that it should be renamed "The Bureau for the Development of Negro Insolence and Vagrancy." They maintained, however, that the U.S.A. denomination would have a more baneful influence on the economic than on the social life of the South. "Work is a luxury in which the negro mind is losing interest. He is more a 'gentleman of leisure' at the present time than at any previous time in history."91 The editors

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then permitted themselves to indulge in a bit of satire. Looking through a crystal ball, they affected to see into the future and prophesy what conditions would be like in the United Church when its alleged doctrine of racial mixture was imposed upon the South. A series of "news bulletins" issued by this new denomination informed the brethren of social events that transpired in U.S.A. congregations in various areas of the South:

The song service at the Hambone Elect Church last Sunday night was an enjoyable affair. There was a song "Oh Tell It To Me" sung by the quartette composed of Messrs. Snowball Roosterfetch and Abraham Sumner Boozequench and Misses Iddy Beanpole and Gladys Narrowpate. The gentlemen are colored licentiates from our Southern College at Lebanon and the young ladies belong to two aristocratic white families. The mingling of the white and black is something that lies very near our predestinated gizzards.

There was a runaway marriage at the church manse last week. Mr. Squinteye Brown, a colored student from the Lebanon school of law, stole the heart and hand of Miss Clara Beatrice Puddinhead, daughter of Judge Puddinhead. The old Judge, who is a civil war veteran and an unreconstructed Cumberland, was outwitted by the intelligence and sagacity of a colored youth. Another evidence that colored intellect is superior to that of boasted Southern aristocrats.

There are 150 colored and 75 white students enrolled in the Divinity School at Lebanon. The colored students lead their white brothers in all points, especially in smell.

Mr. Samuel Chickengraft and his white wife have returned to our city. Before union was effected he would have not been allowed in a southern city.

At the class entertainment at the residence of our colored divine, Rev. Jimmie Hoodoobag, D. D., L.D.D., and P.D.Q. last Thursday night, the boys and girls were divided and the girls drew cards from a social box with the names of the boys on it. Every time one of the girls drew one of our colored youths for a beau for the evening it brought a sigh of envy from the other white girls not so lucky.
Miss Sally Ann Scallawag has returned from a missionary trip to investigate the mental, physical, and moral condition of former C.P.'s in the South who were herded into our church with the Union. The conditions of these benighted people with their limited intellectual powers demand heroic attention from Missionary Boards. Some are so densely ignorant they object to union, and will not let their children associate with the colored people. We recommend that our board at once send colored missionaries in the South to teach these people Elect manners and instruct them how to eat with a knife and fork and wear store clothes.92

The anti-unionists resorted to fiction to drive their message home.

The Rev. Mr. W. M. Robison of Marshall, Texas, penned a touching romance entitled The Parting of the Way, which the anti-unionist press in the Cumberland Church officially supported. In the preface to this remarkable work the minister made the theme of this gripping narrative crystal clear. Pointing out that the "northern" Presbyterian Church was a self-confessed Negro equality body, he stated that the primary purpose of the union between the U.S.A. and Cumberland denominations was to disrupt the established society in the South. However, "the rich blood of the pure Anglo-Saxon race would not submit to the equalization of noble sweet women and children with the inferior races in their dirt and filth."93

The tale was a heartrending love story about a Rev. Mr. Royal, a Cumberland minister in the South who allegedly prostituted his

92Editors, "A Prophetic Glance Into the Future as to What We May Expect, May, 1908," (Extracts from Church News Columns of the "Union Social Equality Advocate"), The Cumberland Banner, II (August 3, 1906), 8.

principles by supporting the union with the U.S.A. Church. His affections were captured by Miss Eva, his church organist, who remained an unreconstructed Cumberlander. The only obstacle to matrimony between the two protagonists being their divergent views on the denominational merger, the dialogue of their tempestuous courtship was composed primarily of passages from scripture, Confessions of Faith, official statistics of the church, and extracts from committee reports. With this tension-building device the love interest reached a climax. In the book's final chapter Miss Eva was still in doubt about her feelings toward the handsome young minister who had completely lost his heart to her. Upon seeing the Rev. Mr. Royal in the company of Negro divines at a U.S.A. General Assembly meeting in Chicago, the scales fell from her eyes. While she was seated watching the proceedings, her would-be lover hurried over to her. Enthusiastically pumping her hand, he inquired what she was doing at this assembly. Rebuffing his friendly overtures, she said, "I now come to realize the meaning of this whole union scheme by these northern people. Not that they love the Negro more but to bring down our noble southern sons to equalize themselves with the Negro and call it religion."

"Miss Eva, I am sorry you are so hard on this feature of our work for I'm sure we ought to strive to save the poor Negro as well as others. They have souls to win for Christ and I am truly sorry you came up here as much as I was delighted to see you."

She then crushed him with:
Now Mr. Royal, you know we love the dear old darkey in the South far better than these people do in the North and we pray for them, wait on them when they are sick, give them of our means, and they love us because they know their places and are satisfied with it. . . . God has given to us our natural elements to move in and our environments have much to do with our service for the Master. The Negro has his element and like the bird or fish his joy is complete when in it.

Should you take one from his filthy shack and place him in an elegant home with gaudy surroundings he would be most miserable. . . . All of our troubles with the colored man in the South arise from the efforts from the younger set of Negroes trying to get out of their natural environment and away from the place where they belong by nature.

Although "we have had days of sunshine and days of storms and clouds," the "story of our lives comes to a parting of the ways today, Mr. Royal." With this touching scene and on this high philosophical level this noble work came to an end.\(^9^4\)

Replying to these statements, a pro-unionist Cumberland minister declared that it was "to be bitterly regretted" that the idea should be disseminated that "union would result in forcing so-called 'Negro equality' upon the South." For the "plain fact is, that our brethren in the North dislike the idea of social equality just as much as we who are in the South." Proof of this could be seen in the fact "that in practice, there is already almost complete separation of white and black in the [U.S.A.] Presbyterian Church."\(^9^5\) Doubtless a majority of ministers in both camps deprecated the anti-Negro sentiments that

\(^{9^4}\) Ibid., 103-06.

\(^{9^5}\) Editors, "Union and the Relation of the Races," The Cumberland Presbyterian, LIXX (February 9, 1905), 162-63.
appeared in the course of the union debate, but the amount of racist
literature during this period was impressive.

A surprising quantity of ink was spilled in an attempt either
to prove or to disprove that the amendments adopted in 1903 by the
U.S.A. denomination substantially modified Calvinism in the doctrinal
standards of that church. Unfortunately, some of the ministers who
expressed their views appeared to be better acquainted with their
prejudices and predilections than with the actual doctrine under dis-
cussion. In the course of the debate, many Presbyterians of all denomi-
nations turned their eyes toward Princeton University and awaited with
some interest to learn the views of Dr. Francis L. Patton, perhaps the
nation’s leading authority on Calvinism.

Dr. Patton centered his attention on the doctrinal question.
Stating that the U.S.A. denomination held the Calvinist system of
church doctrine, he further said that his church organization "repre-
sents those who believe that the maintenance of that type of doctrine
through the organized instrumentalities of the church is a matter of
great importance." This being the case he turned his attention to the
significance of the alterations in the creedal standards of the U.S.A.
Church adopted in 1902 and 1903.

If the Cumberland Presbyterians were to conscientiously unite
with our church on the basis of our revised Confession of
Faith it must be because either (a) they are ready to abandon
their own theology as it is formulated in their own Confession
of Faith or, (b) because they believe in revising our Confes-
sion of Faith . . . or, (c) because they believe in spite of
these existing Calvinistic features we recognize an evangeli-
cal faith common to the two churches a sufficient basis of
union.
With reference to the first question, he stated that there was every
evidence that the Cumberland Presbyterians had not abandoned their dis-
tinctive doctrinal beliefs and had no intention of doing so. The ques-
tion of whether the revisions of the Westminster Confession made in
1903 had eliminated its Calvinistic features was an intellectual pro-
lem capable of easy solution. Were the question addressed to a board
of theological experts, it would unhesitatingly pronounce the document
a "Calvinistic symbol." If the Cumberland Presbyterians were under the
illusion that the U.S.A. denomination had conceded anything of conse-
quenue to them in regard to doctrine they were guilty of self-deception.
That being the case, if the two denominations were to merge, it must be
on the basis of "the evangelical faith of Christendom" and not upon the
Calvinistic system as represented by the Westminster Confession of
Faith.96 Dr. Patton's ultraconservatism must be kept in mind in evalu-
ating his viewpoint.

After the arguments had been stated and pondered by the min-
isters and elders of the Cumberland Church, the presbyteries had to
meet and vote on the union question before the next annual meeting of
the General Assembly in May, 1905. Apparently the balloting in Texas
took place with little evidence of internal friction, for the members
of presbyteries could speak and vote their convictions on the issue

96 Editors, "Dr. Patton's Position," The Cumberland Presbyterian
LXVIII (September 1, 1904), 260. [The most detailed discussion of the
theological point at issue has been cited in footnote number 41 of this
chapter.]
without intimidation. A final judgment on the extinction of the Cumberland Church had not yet been rendered, and both pro- and anti-unionists in these church courts could remain in these religious bodies and exercise control of their properties without fear of expulsion.

The Bacon Presbytery of the Cumberland Church, located in east central Texas, was the one exception to this prevailing harmony. This judicatory met in December, 1904, to consider the fate of the Cumberland denomination. After the introduction of a resolution favoring union with the national church, a debate took place at the conclusion with a number of ministers and one elder participating. A vote was then taken and the resolution passed with nine ministers and ten elders voting in the affirmative and two ministers and ten elders voting in opposition.97

The two anti-union pastors then attempted to introduce a resolution denouncing the action taken by the presbytery. Believing this statement insulting to them personally, the pro-unionists at the meeting refused to allow the motion to be spread on the official records. The two dissenters then attempted to introduce a second resolution protesting the refusal of the judicatory to permit the incorporation of their motion into the minute book. The pro-unionists permitted them to spread this second resolution on the official records. In this

97 Minutes of December 10, 1904, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Bacon of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, December, 1904-February, 1907," 3-10. In church papers (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas).
statement the two anti-unionists avowed that their original motion had been respectful and disclaimed any slanderous allusions to the character or principles of those who favored the union resolution.

The unionists then introduced a resolution responding to the statement of their antagonists. In their reply they stated, "if said protestants believe themselves to be respectful they were exceedingly unfortunate in the selection of the language of their protest." They did not think the anti-unionists were decorous in their expression when they charged that the majority was guilty of an unconstitutional action in adopting the union resolution. It was hardly respectful to state that the majority had been confused and misled by the false statements of certain named members present. This accusation was an insult to the intelligence of the majority and a slanderous attack on the persons accused of these so-called false statements. In conclusion, the unionists charged that both protest resolutions were "wholly erroneous, false and misleading." 98

Relations between the two factions were obviously strained, and it is not surprising to discover that further trouble developed between them subsequently. A year later a special committee reported to this same church court on what it alleged to be the outrageous behavior of Elder John S. McNutt. Chosen as one of the commissioners to represent the presbytery in the crucial meeting of the Cumberland General Assembly that met in Fresno, California, he had assured the unionist majority

98 Minutes of December 12, 1904, ibid., 20-23.
that he would represent their views at this meeting. After his selection he had been approached by the anti-unionist minority who promised to pay his expenses to California if he would change his position and oppose the merger. "While we do not think the Presbytery has any right to control the convictions of its commissioners," the committee growled, at the same time, "it would be a matter of honor for the commissioner to refuse to accept the privileges of presbyterial franchise which he could not conscientiously represent." Upon his arrival in Fresno, this infamous delegate raised a tumult, scattered dissension, and violated Presbyterian law to the everlasting shame of the Bacon Presbytery. Then adding insult to injury, upon his return he presented a bill for his expenses which he demanded that the judicatory pay. This was in spite of the fact that already he had admitted that he was bribed by the prior payment of these same expenses. Such were the developments in the Bacon Presbytery.

Although it cannot be fully documented, the Cumberland records indicate that the younger ministers of the denomination in general favored the union. On the other hand, the older ministers, the men who had grown up with the church, and who through dedication and self-sacrifice built it up in remote rural areas, looked with dismay on the elimination of their beloved denomination. This is exemplified by a letter from the Rev. Mr. John H. Day of Detroit, Texas, telling about the vote of the Red River Presbytery of the Cumberland denomination.

99 Minutes of December 9, 1905, ibid., 49-50.
He had become a minister in that church in 1864; now in the "sunset border of life" he had done "all I could, living poor and riding through the wet, cold, and heat, preaching a 'whosoever will' gospel."

When the ballots of the Red River Presbytery were counted, only he and the Rev. Mr. J. H. McKnight voted against the union resolution. "To me it is a sad sight," he sighed. McKnight died at an advanced age, and Day was the only one left who held true to an independent Cumberland Church in his judiciary. He declared: "Myself and my little church will be loyal to the end." 100

In spite of the former statement, it was apparent in the triumphant tone of their literature that the anti-unionists in the Cumberland Church appeared serenely confident that the merger scheme would be defeated. As the results of the presbytery votes began to come in during the winter and spring of 1905, revealing a strong unionist trend, alarm swept the ranks of these dissenters. An article written by the editors of The Cumberland Banner reflected their thinking immediately prior to the meeting of the Cumberland General Assembly in California. The Cumberland Church would be led to the executioner's block and the entire estate transferred to another denomination.

Guillotined! That would be mild and merciful compared with the whole design. What is it but the black flag of wreck, ruin and desperation? No quarters or concessions are to be extended. Union will be declared. . . . The executioners will demand that it give the fidelity of service that it always did and bring the same offerings that it brought prior

100 John H. Day to the editors, "n.d., The Cumberland Banner, II (June 15, 1906), 2.
to the issuing of the warrant of condemnation. We must search the pages of the history of the earlier struggles of Christianity and of Pagan oppression for such a piece of torture and cruelty.101

When the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church assembled in Fresno, California, in May, 1905, the total vote of the presbyteries was read. The vote in the lesser judicatories in the Texas Synod was as follows:

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Altogether 162 ministers and 158 elders voted for union, while 85 ministers and 183 elders voted against; this meant that there was a total vote of 320 commissioners for as compared to 268 against. In

101 Editors, "The Final Drama of Unionism," The Cumberland Banner, I (April 14, 1905), 5.
the presbytery count in the State of Texas, 13 presbyteries voted for
the merger plan, while seven voted against.\textsuperscript{102}

In the vote of the presbyteries in the denomination, 691 min-
isters and 649 elders approved the union plan, while 470 ministers and
1,007 elders disapproved it. This meant there was a total vote of
1,344 for and 1,477 against. However, the constitution of the Cumber-
land Church provided that the vote would be tallied by presbyteries
and not by a majority or minority vote of the membership. The more
populous southern presbyteries voted in large majority against the
merger plan, but many border states and non-southern judicatories with
a smaller enrollment voted in favor of it. A total of 61 presbyteries
voted for union, while 51 voted against.

The sectional character of the balloting was clearly indicated
in the presbytery vote. Excluding the state of Texas, every presbytery
but two located in the former Confederate States voted against the
proposition. Out of 51 church courts that went against union, 43 were
located in the South. Of the remaining eight presbyteries that voted
against the merger, four were in Missouri, three in Illinois, and one
in Indiana. Although a border state, much of Missouri is southern
oriented, and southern Illinois, where the dissenting presbyteries were
located, has always been subject to southern influence.\textsuperscript{103}

\textsuperscript{102}Minutes of May 22, 1905, Minutes of the General Assembly of
the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1905), 40-42.

\textsuperscript{103}Minutes of May 22, 1905, \textit{ibid.}, 38-43.
The sectional nature of the decision did not go unnoticed at the time. Even before the final tally was in, one writer noted:

Can it be that the people south of the Ohio and east of the Mississippi have different theological views from their brethren North and West. I do not believe it. Can it be that those south of the Ohio and east of the Mississippi are less informed than our brethren of the North or West? It certainly cannot be. What then? The "negro" that is all. We have said that we are not a sectional church. Does not the vote prove to the contrary?\textsuperscript{104}

The presbyterial apportionment was such as to give a decided advantage to more numerous judicatories with limited membership. For instance, the state of Tennessee had a total Cumberland membership of 42,464. Iowa, on the other hand, had a total membership of 1,190. The total number of presbyteries in Tennessee was thirteen while Iowa had three. Tennessee sentiment was decidedly against the union, but it was only able to cast eleven votes in the negative while Iowa with one thirty-fifth of the membership of Tennessee was able to cast three ballots in the affirmative. Again, Tennessee had 10,000 more members than Texas, but the Lone Star State had eight more presbyteries and cast thirteen votes for union in the General Assembly and seven against. Numerous examples of this unfair representation could be cited but only one will suffice. On the Pacific Coast there were seven presbyteries representing a membership of 4,063. Kentucky also had seven presbyteries, but these church courts represented a membership of 16,950.

\textsuperscript{104}W. L. Livingston, "Some Interesting Phases of the Union Situation," \textit{The Cumberland Presbyterian}, LXIX (January 19, 1905), 95.
Kentucky went six to one against the merger, but the Pacific Coast cast seven votes for the union.\textsuperscript{105}

Regardless of these factors, the required constitutional majority to pass the measure had been attained. The majority members of the special committee on union and reunion issued a report recommending that the General Assembly declare the union consummated.\textsuperscript{106}

For a variety of reasons, the minority members of the committee urged abandonment of the merger plan. Claiming that the constitution of the Church gave the General Assembly no authority to negotiate organic union with another denomination, they protested that the union plan violated both the provisions and spirit of that instrument. Citing the fact that a majority of the members of the lesser judicatories had cast their ballots against the merger, they declared that a majority of the elders, lay and spiritual, opposed the scheme. The specter of Negroes being thrust into white congregations and presbyteries was also raised.\textsuperscript{107}

After the reading of the majority and minority reports to the General Assembly, the Rev. Mr. S. M. Templeton of Waxahachie moved adoption of the majority report. Elder J. J. McClellan then urged the adoption of the minority report as a substitute. A discussion was then

\textsuperscript{105} Davis, "Union of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church, USA," 67-68.

\textsuperscript{106} Minutes of May 22, 1905, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1905), 40-45.

\textsuperscript{107} Ibid., 42-43.
declared in order. In the course of the debate which followed to the credit of the delegates the bounds of courtesy were never over-stepped, although many of the men who spoke were almost overcome by the strength of their emotions. The Rev. Mr. Templeton began the discussion. "Hesitating and almost awkward in his speech at first, he warmed up to his subject, he waxed eloquent and powerful as well as cleverly argumentative showing that he well merited the place of honor his church had given him." Among other things, he argued that the majority vote against union cast by the members of the lesser judicatories was not "pertinent." "It is not the law of our church to vote by individuals, but by presbyteries."

Another pro-union speaker, the Rev. Mr. T. A. Wigginton of Evansville, Indiana, also one of the members of the committee on union and reunion who signed the majority report, turned his attention to the race question. Arguing that the fear that white and black ministers would be forced to sit in the same presbyteries and synods was without foundation; he declared that colored ministers would undoubtedly be shoved into separate church courts.

Speaking with high emotional tension, Elder J. J. McClellan of West Point, Mississippi, was more fiery in his utterances than any of the previous speakers. Tapping a copy of the Westminster Confession of Faith, he stated that to dedicated Cumberland Presbyterians this work was "repulsive." "Why, the Methodist Church comes more nearly to my

\[^{108}\text{Ibid., 44.}\]
doctrine than the teachings of this book," he cried. His words stirred amens and exclamations from various parts of the house and the moderator had to rap vigorously for order. "You may laugh, brethren," he continued, "but I have been in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church for forty years and I am only 48 years old. I do not know anything but to love the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and when you tear it from my bosom you tear my heart strings." As he concluded, his voice broke and the gathering was visibly moved.109

Finally, the church courts voted on the minority and majority reports. They first voted down the minority report as a substitute for the majority report. They then adopted the majority report, declaring that union should be consummated, by a vote of 137 delegates for and 111 against the motion.110

A short time later, Elder J. J. McClellan speaking for the anti-unionists, introduced a resolution of protest against the action taken by the national governing body. In this rather lengthy statement the chivalric tone that had apparently hitherto prevailed at the gathering was signaly lacking. Among other things the paper stated:

The plan or basis of this union is not in its legal and logical effect a union of the two churches. Its consummation would be purely and simply the merging of the membership of our communion into the other communion and the conveyance of all our property assets into that communion.

109 Fresno Morning Republican, May 23, 1905.

110 Minutes of May 23, 1905, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1905), 51-56.
Implies fraud and coercion, the resolution declared: "The arbitrary exercise of authority either legally vested or assumed can only have disastrous results." The plan of union being "utterly impracticable" would lead to "disorder, chaos, and confusion" and bring "shame and reproach to the Kingdom of our Master." Ninety-one delegates signed this resolution. 111

Stung by this attack, Templeton and others drew up an answer. In referring to the doctrinal arguments of the minority, the paper used such words as "preposterous" and "violent construction." Turning its attention to the question of property rights the statement declared that the members of the united church would continue to exercise the same control over their property that they had enjoyed before the merger had taken place. "Only those members who may refuse to go with their Church into the union will divest themselves of any property rights." That last sentence must have chilled the blood of the anti-unionists in the hall. It was a clear warning that all those who continued to oppose the union after it had been legally consummated might be confronted with the total loss of their church property holdings. Having permitted the glint of the mailed fist to be seen beneath the velvet glove, the majority of the General Assembly, having triumphed over its opposition, appealed for reconciliation. With "the opportunity for more deliberate reflection" all could now prepare to transfer themselves into the united church, "seeing that the excitement incident

111 Minutes of May 24, 1905, ibid., 78-80.
to earnest debate may now subside by reason of the fact that the decision is accomplished and final."

The U.S.A. General Assembly also having accepted the plan of union, the majority paper stated that another joint committee would be appointed to work out the final details of the merger. Consequently, both general assemblies would meet separately a year from May, 1905, for the last time. After 1906 there would be only one General Assembly of the united church. These reports ended the business of consequence.

While the union debate riveted the attention of American Calvinists, the three presbyteries of the U.S.A. denomination in Texas demonstrated an almost painful eagerness to promote the merger. As the joint conference on union was hammering out a plan to be proposed to the General Assemblies of both churches, the North Texas and the Trinity Presbyteries drew up resolutions stating their enthusiastic support of the union movement. When they were required to cast their official ballots on the union question, all three cast unanimous votes in favor of the merger. Two men in the Austin Presbytery, however, recorded

112 Ibid., 80-91.

113 Minutes of April 28, 1903, "Minutes of the Presbytery of North Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1900-1906," 63. In church papers (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas); Minutes of April 14, 1904, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Trinity of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1895-1906," 103. In church papers (University of Texas Archives, Austin, Texas).
their votes against the separate presbytery provision. This eagerness is understandable when one compares the scanty membership of the national church in Texas with the representation of the Cumberland establishment. Comparative figures will be given in the next chapter.

The General Assembly of the U.S.A. Church held its regular annual meeting at Winona Lake, Indiana in May, 1905. The presbyterial vote was overwhelmingly affirmative for both the union plan and the amendment providing for racially separate church courts. The total number of presbyteries voting for the merger plan was 194 while 39 were opposed. Seven judicatories failed to take action, however, while one ratified conditionally. On the amendment providing for separate presbyteries and synods for racial or national groups, the vote was 188 presbyteries voting affirmatively as contrasted to 45 voting in opposition. Eight church courts failed to take action on the issue. Thus, both denominations constitutionally ratified the union plan.

When the General Assemblies of the Cumberland and U.S.A. denominations made their decisions known, a wail of anguish broke from The Cumberland Banner. What dismayed the anti-unionists inside the

114 Minutes of April 12, 1905, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Trinity of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1895-1906," 110; Minutes of April 5, 1905, "Minutes of the Presbytery of North Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1900-1906," 75; Minutes of April 19, 1905, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Austin of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1900-1906," 272. In church papers (University of Texas Archives, Austin, Texas).

115 Minutes of May 22, 1905, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA (1905), 42-44.
Cumberland Church almost as much as the actual decision to merge was the defection to the ranks of the unionists of many men formerly opposed to the movement.

Well, "it is settled"—"unanimously carried" and declared "constitutional" by both churches. Loyal Cumberland Presbyterians can work, pray and hang their harps in despair on the bending willows--the Cumberland Presbyterian Church must soon cease to exist--it is only a matter of arranging details. And to the cruelty of the pangs we are told that about all the "conservative" and "leading" men who have been opposing the merger have declared their willingness to bow in humble and "loyal," submission to the behest of a factional majority of the Assembly--leaving only the "insignificant fragments" to float into the Methodist and Baptist folds.116

Since details still had to be ironed out, the joint committee on union held conferences in St. Louis, Missouri; Charlotte, North Carolina; and Cincinnati, Ohio. Negotiations were evidently successful, for the committee drew up a final report for adoption by the General Assemblies of both churches.117

When the Cumberland Presbyterian Church gathered for its last authorized General Assembly meeting at Decatur, Illinois, on May 17, 1906, both the pro- and anti-unionists inside the denomination were well organized, and a last bitter struggle appeared inevitable.118 Election of a moderator for the session provided the first test of strength between the two contending forces. Unionists nominated Dr.

116 Editors, "Is the Question Settled?" The Cumberland Banner, I (July 14, 1905), 4.

117 Minutes of May 24, 1906, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., VI (1906), 137-38.

118 Nashville American, May 17, 1906.
Ira Landrith of Nashville who had been one of the most active proponents of union ever since the inception of the movement in 1903. Anti-union delegates nominated the Rev. Mr. A. N. Eshman of Mississippi, one of the most determined opponents of the movement. When the ballots were counted Dr. Landrith was elected, and the anti-unionists had suffered yet another defeat.\textsuperscript{119}

After this first vote the anti-unionists realized that they would be overwhelmed by a majority of the delegates. They were in no mood, however, to submit supinely to the fate prepared for them by their pro-union brethren. Realizing even before the assembly gathered that they would be outnumbered, the opponents of union determined on legal action to prevent the consummation of the merger. Consequently, on May 16, 1906, the day before the judicatory was due to begin its proceedings, Judge J. H. Fussell, an anti-unionist elder, and others filed suit against J. B. Bail, the retiring moderator, and other supporters of union. The demurrer, or bill, filed by the anti-unionists before the circuit court of Illinois at Decatur enjoined every commissioner in attendance at the Cumberland General Assembly meeting from consummating the merger with the U.S.A. denomination. Judge W. C. Johns sat on the bench in this case.\textsuperscript{120}


\textsuperscript{120}Minutes of May 17 and 23, 1906, \textit{Minutes of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church} (1906), 18, 52.
A local newspaper reported that, while the case was being argued, excitable Presbyterians crowded higgledy-piggledy into the courtroom. On a number of occasions the din inside the chamber became so great that Sheriff Thrift had to rap for order and threaten to clear the room.

Unionist defendants were represented by Judge John M. Gaut, who became prominent in later litigation over the possession of the property of the former Cumberland denomination. Having made an exhaustive study of the case, he argued before Judge Johns' court that the union had been effected constitutionally and legally and was not subject to review by a civil tribunal. In his final summary, however, he demonstrated sympathy for the position of the plaintiffs. Judge Gaut said that this was another example of a conflict of views between progressives and conservatives. "The new should be patient with the old and yet the old should not be allowed to stop the wheels of progress." Although he pitied elderly Cumberland ministers who could not in conscience accept the decision of the General Assembly of their denomination, such individuals could not be permitted to block the will of the majority.121

Judge Johns delivered his opinion on May 19, and in his decision he indicated that he was well aware of the significance of the case before his tribunal. Total property value of the Cumberland Church was over seven million dollars, and complainants claimed that as many as 100,000 people adhered to their contentions. Probably an even larger

121 Decatur Daily Review, May 19, 1906.
number sympathized with the defendants who favored the consummation of the union.

"In its scope, aims, and contentions, the case presented to the court has no parallel in the jurisprudence of the United States," the judge averred. If the prayer of the bill presented by the complainants was granted, the Cumberland General Assembly would reassemble next year with none of the contentions within the denomination resolved. On the other hand, if the injunction was denied, the majority within the Cumberland Church would adopt the report of its committee on union and reunion and declare itself merged with the national Presbyterian Church under the name and style of the U.S.A. Presbyterian denomination.

The minority will form a General Assembly, denounce the former proceedings, and claiming to be the true Church, proceed to the uneven tenor of its way through a multitude of law suits in a dozen or more States of the Union.

In reaching his decision Judge Johns argued, "Members of lesser bodies of a voluntary organization are bound by the acts of the highest tribunal. Civil courts have no right to interfere with those acts." Persons appointed by the General Assembly are trustees to govern the property of the church, he contended, and all communicants of the denomination share the benefits of the property in equal degree. However, "where a majority, however large, abandon the tenets and doctrines of the association, they cannot hold the property against the minority who adhere . . . [to these tenets and doctrines]." Where there are two rival groups claiming to represent the denomination, the
decision as to which is the true representative is dependent upon the construction of the by-laws of the religious organization.

Johns then stated there was no exclusive authority vested in the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church to carry over the entire association and its property to another denomination, but the constitution did not specifically prohibit such action. Damning for the cause of the anti-unionists was the fact that no one had questioned the legality or constitutionality of the proceedings from 1903 through 1905 until the announcement of the presbytery vote. When those opposed to the merger discovered that they had been defeated, then, and only then, did they begin to question the legal and constitutional validity of those proceedings.

Since the property of the Cumberland Church would continue to be used for denominational purposes, "it is the duty of the trustees to proceed [according to the majority of the General Assembly and transfer the property into the united U.S.A. Presbyterian Church] ... no secular court can stop them by injunction."

Judge Johns concluded by saying that since the steps taken and the measures employed were not in violation of the constitution of the Cumberland Church, therefore

the application for an injunction is without precedent. No court, so far as the decisions at hand reveal, has ever enjoined the committee of an ecclesiastical body in considering what acts it should take upon any given proposition. The demurrer to the bill is sustained, the motion for a preliminary injunction is overruled, and the complainants conclude to abide
by their bill, it will be dismissed, for want of equity at
their cost.\footnote{Minutes of May 23, 1906, Minutes of the General Assembly of
the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1906), 52-58.}

Both factions within the Cumberland denomination had by mutual
consent agreed to postpone all important business before the General
Assembly until after the decision of Judge Johns's court. This deci-
sion having been rendered, the final report of the committee on union
and reunion was presented to that judicatory. Among other things, it
provided for transfer of all the ministers, communicants, boards, and
property of the former Cumberland Church to the national Presbyterian
Church. The boundary lines of presbyteries would be readjusted. In
the North and the West the presbyteries of the U.S.A. denomination,
would absorb the Cumberland Church courts while in the South the bor-
ders and names of the Cumberland denomination would be preserved. In
border states a mutual adjustment of boundaries would take place, and
an attempt would be made to preserve the names of the presbyteries
particularly dear to the people of that area belonging to either branch
of the Presbyterian Church.

The report concluded by authorizing the moderator of the Cum-
berland Assembly to read the following statement:

The joint report of the two committees on Reunion and Union
and the recitals and resolutions therein contained and
recommended for adoption, having been adopted by the General
Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of
America and the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presby-
terian Church, and official notice of such adoption having
been received by each of the said General Assemblies from the
other; I do hereby declare and publicly announce the basis of union and reunion is now in full force and effect, and that the Cumberland Presbyterian Church is hereby reunited with the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America as one Church, and that the official records of the two churches during the period of separation will be preserved and held as making up the history of one church.

And when such declaration shall have been publicly made in the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, no business in that General Assembly shall be in order, except a motion to adjourn sine die, as a separate Assembly.\textsuperscript{123}

In the course of the debate that followed the presentation of this report, commissioners demonstrated their emotional involvement by cheering, applauding, and occasionally whistling their support of a speaker. Stated Clerk the Rev. Mr. J. M. Hubbert, acting as moderator in the temporary absence of Dr. Landrith, was compelled to rap for order. "Let me caution the members of the Assembly to refrain from applause. When you feel like applauding, pray instead."\textsuperscript{124}

Later the Rev. Mr. W. M. Robison, author of The Parting of the Way, launched a fiery attack on the Westminster Confession of Faith. "Can you conscientiously ask a candidate if he adopts the Westminster Confession as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?" he cried. "Cries of 'yes, yes!' broke from various parts of the hall. He continued in an emotional voice,

I hope to love my brethren, honor God and do the best preaching I can, during the few years that are left to me; and I believe I can do my best only with my Bible and the Confession of my father and mother.

\textsuperscript{123}Ibid., 64-71.

At this point harried Moderator Hubbert pleaded, "I appeal to all conservative men in this assembly that we possess ourselves in prayer and patience and avoid extremes on either side."  

A poll was then taken of the commissioners present with the result that 85 ministers and 78 elders voted in support of the report which was a total affirmative ballot of 165. Voting in opposition were 50 ministers and 41 elders, or a total of 91.  

The desperate anti-unionists then introduced a resolution of protest to the action taken by the judicatory. This statement asserted that the General Assembly had no authority to adjourn *sine die* as a separate assembly, and furthermore, the General Assembly had no constitutional right to transfer the allegiance of Cumberland ministers, elders, and presbyteries to another Presbyterian Church. One hundred commissioners signed this resolution.

The answer drawn up by the Rev. Mr. S. M. Templeton and others retorted that, although the Cumberland General Assembly was to adjourn *sine die* as a separate judicatory, the Cumberland denomination would continue its work within the united U.S.A. denomination. Furthermore, a civil court had decreed that the General Assembly did not violate the

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125 Editors, "Seventy-sixth General Assembly Concluding Sessions of the Historic Last Separate General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church," The Cumberland Presbyterian, LXXI (May 31, 1906), 647.

126 Minutes of May 23, 1906, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1906), 77.
constitution of the church when it declared the Cumberland Church united with another Presbyterian branch.\textsuperscript{127}

The remaining business transacted was brief but significant. A committee was appointed to draft a pastoral letter to be read in all the churches of the Cumberland denomination. This epistle urged members not to take hasty action or to listen to the blandishments of the enemies of the church but to follow the majority into the union.\textsuperscript{128} Another committee was appointed to seek legal counsel to protect any other rights of the church.\textsuperscript{129}

These details having been attended to, Moderator Landrith publicly read the last paragraph of the report drafted by the committee on union and reunion, proclaiming the Cumberland Presbyterian Church reunited with the U.S.A. denomination. After this declaration by the moderator, J. S. Grider offered a resolution to adjourn \textit{sine die} as a separate assembly and to meet again as part of the General Assembly of the U.S.A. Presbyterian Church in May, 1907. The Assembly adopted the resolution by practically the same vote as the ballot that adopted the report on union and reunion. The judicatory then adjourned \textit{sine die} on May 24, 1906.\textsuperscript{130}

\textsuperscript{127}Ibid., 78-79.

\textsuperscript{128}Minutes of May 23-24, 1906, \textit{ibid.}, 86-87, 107-10.

\textsuperscript{129}Minutes of May 23, 1906, \textit{ibid.}, 87.

\textsuperscript{130}Minutes of May 24, 1906, \textit{ibid.}, 115-16.
Judge Fussell, the recognized leader of the anti-unionists, then arose and announced that the "loyalists" would continue the meeting of the Seventy-sixth General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. According to the official organ of the anti-unionists, the pro-unionist commissioners then responded with a "snarl and sneer" to this statement. The dissidents wished to continue their deliberations in the same house of worship occupied by the united assembly but were expelled by the church officials. They gathered instead in Armory Hall of the Grand Army of the Republic. One hundred and six commissioners, representing 40 presbyteries, met on May 25, 1906, reorganizing themselves into another General Assembly. They voided and repudiated the report by the committee on union and reunion together with all other actions taken by the so-called "sine die" contingent of the Cumberland Church. The assembly then adjourned, scheduling its next meeting in May, 1907, at Dickson, Tennessee, the birthplace of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.131

Thus, Judge Johns's prophesy proved correct. The minority of the denomination refused to accept the decision of the General Assembly in adjourning sine die. Reorganizing themselves into an independent church, they prepared to steer their hazardous course through the reefs and shoals of innumerable lawsuits. A bitter struggle over the property of the formerly united Presbyterian church appeared inevitable.

131Editors, "The Decatur Assembly and the Question of Organic Union," The Cumberland Banner, II (June 1, 1906), 8.
While the Cumberland judicatory was meeting in Decatur in May, 1906, the General Assembly of the U.S.A. denomination gathered at Des Moines, Iowa. The delegates resolved that the question of union and reunion take precedence over all other business before the church court. On May 18, Dr. W. H. Roberts, Stated Clerk of the assembly and one of the members of the joint committee on union and reunion, presented the report of the committee. There was then much discussion of the property adjustments of the Cumberland Church. It was finally determined that these adjustments would be left largely to the respective boards of the two denominations. Even before union was consummated, according to the report of the union committee, the educational board of the Cumberland Church had already examined the feasibility of transferring all the property and trusts belonging to it to the educational board of the U.S.A. Church.

A committee reported that a conference had been held with the trustees of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church on the means of obtaining title to the property of the former Cumberland denomination. Prominent lawyers were consulted, and their almost unanimous opinion was that since the various trusts were held by corporations and trustees of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Church, the united U.S.A, Church was entitled to all the property after union was consummated. The

132 Minutes of May 18, 1906, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, VI (1906), 15-16.

133 Minutes of May 24, 1906, ibid., 138-39.
report further stated that particular care should be taken in the wording of the resolution completing the union so as to make it clearly understood that the Cumberland Presbyterian Church would continue its existence reunited with and incorporated into the U.S.A. denomination. The committee concluded by saying that it was impossible to insure the church that litigation would not develop as a result of the union. After consultation with eminent lawyers it was believed that all litigation undertaken by the anti-unionists would be unsuccessful. \[134\]

A vote was then taken on the report drafted by the joint committee on union and reunion. When the ballots were counted, it was discovered that the report had been adopted with only two dissenting votes. \[135\]

Upon receiving word that the Cumberland General Assembly had adopted the same report, the moderator of the U.S.A. judicatory declared that the union was in full force. He then ordered all churches, presbyteries, and synods of the former Cumberland denomination enrolled in the U.S.A. Church. \[136\]

Those commissioners assembled at Des Moines who favored the merger (and these were in the great majority) desired a complete union. Aware for the first time that the dissension within the Cumberland Church was sufficient to divide the denomination, they hastened to make

\[134\] Minutes of May 24, 1906, \textit{ibid.}, 139-40.  \\
\[135\] Minutes of May 24, 1906, \textit{ibid.}, 123.  \\
\[136\] \textit{Ibid.}, 152-53.
tardy concessions. They resolved that no acceptance of the U.S.A. doctrines would be required of communicants beyond that of a personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Master. Minister and church officials in expressing approval of the Westminster Confession of Faith were required to assent only to the general system of doctrine.

Finally, the union required no change in the relationship between communicants, ruling elders, and deacons to their particular churches.\footnote{137}

After the adjournment of the Cumberland General Assembly at Decatur, Illinois, 15 Cumberland delegates led by the former moderator, Dr. Landrith, arrived in Des Moines to be presented in the final ceremony of the U.S.A. General Assembly meeting. They received a warm welcome. Pandemonium broke loose when they appeared in the hall, and U.S.A. delegates wept openly for joy. The Cumberland representatives were cheered for fully five minutes.\footnote{138}

The leaders of the U.S.A. denomination were jubilantly optimistic. Believing that the movement for union and federation was in full swing, they predicted the early uniting of all the branches of the Presbyterian Church into one denomination. Even non-Presbyterian Protestant sects might be impelled to merge.\footnote{139} This optimism was to prove premature. Opposition to the union within the Cumberland Church

\footnote{137}{Minutes of May 26, 1906, \textit{ibid.}, 210-11; \textit{Nashville American}, May 27, 1906.}

\footnote{138}{\textit{Nashville American}, May 27, 1906.}

\footnote{139}{\textit{Ibid.}, May 26, 1906.}
was both bitter and determined. It appeared inevitable that presbyteries of the formerly united denomination would split apart. Cumber-land colleagues would turn upon one another with fratricidal fury. A struggle over the property rights of the formerly united religious body loomed as a stark certainty.
CHAPTER IV

DIVISIONS WITHIN THE PRESbyterIES
AND STRUGGLE OVER PROPERTY

Upon the union of the Cumberland and U.S.A. Presbyterian Churches, members of the former Cumberland presbyteries were compelled to choose where they would place their allegiance. Whether to transfer themselves into the united U.S.A. denomination or to enroll themselves in the reorganized Cumberland Church was a difficult decision for them. Strife and bitterness were engendered as pro- and anti-unionists ministers and elders struggled for control of local church courts. Moreover, the ownership of the property of the former Cumberland Presbyterian Church had to be determined.

In 1906 in the nation the Cumberland Church had 2,869 churches, compared with 8,118 in the U.S.A. denomination, but there were only 1,514 Cumberland ministers while the U.S.A. had 7,848. The Cumberland Church had a total membership of 185,212, who contributed $1,012,842 for the year while the U.S.A. Church had an enrollment of 1,158,662, who contributed for the same year the grand total of $19,943,308.¹

¹Comparative Summary, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., VI (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Publishing House, 1906), 784-85.
While the national church had eight times more ministers and ten times more communicants than the Cumberland denomination, the total contributions of the U.S.A. communicants were twenty times that of the Cumberland membership. Although the Cumberland Church enrolled more churches than its sister denomination, many of these were tiny rural congregations of from eight to twelve members.

In Texas, where the Cumberland establishment was far greater than that boasted by the U.S.A. denomination, the statistics were the opposite of the national average. The Synod of Texas of the Cumberland Church had 21 presbyteries with 316 ministers, 575 churches, and 30,534 members. The value of the church property was $913,367, and the total contributions for the year were $173,771.² The U.S.A. denomination, on the other hand, possessed only three presbyteries with 36 ministers, 58 churches, and a total membership of 3,696 while the value of the church property was not given. Total contributions for the year amounted to $50,284.³ These figures indicate that in Texas the U.S.A. establishment would be absorbed by the former Cumberland denomination instead of the reverse taking place.

Church courts of the former Cumberland denomination compelled members to choose the denomination with which they would cast their

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³Statistics and Presbytery Rolls, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., VI (1906), 782.
lot. In the northern and western states the membership, with hardly a
division, transferred into the national church. Refusing to accept the
union, membership in states of the former Confederacy, moved into the
Cumberland Church. Several factors produced a crucial struggle in
Texas. Not only was the Cumberland establishment there large but also
there was a greater division of opinion in that state. Presbyteries
were torn apart and ministers turned fiercely on their former colleagues.

A majority of the smaller church courts voted approval of the
union, and, as a consequence, many of them transferred into the
national church with little strife or schism. In some of the presby-
teries, although differences of opinion were apparent, harmony and com-
passionate understanding were maintained. For instance, in December,
1904, the Abilene Presbytery of the Cumberland denomination, located in
West Texas, voted in opposition to the union by 14 to 13; however, it
resolved to abide by the final decision of the church with regard to
union. On consummation of the union, members of the Abilene church
court at a regularly scheduled meeting at Sabanno in July, 1906, drew
up an open letter to their membership which stated in part:

We are happy to tell you that our meeting here has been and is
conducted without that friction on account of union, which has
characterized some others. Our ex-moderator, a non-union man,
preached a good sensible sermon at our opening, after which he
informed us that it was not the purpose of those who opposed
the union to give us any trouble and that they preferred not

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^Minutes of December 10, 1904, "Minutes of the Presbytery of
Abilene of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, July 8, 1897-July 5,
1906," 271. In church papers (Trinity University Archives, San
Antonio, Texas).
to be enrolled as members of this body at the present, but have further time for deliberation and investigation. This request was granted and the brethren asked to sit with us during all our deliberations. We have preferred to be lenient with our beloved brethren, who differ so much from us, rather than legally exact; and we cherish the fond hope that we remain one and undivided as a Presbytery and as congregations.  

When disputes did occur inside the lesser judicatories they were sometimes resolved with a minimum of friction, as in the Greenville Presbytery which drew up a resolution of loyalty to the reunited church:

Whereas, this Presbytery has heretofore opposed, by a large majority vote, union with the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., and has done what it could to prevent said union; and whereas, our church as a whole, has in an orderly and constitutional way entered into the union with said church; and whereas, further resistance to said union might be neither wise nor profitable to the cause of religion; and whereas, we are assured by the Assembly of each Church, that in entering the union, we surrender nothing hitherto sacred and dear to us. Therefore, Resolved That we now as a Presbytery acquiesce in the decision of the Church, as expressed in its several courts, and as loyal Cumberland Presbyterians hereby pledge ourselves to stand by and uphold the action of said courts.

The clerk then noted that all the members voting against the above resolution walked out of the church building and assembled in the house of worship of the Methodist Church, South.

References:


6 Minutes of June 29, 1906, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Greenville of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, November 30, 1899-April 23, 1907," 142-43. In church papers (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas).
Unfortunately, harmony was not universal in the Texas judicatures. When the Snyder Presbytery, located in West Texas, met in the public schoolhouse in the hamlet of Dora in June, 1906, the retiring moderator, Ruling Elder W. W. Beall, addressed the church court:

"The Snyder Presbytery of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, on its adjournment last December at Camp Springs, adjourned as a Presbytery of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and in that capacity it now meets to transact business." He declared that when the roll is called, it must be understood that it was the roll of the Snyder Presbytery of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. . . . The time for division had come, . . . on the calling of the roll each member and delegate should be enrolled as a minister or ruling elder of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, or of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.

The Stated Clerk called this pronouncement in question. He argued that

the church, in dealing with the union proposition, had, from the beginning, pursued the regular constitutional course, . . . the union was now fully consummated, and every member, minister and congregation of the former Cumberland Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., . . . reunited . . . it was no longer a question of going into the union, for "we are already in; and will be included in the rolls of the minutes of the Des Moines Assembly."

Since neither man would yield, by common consent the moderator declared a recess until the next morning at nine o'clock.

When the Presbytery reassembled at the prescribed time, there was further discussion of the union question. The moderator then again asked that the roll be called as that of a Cumberland judicatory. The stated clerk retorted that he had no such roll and that there was no such presbytery or church. Instead, he averred that he would be happy to call the roll of the Snyder Presbytery, U.S.A., but the irate moderator would hear no such roll. Tumult and confusion in the
schoolhouse ensued. Elder Beall, supported by a small majority of the
court, refused to act as moderator of a U.S.A. Presbytery, where-
upon the Rev. Mr. Tate declared himself both stated clerk and moderator.
Announcing a fifteen-minute recess, Tate declared that the presbytery
of the U.S. denomination would meet in the home of Brother J. M. Bryson,
located some 300 or 400 yards from the schoolhouse.

When the Presbytery reassembled in the home of Bryson, Stated
Clerk and Moderator Bryson, Stated Clerk and Moderator Tate called it
to order. Eleven delegates in addition to Tate answered the roll call.
Four ministers not present were dropped from the roll. The majority
continued their deliberations in the public schoolhouse and enjoyed, as
they declared, a "spiritual feast."

In December, 1904, the oldest Cumberland Presbytery in Texas,
and indeed the first organized judiciary of any Presbyterian denomina-
tion, the Texas Presbytery, voted 20 to 13 against the union. A
notice pasted in the back of the official record book stated, however,
that the last two pages of the roll book had been torn out, perhaps
indicating that some sort of struggle had occurred. Other records

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7 Minutes of June 14-15, 1906, "Minutes of the Snyder Presbytery
of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, 1904-1907," 59-63. In church
papers (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas).

8 Editors, "General Church News," The Cumberland Banner, II
(June 29, 1906), 8.

9 Minutes of December 10, 1904, "Minutes of the Presbytery of
Texas of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, 1893-1907," 287. In micro-
film collection (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas).
available give conflicting testimony with respect to what happened at the crucial meeting held in July, 1906. According to an anti-unionist, the Texas Presbytery met with the New Harmony congregation as scheduled on July 6, at 8:30 in the evening. The moderator, J. A. Hornbeak, delivered the opening sermon, after which he announced that he would conduct the business of the Texas Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. Anti-unionists who heatedly contested this statement, undertook to begin transaction of business as the Texas Presbytery of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in the name of the Cumberland denomination, but the unionists--three ministers, and eleven congregations--refused to respond to the roll call. The unionists then announced that the Texas Presbytery would adjourn to meet in Henderson, Texas, at 8:30 the following morning. After further exchanges between the two factions, the Rev. Mr. Hornbeak led his supporters from the hall. The unionists then organized the Texas Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., while the delegates remaining with the New Harmony congregation constituted themselves the Texas Presbytery of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.10

A U.S.A. delegate present related a slightly different version of what happened. He said that the Texas Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., assembled for its regularly scheduled meeting in the New Harmony house of worship when, to the astonishment and annoyance of

10J. D. Potts, "Texas Presbytery," The Cumberland Banner, II (July 20, 1906), 1.
those favoring the merger, the Rev. Mr. J. G. Braly announced that he and other anti-unionists intended to organize the Texas Presbytery of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and to hold their sessions in the same room at the same time. This action was taken even with "the brethren of this presbytery knowing that such proceedings would cause friction and likely hard feelings." In a new vote on union the presbytery reversed the decision with 20 members of Presbytery favoring the merger and 13 opposing it. The unionists, not wishing to have a pitched battle for possession of the chamber, adjourned to meet in Henderson, leaving the New Harmony church building in possession of the "seceders."  

Whatever actually happened, evidently the brethren parted on very bad terms.

When the Fort Worth Presbytery met at Sarah, Texas, on September 4, 1906, according to the Rev. Mr. W. H. Berry, an anti-unionist, the unionists greatly predominated. He and other like-minded members, therefore withdrew to form a separate presbytery under the dominion of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Hearing that the unionists in the formerly united Presbytery of Fort Worth were planning the seizure of his congregation and church property, the Rev. Mr. Berry growled that should they try to do so, they would suffer the same fate meted out to "cricketts and other small bugs."  

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11 S. Park, "Texas Presbytery," The Cumberland Presbyterian, LXXII (July 19, 1906), 83.

In only a few of the lesser church courts of the Texas Synod of the Cumberland Church where the anti-unionists in a clear majority. Among these were the members of the Marshall and Gregory Presbyteries. The latter, in April, 1905, voted 26 to 13 against the union. With the final achievement of union, it drew up a resolution which stated in part:

we condemn the action of the majority [of the Decatur General Assembly] as being without authority of law, and therefore null and void and without binding force on anyone in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church; and we do hereby endorse the action of the protestants. We further declare it to be the purpose of this Presbytery to be now, and to continue, an integral part of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church as organized in 1810, and as now continued. . . .

We further declare that we will not in any way recognize the authority or jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., over this Presbytery, or over any of the churches or ministers within the bounds of the Presbytery.

Twenty-six men answered the roll and took part in drafting the above statement, but five ministers and as many elders refused to respond to the roll call and walked out of the proceedings.14

On November 1, 1905, the anti-unionists held a conference in Dallas. More than 100 delegates, representing 13 presbyteries, were in attendance. After raising $2,500 and appointing Judge F. H. Prendergast

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of Marshall to protect the legal and property interests of the church, the conference drew up the following statement:

Whereas, certain persons have asserted to our people that the union between the C.P. Church and the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., was and is an accomplished fact, and thereby have disturbed the minds of some; therefore, be it

Resolved that such statements are wholly incorrect and misleading. . . . Ignorance is said to be the mother of devotion. It is in some cases the stronghold of unionism.15

In spite of the objections raised by the anti-unionists, as indicated, they represented but a resenting minority of the Cumberland Presbyteries, together with the allegiance declared by their member ministers.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Presbytery</th>
<th>Total Number of Ministers</th>
<th>Dissenting Ministers</th>
<th>Dissenting Ministers with Pastoral Charges</th>
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<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amarillo</td>
<td>18</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austin</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacon</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>19</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corsicana</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marshall</td>
<td>10</td>
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</tr>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weatherford</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although the exact number of elders, trustees, and church members who withdrew from the union is not known, it has been estimated that most of the congregations who retained their allegiance to the Cumberland denomination were small, rural churches. Not a single strong church in any Texas city or larger town refused to transfer into the national church. Of the 69 anti-unionist ministers, 34 had pastoral charges, but only one had given his full time to a single church.\textsuperscript{16}

Inasmuch as only 85 Texas Cumberland ministers voted against union in 1905,\textsuperscript{17} only a small number of these dissenters refused to transfer into the U.S.A. denomination. When decision became necessary, for various reasons many former opponents moved into the reunited church. Many doubtless felt conscience-bound to submit to the will of the majority. Swallowing their scruples, some ministers may have followed their property into the united church. In Texas the men who retained their allegiance to the Cumberland Church after 1906 were almost exclusively older ministers who had grown up with and built the church. Hardly a youthful or middle-aged clergyman remained to rebuild the shattered church. The blow was all the more cruel for the older men who had anticipated a retirement from a lifetime of dedicated and ceaseless toil, believed that younger men would be available to occupy their vacated posts. Now, however, the task of reknitting the broken

\textsuperscript{16}W. L. Livingston, "The Line-up in Texas Synod," The Cumberland Presbyterian, LXXII (September 6, 1906), 311.

\textsuperscript{17}Minutes of May 22, 1905, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1905), 40-42.
bones of the denomination fell on the shoulders of these aged veterans.18

As previously cited, the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Texas in 1906 had 316 ministers, 575 churches, and 30,534 members,19 while the national church representation was 36 ministers, 58 churches, and 3,696 members.20 Upon completion of the union, the national church claimed to have 245 ministers, 380 churches, and 24,373 members.21 These statistics are not exact, because many Presbyteries retained on their rolls for several years a few ministers and congregations that did not wish to remain. Eventually these had to be stricken from the official record books. These figures, however, give a rough approximation of the increased strength of the U.S.A. denomination in Texas and indicate that the national church was increased by 209 ministers, 422 churches, and 20,677 members, making it a substantial factor in the religious life of Texas for the first time.

Disposal of the property holdings of the former Cumberland denomination still had to be determined, and the members of both the


19 Statistics and Presbytery Rolls, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1906), 128a.

20 Statistics and Presbytery Rolls, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., VI (1906), 782.

21 Statistics and Presbytery Rolls, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., VII (1907), 948.
reunited U.S.A. denomination and the reorganized Cumberland Church awaited the decision of civil courts with much anxiety. Some U.S.A. ministers became concerned about the trend events had taken. Christian unity was unquestionably an idealistic goal worthy of pursuit, but one might pay too high a price for an ideal without ever achieving it. Could a union of consent be had if begrimed and disfigured by sordid litigation?

The Rev. Mr. William Laurie, U.S.A., wondered whether the union which had been constitutionally effected were a true merger of the churches or only a paper union. In the spring of 1906 the General Assemblies of both religious bodies cast their final votes on union and in the General Assembly of the U.S.A. Church only two dissenting ballots were cast. However, at the meeting of the Cumberland General Assembly, with 257 delegates present, 106 voted in opposition to the union.

Had the opposition ended there it might not have been significant. After the adjournment of the General Assembly, the dissidents met and reorganized the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Far from having acted on impulse, these delegates had given ample warning of their intention to take this step in the event the merger was consummated. Moreover, many Cumberland Presbyterians had declared their intention to follow the rebels into the reorganized Cumberland denomination. If only a few of these communicants had showed signs of migrating back into their old church it would not be a cause for worry; but this movement was taking place on an extensive scale. It was heartrending to read the records of many of their presbytery meetings. To tear a church
into pieces, particularly a great denomination such as the Cumberland Presbyterian Church had been, was a very serious matter.

Faced by these painful circumstances, a conciliatory policy seemed called for. Apparently, however, the decision seemed to have been made to force those Presbyterians who would not voluntarily transfer themselves into the national church to do so by legal action. Injunctions prohibiting Cumberland Presbyterians from worshipping as Cumberlanders in their own houses of worship that they had built and paid for were obtained in civil courts in the states of Tennessee and Alabama. If they would not worship in these churches as "northern" Presbyterians, they would not be permitted to worship in them at all. These same injunctions prevented them from "the manufacture or selling" of the Cumberland Confession. How could U.S.A. Presbyterians explain to them the justice of permitting the Mormons and every other religious body in the United States to publish and sell their books of doctrine while prohibiting the Cumberland Presbyterians alone from this practice?

Driving multitudes of reluctant Presbyterians into the "northern" church by force was a large and difficult operation. Moreover, the action of the U.S.A. denomination hardened and intensified the opposition to the union, actually, militating against the very object it hoped to effect—universal merger by consent. Many Cumberland Presbyterians who formerly mildly opposed the union became embittered.

While shutting them out of their houses of worship and prohibiting them from selling their religious tracts was very irritating, the attempt of the national church to seize all the property of the
former Cumberland denomination raised a still greater barrier to understanding. An indication is the statement which the Rev. Mr. Laurie took from *The Cumberland Banner*:

I have always respected the Presbyterians... but recent events have caused a total change in my views... Now this Church is the backer and abettor of those men who are trying to rob us of our own under the shadow of law... Every man and woman who is a true Cumberland Presbyterian at heart, and who had been disposed to submit, and go quietly into the union, will balk at the effort now made to rob us of everything.

Commenting on the above statement, Laurie continued:

We are proud of the [U.S.A.] Presbyterian Church, and we do not believe the rank and file in our great and rich Church will be party to such doings. Could we get the vote of our people, we are sure they would say, "We do not want the property of the Cumberland Presbyterians, and we will not have it."

I do not believe the courts should nor will give us their property. And if they do, I believe it will be a stain on our name.... May God bring light and peace out of this darkness and strife;22

This attitude evidently did not reflect the official policy of the national church. Judge A. M. Gaut in an article entitled "Predicted Litigation" examined the question of which group would possess the property of the former Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Exhaus-tively investigating prior decisions relating to other church unions, he came to the following conclusions: English legal precedents appeared to demonstrate that if the question were carried into British courts, the reorganized Cumberland Presbyterian Church would certainly be given title to all the property. In particular, he

22 William Laurie, "Where Are We as to Reunion?" *The Presbyterian*, LXXVI (December 26, 1906), 8-9.
cited the decision of the House of Lords in August, 1904, in relation to the so-called "Scottish Church Case."

This case did not, however, affect American jurisprudence. Opinions handed down by American courts demonstrated a definite trend of legal thinking to the effect that the action of a religious body in altering either its name or creed should not in any way invalidate its title to the property of the church. Among many others, the cases of McInnis v. Watson, 41 Penn. 9, (1861) and Lamb v. King 14 LRA 529, were cited in support of this view.

In another section of the same article, entitled "Concurrent Opinions," several of the nation's leading jurists were asked to express their opinions on this complex subject. Without a division, these eminent lawyers declared that the U.S.A. Church was entitled to all the property of the former Cumberland denomination. Judge Gaut concluded by stating that if the Cumberland Presbyterians attempted to resort to the civil courts for redress of their grievances, they were foredoomed to defeat and all their property would be stripped from them.23

The national church in its official pronouncements was candidly clear in its view of the property question. An official circular issued by that church was curiously reminiscent of the intention expressed by the Old School denomination in regard to the seceded

southern presbyteries at the end of the Civil War. This "last official order of union instructions" was sent to "loyal" ministers and communicants who wished to retain the use of their church property as part of the national church.

Should the trustees of your church undertake to prevent you from controlling and using the building or should they offer to allow the seceders to use it for separate services, such trustees would be guilty of a breach of trust, and any loyal member or members of the united church, whether elders or not, would have the right to file a bill in equity to remove trustees or restrain them from such a breach of trust, and to enjoin the seceders from interfering with the control, possession or use of the property. This right is wholly independent of the fact whether a majority of the congregation are seceders or not.

The loyal members of the congregation constitute the congregation whether they be a majority or minority; the loyal members of the session constitute the session whether they be in a majority or minority; and the loyal members of a presbytery, be they a majority or a minority, constitute the presbytery. Whether it becomes necessary, a loyal minority can separate itself from the majority and elect its own officers and conduct its business free from . . . obstructions by the seceding majority. Whenever they do so it is the duty of the trustees to allow this loyal session to control the church property.24

In line with this stated policy, by May, 1907, the national church had filed suit for the possession of church property in the courts of Texas, Missouri, Indiana, Tennessee, and Illinois. It was the belief of the non-unionist Cumberland leaders that this litigation did not represent the will of the U.S.A. denomination as a whole but was due to the efforts of former Cumberlanders and a few leaders of

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the national church who wished to secure the property and force the union.25

Dissidents who reorganized the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and perpetuated the name in May, 1907, held what they called the Seventy-seventh Meeting of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church at Dickson, Tennessee, the birthplace of the denomination. The independent Cumberland Presbytery had originally formed at the home of Samuel McAdow, located six miles east of Dickson. Traveling out to this hallowed ground, several of the delegates formally opened the session of the judicatory.26

While 279 commissioners had attended the meeting in 1906 at Decatur, only 140 came to the meeting at Dickson.27 The delegates represented 76 of the former 114 presbyteries of the Cumberland denomination.28 Many of them were in a disorganized state. As late as 1910 it was claimed that there were as many as 125,000 Cumberland Presbyterians, but 25,000 of these were scattered and 25,000 more were disorganized.29 These data, which probably exaggerated the strength of

25Minutes of May 16, 1907, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1907), 19-21, 66-68.

26Editors, "Anti-unionists at Dickson," The Cumberland Presbyterian, LXXIII (May 23, 1907), 664.


28Minutes of May 16, 1907, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1907), 19.

the reorganized Cumberland Church, do indicate the confusion into which
the denomination was thrown after the merger of 1906.

As it was impracticable to convene the assembly at the home of
McAdow, the delegates assembled at nearby Dickson in a large tent. A
reporter noted that many of the commissioners had passed into the "sere
and yellow age of life." The audience in attendance had the appearance
of an "old fashioned camp meeting" such as used to rejoice the hearts
of pioneers. The atmosphere was Pentacostal. Visitors and commissioners
alike joined in the singing of such songs as "Happy Day" and "Old-Time
Religion." "Tenting Tonight on the Old Church Ground" was a particular
favorite. Since Cumberlanders believed they were being chased from
their houses of worship in various sections of the country, this was
perhaps an appropriate tune for this occasion. When the audience
joined in the gospel favorite "When the Roll Is Called up Yonder," the
effect was electric. One after another, men and women began to shout
praises to the Lord. At one time there were as many as fifteen men and
women weeping and shouting "Hallelujah."

The railroad into Dickson announced a very low fare, a person
being able to travel round trip for what he had formerly paid for a
one-way journey to the Tennessee town. Consequently, visitors, particu-
larly on the weekend, poured into the community, with 400 arriving in
one day in a special train. During this weekend there were almost
10,000 persons in attendance. In addition, there was a constant stream
of visitors to the birthplace of the church, an army of 250 a day
traveling out to the former residence of the Rev. Mr. McAdow. A
reporter said it was pathetic to watch the faithful gather at this hallowed ground. Many persons of an advanced age would kneel reverently on the ground where the house formerly stood, then rise "as though a new spirit and a new birth had seized hold of them."30

On Thursday evening of the first day of the meeting in an address punctuated by frequent and hearty applause, the Rev. Mr. J. L. Hudgins preached the opening sermon. He was bitter in his attack on former Cumberlanders who transferred into the national church.

While some have gone out from us and have gone back into the mountains of Calvinism, like a mother cruelly stabbed at the heart by her own children, the Cumberland Presbyterian Church comes today sore and bleeding back to the community in which she was born to stand upon the plane on which our fathers, all long since gathered to heaven, stood, and to lift again, and if it be possible, higher than ever before her heavenborn system of doctrine and to unfurl the banner trailed in the dust by traitors never worthy of her. Every scheme known to ward heelers [sic] of partisan politicians was resorted to that a technical endorsement might be given to the cowardly surrender of the Committee on Fraternity and Union.31

The church began its reorganization by appointing a new Board of Education to replace the twelve members who had gone over to the U.S.A. Church. It was reported that the church property "seized" by the reunited denomination had a value of $5,321,775. Because the U.S.A. denomination had taken over the Cumberland University in Lebanon,

31Ibid., 664.
Tennessee, the reorganized church established a seminary at Bethel College in McKenzie, Tennessee.\textsuperscript{32}

The report of the new stated clerk and treasurer showed a balance on hand of $78.06. The former stated clerk, J. M. Hubbert, had carried all General Assembly Minutes with him into the national church. A resolution was thereupon adopted to secure these records if possible, as well as the $4,515.78 also carried with him.\textsuperscript{33} The body also urged all Cumberland Presbyterians to "earnestly resist" all attempts of the U.S.A. denomination to take over the property of the Cumberland Church. In order to secure "self-defense" and "self-protection," the assembly appointed a legal committee and raised a fund of $12,000 to secure counsel in suits filed throughout the country.\textsuperscript{34}

While these events were transpiring, the national church held its General Assembly meeting in Columbus, Ohio. Nine hundred delegates attended, including 300 former Cumberland Presbyterians.\textsuperscript{35} Dr. Ira Landrith, moderator of the 1906 Cumberland General Assembly, preached the opening sermon. His text, from Deuteronomy 33:23, "Possess thou the West and South," was very appropriate for the occasion. The congregation applauded him when he launched into a fiery peroration in

\textsuperscript{32}Minutes of May 21, 1907, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1907), 63-66.

\textsuperscript{33}Minutes of May 21, 1907, \textit{ibid.}, 57-58.

\textsuperscript{34}Nashville American, May 20, 1907.

\textsuperscript{35}\textit{Ibid.}, May 16, 1907.
which he declared that all the property of the former Cumberland Church would be taken from the anti-unionists.36 As did the Dickson judiciary, the assembly appointed an eleven-man legal commission to secure the property holdings to which the church was entitled.37

Before adjourning, the Cumberland General Assembly drew up a "fraternal letter" to the U.S.A. Assembly which was published as an advertisement in the Ohio State Journal. It stated in part:

The year just now expiring has been an eventful one for your church and for ours, eventful alike for each of them, but with different results. During that period, to our regret, perhaps as many as one-fourth of our lay members and more than one-half of our ministers have gone away from our Church and into yours on account of the so-called union and reunion between the two.

Notwithstanding, all of this the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, by the Grace of God, still survives; and it still feels that it has an important mission to perform in the world for our Divine Lord and Master.

Protesting the attempt of the U.S.A. Church to use judicial coercion to persuade Cumberland Presbyterians to transfer into the national church, this document complained in particular about the Fayetteville injunction. This suit had been filed in Fayetteville, Tennessee, in July, 1906, by former Cumberland Presbyterians. The purpose of the suit, according to the "fraternal letter," was not only to secure possession of the property in that state but to restrain and prohibit Cumberland Presbyterians from using their own property, from asserting rights to

36 Ibid., May 17, 1907.
37 Minutes of May 23, 1907, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., VII (1907), 140.
it in a court of law, from using their own name, and from using their own Confession of Faith. The report also cited other suits filed in other sections of the country.

We cannot believe that the majority of your great church has sanctioned this cruel and relentless course of oppression and wrong which is being pursued against us in the civil courts; or, if it has received the sanction heretofore, we cannot believe that upon a second thought you would permit a continuance thereof in the future.

Your church does not need our property, and even if it did, you, as Christian people, could not afford, if allowed, to take it from us.

Refusing to recognize the existence of the General Assembly of the extinct Cumberland Presbyterian Church, the U.S.A judicatory sent its reply in the form of a personal letter to "T. H. Padgett and Associates." After answering many of the charges in the "fraternal letter," the communication urged the dissidents to transfer into the national church.

We hope that when you know the full significance of the reunion you will recognize the wisdom of yielding to the legally expressed will of those who have been your brethren in the Lord, and that you will join us in the work for the salvation of souls and the winning of the world to righteousness in the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Believing that strife or the perpetuation of denominational churches of the same faith and order, churches which ought to be one in name and fact, is unwise, we rejoice in the present reunion, and shall pray for other such reunions with other Presbyterian churches.

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If the anti-unionists persisted in their refusal to enter the U.S.A. Church, moral and Christian principles should govern both bodies in the disposal of the property. 39

Litigation between these two religious bodies led to suits filed in the civil courts throughout Texas, sometimes by the anti-unionists and at other times by U.S.A. Presbyterians. One such instance involved the Rev. Mr. John H. Day of Detroit, Texas, who with 30 members of his congregation, refused to transfer into the national church. In August, 1906, the 12 pro-union members of the church closed the doors of the house of worship against them. Day entered suit in the local courts for possession of the property and damages, but the case would not be heard until the following May. The aged preacher sighed, "We have a nice house, all paid for, but have no place to worship." 40

Also in August, 1906, the Weatherford Presbytery held its regularly scheduled meeting in Mineral Wells, Texas. In the opening sermon Dr. S. M. Templeton, not a member of that Presbytery, touched upon such points as "the Savor's prayer for unity," "constitutionality of the union movement," "union an accomplished fact," and "the duty of submitting to the majority." After this he announced that the congregation had accepted union, and that all the property of the church had been


transferred into the reunited denomination. The anti-unionists were then expelled from the house of worship and retired to a nearby Christian Church to lick their wounds.41

The unionists, however, were not the only communicants who resorted to the practice of occupying church property and excluding their opponents from the use of it. In October, 1906, in the 13th District Court of Navarro County in Corsicana, Texas, F. N. Drake and others petitioned for an injunction to bar a group of anti-unionists from the occupation and sole use of the house of worship and manse of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. According to the bill filed by the plaintiffs, J. Y. Bates, an elder of the church, and others refused to accept the union and reunion of the Cumberland and U.S.A. denominations. Organizing themselves into the session of the church, they chose the Rev. Mr. W. J. Lackey as their pastor. They claimed that the Cumberland Presbyterian Church perpetuated its independent existence and that the Corsicana Presbyterian Church was an integral part of that denomination. Obtaining a key to the house of worship and the manse, they barricaded themselves inside these buildings and claimed the sole and absolute use of them. Seizing the church records, they made exclusive appointments for services in the church to be conducted by the Rev. Mr. Lackey. The defendants were threatening to oust the plaintiffs and deprive them of the use and benefit of the church and manse for religious purposes.

41 W. H. Berry, "Presbyterial Meetings--Weatherford Presbytery," The Cumberland Banner, II (September 21, 1906), 8.
The plaintiffs' petition then summarized the history of the union movement in order to prove that the merger was both legal and constitutional. It was pointed out that the Corsicana congregation was a constituent part of the former Cumberland denomination and therefore bound by the decision of the constitutional majority of that church. Admitting the members of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church of Corsicana who were antagonistic to the union were many, the plaintiffs, nevertheless, claimed that the church members who favored the merger were also numerous. Drane and the other complainants in the case were also former elders in the church session as were the defendants. Since Drane and his associates adhered to the union, they officially and legally constituted the administrative body of the church; therefore, the church property belonged to them and to the other communicants of the Corsicana Church who accepted the merger. By renouncing the union, Bates and his colleagues had vacated their posts, and they and other like-minded members of the congregation had lost all rights in regard to the contested property. The bill alleged that if the defendants were permitted the continued use of the manse and house of worship the plaintiffs would suffer "irreparable injury." An injunction was therefore demanded

restraining defendants from in any manner interfering with or molesting the pastors, elders, deacons, church members or other ecclesiastical agencies who adhere and recognize said
The defendants in turn filed a demurrer to this bill. In their instrument the defendants stated that the property was originally dedicated and was at that time employed for the use of the congregation of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church of Corsicana. Being elders, deacons, and trustees of said congregation, these defendants had the exclusive right to custody and management of the property in question.

In May, 1863, 20 individuals organized the voluntary religious corporation known as the Cumberland Presbyterian Church of Corsicana. They then entered into the following covenant:

We feeling willing to support the gospel, according as God and His providence may prosper us, and desiring to have the ordinances of God's House administered amongst us, agree to associate ourselves together as a congregation of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, to be known by the name of Corsicana Congregation.

This congregation, the adherents further noted, then became subject to the Presbytery of Tehuacana of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Through vicissitudes and circumstances since that date, the church officers and communicants in succession have individually and collectively adhered to the peculiar tenets, doctrines, and polity of the independent Cumberland Presbyterian denomination.

The lot and parcels of land on which the church and manse, or parsonage, were constructed were transferred to this congregation for

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their use and benefit "exclusive of all other associations, organizations, churches and religious denominations." This was the property administered by the trustees and executive officers of the congregation who the defendants claimed to be.

Furthermore, the alleged union between the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the "northern Presbyterian Church" was fraudulent because the Cumberland General Assembly had no authority under the constitution of the denomination to effect such a merger. That being the case, the officers, communicants, and property of the Corsicana Congregation were not transferred into the said "northern Presbyterian Church." Instead that congregation remained subject to the authority of the independent Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Finally, the complainants by transferring themselves into the U.S.A. denomination severed all connection with the Corsicana congregation and surrendered all rights and privileges in regard to the property.\(^4\)

Although the briefs were submitted in the fall of 1906, judgment was not rendered until May, 1912. At that time both parties represented by counsel appeared in the courtroom. Waiving the right of a jury trial, the litigants agreed to abide by the decision of the judge. Without enumerating the reasons for this judgment, he declared that the complainants should receive from the defendants all the property and buildings then occupied by J. Y. Bates and his associates.\(^4\)


Both pro- and anti-unionists tacitly agreed, however, that a suit filed in Marion County over the possession of the Presbyterian Church in Jefferson would be a test case. The plaintiffs were the members of the congregation adhering to the reorganized Cumberland Church. According to their brief G. W. Brown and his associates, claiming to be the session and trustees of the Jefferson Presbyterian Church of the U.S.A. denomination, invaded the church grounds. Asserting that the defendants had no further interest in the title to the property, the plaintiffs "by force" ejected them from the church grounds. Denying the Cumberland Presbyterian Church all use and benefit of the property, they declared that the land and buildings had been transferred into the "northern Presbyterian Church," and said property was being employed for the sole use and benefit of that "foreign" religious body.

The plaintiffs further claimed that not more than 20 members of the Jefferson Church favored the union while more than 30 were opposed. Composing a majority of the members of the session as well, the anti-unionists demanded the management of the property.

Alleged doctrinal differences between the Cumberland and U.S.A. denominations were cited, and the Confessions of Faith of both churches were introduced as evidence to prove that these religious bodies were basically different in creed. The illegality and unconstitutionality of the union itself were also claimed. Furthermore, the complainants averred, "The Presbyterian Church admits Negroes on a full equality of membership and the Cumberlands do not admit them at all." The plaintiffs said that they had offered to enter into some temporary
arrangement with the defendants as to the possession and use of the property until legal ownership could be decided by the courts, but the defendants had refused all such offers.\textsuperscript{45}

In their demurrer the defendants denied any forcible or unlawful seizure of the house of worship and manse in question. Instead they claimed that they had had "quiet and peaceful and uninterrupted and lawful" possession and use of them at the time of and before the filing of the complainants' bill.

Twenty-seven of the 40 members of the Jefferson Church vowed their support of the union in a signed paper introduced as evidence. It was obvious, therefore, that the complainants were not upheld by a two thirds majority of the communicants or even by a majority. It was equally false that they composed a majority of the session of said congregation.

Turning its attention to the question of doctrine, the defendants' paper stated that the Cumberland Church in 1814 adopted its first Confession of Faith. In compiling this creedal statement they lifted verbatim many chapters from the Westminster Confession. Others were modified to exclude all references to the doctrine of predestination. In 1882 the Cumberland Confession was again revised to incorporate other doctrinal statements wherein the Cumberland Presbyterian Church differed from the national Presbyterian denomination. By its

revisions of 1902-1903 the U.S.A. Church adopted all the doctrinal statements of the Cumberland denomination, so that the two Confessions of Faith were essentially the same.

The constitutionality and finality of the proceedings of 1903 through 1906 of the General Assemblies of both denominations were cited, and the defendants claimed that the civil courts had no right to call into question the action taken in reference to union. The demurrer asserted that there was nothing in the constitution of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church to exclude colored communicants. Moreover, the national church had accepted an amendment providing for separate presbyteries for disparate races and national groups. As for the compromise arrangements suggested by the plaintiffs, the defendants declared that these proposals were not within the defendants' power to recognize.46

The Honorable P. A. Turner, the judge presiding over the 5th judicial district of Marion County, rendered judgment in January, 1907.

That worthy argued as follows:

1. In May, 1906, the General Assembly of each church declared that union had been effected. In my opinion, whether or not union had been accomplished, is an ecclesiastic question. The highest authority in each church so held. This is binding on the civil courts. If I should be mistaken in this, then I hold that union has been effected regularly, legally and in accordance with the procedure of each church.

2. The Cumberland Presbyterian Church did not hold this property in trust for the purpose of propagating any particular religious faith.

3. If I am mistaken in the second conclusion, of law and if it did hold this property in trust for the purpose of propagating a particular religious faith, then I hold, that there is such similarity in the Confession of Faith of the two churches that its adoption of the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America is not such a radical change of its Confession of Faith as to operate a diversion of said trust property and a forfeiture of the same.

4. I hold that the united church, the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, is the legal successor of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and is entitled to the possession of this property.

5. The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, being in possession of said property through the defendants, and being entitled to the same, judgment is rendered for defendants.\(^7\)

Unwilling to accept defeat, the defendants, William Clark and associates, appealed the judgment to the court of civil appeals of the 6th Supreme Judicial District of Texas. After hearing the evidence, the court reversed the decision in favor of the plaintiffs.\(^8\)

The U.S.A. representatives were, however, no more willing to accept this decision than the Cumberlanders had been to submit to the first judgment and appealed it to the Texas Supreme Court. Having heard all the arguments presented by both parties, that Supreme tribunal rendered its judgment on March 3, 1909.

The first question raised by the defendants was whether the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church had authority under the constitution to consummate the union with the national Presbyterian Church. The anti-unionists argued that the Westminster

\(^{47}\)Editors, "The Decision in the Jefferson, Texas, Suit," The Cumberland Banner, III (February 8, 1907), 1.

Confession of Faith was so antagonistic to the Cumberland Confession of Faith that union was impossible. To this the court responded that the Cumberland Constitution clearly stated that two-thirds of the Cumberland presbyteries had the authority to adopt a new Confession of Faith, and the decision of these judicatories was binding on the civil courts.

The defendants further averred that the merger was illegal because the Cumberland Constitution gave the judicatories of the church no specific power to effect a union with another religious body. To support this view a provision of that document was cited: "the jurisdiction of these courts is limited by the express provision of the constitution." The court in turn argued that it interpreted this provision of the constitution to mean that the powers and prerogatives of the various church courts should be defined clearly so that there would be no overlapping of authority. But it would be a "strained and unnatural construction" to interpret that document to mean that the judicatories had to have the express authority of the constitution for every action taken by them. In language curiously reminiscent of that used in Alexander Hamilton's report on the national bank, the court stated:

It is elementary that the grant of specific power the imposition of a definite duty upon any person or court confers by implication the authority to do whatever is necessary in order to execute the power conferred or to perform the duty imposed and the implied power is as much a part of that statute as if it were given into the body of the act itself.

Citing the vast powers conferred upon the General Assembly by the Cumberland Constitution, the judges declared that the national governing body being "the embodiment and expression of the sovereign power of the
whole church" had ample power to take whatever action was deemed necessary for the benefit of the church as a whole. As a result, the General Assembly had full authority to effect a union with another religious body, and this action was not subject to review by the civil courts.

In further support of their contention that the merger was invalid, the defendants protested that the U.S.A. denomination permitted Negroes under certain circumstances to attend and take part in its church courts and public meetings, while the rules and regulations of the Cumberland Church excluded this race from such activities. However, the Supreme Court stated, that this was another matter for exclusive consideration of the General Assembly of the Cumberland denomination. The issue having been adjusted by that judicatory according to its best judgment, the matter was likewise beyond the power of the civil courts to revise.

The anti-unionists raised the question of ownership of the property of the former Cumberland Presbyterian Church. This was the only issue over which it had any real jurisdiction. The court noted that the deed for the land acquired by the Cumberland Presbyterian Church of Jefferson was made out to the trustees of the congregation. The Jefferson Church furnished and paid for the property in question in the regular way of business, and there was no expressed or implied trust in the title. The tribunal naturally concluded that the deed still belonged to the church to which it was originally signed over, and "whatever body is identified as being the church to which the deed was made still holds the title."
The Jefferson Presbyterian Church was a component part of a larger and more important religious body, known as the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and this local congregation was bound by the orders and judgments of the higher church courts of the denomination. Not being disorganized by the union, the Jefferson Church lost nothing but the word "Cumberland" from its name. Being an integral part of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, the Jefferson congregation became incorporated into the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., upon consummation of the union. Therefore, the plaintiffs and all those who recognized the merger were entitled to all the property of the former Cumberland Presbyterian Church. The Texas Supreme Court reversed the judgment of the Court of Civil Appeals and affirmed the decision of the district court. The court awarded the pro-unionists title to all church property and authorized them to collect all court costs from the dismayed defendants.\textsuperscript{49}

This suit, recognized by both parties as a test case for all other litigation begun in Texas, settled beyond dispute the question of property ownership. Cumberlanders then had no recourse but to throw themselves on the mercy of their U.S.A. brethren in the disposal of property titles.

The official chronicler of the history of the Jefferson Presbyterian Church stated that the burden of expense of this litigation for

the U.S.A. denomination was carried by one member of the congregation, W. B. Ward. Demoralized by this bitter conflict and protracted litigation, the congregation had dwindled considerably. Most of the affluent communicants left the church, thrusting financial responsibility onto the shoulders of one individual.

Upon conclusion of the suit, opponents to the union in the former congregation built a separate church in Jefferson on the corner of Lyon and Delta Streets, where services were held for a number of years. The death of church leaders reduced the congregation to a mere handful. When the church burned no attempt was made to reconstruct it. The legal struggle in Texas was duplicated in other states of the union. Altogether, suits were instituted in 12 states. The principal cases were:

ILLINOIS: First Presbyterian Church, Lincoln, vs. First Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Lincoln, 245 Ill., 74. April 21, 1910.

With the exception of decisions in Missouri and Tennessee, these suits were adjudicated in favor of the U.S.A. Presbyterian Church. 51

Inevitably the question of the disposal of $7,000,000 worth of property was carried from the state courts to federal tribunals. The suit that finally reached the United States Supreme Court was first known as the "College Case," its official name being The Synod of Kansas v. Missouri Valley College. It was filed in a lower federal court in Missouri by James M. Barkley and William H. Roberts, moderator and stated clerk, respectively of the U.S.A. General Assembly, to obtain possession of the Cumberland Church at Mount Carmel, Missouri, and Missouri Valley College. In the United States Supreme Court, it was officially designated Shepherd v. Barkley, but is commonly called the "church case."

On May 6, 1918, the court handed down its decision. It declared that the power of one church to unite with another was inherent in sovereignty, and that in the Presbyterian system of church government the property of the church did not belong to the local congregations who might be using it, but was the possession of the general church and was under the control of a majority of the General Assembly. As a consequence, the union was valid, and all the property of the former

51 Minutes of May 29, 1914, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., XIV (1914), 235.
Cumberland Presbyterian denomination belonged to the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.\textsuperscript{52}

The anti-unionists were overwhelmed by this final defeat. This decision, of course, reversed the prior decisions that had favored the Cumberland Presbyterians who were now threatened with the loss of the few property holdings they had thought were secure.

The object of one of the most protracted suits was the possession of the Cumberland Presbyterian Publishing House. Its value in 1909 was estimated at approximately $263,000.\textsuperscript{53} After the union of the two churches in 1906, the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., took possession of the property and held it until February 12, 1910. At that time the Supreme Court of Tennessee, in the case of Zarecor, et al v. Provines, et al, awarded the property to the Cumberland Church.\textsuperscript{54} The case, now styled Helm v. Zarecor, was appealed by the national church to the federal courts. Since the plant was incorporated under the laws of the state of Tennessee, the federal court in that state refused to hear the case on the grounds of doubtful jurisdiction.\textsuperscript{55} The question of jurisdiction came before the United States Supreme Court. On November 6, 1911, Justice Charles Evans Hughes handed down the opinion that the

\textsuperscript{52}Shepherd v. Barkley 247 US 1, 38 Supreme Court Rep. 422. 62 Law ed. 939 (1917).

\textsuperscript{53}Appendix III, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1910), 90.

\textsuperscript{54}Appendix III, ibid., 80-81.

\textsuperscript{55}Appendix III, ibid., 82.
case transcended state boundaries, because it represented interests and
claims of the two churches which extended over many states. The case
was once again referred to the United States District Court in Nash-
ville for adjudication. That court, on July 24, 1913, gave the final
decision, awarding the property to the U.S.A. Presbyterian Church.

The laments of the Cumberland Presbyterians as they reeled from
one blow after another were piteous. The Rev. Mr. R. N. White noted
that U.S.A. Presbyterians were charging Cumberlanders with stirring up
a fuss over the union. This reminded him of an experience he had had
some years earlier. While walking down a road in Texas one summer day
he heard a cow hidden by an intervening hill, bawling at a terrific
rate. Upon climbing the hill the minister saw that the cow was stand-
ing over her young calf and fighting off a flock of vultures that were
trying to kill it. If Cumberland Presbyterians were bawling dolefully,
it was because U.S.A. buzzards were trying to pounce on their property.

In May, 1909, a special committee reported to the Presbytery of
Austin of the U.S.A. denomination on a conflict arising over the dispos-
sal of the property of the Second, or Grace, Presbyterian Church in
Austin which was formerly the Cumberland Church. This five-man group

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56 Frank Hagerman, In the Supreme Court of the United States
(pamphlet), 61. In church papers (Memphis Theological Seminary
Library, Memphis, Tennessee).

57 Minutes of May 21-26, 1914, Minutes of the General Assembly
of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1914), 156.

58 Venus, Texas Cumberland, April 1, 1907.
had been appointed at the last meeting of the presbytery to investigate conditions in the congregation and report at a pro re nata meeting on the results of its investigation. At this specially called meeting the committee stated that it had discovered that the communicants of that house of worship were divided into two opposing camps. One faction, led by Elder J. H. Gillespie, John W. Hornsby, N. J. Clancy, and G. M. Bynum, favored union with the congregation of the First Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., of Austin. They also favored the sale of the lot on which were erected the house of worship and other buildings. This land was located directly across the street from the First Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. Proceeds of the sale should then be taken by that party with it into its union with the U.S.A. congregation. They believed this merger was the best solution for the dissension and confusion that had arisen within the Second Presbyterian Church congregation. Another faction, led by an Elder P. G. Dismukes and Deacon C. P. Ledbetter, opposed both the union and the sale. Wishing to perpetuate the continued existence of the Second, or Grace, Presbyterian Church, they wanted to continue services in the old house of worship.

Faced by this problem, the special committee unanimously recom-
mended that the presbytery recognize the existence of the Second Pres-
byterian Church and proposed that all members of the former congregation who wished to do so be permitted to retain their allegiance to the Cum-
berland denomination. The lot and all buildings should be sold and the proceeds divided according to the following plan: 15 per cent should follow those who united with the First Presbyterian Church and should
be placed under the control of the Board of Trustees of the U.S.A. Church, and 70 per cent of the money should be set aside for the use and benefit of the communicants who wished to perpetuate the Second, or Grace, Presbyterian Church. The committee further recommended that the anti-unionists purchase a lot and erect a house of worship at some site suitable to them. Until completion of their church building, they were welcome to use the house of worship of the First Presbyterian Church. Further, the Rev. Mr. E. B. Wright, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, would serve as acting pastor of the Grace Presbyterian Church until its members and session chose another minister. The Presbytery accepted the recommendations of its committee, and the matter was believed closed.59

On the surface, this would appear to have been a fair and equitable disposition of the problem, for it was not necessary for the U.S.A. denomination to give any share of the revenue from the sale to the Cumberland Presbyterians unless they chose to do so. Acting in accordance with this plan, the First Presbyterian Church, on July 4, 1909, enrolled 36 members of the former Grace Presbyterian Church.60

Unfortunately, when the Austin Presbytery assembled in September, 1909, another report was made to that body concerning the problem

59 Minutes of May 11, 1909, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Austin of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1907-1917," 126-30. In church papers (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas).

60 Minutes of July 4, 1909, "Minutes of the First Presbyterian Church, USA, of Austin, 1907-1920," 63. In church papers (First Presbyterian Church, Austin, Texas).
of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. The ruling elders of that church had held a called meeting to implement the plan framed by the Austin judicatory and to facilitate the transfer of the property to the First Presbyterian Church. At this assembly, Ruling Elder P. G. Dismukes attempted to intimidate the trustees of the Grace Presbyterian Church by threatening to go into civil court if trustees Hornsby, Clancy, and Bynum did not immediately resign their offices. In the wrangle that followed, Elder Dismukes accused the First Presbyterian Church of attempting to steal the property of the Grace Presbyterian Church. As tempers blazed, Sheriff George Matthews of Travis County arrived. Acting for Elder Dismukes and others, he served papers on the members of the Board of Trustees, demanding that they appear in District Court to give reason why they should not be prevented from transferring the property of the Second Presbyterian Church to the Board of Trustees of the First Presbyterian Church of Austin. This suit, known as 25892, P. G. Dismukes, et al v. J. W. Hornsby, et al in the District Court of Travis County, 26th Judicial District, was still pending when the presbytery met.\(^{61}\)

The angry presbytery then resolved to dissolve the congregation of the Second, or Grace, Presbyterian Church, said dissolution to take place on October 1, 1909. The session of the former Cumberland Church was directed to notify all members of the congregation of the dissolution

\(^{61}\text{Minutes of September 8, 1909, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Austin of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1907-1917," 134-37.}\)
and to supply them with letters of dismissal to whatever church they wished to join. The property of the late Grace Presbyterian Church should be sold and the proceeds used solely for the benefit of churches enrolled in the Austin Presbytery. ⁶²

When the Austin Presbytery gathered for another meeting in November, 1909, they doubtless believed the books were closed on the subject of the Second Presbyterian Church of Austin. To their alarm and dismay, Mrs. P. G. Dismukes and Mrs. C. P. Ledbetter appeared and demanded a hearing as representatives of the Grace Presbyterian Church. The elders and ministers advised their uninvited guests that the Grace Presbyterian Church was "officially unknown" to the presbytery. While they could recall that such a church had existed at one time, they told the ladies that it was now obliterated from the face of the earth. When the two women appeared vexed at this pronouncement, the members of the presbytery advised them that while they would not recognize them as official representatives of the non-existent Grace Presbyterian Church, they were willing to permit their visitors to express their individual views.

Mrs. Dismukes then read from a prepared paper which she followed by certain "remarks" about the U.S.A. Presbyterian Church in general and the members of Austin Presbytery in particular. These "remarks" were evidently of so scorching a nature that the elders and ministers recessed the session until 1:30 that afternoon and fled from

⁶²Ibid., 147.
the field of conflict. Upon returning to the building at the appointed time, the discomfited clerics discovered that Mesdames Dismukes and Ledbetter were still occupying the premises. Since the two women asserted their vigorous determination not to evacuate the chamber in order to permit the church body to enter into an executive session, the Presbytery voted that it was expedient for them to reassemble in the studio of Dr. McClintock. Having reached the safety of this refuge, the Presbytery then went into executive session and completed its deliberations. Eventually the Cumberland Presbyterians agreed to drop their injunction suit, and the property was equally divided between the First Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., of Austin and the Cumberland Presbyterians.

The Cumberlanders who refused to follow the property into the union paid a high price for their decision. The Gregory Presbytery, located in West Texas, and one of the few in which anti-unionists held the majority, in 1909 placed the following statement on its official minute book:

As a church we are bound by the present conditions so that we can hope to do but little until an all wise Providence overrules (which we believe he will) in the right and we get our property . . . from the U.S.A.'s.

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63 Minutes of November 4, 1909, ibid., 155-57.
64 Minutes of March 18, 1913, ibid., 308.
In Texas much the greater part of the property of the former Cumberland denomination was transferred into the reunited church. After 1906 Trinity University and the Texas Female Seminary were taken over by the U.S.A. denomination. For some years the Shepherd Home was administered by the two boards, one appointed by the national church and the other by the Cumberland Presbyterians. About 1911 the national church sold the property of the Shepherd Home and transferred all the proceeds of the sale into its treasury. Almost without exception all the church property in the cities and larger towns of Texas was transferred to the Synod of Texas, U.S.A. Only a few small country churches were left to the reorganized Cumberland Church.66

The U.S.A. Church claimed that wherever a majority of the local congregation opposed the union, the national church refrained from appropriating the property.67 Since the strength of the reorganized Cumberland Presbyterian Church lay primarily in the poorer rural districts of the Lone Star State, the decision of the U.S.A. denomination in regard to property may have had some justification. On the other hand, since the U.S.A. denomination was in a position to acquire all the physical possessions of the former Cumberland Church, it may have been easy for them to rationalize the seizure of the greater part of the property.

66Campbell, History of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Texas, 180, 182.

67Moseley, History of the Jefferson Presbyterian Church, 20.
The Cumberland Presbyterian denomination as a whole never recovered from the disastrous struggle over union and the protracted litigation that followed. In 1906 the Cumberland Church had 185,212 members, 1,514 ministers, and 2,869 congregations in the United States.68 The United States census reports of 1916 showed the results of the abrasive developments since that time as then the church had only 72,052 members and 1,313 churches. The number of ministers was not given. While the property before union was estimated to be worth approximately $7,000,000 by 1916 its value had shrunk to $1,935,072.69 This religious organization has hardly grown since that time as the General Assembly Minutes of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church for 1965 show that in 1964 the church had only 954 churches, and of these only 434 were in fulltime operation. Total membership was 80,231, but of these only 59,697 were active. The total number of ordained ministers was 740, but of these the number with pastoral charges was not given.70

The Synod of Texas of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in 1906 contained 21 presbyteries and incorporated all the Cumberland congregations in Texas and Louisiana. This judicatory had 316 ministers,

68 Comparative Summary, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., VI (1906), 785.
70 Statistics of 1963 and 1964 compared, Minutes of the 135th Meeting of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1965), 125.
1,783 churches, and 30,534 members.\textsuperscript{71} However, by the year 1966 the Synod of Texas of the Cumberland denomination had eight presbyteries, but these incorporated churches in Louisiana, Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, California, and the Orient, and Colombia in South America. The church court contained 104 churches and 112 ministers. Although the church rolls showed a total membership of 8,700, only 6,552 were active communicants.\textsuperscript{72} By comparison the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., (now U.P.) in 1964 contained six presbyteries and incorporated the states of Texas and Louisiana. It had 261 churches, 278 ministers, and 54,441 communicants.\textsuperscript{73} Representation of the national church in Texas and Louisiana was almost equal to the establishment of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church throughout the world.

In retrospect, it can be surmised that the attempt to unite the two branches of the Presbyterian Church came too soon after the Civil War. If passions had been permitted to die down for another generation resistance to the merger scheme would have been far less. What was certain was that with the transferral of the great majority of northern

\textsuperscript{71}Statistics and Presbytery Rolls, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (Nashville: Cumberland Presbyterian Publishing House, 1906), 128a.


\textsuperscript{73}Statistical Tables and Presbytery Rolls, Minutes of the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church in the USA, 6th Ser., VII (Philadelphia: Office of the General Assembly, 1965), 125.
and western ministers and congregations into the national church the
reorganized Cumberland denomination was more than ever a small sec-
tional church limited almost exclusively to the South. As such, its
growth has been stunted, and when one considers the great increase in
population since 1906, it has retrogressed at an alarming rate.

One result of the merger cannot be denied. The U.S.A. denomi-
nation was able to move into the hinterland of the South, and particu-
larly into the Mississippi Valley and Texas. Especially in the latter
state, this church could now challenge on almost equal grounds the
southern Presbyterian Church, and its never-abandoned claim to be known
as a national church could now be better justified than formerly.

Meantime pro-unionists of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church,
calling themselves the Synod of Texas "A," and the Synod of Texas of
the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., met by pre-arrangement in Abilene,
Texas in the fall of 1906. The two bodies met separately, but appointed
committees to confer on means to join the two into one organic union.
The object of the joint conference of the two committees was to agree
on a plan of future presbytery names and boundaries and to work out
other details of the merger. This plan in turn would be submitted to
the General Assembly of the national church for its consideration and
action.74

74 Minutes of September 15, 1906, "Minutes of the Synod of Texas
of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1900-1906,"
143; Minutes of September 15, 1906, Minutes of the Synod of Texas A
(Cumberland) of the Reunited Presbyterian Church, 19th Meeting at
Abilene, Texas, September 13-17, 1906 (n.p., 1906), 9. In church papers
(Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas).
Acting upon the recommendations of the joint conference, the U.S.A. General Assembly at its regular annual meeting in the spring of 1907 issued an Enabling Act which provided that the two synods should be combined under the name and style of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, and the 21 presbyteries of the former Synod of Texas "A" of the Cumberland denomination would be rearranged and reorganized as 12 presbyteries: the Austin, Abilene, Amarillo, Brownwood, Dallas, Denton, Fort Worth, Houston, Jefferson, Paris, San Antonio, and Waco. The Presbytery of Jefferson included 13 counties in East Texas and the entire state of Louisiana. In 1911 the Presbyteries of Austin and San Antonio were combined into the Presbytery of Austin, and a new judicatory, known as the Presbytery of El Paso, was erected in far West Texas. The next year the Southwest Bohemian Presbytery was erected under the Synod of Texas, its borders coextensive with the Synod of Texas itself. Also the Presbyteries of Denton and Fort Worth were united to form the Presbytery of Fort Worth. Consequently, by 1913 the Synod of Texas, U.S.A., still contained 12 lesser judicatories: the Presbyteries of Abilene, Amarillo, Austin, Brownwood, Dallas, El Paso, Fort Worth, Houston, Jefferson, Paris, Southwest Bohemian, and Waco.

75 Minutes of May 23, 1907, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., VII (1907), 171-73.

76 Minutes of May 27, 1911, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., XI (1911), 250.

77 Minutes of May 23, 1912, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., XII (1912), 165.
The united Synod of Texas, U.S.A., held its first meeting in Waxahachie, Texas, in October, 1907. All 12 presbyteries as then named were represented with a total of 107 delegates. The Texas judicatory then included 245 ministers, 580 churches, and 24,373 members. Nothing of consequence transpired at this first united meeting.

The Synod of Texas could contemplate with satisfaction its augmented strength which would permit it to become a significant factor in the religious life of Texas, where the continued growth and prosperity of the national church appeared assured. Although doubtless not anticipated in the beginning, the increased strength of the U.S.A. denomination was almost certain to have one unfortunate result. For the first time it could challenge on almost equal terms the U.S., or southern Presbyterian Church in the field. Consequently, the almost uniformly cordial relations that had existed between the Synod of Texas, U.S.A., and the Synod of Texas, U.S., were likely to erode. As the two branches of the Presbyterian Church contended for the same ground, crises would arise which would take all the diplomacy and understanding of the members of both churches to resolve.

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78 Minutes of October 10, 1907, Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 20th Meeting, at Waxachie, Texas, October 10-14, 1907 (n.p., 1907), 4-10. In church papers (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas).

79 Statistics and Presbytery Rolls, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., VII (1907), 948.
CHAPTER V

COMITY AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH U.S.
AND THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH U.S.A.

It is obvious to anyone interested in the progress of Presbyterianism in Texas that the activities of two competing churches, the U.S. and the U.S.A., contending for the same ground were bound to produce friction and misunderstanding. One answer to this hurtful rivalry was the refusion of the two churches into one body, but suspicions and animosities growing out of the Civil War made any such ecclesiastical merger difficult. The problem, nevertheless, cried out for a solution. Every time one church moved into what the other believed to be its sphere of influence, clashes developed. Local conflict would inevitably abrade relations between the two churches on a state level. The pastors would inevitably carry complaints and vexations through their presbyteries to synod. Such continuous opening of new wounds and mortifying of old injuries would damage, not only the cause of Presbyterianism but also that of religion itself. Unfortunately, even the simplest accommodations or understandings between the two great branches of the church proved difficult.

The first attempt at a rapprochement between the two churches came when the Rev. Mr. E. B. Wright, pastor of the Presbyterian Church
in Austin, presented a paper to the Austin Presbytery at its regular meeting on August 17, 1875. Addressed to the Synod of Texas of the southern Presbyterian Church, this resolution stated that in order to make the missionary work in the state more effective there was an urgent need for the two branches of the Presbyterian Church to join forces. The U.S. Assembly was "respectfully and fraternally" requested to appoint a committee to meet with one named by the Austin Presbytery. The conference of these two delegations, having as its objective the elimination of friction and misunderstanding, should frame a common plan of action to be adopted and implemented by both churches. The paper adopted by presbytery was transmitted to the U.S. synod for its consideration.¹

On November 5, 1875, the southern assembly acknowledged with "unfeigned pleasure" the reception of the paper from the presbytery, and it "most cordially reciprocated the kind and Christian statements therein contained." Inasmuch as the General Assemblies of the two churches have not settled the "question of fraternal correspondence," the synod could take no action in the matter. This answer by order of the southern assembly was communicated to the Austin Presbytery.²

¹Minutes of August 17, 1875, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Austin of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1868-1887," 47-48. In church papers (University of Texas Archives, Eugene Barker Memorial Library, Austin, Texas).

²Minutes of November 5, 1875, "Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the US, 1859-1900," 57-58. In church papers, (Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary Library, Austin, Texas).
In spite of the negative response to its overture, the Austin judiciary on October 26, 1876, adopted the following resolution: In order to secure "friendly relations" with the southern church, and in order to avoid conflict over missionary work, the presbytery pledged that it would not attempt to establish a church in a city or town where a U.S. church was already established. The U.S. presbytery or pastor in charge of an area should first be consulted on the needs of the town or city.\(^3\)

On October 15, 1880, at its regular annual meeting at Weatherford the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., was honored by the presence of the Rev. Mr. M. Cherry of the Presbyterian Church, U.S., sitting as a corresponding member and visiting guest. At this meeting one of the members of the national church sounded out Cherry on the advisability of having the synod, U.S., and the synod, U.S.A., appoint committees to confer on how the work of the Presbyterian Church could be carried on in Texas without conflict. Cherry stated his personal belief that such a conference would benefit both churches. Encouraged, the U.S.A. synod then appointed a five-man committee to correspond with the southern synod.\(^4\)

\(^3\) Minutes of October 26, 1872, "Minutes of Austin Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in the US, 1868-1887," 63.

\(^4\) Minutes of October 15, 1880, "Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1878-1900," 60-61. In church papers (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas).
Responding favorably to the overtures of the U.S.A. church the U.S. synod also appointed a committee to meet with that of the U.S.A. judiciary. The joint committees held a conference in Waco in February, 1881 to frame rules of comity. The first topic agreed upon was priority of occupation of a territory. The presbytery that occupied a given town or region had a prior claim to that field which other judicatories must recognize. A point was considered occupied when "supplied by stated preaching" or maintenance of regular service at least once a month. Occupation further required that a church organization "has been effected and a stated means of grace ... maintained." Finally, "contiguous mission stations must be supplied from a central point." These statements were not defined.

Once a region had been declared occupied but was without stated supply for one year, a joint committee of both synods could declare the field vacant. It could then be occupied by whichever synod "regularly and statedly filled the vacancy." In towns where both assemblies had churches but only one could be sustained the conference proposed the following recommendations: when the property of an absorbed church was involved, the church obtaining the property would pay the Board of Church Extension or Erection a sum equal to the amount the board had contributed to the construction fund. No fusion of churches would take place, however, unless a majority of both congregations consented but mergers should be encouraged for the sake of church comity. The joint committees recommended that missionaries conform to these suggestions until the synods acted upon them.
They recommended that both churches cooperate in a community whenever it would lead to the advancement of both the community and the church. Congregations organized in the future would choose which denomination they wished to join.⁵

At its next annual meeting in Brenham, in October, 1881, the U.S.A. synod unanimously approved the rules agreed upon. Furthermore the judicatory made the U.S.A. comity committee permanent in order to confer with a like committee of the southern church on all matters of mutual interest.⁶

In October, 1881, in Corsicana, the southern synod gave the comity committee report a somewhat different reception. The synod first commended the members of the committee for "promptness and diligence" in "the discharge of the delicate duty assigned them" and then approved "the courteous and Christian spirit which characterized the whole proceedings of the joint conference." In view of the "great principles involved" and the "dangerous precedent" established, the judicatory declined, however, to adopt the report. The ministers then framed their reasons for this rejection and spread them upon the official record, stating that

neither this synod nor any other ecclesiastical body has any power vested in them by the head and lawgiver of the church to make any deliverances or to enact any laws or to issue any

⁵Minutes of October 24, 1881, "Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the US, 1859-1900," 193-95.

⁶Minutes of October 18, 1881, "Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1878-1900," 88.
injunction which would even seem to deprive the very humblest of God's covenanted children of their right to worship Him according to the dictates of his own conscience and after the forms of the church of their fathers.

Furthermore, the church court declined to adopt the report because to adopt it would usurp the prerogatives bestowed by the constitution of the church upon the presbyteries. These prerogatives were: "to take special oversight of vacant churches; to concert measures for the enlargement of the church within its bounds; in general, to order whatever pertains to the spiritual welfare of the churches under its care." The General Assembly at its last stated meeting specifically assigned to the individual presbyteries "all practical propositions for the cultivation of their fields" and the Synod of Texas assigned an advisory capacity only. The plan the comity committee had drawn up was "both impractical and inexpedient," because, under existing relationships between the two churches, there could be no tribunal to adjudicate disputes. Finally, in declining to adopt the report, the synod declared that it was not actuated by any "enmity or unkindness" to the U.S.A. Church but rather wished to cultivate "harmonious relations of and peace with" that church as with all other

7Presbyterian Committee of Publication, Book of Church Order of the Presbyterian Church of the US as Adopted by the General Assembly of 1879 and 1894 with Amendments Embodied up to and Including the Year 1922 (Richmond: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, n.d.), 32.

8Minutes of May 27, 1881, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the US, 1879-1882, V (Wilmington: Jackson Bell Printers and Binders, 1881), 388-89.
ecclesiastical bodies which "recognize & proclaim the crown rights of Christ." 9

Although inconclusive, there is some evidence that the southern Presbyterian Church rejected the rules of comity because it felt it should retain the freedom to move into whatever field it should choose. A hint to this effect appeared at the General Assembly meeting of the U.S.A. Church in 1880. The Synod of Texas requested extensive financial assistance of the National Board of Home Missions to open up Texas as a missionary field. "With great fullness and clearness" the delegates discussed with the members of the committee conditions in Texas relative to evangelization. As a result of these discussions the committee reported to the General Assembly that the population of Texas was very large and continually growing, but due to the peculiar circumstances within the territory, the prospect for successful missionary development appeared discouraging. The Presbyterian population as a whole was relatively small and widely scattered, and it would be extremely difficult to supply them with educated ministers. Furthermore, "it appears that our brethren of the southern Presbyterian Church seem inclined to seek the exclusive occupation of the state, as far as Presbyterianism is concerned." If the committee had evidence that the US Church had the ability to supply desperately needed trained pastors it might be content to resign the field to them even if this meant

9Minutes of October 18, 1881, "Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the US, 1859-1900," 187-88.
sacrificing many who held the principles of the U.S.A. Church. Regretfully, there was no evidence that the Southern Church could. Thus, the committee recommended that their brethren continue in this area with the same "Christian good will and spirit of reconciliation" hitherto exhibited. The General Assembly should make assistance available to their workers in the field.\(^\text{10}\)

There were, however, men of good will in both branches of the church seeking a better understanding and closer cooperation. At the annual meeting of the U.S. Synod in Victoria in November, 1883, the Rev. Mr. S. F. Tenney, one of the members of the committee that had met with the U.S.A. committee in Waco, offered a resolution that the southern judicatory appoint a three-man committee to confer with a similar standing committee of the U.S.A. branch. The two committees should consult on the expediency of jointly supporting Austin College, a U.S. Presbyterian-sponsored institution. They should also discuss cooperation in the evangelization of the Texas Negroes. Further, they would discuss the erection of separate presbyteries and a synod in Texas composed exclusively of colored converts. The synods should establish jointly a school for the instruction of colored preachers and teachers. They would confer on ways to prosecute jointly the home mission work in Texas by eliminating friction and duplicated endeavor. Both committees

\(^{10}\) Minutes of May 28, 1880, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., VI (New York: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1880), 68.
should report annually to their respective synods, briefing them on the progress of comity within the state and recommending future action.

Tenney's paper was referred to a special committee which would make recommendations concerning the various proposals. This committee recommended rejection of the proposal that the U.S. synod appoint a committee to confer with the Home Mission Committee of the "northern" synod. Such action would be "unusual" and "improper" since the committee named by the U.S. synod had not been clothed with authority to act. Since the southern church solely sponsored Austin College, and the school's board of trustees had not urged the necessity of this action, the committee recommended rejection of the proposed joint control.

Finally, the committee recommended that the two synods cooperate in gospel work among the Negroes and mutually support an institution of learning for the colored people of Texas. The synod then adopted the recommendations of its committee. 11

The two committees named by their respective synods to discuss cooperative endeavors among the Negroes met at Victoria and drew up a report. It proposed that the two judicatories create presbyteries composed exclusively of colored Presbyterians. When they had grown sufficiently they should be formed into a synod composed of their race. In so far as their respective means might allow, both synods should train and financially support Negro ministers. The two synods would appoint

11 Minutes of November 18, 1883, "Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church-in the US, 1859-1900," 233.
a permanent joint committee to supervise evangelical work among the colored, raise funds in support of this labor, and report annually to the synodical assemblies. Until a separate colored presbytery had been formed, an individual Negro minister would be connected with the presbytery of the church with which he was affiliated. An institution for the training of colored teachers and preachers would be established and maintained by both synods, both branches of the church being equally represented on the board of trustees. In the event that there was a shortage of qualified colored ministers, the joint committee was authorized to appoint willing white preachers to work among the colored. Finally, the joint committee and board of trustees were not authorized to involve either synod in debt. The U.S.A. Synod at its 1884 annual meeting unanimously accepted these recommendations.\(^\text{12}\)

At its 1885 meeting in Houston, the U.S. synod heard the report on cooperative work among the colored of Texas. Then, pleading that the General Assembly of the southern Presbyterian Church had not rescinded its order forbidding any correspondence with a "foreign body," it voted to postpone indefinitely any action on the matter.\(^\text{13}\)

This resolution by the southern synod temporarily ended all attempts at cooperative action or mutual understanding.

\(^{12}\) Minutes of October 25, 1884, "Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the USA," 139-43.

\(^{13}\) Ibid., 170.
It remained for the General Assemblies of the two branches of the Presbyterian Church to clear the way for comity on the local level. At its 1882 annual meeting the national Presbyterian Church almost unanimously adopted the following resolution:

In order to remove all difficulties in the way of that full and formal fraternal correspondence which, on our part, we are prepared to accept, we adopt the following minute, to wit: That while receding from no principle, we do hereby declare our regret for and withdrawal of all expressions of our Assembly which may be regarded as reflecting upon, or offensive to, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America.¹⁴

The assembled clerics then appointed a seven-man committee to meet with a similar committee, if named, from the other assembly to facilitate the work of Presbyterianism throughout the nation.¹⁵

Upon receipt of the overture of the northern church the southern General Assembly appointed a committee to meet with the U.S. Comity Committee.¹⁶ After lengthy, indecisive negotiations, the two delegations met in joint conference in New York City on December 28, 1888, and continued in an interchange of views until January 1, 1889. Finding themselves unprepared for final agreement, they named subcommittees to discuss cooperation on the home field, and evangelization of

¹⁴Minutes of May 25, 1882, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., VII (New York: Presbyterian Board of Publications, 1882), 50.

¹⁵Ibid., 591.

¹⁶Minutes of May 25, 1883, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the US, VI (Wilmington, N.C.: Jackson & Bell, Water-Power Presses, 1883), 57.
the colored. The subcommittees met in Atlanta, Georgia, in April, 1889, and framed the reports to be submitted to their General Assemblies. First, the committee on cooperation in the home field agreed upon their report. When presbyteries of disparate branches of the church had overlapping boundaries, either as presbyteries or through their appointed committee they would agree to divide the ground between them in order to avoid injurious rivalries or antagonism. Where a weak church in a community, unable to support a minister, had an opportunity to unite with another Presbyterian Church of the other denomination the presbytery with authority over it should consent to the merger. The pastor ministering to the federated congregation should be of whichever branch of the church the presbyteries determined. Funds for support of a united congregation should be collected and channeled through agencies chosen by both churches. If individuals wished to transfer their allegiance from one branch of the church to the other, the presbyteries in authority over them should permit them to do so. If a sufficient number wished to form a congregation, they should be allowed to transfer as a body into the nearest presbytery of the other church.

Doubtless one reason the committees readily attained accord on these matters was the fact that they were subject to various interpretations. If a congregation transferred from one assembly to the other, which branch of the church would hold legal title to the property? If two presbyteries could not concur on the appointment of a pastor of the federated church, what tribunal would resolve the conflict? Those who framed these rules doubtless believed that men of good will could
readily find a common ground for understanding in any dispute, but even men of good will can sincerely disagree.

The committee dealing with cooperation in work among the Negroes agreed that there was a basic policy difference between the two branches of the church. The southern denomination clearly stated its belief that, for the best interest of all, the white and the colored races should be separated in their own congregations and judicatures. The national church, on the other hand, did not adhere to the necessity of total separation of races. Greater cooperation and amity between the two branches of the church should not be destroyed by differences of opinion regarding relations between white and black brethren of the church. Any difference of opinion between the two denominations on the status of the Negro in the church should be resigned to the "providence of God," and the "status quo" be maintained. That is, both churches should be permitted to prosecute their work among members of this race in accordance with their previous policies without the interference of the other church. In addition, the institutions of learning for the colored, administered by either church, should be recommended to the financial support of both assemblies.

These subcommittee reports, together with the papers framed by the other two subcommittees, were adopted by the General Assembly of
the U.S.A. Church. The southern church promptly ratified this same agreement.

Now that a general understanding had been reached on a national level it was reasonable to assume that the local synods and presbyteries in Texas and Louisiana would be inspired to appoint committees to frame practical working agreements. This meant that the joint committees would decide which church would have a clear field in certain counties or towns. Although there were records of such pragmatic arrangements in other parts of the South, there was no evidence that such agreements were even attempted in Texas and Louisiana. Apparently judicatories administering this territory felt that the comity reports ratified by the two General Assemblies made any local rapprochements unnecessary. This was patently an error, because the agreements merely stated general principles, and even these were so loosely worded that they could be implemented only with difficulty.

Comment on this point is to be found in a letter from the Rev. Mr. B. A. Hodges, Chairman of the Committee on Comity of the U.S.A. synod, to another minister of the same judicatory.

It is true that the agreement of 1889 is sufficient, if faithfully carried out. But it has not been carried out, and I fear it will not be unless our Synods adopt measures for

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17 Minutes of May 24, 1889, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., XII (Philadelphia: MacCalla & Company, Printers, 1889), 70-73.

18 Minutes of May 23, 1889, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the US, VII (Richmond, Va.: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1889), 596.
its being carried out. There are many points of friction not touched in that agreement, and they are the ones that touch us in Texas. I fear the Presbyteries will do nothing. It seems to me that a General agreement on the special points of friction ought to be had by the Synod in order to create a sentiment in favor of cooperation.

Hodges pointed out that if a concord were reached it would have to come from the synod level. As proof of this he pointed out that in the Presbytery of Waco, U.S.A., there were 14 communities unable to sustain two separate congregations; however, each branch of the church had an establishment in each of these communities. Churches in these communities demonstrated a strong desire for merger. Unfortunately, these 14 communities were located in the three separate U.S. presbyteries of Central Texas, Dallas, and Fort Worth. Local congregations were reluctant to take the initiative, particularly when the policy of these three U.S. presbyteries varied widely. While a synodical plan would not bind the judicatories absolutely, it would influence them greatly.\(^19\)

In another letter to the same cleric, Hodges reiterated the need for an effective understanding between the two branches of the church. "I am fully aware that the spirit of the 1889 agreement is being violated on both sides, and I blush every time my church is guilty." While asserting his strong desire for the progress and prosperity of his church, he stated that the cause of Presbyterianism was more important than that of either denomination.

\(^{19}\)B. A. Hodges to J. P. Robertson, November 18, 1908. Papers of B. A. Hodges, in (Trinity University Archives).
He then expounded on the difficulty of the two branches trying to reach an accommodation in Texas. After 1906 the U.S.A. church was composed in large part of former Cumberlanders. Ever since the Civil War the U.S. and Cumberland Churches had been vigorous and often bitter rivals for the same field. Thus, they had a long history of mutual suspicion and hostility. When the Cumberlanders united with the mother church, they transferred this antagonism into it.

Many U.S. ministers, calling their denomination the southern Presbyterian Church, labeled the U.S.A. denomination the "northern" church. Thus they stigmatized it, and argued that it should confine itself to the northern states leaving the field of the South exclusively to the U.S. denomination. The Cumberland Church, however, was the earliest Protestant church to enter Texas, and by the year 1906 had a membership almost equal to that of the U.S. church. When the merger of the Cumberland and U.S.A. churches was consummated, this large establishment in the state was transferred to the mother church, and the history of the former Cumberland Church became part of the general history of the U.S.A. church. The national church, therefore, believed that it had as much right as any Protestant denomination to the field and that the South had need of both the U.S. and the U.S.A. churches. "This is our view of it, and on this view we act."\(^{20}\)

\(^{20}\)B. A. Hodges to J. P. Robertson, August 4, 1908. Papers of B. A. Hodges.
As a result of this ill feeling and lack of general understand-
ing, the ecclesiastical correspondence of the time is filled with petty
bickering. In a typical letter the Rev. Mr. W. T. Logan, Chairman of
the Committee on Home Missions of the Presbytery of Abilene, U.S.A.,
wrote the Rev. Mr. Hodges, Chairman of the Synodical Committee of the
same denomination:

I don't [sic] remember just what I said about the trouble
with the U.S. people. While I do not like to repeat trouble
and unpleasant things, but as you are chairman of our Home
Missions Committee, I see no harm in relating some of the
conditions.

About two years earlier the southern church surrendered to the
"northern" church all claims to the town of Aspermont. The pastor-
evangelist of the southern church sent word to the U.S.A. evangelist,
the Rev. Mr. W. E. Green, that he was withdrawing from the field, and
if Green wished to enter the community he was free to do so. After
preaching in the town for two years, the U.S.A. evangelist developed a
small but enterprising church. When a railroad was constructed to the
town, it bade fair to become a promising center. When the Austin Presby-
tery of the U.S.A. church appointed a permanent supply to the commu-
nity, he collected money for the construction of a church building and
manse, and the congregation was built up to thirty members. When the
"U.S." people saw the state of affairs, they demanded that the national
church abandon the town and return the field to them. When the Abilene
Presbytery refused this demand, they took their complaint to the chair-
man of their synodical committee on comity. The case has yet to be
settled by the joint committee on comity. We
are still occupying the field, and shall continue to do so until the Board [of Comity] orders us to abandon it, and then we shall do so... I regret to report the unsatisfactory relations with our U.S. brethren, but they have forced it upon us, and we are only trying to take care of ourselves.21

The U.S. church was not the only guilty party. The Rev. Mr. S. L. Morris, Secretary of the Executive Committee of Our Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church, U.S. in a letter to another minister of the same denomination protested the attempt of a "northern" minister to construct a "northern" church in Grand Field Oklahoma, a town of a thousand people where the U.S. Presbyterians already had a church building. This U.S.A. pastor justified his actions by asserting that in Eschiti, Oklahoma, a few miles away, his denomination had established a church. When Eschiti failed to survive, and several of the members of the old U.S.A. church moved to Grand Field, the "northern" minister protested that he had the right to proselytize in this community. As to the attitude of this U.S.A. minister, the author of the letter said:

I contend that, according to the comity between the two churches, as we are already on the ground with a good church building, it would be a waste of money for the Northern Church to enter that field.

In the northern part of Oklahoma there was a large area of sixteen hundred square miles where there was not a single Protestant church.

I simply raised the question... whether it was right for them to be wasting money in competition with us, when they have so much unoccupied territory in the north... . . .

I do not see how anyone could take any other view of the matter.22

There seem to have been few disputes of this nature until the union of the Cumberland and U.S.A. churches. This might have been because the U.S.A. Church was so small in comparison to the southern church until 1906 that it hardly appeared to be a serious rival in Texas and Louisiana. After that year, when the former Cumberland Church with a long history of mutual antagonism between it and the U.S. denomination united with the U.S.A. church, friction between the national and southern Presbyterian churches mounted. Evidently between 1906 and 1920 the two branches of Presbyterianism were able to amicably settle these and other disputes.

In addition to those arising between the U.S. and U.S.A. churches over who was poaching on whose preserves, some conflicts resulted from the uniting of two weak churches in a community that could support only one strong congregation. To avoid injured feelings on one side or the other, the absorption of a U.S.A. church by a U.S. church, or vice versa called for the most careful strategy and diplomacy by leaders of both denominations. Correspondence of the period demonstrates that some ministers from both religious bodies strove to promote the cause of Presbyterianism as a whole by encouraging the union of weak churches wherever practical.

22 S. L. Morris to J. D. Robertson, November 23, 1908. Papers of B. A. Hodges.
A letter from the Rev. Mr. W. A. McLeod, of the U.S. Home Mission Committee to the Rev. Mr. B. A. Hodges, Chairman of the Synodical Committee of Home Missions of the U.S.A. church provides an example. The southern Presbyterian inquired about the possibility of consolidation in nearby towns of Forney and Wills Point, where the U.S. church had a membership of approximately 40, while the U.S.A. establishment had slightly more. Even though the U.S. congregation was "pretty well to do," he thought the cause of religion would be served by transferring them to the U.S.A. Church at Forney. "As a member of the Home Mission Committee, I intend to do all I can to keep faith with you, and I feel the other members feel the same way."23

The movement for union of weak churches and the search for more harmonious relationships between the two churches did not proceed without opposition, as another letter from McLeod to Hodges indicates. After asserting that the U.S. synod had just appointed a Committee of Comity to facilitate this consolidation, the southern Presbyterian stated, "Strange as it might seem the movement was headed by Brother John V. McCall, of Gainesville, heretofore the king bee of the 'stand pat' forces." Brother McCall admitted on the floor of synod that a conversation he had with Dr. J. F. Smith in a railroad car two years earlier had changed his views on the need for fusion. At this same synod meeting a "typical stand patter" expressed opposition to the movement for

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23 W. A. McLeod to B. A. Hodges, April 18, 1910. Papers of B. A. Hodges.
comity. Referring to events of 32 years before, he spoke of a comity agreement signed between the two denominations. The provisions of which he declared had never been carried out by the U.S.A. church. "He waxed warm under the collar when he spoke of the policy of the 'northern' church having Negroes in their membership." He indicated fear that the "northern" church would attempt to "put the nigger" in every consolidated church. "That latter argument makes me worry, because it is such thinly veiled demogogurey [sic]."

In spite of opposition within both churches, the fusion of weak churches continued. Although the synodical judicatories ratified no general plan, a letter from Hodges to a U.S. minister spelled out the work arrangements which both branches of the Presbyterian Church unofficially adopted. Even though the U.S.A. comity chairman spoke of "articles" drawn up by presbyteries of the two denominations, there is no record of such an understanding between the denominations. He might have referred to a comity plan that committees of the two presbyteries had unofficially framed. These, however, were never spread upon the records of either denomination.

As you . . . know our presbytery and the presbytery of the Southern Presbyterian Church have adopted articles by which we hope to unite all churches in small communities, each Presbytery to endeavor to keep the exchanges so nearly even that there will be no loss of membership, [to either denomination] if that can be done. 25

24 W. A. McLeod to B. A. Hodges, October 24, 1912. Papers of B. A. Hodges.

In spite of the sentiments expressed in the foregoing, a minister on occasion could not refrain from expressing satisfaction at the victory of his church at the expense of the other denomination. A U.S.A. minister, discussing the absorption of a U.S. church in the town of Wortham, wrote in connection with the request of the southern congregation to be dismissed to the national church:

The remarkable thing about it is that neither myself or [sic] my people had anything to do with it until it became so apparent that it was going to succeed that they begged me to take hold and help them to land safely, which I did. Their Presbytery reluctantly granted their request and on last Thursday our Presbytery met here and took them under its care and consolidated the churches. We got 70 members and all of their property, about $5,000.00. We retain all of their officials and give them full representation in the Sunday School.26

When the welfare of Presbyterianism as a whole was clearly at stake the national church proved itself equally willing to surrender to the southern denomination. Hodges, writing to a U.S. minister in the Central Texas Presbytery, U.S. stated:

I am again writing you on the matter of union.
I have made a list of seventeen places within the bounds of Waco and Austin Presbyteries of U.S.A. Church, that cover nearly all your presbytery and parts of Dallas and Fort Worth Presbyteries of U.S. Church.
Why may we not start a move to get these churches together? I am sure some of them can be combined. For instance, I was at Ennis last Saturday, and had a conference with our people there. We are not as strong as the U.S. Church, but have some good people. These two churches ought to be combined. The town is not growing, and the two churches will just about make one good one. After a long conference with our elders, I believe they are just about ready for union, if only they can be made to see that the U.S. church will make an exchange our

way. It is not the idea of a "swapout" that appeals to them, but the idea of a union atmosphere. If we can create that atmosphere I think we can make many mutual exchanges that will relieve us of some embarrassing situations, and strengthen our work all round. Of course, we can only encourage the churches to get together. We cannot direct what they must do.  

With these examples drawn from official church correspondence as a general background, this chapter can now turn to a careful statistical study compiled by a U.S.A. minister for his General Assembly. This paper concerned itself with the history of the merger of the U.S. and U.S.A. churches in Texas from 1906 through 1920. Since there were four federations among the above 26 churches, the total duplication was reduced to 23. It can be seen that between 1906 and 1920, 67 duplications disappeared. How did the elimination of so many churches come about? Further, how has it affected each of the denominations and how was the property involved disposed of?

In some cases one church gradually drained the membership of the other until the ruling presbytery dissolved the church. In certain instances the presbytery took the initiative by dissolving the church and recommending that the membership join the other branch of the Presbyterian Church. In by far the largest number of cases, however, a presbytery dismissed the church to the other denomination on the request of the church itself. Thus, the impetus toward fusion came not from the leaders of the two denominations but from the individual congregations themselves.

The final balance sheet of the membership and property transferred was of great interest to both churches. Although in some of the mergers the figures were not available, statistics of some transfers are given below. Concerning 50 of 57 cases, they show the following:

**THE SITUATION IN 1906**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>U.S.</th>
<th>U.S.A.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ministers</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministers</td>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Churches</td>
<td>442</td>
<td>461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Churches</td>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members</td>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>23,059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members</td>
<td>U.S.A.</td>
<td>21,884</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Presbyterian membership in 1906</td>
<td></td>
<td>44,943</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**THE SITUATION IN 1920**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>U.S.</th>
<th>U.S.A.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ministers</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministers</td>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Churches</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Churches</td>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members</td>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>32,413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members</td>
<td>U.S.A.</td>
<td>29,677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Presbyterian membership in 1920</td>
<td></td>
<td>62,090</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DUPICATION OF CHURCHES IN 1906**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>U.S.</th>
<th>U.S.A.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of duplications in 1906</td>
<td></td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership of the 93 churches:</td>
<td>U.S.A.</td>
<td>6,524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>5,834</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total membership of the 93 churches</td>
<td></td>
<td>12,358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average membership of the 93 churches:</td>
<td>U.S.A.</td>
<td>70+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>63-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average membership of the churches if united</td>
<td></td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DUPICATIONS IN 1920**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>U.S.</th>
<th>U.S.A.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of duplications in 1920</td>
<td></td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership of the 26 churches:</td>
<td>U.S.A.</td>
<td>4,148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>3,278</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total membership of the 26 churches</td>
<td></td>
<td>7,426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average membership of the 26 churches:</td>
<td>U.S.A.</td>
<td>159+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>126+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average membership of the 26 churches if united</td>
<td></td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Number of churches transferred and dissolved:
- U.S.A. to U.S. Church: 22
- U.S. to U.S.A. Church: 28

Number of members transferred:
- U.S.A. to U.S. Church: 846
- U.S. to U.S.A. Church: 615

Amount of property transferred:
- U.S.A. to U.S. Church: $36,500.00
- U.S. to U.S.A. Church: 23,550.00

Total number of churches transferred: 50
Total number of members exchanged: 1,461
Total amount of property exchanged: $60,050.00

It can be seen that the U.S.A. church obtained the largest number of churches, but the U.S. denomination a larger total membership and the lion's share of the property. The survey demonstrated a healthy atmosphere of cooperation and comity, although too often the leadership of the movement lay outside the ranks of the church hierarchy.28

While bitter quarrels may have retarded understanding between the two branches, the records make it clear that there has always been a number of ministers in each denomination working toward a more harmonious relationship. However, as long as there are two churches competing for the field, there are likely to be disputes and misunderstandings. The only final and rational solution to the problem is the organic union of the U.S. and the U.S.A. churches, and it is evidently as far from realization today as it was during the period of Reconstruction.

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CHAPTER VI

THE EL PASO CASE

One of two conflicts which developed between the two Presbyterian denominations that could not be settled by a friendly entente was the so-called El Paso Case. Unfortunately, although the main outlines of the problem are clear, numerous details are obscured as many of the related documents and records have disappeared. Some of the records of both churches that might be expected to deal at length with this issue, nevertheless, are extant. Curiously, however, while presbyterian and synodical minutes usually treat every dispute with voluminous and even tedious thoroughness, these manuscripts are strangely mute and vague about many aspects of this West Texas controversy.

Due to the outbreak during the administration of President Taft, of a prolonged revolution in Mexico, almost all the U.S. and U.S.A. missions closed, and the missionaries operating these stations, with many of their Mexican communicants, fled to Texas. Owing to its proximity to Mexico and already largely Latin population, El Paso became the gathering point of this refugee throng. Over half the membership of the U.S.A. mission stations in Torreón, Mexico, moved en masse to that community.
In 1913 when this influx reached its height the national church had no Spanish-speaking mission in El Paso, but the U.S. denomination already occupied the field with a small poverty-stricken settlement house. U.S.A. communicants and missionary leaders, evidently reluctant to attach themselves to this southern Presbyterian station, asked the Synod of Texas, U.S.A., to build a separate settlement house.

That judicatory, however, was reluctant to move aggressively into an area already preempted by the southern church. To avoid conflict, the Synod of Texas, U.S., and the Synod of Texas, U.S.A., appointed a joint committee to meet in San Antonio on May 10, 1913. The committee drew up a comity agreement regarding the work among the Spanish-speaking communicants in Texas, whereby the southern Presbyterian Church agreed to withdraw from El Paso. Then the U.S.A. synod would construct a mission station, and all the communicants of the U.S. Presbyterian Church would transfer to it. In return the U.S.A. Assembly promised not to enter San Antonio, where its sister denomination had a strong establishment.

Members of both synods were cordially willing to accept the understanding, but it had to be ratified by the General Assemblies of both denominations before it could be implemented. Both bodies met in Atlanta a few weeks after the agreement had been framed, and each synod presented this compact to the Home Mission Board of its Assembly. On June 5, 1913, Dr. Charles M. Thompson reported to the U.S.A. Synod that the Home Mission Board of the national church had officially accepted the agreement. However, no action was ever taken on the board of the
southern General Assembly. No mention of this comity agreement can be found in official church records. Further, the minutes of the General Assemblies of the respective denominations failed to note any such request for ratification.

Now both of the Texas Synods considered the entente null and void. Acting in accordance with this view, the U.S.A. Church moved into San Antonio, and the U.S. Church retained its mission station in El Paso. Evidently no hostility of any consequence developed over their work in San Antonio, but the case proved different in the far western city. Trouble developed when the U.S.A. Synod proceeded with its plans for the construction of a mission station in that community. At the annual meeting of the U.S.A. judicatory in El Paso in October, 1914, the committee on home missions reported on the work done among the Mexicans in Texas. It stated that about 18 months previously the Rev. Mr. Kenneth Brown made a careful survey of the El Paso field and reported enthusiastically on the possibility of progressive work in that area. Encouraged by this report and a later survey conducted by the Rev. Mr. Robert McLean, superintendent of Mexican work for the U.S.A. synod, the committee had sent him to the 1914 meeting of the U.S.A. General Assembly to request financial aid from the Home Mission Board. Perhaps to the astonishment of both the committee and McLean,

1E. A. Hodges, A History of the Mexican Mission Work Conducted by the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America in the Synod of Texas (no location given: The Women's Synodical of Texas, 1931), 12-13. (Pamphlet)
the board responded with marked generosity. Promising to contribute $50,000, that body appropriated $4,430 to facilitate the work in the coming year.2

Since September, 1913, the Rev. Mr. McLean had made regular visits to El Paso, and on December 1, 1914, the Rev. Mr. José Venecia moved his residence from San Angelo to El Paso to take charge of the work. As the fruit of their labors, in March, 1915, a U.S.A. congregation was formed in the Mexican community. Their greatest handicap was the absence of a church building.3

The problem in El Paso proved unique. Although the Mexican population was large, save for a few scattered enclaves, the great mass of these Spanish-speaking citizens lived in one area of the city. Thus, any church that would serve this community would of necessity be erected relatively close to another house of worship. Ten centers of religion, Protestant and Catholic, existed, within five-minutes walk of each other.4 When the U.S.A. synod built its mission station, it was located 750 feet from the struggling little church of the U.S. denomination.5

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2Minutes of October 9, 1914, Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the USA (n.p., n.d.), 21-22, 25.


5Appendix, Minutes of the 62nd General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the US (Richmond, Va.: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1922), 189-90.
Storm warnings appeared at the regular 1915 annual meeting of the U.S. synod at Sherman. The permanent comity committee appointed to meet with a similar body of the U.S.A. church, reported that it had held but one session in joint conference. The attention of the conference was engaged by a discussion of the work begun by the national church in El Paso. Unfortunately, no understanding could be reached at this meeting. A voluminous correspondence followed between the chairmen of the U.S. and U.S.A. committees, but again there were no decisive results. Failing to reach a settlement, the two chairmen finally agreed that their committees would take individual reports to their respective General Assemblies for final adjudication. Each committee then drew up a statement of its case.

The report of the U.S.A. Comity Committee made it clear how friction developed. A letter from the Rev. Mr. C. R. Womeldorf, head of the U.S. mission station in El Paso to Dr. Homer McMillan in Atlanta, Georgia, and Dr. Robert E. Speer, New York City, chairmen of the comity committees of the General Assemblies of the two denominations, revealed the source of the conflict. Womeldorf complained bitterly about the alleged scandalous and unprincipled activity of the Rev. Mr. Venecia. That U.S.A. minister visited the members of Womeldorf's congregation and held religious services in several of their homes. Furthermore, he "villainously" misrepresented his position, sometimes

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saying he was a member of the southern church and at other times of the northern church. The climax came when he invited Womeldorf's communicants to a Christmas festival at the First Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., where they were given presents and provisions "simply buying and bribing in the most stealthy manner."

In response Womeldorf charged that the U.S.A. committee said their investigation disclosed that a number of U.S.A. missionaries who formerly resided in Mexico were now living in California, Arizona, and elsewhere. Upon hearing that Venecia planned to establish a church in El Paso, these clergymen supplied him with names of their former communicants. They urged him to seek out these Spanish-speaking families in their homes and if possible to enroll them into the membership of his mission station. Unknown to these missionaries and Venecia, a number of these refugee Presbyterians had affiliated themselves with Womeldorf's church.

When Venecia discovered that several of these families were members of the U.S. congregation, he neither visited them again nor asked them to join him in his work. He confessed, however, that he yielded to the earnest entreaty of one of the families belonging to Womeldorf's church and held religious services in their home. However, Venecia vigorously denied that he ever cunningly masqueraded as a U.S. minister. Finally, the Christmas party was an innocent, impromptu affair and, although gifts were distributed, the charge of bribery was "without foundation in fact or in intention."
In conclusion, the committees asserted that Womeldorf demanded a higher standard of conduct than he was willing to impose upon himself. He continually visited in the homes of known members of the congregation of the First Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., attempting to proselytize them. In conclusion, his ridiculous accusations were a greater violation of friendship and comity than any actions on the part of Venecia.\(^7\)

The Comity Committee of the U.S. judicatory, on the other hand, took an entirely different view of the problem. Making no allusion to the allegations of Womeldorf, they charged that the U.S.A. church was primarily responsible for the unpleasant situation due to its unwarranted zeal in moving into the El Paso field. Why should the "northern" church force its way into this community when the large Mexican population of Los Angeles where the southern church had no establishment was ignored? There was not room for two Presbyterian churches in the Spanish-speaking community of El Paso. It was difficult for these Mexicans to distinguish between Baptists and Methodists, and the difference between the Presbyterian Church, U.S., and the U.S.A. was totally incomprehensible to them. Further, the U.S. committee stated its firm belief in the "undesirability of their ever knowing of such difference."

Finally, the committee accused the U.S.A. denomination of violating the agreement of Reformed Churches which both denominations had

\(^7\)B. A. Hodges, et al., "Summary of the Situation as viewed by the Representatives of the Synod of Texas, U.S.A." Papers of B. A. Hodges in (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas).
ratified. This compact stated that neither denomination would establish a rival church in a foreign-speaking community of less than 100,000 where another Presbyterian house of worship had already preempted the field. Members of the U.S.A. Comity Committee when pressed on this point insisted that the understanding applied to all foreign-speaking citizens with the exception of Mexicans. Southern Presbyterians were not convinced by this interpretation and demanded clarification and adjudication in the higher church courts.  

In response to these overtures each General Assembly appointed Comity Committees which met jointly at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on October 28, 1915. Remote from the field of combat, these representatives recognized that the location of the U.S.A. mission station was one of "hurtful friction" with the work of the U.S. Presbyterian Church in El Paso. It was, in addition, a violation of the letter and spirit of the agreement relating to foreign-speaking Americans in communities of less than 100,000. The U.S.A. Executive Committee was instructed to order the removal of its house of worship beyond the sphere of "hurtful rivalry" to a new location to be determined by a joint synodical committee.  

At the next annual meeting of the Synod of Texas, U.S., the Comity Committee delivered its report, stating that in its view the

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9 Appendix, Minutes of the 56th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the US (1916), 183.
resolution of the problem was acceptable. The committee declared the settlement would be "fully satisfactory and final only" when lower courts of that denomination carried out the directives of the U.S.A. Executive Commission. The members of synod unanimously voted to adopt the report as written.10

At first the lower courts of the national church appeared willing to submit to the comity agreement. At the annual meeting of the U.S. synod, its Comity Committee stated that it had bowed to the mandate of the U.S.A. Executive Commission. On September 19, 1916, it had met with the Comity Committee of the U.S. synod in the Y.M.C.A. Building in Dallas. In order to restore harmonious relations and to avoid future friction, the U.S.A. committee agreed to order the removal of its mission station in El Paso.11

By the following year, however, the U.S.A. synod apparently had second thoughts regarding the El Paso case. In the fall of 1917 the Comity Committee again reported that it had attempted "faithfully" to carry out the provisions of the agreement. They tried to arrange a conference with the U.S. Comity Committee in El Paso in order to agree mutually upon a new site for the mission station. A conference failed to materialize, because the U.S. committee neglected to attend. The committee said that the southern church had violated the spirit of comity.

10 Minutes of October 13, 1916, Minutes of the 61st Session of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the US (1916), 310.
11 Minutes of October 7, 1916, Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the USA (1916), 39.
Insisting that the national church was no longer bound by the original agreement, the committee requested the Executive Commission at the annual meeting of the U.S.A. General Assembly on May 21, 1917, to permit them to disregard the original agreement and to proceed with their work in El Paso. After hearing these facts offered by the Texas Committee, the Commission of the U.S.A. General Assembly issued the following order:

Resolved, that in view of the fact that our Committee on Community of the Synod of Texas, U.S.A., has endeavored faithfully and earnestly to carry out the instructions of the General Assembly with reference to the El Paso case, and in view of the further fact that an agreement was reached by our committee and the Committee on Community of the Synod of Texas, U.S., which agreement was in full compliance with the direction of the Assembly of 1916, and since the work there is developing rapidly because of the conditions in Mexico and the influx of people from the Presbyterian missions in Mexico, we must take steps to house them. We, therefore, authorize the Synod of Texas, U.S.A., to decide upon a location and secure funds for the erection of a building.

The committee rejoiced that this ended the "long and disagreeable controversy" with the southern Presbyterian Synod. Further, the U.S.A. mission station would be conducted in such a fashion as to avoid friction with any other mission in El Paso.12

The mood of the U.S. committee in its report to its synod in the fall of the same year was definitely gloomy. They reported that the chairman of the two comity committees had carried on a voluminous correspondence during the past year. The chairman of the U.S. committee attempted to arrange a meeting in a central location convenient for

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both committees. The other chairman, however, insisted upon a conference in El Paso which was too remote for several members of the U.S. committee. Since the location could not be agreed upon, the meeting was never held.

The attitude of U.S.A. Chairman Hodges was clearly revealed in a letter, dated February 15, 1917, to his opposite number in the southern church.

Who is to determine the sphere of friction or hurtful rivalry? What constitutes friction or hurtful rivalry? Is such friction or rivalry a matter of geography or is it a matter of one's mind? I submit to you that in a city like El Paso friction is more a matter of the mind than of geography.

Further, the Comity Committee heard that the U.S.A. synod was collecting money for the erection of a house of worship in El Paso without further consultation with the southern church. The committee urged that the U.S. synod recommend to its sister judicatory that the mission be removed to east El Paso, where there were 15,000 Mexicans unministered to by a church of any denomination. Regretably the action of the U.S.A. synod was not only a breach of the general rules of comity between the two Presbyterian Churches, but also of the agreement framed by the joint committee.13

It can be seen that ministers were human and capable of ingenious rationalization to persuade themselves that morality lies wholly on their side when they urgently desire an objective. It is difficult to

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13 Minutes of November 8, 1917, Minutes of the 62nd Session of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the US (1917), 373-74.
see how the U.S.A. clergymen could persuade themselves that because of
the promising possibilities of the field, they had the right to tear up
a solemn agreement signed by both Presbyterian denominations and then
indignantly to accuse the other church of violating comity. An objec-
tive analysis of the evidence makes it appear that the synod of the
southern church was justified in its annoyance at its sister judicatory.

Several years passed before the U.S.A. synod could implement
its plans. It acquired property on the corner of Fourth and Ochoa
Streets, but, due to wartime shortages, the state council of defense
denied their request to construct a house of worship. With the termina-
tion of hostilities, prospects of a new church brightened, and in
April, 1919, the Rev. Mr. Robert McLean commissioned an architect to
draw up plans for the building. Funds were, however, lacking, and it
was not until November of that year that the Board of Home Missions of
the national church agreed to underwrite construction costs.

On Sunday, February 8, 1920, the entire Mexican membership of
the Rev. Mr. Venecia's church, now numbering over 500, gathered on the
corner of Fourth and Ochoa Streets. A brass band played enthuasi-
astically while the communicants sang songs of rejoicing. The acting mayor
of El Paso, Dr. B. Wren Webb, Venecia, and McLean delivered the ceremo-
nial addresses. At the conclusion of these talks, the cornerstone for
a new church was laid. The new house of worship was to cost $40,000,
and the bill for the complex of buildings was to total over $100,000.
As projected, this was to be the finest Presbyterian home for Spanish-speaking citizens in Texas. ¹⁴

The heart of the Synod of Texas, U.S., failed to beat high with equal gladness at the sight of the erection of this church in West Texas. For the second time it carried its complaint to its General Assembly, and that court listened to the cry. In 1922 an ad interim Committee on Comity of the U.S. General Assembly, reporting on its investigation of the El Paso controversy, disclosed that the former mission station of the U.S.A. church was 720 feet from the U.S. mission, but it was located around the corner and out of sight of that building. In accordance with the joint comity agreement of 1916, the U.S.A. synod did demolish the old structure. Now, however, it was erecting a new and far more magnificent house of worship also 720 feet from the U.S. mission but on the same street, and impudently in plain view of the southern Presbyterian Church. The Comity Committee of the U.S. synod made many subsequent attempts to meet with the U.S.A. committee but that body declined unless the U.S. committee agreed to reopen the whole dispute and frame another agreement more satisfactory to the Texas Synod, U.S.A. This the U.S. committee refused to do.

Fortunately, the bitterness between the two El Paso churches appeared much allayed, but this did not excuse the U.S.A. Synod's unilaterally scrapping the original comity agreement. Finally, the ad

interim committee of the General Assembly recommended that in the interest of religion no further action be taken in the El Paso matter.\textsuperscript{15}

The acrimony so markedly evident over the J. C. Barr case was noticeably absent in the El Paso dispute. At the time when the controversy was supposedly at its height, the synod of the southern church at its 1917 annual meeting passed a resolution urging their brethren in the U.S.A. judicatory to sever their relations with the national church and to permit themselves and all their property to be absorbed by the U.S. synod.\textsuperscript{16} The response of the U.S.A. synod to this overture did not come until two years later at its regular annual meeting in 1919. Readily confessing the need to eliminate the spectacle of two Presbyterian Churches competing for the same field, it declared that federation in Texas would not solve the basic problem. The final answer was the organic union of the two denominations and toward this achievement both local courts should concentrate all their efforts.\textsuperscript{17}

The El Paso controversy appeared to die down after the exchange of a few angry words, and after a few years the whole matter appeared to have been forgotten by almost everyone. Nevertheless, the lesson of this incident was clear. Until the merger of the two Presbyterian

\textsuperscript{15}Appendix, Minutes of the 62nd General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the US (1922), 189-91.

\textsuperscript{16}Minutes of November 8, 1917, Minutes of the 62nd Session of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the US (1917), 373-74.

\textsuperscript{17}Minutes of October 11, 1919, Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the USA (1919), 56-58.
denominations occurred, disputes like the El Paso case could recur, abrading relations between the local judicatories and injuring the cause of religion itself.
CHAPTER VII

THE JOHN CHRISTIE BARR CASE

The J. C. Barr case was the most important and complicated dispute that developed between the Synod of Texas, U.S.A., and a judicatory of the southern Presbyterian Church. One of the most significant conflicts that grew up between the two denominations between 1865 and 1920, this controversy raged about the handsome, square-faced, black-haired John Christie Barr,\(^1\) pastor of the Lafayette and Westminster Churches of New Orleans. With American flags painted on the doors of his Model T and a large Bible habitually in his hand, Barr's dynamic personality attracted fierce loyalties and bitter antagonisms.\(^2\) A man of remarkable intellectual ability, he was an indefatigable evangelist who spoke French fluently.\(^3\) Unfortunately, his inability to compromise, and his combativeness precipitated a bitter quarrel which produced banner headlines in the local papers, and strained relations between the two branches of the Presbyterian Church at the national level.

\(^1\)Photograph, New Orleans Daily Times Picayune, July 30, 1914.

\(^2\)Miscellaneous Papers (Westminster Presbyterian Church, New Orleans, Louisiana).

\(^3\)Penrose St. Amant, History of the Presbyterian Church in Louisiana (Richmond, Va.: Whittet and Shepperson, 1961), 183.
John Christie Barr, son of Thomas and Grace Pierce Barr was born in New Orleans on October 27, 1872. Thomas Barr came as a child from Scotland with his parents who settled in St. Louis. At the outbreak of the Civil War he joined Second Company, Second Missouri Cavalry of the United States Army and served during the latter half of the conflict, primarily in Arkansas. After the war he remained in the Federal Army working on the St. Louis bridge and the jetties at the mouth of the Mississippi River. Settling in New Orleans, he engaged primarily in river and harbor construction work.

Barr's mother also came from Scotland as a child and settled with her family in New Orleans, where she spent the remainder of her life. She married Thomas Barr in 1871, and had eight children, six of whom lived to adulthood.

John Christie Barr early demonstrated marked ability. Graduating from the boys' high school in 1889 as valedictorian of his class, he received the Peabody Medal, and Alumni Gold Medal. He received a full scholarship from Tulane University and graduated from this institution with a Bachelor of Science degree. He was named honor man of his class. Because of his academic achievements, Tulane University conferred upon him an unusual distinction by granting him a second full scholarship to complete his graduate study. Taking advanced courses in Greek, Latin, and ancient history he received the Master of Arts degree in 1895. During part of the time he was in graduate school he served as instructor in ancient history.
While he was an undergraduate he became a member of the Lafayette Presbyterian Church and determined to join the ministry. In the pursuit of his Bachelor of Science degree, he managed to take some classical courses. After receiving his Master of Arts degree he entered the Theological Seminary of the Southwestern Presbyterian University at Clarkesville, Tennessee, a U.S. Presbyterian institution, and received the degree of Bachelor of Divinity in 1897. A few days later in recognition of his scholastic achievements and ministerial zeal, this institution awarded him the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity.  

As early as April, 1894, Barr applied to the New Orleans Presbytery, U.S., for a license to preach. A year later this judicatory examined candidate Barr in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, literature, and theology. Following these examinations, he delivered a trial sermon which the members of the presbytery approved. Having successfully passed the course prescribed by the U.S. Presbyterian Church to qualify as a probationer, he was licensed to preach for one year, beginning June 25, 1896, within the bounds of the New Orleans Presbytery.

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5 Minutes of April 17, 1895, "Minutes of the Presbytery of New Orleans of the Presbyterian Church in the US, 1892-99," 131. In church papers (Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary Library, Austin, Texas). [Hereafter reference to this collection will be made by date and title only]; Minutes of June 25-26, 1894, ibid., 91.

6 Minutes of June 24-25, 1896, ibid., 190-92.
After serving as licentiate at the Prytania Street Church and the Lafayette Presbyterian Church in New Orleans, the young cleric received a call to serve as pastor of the latter church. Even at this early period in his life he impressed his strong personality upon his contemporaries. People became either his enthusiastic champions or bitter detractors.

After the formal church service on Sunday morning, January 30, 1898, the parishioners of Lafayette Presbyterian Church remained for a specially called congregational meeting for the selection of a new pastor. When Licentiate Barr's name was mentioned several officers of the church read lengthy papers, stating why his appointment would not be for the best interest of the church. Disregarding these words of warning, the congregation voted 203 to 14 to issue the call to Mr. Barr.7

At this time a pattern emerged that was to reappear throughout his career. His eloquence and magnetic personality would win for him the passionate devotion of his congregation. Rendering him unquestioning support, they would follow him wherever he chose to lead. At the same time he early proved his inability to work harmoniously in harness with others. A man of strong convictions, and intolerant of the views of others, he clashed repeatedly with his associates throughout his career.

When the presbytery met in February the commissioners of the Lafayette Church presented to the members of the judicatory papers

7New Orleans Daily States, January 31, 1898.
calling Barr to the pulpit. Members of presbytery, signifying that the papers were in regular form, placed the call in the hands of Licentiate Barr who stated his willingness to accept the appointment. After passing another even more rigorous examination, J. C. Barr took the vows of ordination, and later in the same month the members of the New Orleans Presbytery installed him as pastor of the Lafayette Church. On February 5, 1901, Barr married Anna Mabry of Clarkesville, Tennessee. They had no children.

On May 18, 1903, at a meeting of the New Orleans Presbytery in his church Barr announced his determination to resign the pastorate of the Lafayette Church in order to enter the foreign mission field. Having previously announced his decision, a large percentage of Barr's congregation was present to hear him read a paper which stated his reasons for wishing to change his field of endeavor. Asserting that his work in New Orleans had been completed, Barr said that his overseas assignment would lead to the "spiritual upbuilding of the church." He said that he and his wife would gladly accept a post abroad although admitting that, "I have had no extraordinary call to this work other than the general call of the ministry." He felt, however, that no such special call was necessary. Depreciating the difference made between

8Minutes of February 18, 1898, "Minutes of the Presbytery of New Orleans of the Presbyterian Church in the US, 1892-1899," 300.

9Minutes of February 27, 1898, ibid., 302.

10Fortier, Louisiana, III, 748.
the home and foreign fields, he averred that any minister of the gospel should be willing to accept any foreign station just as he would be willing to occupy any pulpit in the United States.

When the pastor had completed his remarks, William Frank, Jr., speaking for a majority of the congregation, read a paper in which he said among other things, "We look upon the severance of his pastoral relations as in the nature of a calamity." Although no one could predict with accuracy the end result of the resignation, the great majority of the congregation believed that, "It will prove disastrous to the best interest of our church." The membership had watched his career "with tender and loving solicitude." "His exemplary conduct" has "aroused in our hearts a love beyond expression." Moreover, his work within the church had been outstandingly successful.

How then can we in the face of all those ties and associations, personal and religious, which have bound him to our hearts with bands of steel contemplate with resignation a step which will have the result of parting him from us. We need his guiding hand and example to encourage and inspire us to renewed diligence in the work of our Lord.

Elder Judge George Johnson, speaking for a minority of the membership, read a paper attacking the character of the prelate and urging the presbytery to accept the proffered resignation. Mr. J. Letterer, another officer of the church, responding to these remarks, stated: "knowing as I do the temper of our people concerning the matter at issue and the unanimity with which they opposed the resignation of Rev. Barr," the severance of pastoral relations will have "a disastrous and far-reaching effect upon our church." He regretted the "unfortunate
controversy" that developed between certain members of the board of trustees and the pastor over a missionary fund. Since the opponents of Barr on the board had tendered their resignations, their places would be filled by his supporters. Reasons leading up to his resignation no longer existed, and the pastor could resume his duties "without any sacrifice of honor or self respect." He concluded by asserting that a petition urging the minister to withdraw his resignation was signed by 475 of the congregation of 500 members, thus showing "clearly and unmistakably the wishes of our people." The decision then being in the hands of the church court, the members of the presbytery voted unanimously to refuse the resignation.11

The enemies of Barr in the New Orleans Presbytery were later to charge that between the years 1898 and 1914, 17 officers of the Lafayette Church resigned their posts and left the church unable to live in the "peaceful atmosphere" created by Barr. These dissenters were four elders, seven deacons, and six trustees.12 This charge can be neither confirmed nor denied. The session records of the Lafayette Church note the resignation of many officers during this period but without giving reasons. Records of the period do, however, indicate that the shepherd of the Lafayette Church must have been an unusually difficult person with whom to work.

11Minutes of June 8, 1903, "Minutes of the Presbytery of New Orleans of the Presbyterian Church in the US, 1900-1905," 285; New Orleans Daily States, June 9, 1903.

12New Orleans Times Picayune, November 14, 1914.
Just when friction first developed between Barr and his colleagues in the New Orleans Presbytery is not clear. One account alleged that the hostility stemmed from disputes about the Presbyterian Hospital in New Orleans which J. C. Barr founded in 1908 with "$15.00 and a prayer." He was president from the date it was founded. By 1925 it had assets in excess of one million dollars, and although founded by Presbyterians, it was supported by and served all denominations of the city. The Rev. Mr. George Summey, one of the Lafayette pastor's bitterest critics, later declared that enmity toward Barr's colleagues in the New Orleans Presbytery originated from association with the hospital. Barr requested the New Orleans judicatory to give his institution full financial support. Unfortunately, the hospital was a closed corporation under the sole administration of Barr. While the presbytery wished his enterprise well, it refused to assume financial responsibility for an institution over which it had no control. When Barr was informed that the judicatory refused to incorporate the hospital within its jurisdiction he became, as Dr. Summey put it, "very much stirred up." No such request for aid was ever spread upon the minutes of the presbytery, but that does not necessarily mean that an appeal was never made. Perhaps the pastor of the Lafayette Church sounded out members of the presbytery individually and, realizing that his plea would be denied, never made a formal request.

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13Chambers, A History of Louisiana, III, 324; The Presbyterian of the South, December 14, 1910.
14St. Amant, History of the Presbyterian Church in Louisiana, 179.
Church records show, however, that at least some ill will existed between Barr and his fellow ministers before the founding of the hospital. At the regular annual meeting of the Louisiana Synod of the southern Presbyterian Church, in 1906 J. C. Barr introduced an overture requesting amendment of the charter of the synod. Protesting the preponderant influence of the New Orleans Presbytery in this body, he argued that an augmented representation on the governing board would give the other presbyteries a greater voice in determining synodical policy. The synod accepted this amendment and ordered the election of the new members.15

At the next annual meeting, however, the judicatory reversed itself and reduced the membership on the board to seven without giving any reason.16 To this latter action the minister of the Lafayette Church submitted a formal written protest. He argued that a seven-man board supplied an inadequate representation to an assembly composed of 47 ministers, 97 churches, and 7,000 members. Moreover, the board as constituted gave a disproportionate influence to a restricted section of the synod. The present composition "opens the door to tyranny and misrepresentation." Finally, the rescinding order was passed at the end of the day's session when many of the delegates from the

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16 Minutes of November 21-23, 1907, ibid., 252-53.
discriminated sections had left the hall. The motion was carried in
spite of a protest made upon the floor against this action. Without
comment Dr. Barr's protest was ordered spread upon the minutes.\textsuperscript{17} It
is impossible to judge the merits of the pastor's overture; he may have
been attempting to eliminate a real injustice. Unfortunately, as later
events were to show, he was a man constitutionally incapable of compro-
mise and unwilling to accept a defeat gracefully.

The records do not indicate whether or not Dr. Barr's attack on
what he believed to be the excessive representation of the New Orleans
Presbytery on the synodical governing board produced serious friction
between himself and his colleagues in the New Orleans judiciary. There
is no doubt that the next conflict between the Lafayette pastor and the
members of presbytery did produce the deepest enmity on both sides.
This rancorous dispute, begun by Barr, concerned the right of women to
address mixed assemblies in the Presbyterian church.

The minister of the Lafayette Church initiated the debate on
the role of women in the Presbyterian Church at a regular meeting of
the New Orleans Presbytery in April, 1910. Although the original over-
ture he presented was not on the records, the general nature of his
complaint is easy to deduce. He protested that the Presbyterian
churches in the New Orleans area had repeatedly violated the ordinances
of the U.S. Church against permitting women to speak to mixed assem-
blies in the church. Within the past two or three years there had been

\textsuperscript{17}Minutes of November 21-23, 1907, \textit{ibid.}, 254-55.
many occasions on which women addressed gatherings composed of both men and women, the most recent being in the First Presbyterian Church of New Orleans in March, 1910. The Lafayette Presbyterian Church found itself almost alone among her sister churches in the presbytery adhering to this ordinance. The litigant demanded that the presbytery enforce these ordinances within the sessions under its authority.\(^\text{18}\)

The basis of the minister's complaint was founded upon Presbyterian doctrine. "To teach and exhort, or lead in prayer in public and promiscuous assemblies, is clearly forbidden to women in the holy oracles."\(^\text{19}\) Turning to Webster's dictionary, he defined a congregation as "an assembly of persons met for worship of God and for religious instruction."\(^\text{20}\)

The pastor turned also to the Scriptures for authority, quoting the words of St. Paul, which read as follows:

> Let our women keep silence in the churches for it is not permitted unto them to speak but they are commanded to be under obedience also saith the law. And if they would learn anything let them ask their husbands at home for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.\(^\text{21}\)

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\(^{18}\) Minutes of October 25, 1910, "Minutes of the Session of the Lafayette Presbyterian Church, 1905-1925," 141. [The charge against the First Presbyterian Church cannot be confirmed or denied by an examination of the session records of that congregation.]


\(^{21}\) Holy Bible, A. V., I Cor. XIV: 34-35.
Further words St. Paul recorded on the same subject are: "Let the
woman learn in silence, with all subjection, but I suffer not a woman to
teach nor to usurp authority over a man, but to be in silence." Mrs.
Barr's views on this question are not available.

The minister of the Lafayette Presbyterian Church further
elaborated his position. It was "the settled doctrine of our church"
that women were excluded from licensure and ordination. They are fur-
ther prohibited from exhortation or leading in prayer or publicly dis-
cussing any question at a religious meeting where both men and women are
present. This does not preclude their addressing gatherings composed
wholly of their own sex. "For mutual edification and comfort the ladies
are encouraged to engage in pious conversation and prayer" and to assist
in the general upbuilding of the church through home mission work or
teaching classes in the Sabbath school. Any attempt on their part, how-
ever, to address mixed gatherings sponsored by the church should be
courageously condemned by the individual sessions and the presbytery.

When Barr introduced his overture at the meeting of the New
Orleans Presbytery in April, 1910, he was not permitted to spread his
views upon the official record. Even more insulting to him, his resolu-
tion was laid upon the table and not even dignified with a reply. The
litigant then announced his determination to appeal over the heads of

22 Ibid., I Tim. II:11-12.
the members of Presbytery to the General Assembly of the southern Presbyteri

ten Church for a ruling on the question. 24

True to his word Barr appeared before the highest court of the U.S. Presbyterian Church which convened at Lewisburg, West Virginia in March, 1910. At this assembly he introduced an overture which asked if the southern Presbyterian Church had changed its "historic position" on women's addressing mixed gatherings sponsored by the church. If it had changed its position, to what extent?

If not what position should our own session, executive commit

tees, and presbyteries take with reference to the interdenomi

national bodies and movement in which women are allowed and encouraged to address publicly mixed assemblies in the churches.

The Committee on Bills and Overtures of the General Assembly offered the following response to the query: "There has been no change in the settled policy of our denomination on this matter." 25

Supported by this official pronouncement, the pastor of the Lafayette Church raked the New Orleans Presbytery with a broadside:

The difficulty in New Orleans has been that many of the local Presbyterian Churches have of late either directly or indirectly participated in interdenominational meetings in which the above law has been broken. The Lafayette Church has felt bound by the historic law. Her adherence to that law has led to her isolation from some of the most important interdenominational meetings recently held here. Our sister churches have gradually receded from any attempt to enforce this prin


ciple so that Lafayette Church was left almost alone in upholding the holy ordinances of the church.

24 Minutes of April 21, 1910, "Minutes of the Presbytery of New Orleans of the Presbyterian Church in the US, 1906-1917," 29.

25 Minutes of May 26, 1910, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the US (1910), 67.
After the action taken by the General Assembly all local churches must refrain from participating in interdenominational gatherings where women were permitted to address mixed assemblies. "This is a complete vindication of the Lafayette Church's contention." 26

Stung by this attack, the New Orleans Presbytery, passed a resolution in which it declared "to the Church and the world at large that it has no knowledge official or otherwise, of any of its churches" violating the ordinances on the woman question. "Furthermore, any charges attacking the laxity of the sessions under its authority are false." Finally, the New Orleans Presbytery was "in full accord with the deliverances of our General Assembly on the woman question." The judicatory allowed Barr to file a protest to this resolution but did not permit him to spread his protest on the records of the assembly. 27

In a series of complicated legal manoeuvres Barr carried his complaint against his presbytery to the Louisiana Synod in November, 1910. 28 Then from the Synod of Louisiana he protested to the General Assembly U.S. 29 From the General Assembly he once again introduced the


27 Minutes of October 20, 1910, "Minutes of the Presbytery of New Orleans of the Presbyterian Church in the US, 1906-1917," 77.

28 Minutes of November 17, 1910, "Minutes of the Synod of Louisiana of the Presbyterian Church in the US, 1901-1915," 16.

29 Minutes of May 25, 1911, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the US (1911), 66.
suit into the Louisiana Synod. Since his complaint against the New Orleans Presbytery was rejected by the synod, he once again carried his protest to the General Assembly where he received a final crushing defeat.

Doubtless the judicial committee of the General Assembly unanimously recommended dismissal of the complaint. Enumerating its reasons for this decision, the committee declared that the session of the Lafayette Church did not complain against a decision of the Louisiana Synod but only "merely complained." Further, the session complained against the New Orleans Presbytery to synod. According to Presbyterian law, a church could not complain against one church court to a superior court, but only against a member of the church not submitting to its authority.

The complainant now tasted the bitterness of total defeat and protested his discomfiture. Judgment of the General Assembly against the original complaint of the Lafayette Church was ordered spread upon the minutes of the Lafayette session, which mandate he was compelled to obey. Although complying with this order, Barr asserted his belief that the judgment was not "infallible."

At the regular annual meeting of

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30 Minutes of November 22-23, 1911, "Minutes of the Synod of Louisiana of the Presbyterian Church in the US, 1901-1915," 42-43, 51-54, 60.

31 Minutes of May 22, 1912, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the US (1912), 70a.

32 Minutes of May 25, 1913, "Minutes of the Session of the Lafayette Church, 1905-1921," 208.
the Louisiana Synod in the fall of 1912, the Rev. Mr. McF. Alexander, who had been appointed to defend the Louisiana Synod at the spring meeting of the General Assembly reported to the judicatory on the action taken. After relating how the complaint of the Lafayette pastor had been dismissed he asserted:

The assembly thus fully sustained you in your refusal to sustain the complaint of the Lafayette Church against the Presbytery of New Orleans and left in full force the action of the Presbytery of New Orleans originally complained against.33

In turn at its regularly called meeting in April, 1913, the Presbytery of New Orleans spread upon its records the above statement. It further refused to permit Barr to incorporate in these same records a written protest to the preceding quoted remarks. As a final act of triumph, the New Orleans court directed the Lafayette Church to spread Dr. McF. Alexander's statement on its session records.34

While complying with the instructions of Presbytery, the Lafayette pastor also spelled out in session records his protest to the action of the New Orleans assembly. He "earnestly and respectfully" challenged the justice of the order. The Rev. Mr. McF. Alexander had erred in declaring that the General Assembly sustained the positions of the Louisiana Synod and New Orleans Presbytery on the woman question. Although the church's national governing body dismissed the charges of

33Minutes of November 21, 1912, "Minutes of the Synod of Louisiana of the Presbyterian Church in the US, 1901-1915," 89.

34Minutes of April 17, 1913, "Minutes of the New Orleans Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in the US, 1906-1917," 294.
the Lafayette session, it did so on technical grounds that did not relate to the original issue,

By thus dismissing the appeal of the Lafayette Church, the Assembly did not enter into the merits of the case, and so left standing not only the resolution of the Presbytery originally complained against by the Lafayette Church, but also left standing the overture of the Lafayette Church to the General Assembly which the Presbytery in its resolution contradicted; but which it has never disproved.

Thus the case ended, as it had begun three years earlier, with the New Orleans Presbytery,

as relentless as ever in preventing the recordings on its minutes of a temperate and respectful protest, although the right of protest has, hitherto, been held to be a sacred and inalienable right guaranteed by the fundamental law of the Presbyterian Church.35

It could be argued that the case ended as it had begun with the Lafayette pastor agitating a dead issue. The prohibition of speaking to mixed groups appeared to many people of the time to be an archaic law of the church. While the interdict could not be repealed without doing violence to Presbyterian precedent, ministers of the day had long winked at violations of the ordinance. This was due in part to the fact that many of their parishioners were women who could not appreciate the ideological perfection of church law when this survival from the past relegated them to a subordinate status. This was a period of feminine insurgency, when women were demanding the vote and other long-denied rights. Few ministers were willing needlessly to draw down upon

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35 Minutes of May 25, 1913, "Minutes of the Session of the Lafayette Church, 1905-1921," 208.
their churches the wrath of outraged womanhood merely to live up to the
letter of some half-forgotten church statute. Whatever the merit or
lack of merit of the argument over the question, it was certain that
relations between Barr and his colleagues in the New Orleans Presbytery
had been strained to the breaking point.

In spite of a bitter conflict between Barr and his fellow
clergymen, the pastor's ministry in certain respects had proved a
signally successful one. The Lafayette Presbyterian building first
opened its doors in January, 1842, on Fulton Street in New Orleans.
However, it was not officially organized until the following year. The
original wooden structure which was second oldest Presbyterian Church
in the Crescent City burned in 1860. Rebuilt on Magazine Street near
Jackson Avenue, a more spacious stone edifice surrounded by an iron
fence, was the site of J. C. Barr's early pastorate.36

The ministry of Barr at the Magazine Street church was phe-
nomenally successful if the statistics released by that church are
fully reliable. Under his dynamic leadership the membership rose from
552 in 190137 to 648 in 1941.38 It was then the largest Presbyterian
Church in the state of Louisiana, and one of the largest in the U.S.
Presbyterian denomination.

36Louis Voss, Presbyterianism in New Orleans and Adjacent
Points (New Orleans: The Presbyterian Board of Publications, 1931),
45-49.
37Church Statistics and Presbytery Rolls, Minutes of the General
Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the US (1901), 151.
38Ibid., (1941), 211.
In addition to his work in the church on Magazine Street, Barr proved himself a tireless evangelist. By 1914 he was credited with founding at least twelve churches in the New Orleans area, including those at Gretna, Algiers, and Paradis. Of Dr. Barr's personal magnetism and general ability there can be little doubt.

Unfortunately, his embroilment in another rancorous controversy marred his record and had repercussions beyond the borders of Louisiana. Animosity and suspicion kindled by years of friction between Barr and the members of the New Orleans Presbytery needed only a spark to cause them to blaze into angry flame. A quarrel over which party would have authority over the small Gretna Presbyterian Church provided this spark. Gretna, situated on the east bank of the Mississippi River opposite New Orleans, was within the borders of Jefferson, rather than Orleans Parish. Between 1865 and 1895 both the U.S. and U.S.A. Churches attempted without lasting success to establish a church in this largely German settlement. The foundations of a permanent church organization were laid in 1897 when Licentiate J. C. Barr organized a Sunday School in the area. The prospects were so promising that when the Probationer returned to Tennessee to resume his studies, the Presbytery of New Orleans appointed the Rev. Mr. J. M. Williams to continue his work. In 1897 a commission, including Williams, organized a Presbyterian Church in Gretna, and it was enrolled in the judicatory records. There were ten parishioners but no officers in the original membership.

39Chambers, A History of Louisiana, III, 324.
The church remained a struggling institution for years. Soon after its organization Williams moved to a distant field, and the Rev. Mr. Louis Voss supplied the pulpit for some 30 years. In 1901, since the Gretna Church had no elders, it was placed under the supervision of the Board of Trustees of the Lafayette Church. Thus shepherded, the little congregation met for years in the building that later became the janitor's house. Although the membership remained small, the little group expressed a desire for more spacious quarters. In July, 1903, the Board of Home Missions reported to the New Orleans Presbytery that it had acquired the title to a lot in Gretna for the construction of a church and recommended that the deed to the property be placed in the archives of the New Orleans judiciary. The presbytery accepted the recommendation, and the title to the Gretna property was so deposited.

Money for the purchase of the lot was collected under the supervision of the Lafayette Church; however, the congregation itself began a building fund in 1901 for the erection of a house of worship on the property. Funds gathered were partly donated by the Gretna congregation, partly contributed by friends of the Presbyterian Church, and

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1^41 Minutes of July 3, 1900, "Minutes of the Presbytery of New Orleans of the Presbyterian Church in the US, 1900-1905," 37-38.
partly loaned by the Lafayette Church which supervised the collection of the fund.\textsuperscript{42}

Since voluntary contributions were not adequate for the completion of the building, the Lafayette Presbyterian Church loaned the Gretna congregation $500 at 4 per cent interest. The church fully discharged the debt by 1910.\textsuperscript{43} As security for this loan, however, the trustees of the Lafayette Church demanded transfer of the title to the Gretna property to the Lafayette Church. New Orleans Presbytery complied and transferred the title from its archives to that of the church on Magazine Street.\textsuperscript{44}

Laying the cornerstone of the new church took place on September 25, 1905. In spite of intermittent rain and a chilly temperature, many members of the Gretna and Lafayette churches and other interested people were present. Voss and Barr helped officiate at the ceremony. The cornerstone bore the inscription "Gretna Presbyterian Church, founded in 1896, organized 1897, erected 1905, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone."\textsuperscript{45}

In addition to Sunday morning services at Gretna Mission, Stated Supply Voss held services every Friday night and every other Sunday

\textsuperscript{42}Historical Sketch, Gretna Presbyterian Church Dedication Program, February 25, 1906, loc. cit., 31.

\textsuperscript{43}Voss, A History of Presbyterianism in New Orleans and Adjacent Points, 382.

\textsuperscript{44}New Orleans Times Picayune, September 26, 1905.

\textsuperscript{45}Ibid., September 26, 1905.
night. The Rev. Mr. Barr gave the congregation one additional Sunday night service and occasionally a series of services. In 1904, after a week's special services, Barr received eight new members, not to the Gretna congregation, but to the Lafayette Church. Again in 1907 the minister gained four new members to his church from the Gretna area. Owing to his practice of drawing members from the Presbyterian population of the Gretna settlement to the church on Magazine Street, the congregation of the Gretna Church was able to increase only from 14 in 1900 to 18 in 1914. The limited growth of this congregation became a matter of concern for U.S. Presbyterians in the Crescent City. In 1914 the New Orleans Presbytery appointed a commission to investigate the problem of whether this church should remain under the supervision of the Lafayette Church or be placed under the authority of the New Orleans judicatory. Before the commission could complete its investigation, the Rev. Mr. J. C. Barr and his assistant pastor, William Leith, went, on Friday, July 3, 1914, to the Gretna Church where Evangelist Voss was conducting a service. Without his consent, the Lafayette pastor mounted the pulpit and addressed the gathered congregation, saying,

The Board of Trustees of the Lafayette Presbyterian Church, who hold this building, wish it announced that no ministers or others should conduct any service whatever on the property held by the Board of Trustees of the Lafayette Church, except the pastor and assistant pastor of Lafayette Church, and those which they might invite to do so. Any others who may

\[46\] Voss, A History of Presbyterianism in New Orleans and Adjacent Points, 382.
wish to use the property must get permission of the Board of Trustees.

The minister stated further that he was acting under the direction of his Board of Trustees, but the Presbytery claimed that the board had not yet met, and, therefore, no such instruction had been given. The allegation of the church court evidently was correct because the session records of the church on Magazine Street reveal that the Board did not pass the resolution quoted above until July 5th. Then, on July 10, 1914, it authorized the pastor to announce its action to the Gretna Mission, although he had already done so a week earlier.

The commission which reported the action of Lafayette Church to the New Orleans Presbytery on July 13, 1914, stated that in rendering its decision it kept steadily in view "the future good of the Gretna Church." In its proceedings the commission attempted to adjudicate differences through a conference with all parties concerned rather than by a more formal or legal procedure. It was hoped that in this way a settlement could be reached through amicable negotiations. After prolonged efforts to reach an accommodation, however, this method was abandoned as "impractical."

Since there was a vigorous difference of opinion as to how to serve the best interests of the Gretna Church, the commission decided

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47, New Orleans Times Picayune, November 14, 1914.

48, Meeting of July 5, 1914, "Minutes of the Board of Trustees of the Lafayette Presbyterian Church, 1912-1921," 28. In church papers (Westminster Presbyterian Church, New Orleans, Louisiana).
to let the membership of the church determine their future course. Every member of the congregation received a form on which to indicate whether he wished the Gretna Church to remain under the supervision of the session of the Lafayette Church or to be transferred to the care of the Rev. Mr. Voss with powers of evangelist. The vote was overwhelmingly in favor of placing the church under Voss's ministry, so the commission recommended that the Lafayette Church be instructed to transfer the title of the Gretna property to the New Orleans Presbytery. There would then be no question of the right of the judicatory to appoint Voss as Stated Supply.

Answering Presbytery roll call, 23 members voted to accept the recommendations of the commission while three voted in opposition. This New Orleans Presbytery commission then ordered the Lafayette Church to summon a regularly called congregational meeting to transfer the title within one month's time. The assembly further resolved that Barr's actions on July 3 and 10 at Gretna Church were, to say the least "censurable." The pastor of the Lafayette Church announced his determination to complain to the Louisiana Synod against the action of the presbytery. Soon after the deliverance of the decision of the presbytery, the rumble of rebellion sounded from the Lafayette Church. At its regularly called meeting on July 19, 1914, its Board of Trustees adopted a resolution stating that the transfer of the Gretna title to the New Orleans Presbytery would

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49 Minutes of July 13, 1914, "Minutes of the Presbytery of New Orleans of the Presbyterian Church in the US, 1906-1917," 7-9, 12.
create a precedent and leave the doors wide open for an acknowledged domination and jurisdiction of the New Orleans Presbytery over the property rights of every single corporation and congregation comprised within the membership of the New Orleans Presbytery.

The board further resolved that as soon as the Gretna Church organized itself into a corporation with elected trustees of its own the Lafayette trustees stood ready, as they always had, to transfer the Gretna property to the Gretna trustees. Finally, the Lafayette board issued an official call for a congregational meeting to determine what action should be taken in regard to the alienation of the Gretna property.50

As a result of the declaration of the above board, the regularly scheduled meeting of the New Orleans Presbytery on July 27 promised to be a stormy one. At this gathering Barr exploded a bombshell. Declaring that he had abandoned his contemplated "complaint" to synod over the presbytery's action, he announced that, in compliance with the instructions of presbytery, the Lafayette Church had issued a call for a congregational meeting to alienate the Gretna property. The pastor asserted that his church held the title to the Gretna property in trust at the request of the Gretna congregation, and, as a result, the trustees of Lafayette Church could transfer this deed to the Gretna Church only when it was fully organized and requested such action. He charged that the New Orleans Presbytery was illegally using its power to compel

50 Minutes of July 19, 1914, "Minutes of the Board of Trustees of the Lafayette Church, 1912-1921," 29-30.
a body of a lesser authority to transfer its legally-held property to
the higher one. "My conclusion is that this presbytery is too power-
ful, entirely too powerful for me as a Protestant living in a land
where there is separation of church and state." This being his convic-
tion, he requested that the presbytery dissolve the pastoral relations
between himself and the Lafayette Church and transfer him to another
presbytery where such violations of Presbyterian law could not occur.
He then presented the assembly a formal paper enumerating his reasons
for his request. After appointing a committee to answer the statements
in Dr. Barr's paper, the presbytery postponed action on his resignation
until its regularly called meeting in October.

This meeting of Presbytery produced the first of a series of
front-page sensations in the local press. Distressed at the turn of
events, the Gretna congregation published an open letter in the leading
New Orleans newspaper declaring that the inference was made in the daily
press that the quarrel originated over Barr's refusal to relinquish the
title to the Gretna property. The congregation wished "emphatically"
to deny this allegation, because the Lafayette pastor and the trustees
of his church had always declared their willingness to transfer the
deed to the Gretna Church as soon as it was able to organize itself
into an independent congregation. Expressing their "sincerest appreci-
ation" for the services of Dr. Barr to their church, they wished to

51 Minutes of July 27, 1914, "Minutes of the Presbytery of New
Orleans of the Presbyterian Church in the US, 1906-1917," 14-15; New
Orleans Times Picayune, July 30, 1914.
place on record their "deepest regret" over his resignation. They were grateful to the Lafayette Church for the generous aid given them over the past years in time of need, and they had only the warmest praise for the minister's "unflagging energy and his unselfish zeal to promote the cause of Presbyterianism." 52

This was the state of affairs when, on August 12, the Lafayette Church held its congregational meeting. At this wildly enthusiastic gathering the congregation, by a unanimous standing vote, declined to join in Barr's request for a dissolution of pastoral relations. Declaring that the pastor's position was "morally sound and just," the membership appointed a committee to request the New Orleans Presbytery to decline to accept his proffered resignation. In its resolution the congregation asserted that, "the trouble stemmed from an immutable lack of harmony between us and the presbytery."

At this time the pastor declared his intention to request the Louisiana Synod to transfer the Lafayette Church and other sympathetic congregations to a newly created presbytery in the Crescent City area that would be wholly independent from the New Orleans Presbytery. This proposition met with the "heartiest endorsement" of several other Presbyterian ministers and a number of prominent laymen of other denominations in the city. At least four other Presbyterian churches were expected...

52 New Orleans Times Picayune, August 3, 1914.
to join in the movement to separate themselves from the jurisdiction of the New Orleans Presbytery.\textsuperscript{53}

By early September of this same year, four churches in southern Louisiana—the Lafayette Church, the Gentilly Church, the Algiers Church in New Orleans, and the Presbyterian Church of Paradis, Louisiana—officially requested the synod to transfer them from the New Orleans assembly to a newly-created presbytery. The Rev. Mr. A. Oscar Browne requested that two of his churches, the Palmer Street Church and the Lakeview Church, follow their example, but those corporations postponed their decision until after the meeting of synod in mid-September. Several of the ministers and a number of the members of their churches announced that if the Louisiana Synod rejected the proposed plan they seriously contemplated joining the "northern" Presbyterian Church and thus giving that denomination a firm foothold in the Bayou State.\textsuperscript{54} At that time (1914) the U.S.A. Presbyterian Church had only four small churches in the state. All were former Cumberland corporations located in the far northwestern corner of Louisiana.\textsuperscript{55}

The long-anticipated specially called meeting of the Louisiana Synod took place in Baton Rouge on September 18. Attendance was the largest in the history of Louisiana Presbyterianism, and the atmosphere

\textsuperscript{53}\cite{Minutes of August 16, 1914, "Minutes of the Session of the Lafayette Presbyterian Church, 1905-1921," 232; New Orleans Times Picayune, August 17, 1914.}

\textsuperscript{54}\cite{New Orleans Times Picayune, September 2, 1914.}

\textsuperscript{55}\cite{New Orleans Presbyterian of the South, November 4, 1914.}
was "intense" and "thrilling." Three ministers--Barr; Leith, assistant pastor of Lafayette Church; and A. Oscar Browne, City Missionary of New Orleans--presented two petitions to the synod. One requested that the four churches named above be created into a new presbytery. If this were not acceptable to the membership, the second petition requested that the four churches be transferred temporarily to the Presbytery of Louisiana located in the northern section of the state.

In spite of the intense feeling of all involved, both factions strove to maintain an atmosphere of harmony. The only discordant note was struck by the Rev. Mr. McF. Alexander, a member of the New Orleans Presbytery, who attacked the character and principles of the pastor of the Lafayette Church. However, the moderator of the session, gavel in hand, rapped him into silence, and advised him that his language was not "parliamentary." A Presbyterian divine from southern Louisiana then complained, "I have been hearing these quarrels for over a year and I am just as much in the dark now about their merits as I've ever been." No one bothered to enlighten this bewildered cleric.

At last the membership voted with 30 ministers casting their ballots against and 12 in favor of the request that the four corporations be organized into an independent presbytery. The second petition to transfer the churches to the Presbytery of Louisiana then suffered defeat by a vote of 27 to 23. With the exception of the three petitioners, the New Orleans Presbytery voted to a man against both requests. With but one exception, however, the membership of the Louisiana Presbytery voted unanimously in support of the second petition. This latter
action was taken because the members of this presbytery hoped to forestall an irreparable and disastrous schism in the church.56

The issue of the transfer of the Lafayette Church outside the jurisdiction of the New Orleans Presbytery having been disposed of, the proffered resignation of Barr remained. This would be the principal business of the annual fall meeting of the New Orleans Presbytery on October 5. The tone of amity and courtesy generally maintained at the September synod meeting was noticeably absent from the October session of this court. The Lafayette pastor, accompanied by his allies, Leith and Browne, arrived at the meeting cognizant that he was in the lair of his bitterest foes. Aside from these two clerics he had other support. An official delegation of the Lafayette Church was present to communicate to presbytery the unanimous will of the congregation against dissolution of the pastoral bonds. In addition to his committee, a substantial proportion of the membership of the Lafayette Church stood at the rear of the gathering to lend their champion all possible moral assistance. In the course of the debate, whenever a point was scored in Barr's favor, cheers and applause sounded from this gallery making necessary frequent calls to order by the moderator.

After hasty disposition of the devotionals, the battle was joined with no quarter given on either side. Barr's two ministerial

supporters remained silent, and the Lafayette pastor found himself alone in defending himself from savage attacks hurled at him from all sides. He, zestfully contended, however, with every detractor.

A few voices of moderation arose amid acrimonious charges and counter-charges. One member, who warned that Presbyterianism in Louisiana would not recover for ten years if the dissensions within the Church continued to be aired in the public press, urged compromise. Both sides ignored his plea. The Rev. Mr. C. A. Hyland attempted to obtain the removal of the following statement from the report of the presbyterial committee: "Dr. Barr attempted to thwart and nullify the spiritual interest of the Gretna Church." A roll-call vote defeated the effort and the statement stood as written.

In the course of the debate Dr. Barr stated that if he were the bone of contention he would sacrifice himself and go. "Dr. Barr in my opinion has been the bone of contention here for a number of years," snapped the Rev. Mr. William T. Hardie. Groans and hisses issued from the dismayed champions of the Lafayette pastor. The moderator called him to order, and the Rev. Mr. Hardie grumbled, "Well, he wanted to know and I told him."

The prelates finally settled down to the question at issue. Major A. P. Ault, speaking for the delegation from the Lafayette Church, read a paper sustaining Barr's position and urging the judicatory to permit him to remain as pastor. Barr's paper requesting resignation and spelling out his reasons presented at the previous meeting of Presbytery in July was then read. Among other things the pastor had stated
that the order of the presbytery to transfer the Gretna title violated his conscience. Admitting that at times he had "strenuously" disagreed with the presbytery, he had always found relief through constitutional channels. "I am enough of a Presbyterian to know that as long as I am a component part of the presbytery I must obey the regulations until these regulations are reversed by a higher court." He asserted that he had abandoned his idea of a complaint to synod because even if the case were adjudicated in his favor it would not avail in reversing the presbytery's action in "the vital point at issue."

He then charged that Presbytery had threatened to dissolve the Lafayette Church unless it complied with the order to transfer the Gretna property. The Lafayette Church held in equity the Gretna title at the request of the Gretna congregation. When that congregation organized into an independent corporation the Lafayette Church would transfer the property to its trustees, but to that church only. By the precedent of this presbyterial order,

any church may be recommended on pain of contempt of court to transfer its property to Presbytery. Any member may be ordered on pain of excommunication, to transfer a part or all of its money . . . or even to transfer to the church, what he holds in trust for others . . .

Therefore, I ask you to dissolve the relations between Lafayette Church and me.

The Rev. Mr. G. R. Cornelson, chairman of the presbyterial committee, read a response. It was his church that Dr. Barr had attacked on the "woman question." He stated, "After prayerful and careful consideration these judgments are unanimously offered." The presbytery, he declared, does have the authority to dissolve pastoral relations and
give a letter of dismissal to another assembly only on constitutional
grounds: and through constitutional methods. When the Rev. Mr. Barr
asserted that the order of presbytery "violated his conscience," the
committee responded that the established church court gave ample relief
to the conscience of any clergyman. For the presbytery, therefore, to
accept this charge as a reason for his request was impossible "without
stultifying itself and virtually repudiating the law of the church."
When he said he was enough of a Presbyterian to know that he was obli-
gated to obey the mandate of Presbytery, "he should have acted on the
professed knowledge in this present instance." He asserted that he had
abandoned his proposed complaint to synod because even if the judgment
of that assembly had reversed the order of presbytery it would not have
served to uphold the principle involved. Barr's statement was, "utterly
without validity, logical or legal, in the clear light of the constitu-
tion," of the U.S. Church, according to Cornelson.

The chairman then turned his scornful attention to the Lafayette
pastor's alleged convictions regarding the Gretna property. These
scruples are "absolutely irrelevant or without logical or legal base
and can rest on either gross confusion or perversion of the clear facts
in the case." The directive of presbytery was "solely for the normal
spiritual development" of the Gretna Church. This was proved by the
fact that the presbytery could not possibly receive any benefit, tempo-
ral or otherwise, from the receipt of the title held by the Lafayette
Church. Finally, his allegation that the presbytery threatened to dis-
solve the church on Magazine Street was an absurd falsehood. Having
completed his case, the Rev. Mr. Cornelson then asserted that presbytery's acceptance of the resignation of a minister on the grounds that it had violated his conscience would be "subversive of the right of complaint, fail to give properly the relief sought, and subject presbytery herself to high censure from a superior court of the church." By the same token, none of the other reasons set forth by him could be sanctioned. In conclusion, the paper presented by Barr was, "an insult to this court and to the church of the Lord Jesus Christ she represents. It holds the court in contempt before the church and the world, and its spirit is highly inflammatory." His paper was highly injurious to "the peace and good name of the Presbyterian Church, while its whole tenor is highly insubordinate." While the committee could not accept the reasons set forth in Barr's statement, it urged that, in the interest of the peace and "purity of the church," the presbytery dissolve the pastoral relationship between the Rev. Mr. J. C. Barr and the Lafayette Church. The judicator accepted the report of the committee with its accompanying recommendation with only J. C. Barr and his two allies voting against it.

Dr. Barr then arose and requested that he receive a letter of dismissal to the Presbytery of Nashville. Cornelson sprang to his feet, seized the report of the committee, and waved it over his head. "Can you after the adoption of this report give Dr. Barr clean papers as a Presbyterian pastor, loyal and obedient to another Presbytery?" he cried. In spite of this outburst the presbytery agreed to dismiss him
to the Tennessee judiciary with the customary letter of recommendation. The vote for this action was fairly close, however, being 19 to 11.57

It might be pointed out that the quarrel over the Gretna property was a sterile and unnecessary one. It was only a question of a few months before the Gretna Church would be able to organize itself into an independent congregation, when the Lafayette Church, in order to be true to its word, would be compelled to transfer the title. At that time the Gretna Church would come fully under the dominion of the New Orleans Presbytery, and what tenuous authority Barr had over this church would end. The same line of reasoning applies to the New Orleans judiciary. Had it been willing to wait a brief time, it effectively would have broken all ties between the Gretna and the Lafayette churches. By ordering the transfer of the title, presbytery must have known it would precipitate a bitter struggle. By 1914 feelings were running so high on both sides that the two parties were equally willing to force a test of strength. The fact that in any such struggle the Christian Church itself must suffer apparently did not deter either side.

At any rate, owing to the action of presbytery, the enemies of Barr appeared to have won a total victory. Not only had he been removed as pastor of the Lafayette Church, but also at his own request he was withdrawing outside the borders of Louisiana.

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On October 15, the Rev. Mr. Barr then addressed his congregation, speaking emotionally and pathetically of his 17 years' service. He said he wished to convey his tender affections to each and every member of the congregation. He concluded by stating that "goodbye" only meant "God be with you." At this point fluttering handkerchiefs choked back sobs and wiped away tears throughout the hall. At no time during the meeting had any allusion been made to the friction between the presbytery and the New Orleans Presbytery.58

At a regular congregational meeting of October 25, 1914, called to select a replacement for Barr, the Lafayette congregation issued a unanimous call to their former pastor, to be presented to the Presbytery of Tennessee of the U.S. Church, to resume his ministerial duties with the congregation. If this judiciary should find the appeal in correct form and should give its official sanction, the exiled minister could once again return to the Crescent City and resume his pastoral relations. As Dr. Barr was out of the city, he could not immediately make known his views on the action taken by his former congregation.59

Hardly had this development occurred than New Orleans Presbyterianism learned with surprise that Dr. Barr had not traveled to Tennessee to present his letter of dismissal, but instead had gone to Beaumont, Texas. There on October 26 he had renounced his allegiance to the southern Presbyterian Church and requested the Presbytery of

58 New Orleans Times Picayune, October 16, 1914.
59 Ibid., October 26, 1914.
Jefferson of the U.S.A. Presbyterian Church to enroll him officially in its records. The Jefferson Presbytery, with its official headquarters in eastern Texas, had nominal control over the entire State of Louisiana.

At the Beaumont session Barr stated his reasons for wishing to join the national church. "The days of sectionalism in the U.S. have passed," he stated. Whatever the justification there may have been for the secession of the southern churches fifty years before, the time for organic union for all Presbyterian denominations had come. Just as he had been preparing to leave for Tennessee he had received a "cordial and Christian invitation" from a ruling elder in the U.S.A. Church to cast his lot with that denomination. Accepting this invitation, he was delighted with the "hearty reception" he had received in the Presbytery of Jefferson. This development he felt was "providential," because it meant he would not be cut off from his work in Louisiana as he had feared.

The former Lafayette pastor then presented to the Jefferson judicatory his letter of dismissal and papers demonstrating that he was a minister in good standing in the U.S. church. He then answered affirmatively the questions prescribed by the U.S.A. church for an ordained minister. Following this the presbytery, after enrolling him as a member, conferred upon him extensive privileges as a "Pastor-Evangelist," in New Orleans, Louisiana. This gave him authority to
assume whatever pastoral duties he chose, to found new churches, and to undertake whatever work he deemed necessary in the Bayou State. 60

Returning to the Crescent City on Wednesday evening, October 28, the Rev. Mr. Barr addressed his former congregation. After stating his reasons for joining the national church, the minister declared his delighted willingness to resume his pastoral duties in his former spiritual home. His willingness to accept the call of the church hinged, however, upon the readiness of the congregation and trustees of the Lafayette Church to withdraw from the southern Presbyterian Church and place themselves under the authority of the U.S.A. denomination. At the conclusion of his address many members of the congregation clustered about him to shake his hand and to assure him of their pleasure at the turn of events. A reporter commented that there appeared little doubt that the church would place itself under the discipline of the Jefferson Presbytery. 61

The following day Barr told reporters that the Presbyterian Hospital he had founded would not be placed under the jurisdiction of the Synod of Texas, U.S.A. The only connection this institution had with the Presbyterian Church was that a number of Presbyterian ministers sat on the board of directors. It had never been under the

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60 Minutes of October 26, 1914, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Jefferson of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1907-15," 167-68. In church papers (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas); New Orleans Times Picayune, October 27, 1914.

61 New Orleans Times Picayune, October 29, 1914.
jurisdiction of the New Orleans Presbytery and would continue its existence as an independent corporation.62

Banner headlines in the New Orleans press described the events that took place in the Lafayette Church on Sunday, November 8. Shortly after the Sunday School lesson terminated, and the children ceased singing "Blest Be the Tie that Binds," the pews of the main church rapidly filled with an unusually large attendance. An expression of excitement and expectancy was seen on the faces of the congregation. Dr. Barr took for the text of his sermon the 28th verse of the 11th chapter of Matthew, "Come unto me all ye who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest."

After an earnest address, briefer than usual, the congregation was invited to remain to vote on a resolution drawn up by the session. The membership was asked either to accept or to reject the proposal to sever Lafayette Church's connection with the southern denomination and establish itself as an independent church subject to no authority higher than its own session. The resolution then spelled out the reasons why this action was deemed necessary. "The contradictory and unspeakable conduct" of the New Orleans Presbytery toward the Rev. Mr. Barr forfeited the confidence of the congregation in that body. The order of the presbytery instructing the church to transfer title to property to which the Lafayette corporation had absolutely clear title was "arbitrary and indefensible." The publication in the public and religious

62Ibid., October 30, 1914.
press of slanderous and misleading statements about the Rev. Mr. Barr and the Lafayette Church convinced the membership that "our honor was not safe in presbytery's hands." The Lafayette Church wished to withdraw from the southern denomination, because the New Orleans judiciary "proved through a series of unkindnesses and injustices," that it was "at enmity" with the congregation. Even the very existence of the church was threatened. Its most cruel action came when, in spite of the congregation's unanimous vote to retain the services of Dr. Barr, the presbytery dissolved the pastoral bonds between him and the Lafayette Church. In one final complaint, the congregation expressed shock at the "unseemly and unauthorized activity" of an officer of the presbytery. When this individual had attempted to circulate a "so-called petition" asking the membership to remain in the U.S. denomination, he received the rough handling from the admirers of the Rev. Mr. Barr that he deserved. "We, therefore are tricked by a shrewdness for which we are no match." Rather than weary themselves in vain appeals for justice which would only benefit "unscrupulous opportunists" the church resolved to "cut the Gordian knot."

If New Orleans Presbytery intends to stir up strife, we are not to be intimidated. If need be, we will lose, ... every piece of property which we possess and go out and worship in the street, but we will never again submit to the majority which at present dominates the New Orleans Presbytery and the Synod of Louisiana.

When the vote was taken on the resolution, it was carried with 224 in favor and only six opposed. The congregation, composed of both men and women, appeared jubilant at the result.
Although the church had declared itself an independent corporation, this was only the first step toward placing itself under the jurisdiction of the U.S.A. denomination. So confident were the officers of the session of an affirmative vote that they had invited representatives of the national church to officiate at the installation of the Rev. Mr. Barr as pastor. The Rev. Mr. F. H. Ford of Jacksonville, Texas, represented the Jefferson Presbytery at the installation that evening. In addressing the congregation, Ford, obviously apprehensive about a future conflict with the U.S. church, stated that the U.S.A. denomination had always attempted to live up to the rules of comity and had always striven to preserve the most harmonious relations possible with the southern church. Since he was there at the invitation of the congregation, it must bear the responsibility for his presence. Four other ministers representing the national church then joined Ford, officially installing Barr as pastor of the Lafayette Church.63

When the Lafayette session resolution had spoken of the congregations' worshiping in the street, it clearly implied the fear on the part of the membership that the New Orleans Presbytery might seize their property in a civil suit. Barr and the Lafayette Church had taken irrevocable action. It remained to be seen what counter measures, if any, the New Orleans Presbytery would take.

63Ibid., November 9, 1914; Minutes of April 6, 1915, "Minutes of the Session of the Lafayette Church, 1905-1921," 244-46; Minutes of November 8, 1915, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Jefferson of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1907-1915," 178-79.
The newly installed pastor and his supporters did not remain long in suspense, for the reaction of the New Orleans Presbytery was immediate and vigorous. On Monday evening immediately succeeding the installation service the members of this body gathered at a specially called meeting. The results of their deliberations were sensationally covered in the local press. Grim-visaged Calvinist divines glowered from a photograph on the front page of the Times Picayune. A reporter remarked on "the stern aspect" of the clerics as they listened to their spokesman, the Rev. Mr. U. D. Mooney, pastor of the Napoleon Avenue Presbyterian Church, as he pronounced the "awful sentence." Since the Rev. Mr. Barr had shown himself guilty of contempt of court, schism, rebellion, and insubordination, he was officially deposed from the ministry. Not content with excluding him from the pulpit, the court imposed the unusual punishment of excommunication. Declaring that the Lafeyette pastor was outside the pale of the Christian religion, presbytery denied him the rights of the sacraments until he had done humble penance for his manifold sins. In the thirteenth century the sentence of excommunication had been pronounced with the ringing of church bells as the dread anathema of the church was proclaimed from the altar and church door. By the twentieth century, however, the church had to announce its ban through the medium of the public press.

The fears of the Lafayette congregation appeared to be realized when the judicatory made known its views on the church property. The spokesman for presbytery announced that the membership of Lafayette Church might withdraw from the U.S. denomination as individuals;
however, in the eyes of the southern church they did not represent the
curch on Magazine Street. The church building and all the other prop-
erity held by the Lafayette corporation belonged to the New Orleans Pres-
bytery which intended to retain this property so that it could be used
for the benefit of those members of the Lafayette Church who retained
their allegiance to the U.S. denomination.

The forebodings of the U.S.A. church with respect to the possi-
ibility of a bitter conflict with the southern church were realized in
the paper of presbytery. The court wished to communicate "its most
solemn and emphatic protest" against the "unnatural and unbrotherly
intrusion . . . of the Jefferson Presbytery" into this dispute. This
action produced friction, disturbed the peace of the church, and
"grossly" violated the comity that existed between the U.S. and U.S.A.
denominations.64

Evidently the New Orleans Presbytery expected this sentence
would result in Mr. Barr's being driven from the Bayou State. If so
they were quickly disillusioned. The response of the U.S.A. church and
the Lafayette pastor was equally swift. On the day following the decla-
ration of the U.S. presbytery, the clerk and moderator of the Jefferson
Judiciary wired the Rev. Mr. Barr: "Your standing as a minister cannot
be invalidated by any ecclesiastical authority, Catholic or Protestant,
outside the Presbyterian Church of the U.S.A." The Lafayette pastor

64 Minutes of November 9, 1914, "Minutes of the Presbytery of
New Orleans of the Presbyterian Church in the US, 1906-1917," 66-70;
New Orleans Times Picayune, November 10, 1914.
himself scoffed at the resolution published by the New Orleans Presbytery. In a newspaper interview he jibed:

What the Presbytery attempted here was about as sensible as it would be for a Methodist Conference to try to depose a Baptist minister. Lafayette Church and myself are now, and I have been since October 26, 1914, entirely beyond the jurisdiction of the New Orleans Presbytery. We therefore will give its deliverances about as much consideration as we are compelled to give to an edict of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Barr further ridiculed the charge of schism made against him, advising the judicatory not to carry this complaint to the U.S.A. General Assembly. He reminded it that the southern Presbyterian Church had separated from the national church fifty years earlier, claiming as their justification the dictation of conscience.

How can it make it criminal to secede from the southern church and unite with the national church when it proclaims itself honorable to have seceded from the national church fifty-four years ago and to have erected itself into an independent body?

The question naturally arose, if the New Orleans Presbytery gave Barr papers of dismissal and a customary letter of recommendation, how could it logically claim the right to unfrock a minister it had itself placed beyond its jurisdiction? The argument advanced by the church court was to the effect that Barr's letter of dismissal was to be presented to the Presbytery of Tennessee and that court alone. Until he presented his papers to that body and they were officially accepted by it, he was subject to the discipline of the New Orleans Presbytery.

65 New Orleans Times Picayune, November 11, 1914.
When he violated his pledged word that he would withdraw to Tennessee, he brought down upon his head the retribution his conduct warranted. 66

The Synod of Texas of the national church gave the answer to this allegation. Since there was no binding law or agreement between the U.S. and U.S.A. churches concerning the transfer of either ministers or members from one church to another, declared a synodical committee, the reception of a minister by either denomination was strictly an internal matter. Both churches, however, declared that if a minister from one denomination renounced the allegiance of his former church and presented a letter of dismissal and a statement that he was a cleric in good standing in his former spiritual home, he might be enrolled as a member of the other church. If a clergyman had charges pending against him in his former church, these charges must be spread upon the records of the denomination to which he wished to transfer his allegiance. Therefore, since the Presbytery of New Orleans gave Barr papers of dismissal and a customary letter of recommendation, it no longer had any jurisdiction over him. Furthermore, that judicatory had no right whatever to claim that the U.S.A. church violated the rules of comity between the two denominations. 67 To a layman untrained in church law, the U.S.A. church appeared to have had the better argument.

66 Minutes of November 9, 1914, "Minutes of the Presbytery of New Orleans of the Presbyterian Church in the US, 1906-1917," 70.

67 Minutes of October 11, 1915, Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, Annual Meeting in Paris, Texas, 1915 (1915), 60-70. In church papers (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas).
Meanwhile, the Presbytery of New Orleans was evidently stung by the taunts of Barr as published in the *Times Picayune*. It exploded into a diatribe that spilled into three columns of the front page of a leading New Orleans newspaper. The presbytery not only raked its former member with a broadside, but also turned a salvo of denunciation on the U.S.A. denomination. The statement began by asserting that over the past years the New Orleans Presbytery had "exercised infinite patience" in its dealings with that "erratic and persistent disturber of the peace of the church, Mr. J. C. Barr." By referring to him as "Mister" the southern church indicated that it no longer considered Barr to be a minister in any assembly. The resolution continued:

It hoped thereby to reclaim him from the error of his ways, and to induce him to obey the laws of the church [to recognize] that there was some authority in the Presbyterian Church other than his own will. In exercising this patience, the Presbytery had to stretch almost to the breaking point its Christian charity. In the light of recent events, this long-suffering, tender-heartedness, and charity on the part of Presbytery was a mistake. Still the Presbytery does not regret having exhausted all peaceable means of dealing with him, though it has been in vain.

"Mr. Barr's litigiousness has been prodigious," observed the judicatory after summarizing his record of complaints to presbytery, synod, and General Assembly since 1910. Although these tribunals had only attempted to defend themselves against Barr's continual attacks, that gentleman and his "press agents" had loudly protested through the local newspapers that he was being persecuted. All these complaints, appeals, resolutions, and slanderous charges, the presbytery had previously passed by in silence.
"But his recent acts in violating his ordination vows have been of so notorious a character" that the long-suffering judiciary "in loyalty to her own vows to the Church of Christ are forced to adjudge him guilty of gross contempt of court, deliberate insubordination and rebellion and schismatic conduct and, therefore, unworthy of being a Presbyterian minister." And the New Orleans Court stripped him of all authority as a "minister of Christ."

If "Mr." Barr wished to be relieved of his oath to the U.S. church he should have obtained permission either from the Presbytery of New Orleans or the Presbytery of Tennessee after the latter court had accepted his papers of dismissal. "No man can violate a contract in this way without word to the other party without sin." A man remains married even though he slips away from his legally wedded wife with no word to her, in order to live with another woman. Can he then return to his brokenhearted spouse and hysterically proclaim, "I have repudiated you! You have no right over me!" What profit him to point to a "bogus marriage certificate" as proof of his good standing in the community.

Mr. Barr points to his paper from the "national" church as his authorization as a minister, but how can the Presbytery of Jefferson . . . release Mr. Barr from his oath of allegiance made in the Presbytery of New Orleans to the Southern Church? It is worth about as much as a certificate from Carranza, releasing General Funston from his oath of allegiance to the United States.

America once had such a man who was willing to renounce his natural allegiance and become the subject of a foreign power. His name was "Benedict Arnold."
This renegade cleric now declared that he was a member of the National Presbyterian Church. "There is no 'National' Church," the Presbytery claimed, "that word is only a subterfuge to disguise the act." There was only a northern and southern church, and the "northern" Presbyterians were trespassing on the field preempted by the southern denomination. The Presbytery of Jefferson, composed "largely of ex-Cumberlanders," violated the constitution of their own church when they enrolled Mr. Barr as a member. However, in "charity" they may be presumed to be unfamiliar with the laws of the church they have so recently joined.68

Jefferson Presbytery was at first unaware of the passions stirred by its action in enrolling the Lafayette pastor as a member of the U.S.A. denomination. As custom and courtesy required, the Stated Clerk of the Jefferson judicatory wrote his counterpart in the New Orleans Presbytery informing him that, in accordance with standard procedures, the Rev. Mr. J. C. Barr had been certified as a minister in the U.S.A. church. The epistle was signed, "Fraternally."69 In return, the Jefferson judicatory received a protest letter so filled with "garbled statements" and "astonishing language" the U.S.A. Presbytery


69M. C. Johnson to Louis Voss, November 2, 1914, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Jefferson, Synod of Texas, Presbyterian Church, USA, 1907-1915," 170.
declared it would not countenance any further communications from that body. 70

Back in New Orleans the vendetta between the New Orleans Presbytery and Dr. Barr raged with unabated fury. The New Orleans court still vigorously maintained its determination to repossess itself of its stolen Lafayette Church property. Declaring that the pulpit of this church was vacant, the presbytery appointed A. H. Ziemer to fill it. 71

On Sunday, November 15, the rumor circulated among the members of Lafayette congregation that the Rev. Mr. Ziemer was planning to march on their church with a bodyguard of forty brethren. Representatives of the New Orleans Presbytery, it was believed, intended to drive the dissident membership from the Lafayette Church and force the Rev. Mr. Barr from his pulpit. As a consequence of this apprehension, the great iron gate of the church was slammed shut and 12 sinewy supporters of the pastor stood guard at this portal. As parishioners arrived for the morning service they were permitted to enter the churchyard one by one, and the gate was closed after them.

Although officers of the law were seldom seen in this peaceful suburb, on this particular Sunday morning two policemen were stationed on the corner of Jackson Avenue and Magazine Street to maintain the

70 Minutes of December 16, 1914, ibid., 187.
peace. Meanwhile, inside the house of worship the Rev. Mr. Barr preached to a large and enthusiastic congregation on the text from St. John, 16:2, "they shall put ye out of the synagogues." However, the "forty and one" failed to appear, and when the membership gathered for the evening service the two policemen had disappeared.72

By the middle of November the charges and acrimonious counter-charges exchanged over a four-month period had begun to have effect on the religious life of the Bayou State. When the executive commission of the Jefferson Presbytery met in New Orleans in early November the crisis had not yet reached its climax. Nevertheless, the commission learned with dismay that a thousand people had been lost to common Presbyterianism in the state. Instead of entering other religious denominations perhaps many of these individuals, in disgust, had renounced the Christian religion altogether.73 Prominent citizens of New Orleans predicted that Presbyterianism in Louisiana would not recover from this bitter fratricidal feud for a generation.74

As evidence of the public concern, letters of protest showered upon the daily newspapers. One signed "a non-combatant Presbyterian" will serve as an example:

Villification and counter-villification is not argument, and is unbecoming to the righteous. The people of God expending

72 New Orleans Times Picayune, November 16, 1914.

73 Minutes of November 17, 1914, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Jefferson of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1907-1915," 172-73.

74 New Orleans Times Picayune, November 10, 1914.
their energies and telling to the world how far they have wandered from the ways of their Master should stop and pray.75

While the struggle raged like an erupting volcano that hurled forth blinding clouds of smoke but little light, the procession of dissident Presbyterians from the southern church into the U.S.A. denomination continued. The Paradis Presbyterian Church, with 16 members, and the Algiers Presbyterian Church, with 15 members, officially requested their enrollment on the records of the Jefferson Presbytery,76 but that body refrained from taking immediate action. The New Orleans Presbytery sent several of their ablest ministers to consult with the members of the Gentilly Terrace Presbyterian Church, a prompt action that led the congregation to retain its allegiance to the southern denomination.77

Upon formal application, the Rev. Mr. William Leith and the Rev. Mr. A. Oscar Browne were enrolled and made fully authorized ministers of the national church.78

Obscured by the conflict, the original issue which precipitated the acrimonious quarrel--the ownership of the Gretna Church property--was quietly settled. On Sunday, September 27, 1914, the Gretna

75Ibid., November 17, 1914.

76Petition of the Paradis Church and the Algiers Church, November 8, 1914, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Jefferson of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1907-1916," 175-77.

77New Orleans Times Picayune, November 10, 1914.

78Minutes of November 20, 1914, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Jefferson of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1907-1915," 183-84; Minutes of December 16, 1914, ibid., 186.
Presbyterian Church organized itself into an independent corporation, and on December 1 of that same year the Board of Trustees of the Lafayette Church transferred the disputed title to the Gretna Church property to that congregation. Had the Rev. Mr. Barr and the New Orleans Presbytery shown a little more patience and tolerance the controversy need never have arisen. The property was never transferred as directed. It may be noted that the Rev. Mr. J. C. Barr defied the original order of the New Orleans Presbytery to the very end, for he never transferred the Gretna property title to that judicatory.

Meantime members of the New Orleans Presbytery drew up a statement of protest which they carried to the General Assembly of the southern church. The New Orleans court knew the desire of the General Assembly of the U.S.A. denomination to retain amicable relations with the southern church. Using this knowledge, it hoped to compel that organization to overturn the actions of the Presbytery of Jefferson. The national church was motivated by the hope that continued harmony between the two denominations might one day lead to organic union. Aware of its advantage, the New Orleans Presbytery, in its resolution, complained of the enrolling of the Rev. Mr. Barr as a fully authorized minister and of a "professed installation" of that individual as pastor of the "so-called Lafayette Independent Presbyterian Church." Adding insult to

79New Orleans Times Picayune, September 28, 1914.

80George W. Davidson to M. V. Higbee, January 30, 1915, "Minutes of the Board of Trustees of the Lafayette Church, 1912-1921," 33. [The early records of the Gretna Presbyterian Church have disappeared.]
injury, the Jefferson judiciary then commissioned the Lafayette pastor to lead, "an invasion into territory occupied solely, so far as the Presbyterian Church is concerned, by the Presbyterian Church of the United States."\(^{31}\)

To solve this problem, the general assemblies of the U.S. and U.S.A. churches appointed a Joint Committee of Comity. The judgment of the commission was that J. C. Barr was legally enrolled as a minister of the Presbytery of Jefferson under the Synod of Texas, U.S.A., but the extensive powers of "Pastor-Evangelist" conferred upon him were not harmonious with the comity agreements between the two denominations. No longer considered pastor of the Lafayette Church, his installation by the Jefferson Presbytery was declared to be "ultra vires, ... without authority of law." Jefferson Presbytery was instructed not to enroll the Lafayette Church Independent under its jurisdiction and to assign the Rev. Mr. Barr to a field outside the state of Louisiana. That judiciary was further admonished not to enroll former churches of the U.S. denomination without consultation with representatives of the southern church. Any church enrolled without such a prior conference should be dropped from the register of this court. The joint commission summarized its findings in a final rebuke to the Jefferson Presbytery. This body was cautioned to observe carefully all comity agreements between the two churches, "in view of the great desirability of cordial

\(^{31}\)Minutes of November 9, 1914, "Minutes of the Presbytery of New Orleans of the Presbyterian Church in the US, 1906-1917," 74-76.
cooperation in all Home Mission work by the several Presbyterian denominational churches evangelizing in the South."\(^{82}\)

After agreeing to the resolution issued by the joint committee, the General Assembly of the national church through an executive commission issued a supplementary and clarifying statement. This was done without consultation with the representatives of the southern denomination. This commission declared that the Joint Committee acted in an "advisory capacity" only, and the instructions of this body were subject to the liberal interpretation of the Jefferson judicatory.\(^{83}\) The Presbytery of Jefferson, gathering in an extraordinary called session, asserted that it would adhere both to the orders of the Joint Commission and the supplementary statement issued by the executive committee. Although the Algiers and Paradis Churches had appealed for membership in the U.S.A. church without prior consultation with the southern denomination, stated the Jefferson Presbytery, their petitions were legally valid, and therefore these two corporations were officially enrolled. The Rev. Mr. J. C. Barr was neither removed as pastor of the Lafayette Church nor deprived of his extensive powers as pastor-evangelist in Louisiana. One concession was made to the Joint Commission. The Lafayette Church Independent was not placed under the jurisdiction of the court. "This action in no way affects the cordial

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\(^{83}\)Minutes of May 22, 1916, ibid., 116.
relations and fraternal cooperation and Christian fellowship existing between the Presbytery of Jefferson and the Lafayette Presbyterian Church Independent." It was readily apparent that the Presbytery read the supplementary statement with far more care than the original resolution of the joint committee.

Before proceeding with a narration of the fate of the Lafayette Church Independent, it will be necessary to account for the membership of this church that remained loyal to the New Orleans Presbytery in the U.S. denomination. It was announced in the daily press in December, 1914, that the Lafayette Church "South" would hold services in the Seaman Bethel Church every Sunday afternoon at 3:45 o'clock. The Rev. Mr. George Summey would conduct these services in addition to his pastoral duties at the Third Presbyterian Church. In February of the following year the New Orleans Presbytery appointed a special commission which was instructed to demand that the seceding congregation of the Lafayette Church remand the records and property of that church to the "loyal" membership. If these dissenters refused, the commission was authorized to take legal steps to repossess said property and records.

The special commission appointed by presbytery to take action against the Lafayette Church Independent, delivered its report to the

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84 Minutes of August 16, 1916, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Jeff­erson of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1907-1916," 272-73.

85 New Orleans Times Picayune, December 19, 1914.

judiciary later in the same year. At the insistence of the "loyal" members of the Lafayette Church South, it recommended that no further action be taken to repossess the records and property of the Lafayette corporation. Not wishing to embroil their church in litigation over a period of years, the loyal congregation insisted that the whole matter be dropped and the bitter controversy be permitted to die. The commission also reported on the state of affairs within the Lafayette Church South. Fifty-three members of the former Lafayette Church remained loyal to the southern church. Of those 53 only a part were active in the church. Twenty-one attended the first called meeting, but after that the attendance at regular Sunday services ranged from six to 15 members, a fair average being about ten.87 On the other hand, the entire church session, board of trustees, and 835 members of the former congregation withdrew from the jurisdiction of the southern church.88 Reading between the lines, it is obvious that the small band who retained allegiance to the U.S. church was demoralized after the protracted, acrimonious controversy and was dissatisfied without the dynamic leadership of the Rev. Mr. Barr.

In spite of the weakness of the Lafayette Church South, it organized itself into an independent corporation with its own session and board of trustees. Evidently it did not entirely abandon the idea

87 Minutes of June 29, 1915, ibid., 135-36.
88 Statistical Reports, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., XVII (1917), 867.
of a legal test to determine the ownership of the papers and property of the former Lafayette Church. The chairman of the board of trustees of the newly-organized church, in a letter of November, 1921, advised the trustees of the Lafayette Church Independent that he had heard plans were under way to demolish the old church building. All movable property, such as the organ, books, and records, of this institution was to be salvaged and removed. The U.S. chairman proposed a friendly suit to determine the true ownership of the former Lafayette Church. The trustees of the Lafayette Church Independent would agree to bear half the court costs in any such test case.89

The counsel for the Lafayette Church Independent replied that the proposed litigation with the independent corporation shouldering half the court fees was unacceptable. The trustees believed that the rightful owners were in possession of the property, and they had no intention of assuming the financial burden which would permit an alien corporation to challenge their title to said property.90

This apparently was the last flirtation of the southern denomination with the idea of litigation over the possessions of the former Lafayette corporation. The Lafayette Church South continued its

89 J. Paul Haller to E. R. Mabry, et al., November 12, 1921, and J. Paul Haller to E. R. Mabry, et al., November 25, 1921, "Minutes of the Board of Trustees of the Lafayette Church, 1912-1921," no page no. [These letters and the ones following were loosely inserted inside the record book of the board of trustees.]

90 E. R. Mabry to J. Paul Haller, November 26, 1921, ibid., no page no.
existence for a number of years with a steadily dwindling membership. The last time this institution appeared on the official records of the U.S. church was in 1940.91

Meanwhile, the Lafayette Church Independent had problems of its own. In 1916 J. C. Barr founded the Westminster Presbyterian Church on St. Charles Avenue with a membership of 26. The new congregation was composed entirely of former members of the Lafayette corporation and detached from the membership rolls of that church especially for the purpose of establishing this new congregation. Barr then became joint pastor of both the Westminster and Lafayette churches, receiving full pastoral salaries from both institutions.92 In April, 1917, scrapping what little was left of the comity agreement of the Joint Commission appointed by the two General Assemblies, the Jefferson Presbytery officially enrolled the Lafayette Church on its records.93 The suffix "Independent" was now dropped, and the corporation was simply known as the Lafayette Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.

The history of the two corporations, Westminster and Lafayette Presbyterian churches, then became rather complex. On March 22, 1920, the Westminster congregation voted to transfer its property, movable

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91 Statistical Reports from Presbyteries, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the US (1940), 215.

92 Minutes of May 9, 1916, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Jefferson of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1907-1916," 267-68.

and otherwise, to the congregation of the Lafayette Church. The members of the Westminster corporation then had their names inscribed on the same membership roll of the Lafayette Church from which they had all been removed four years earlier. The Westminster Church then dissolved itself as an independent corporation. Accepting the transfer of property and members from the former Westminster corporation, the Lafayette Church, at a specially called congregational meeting, officially changed its name to the Westminster Presbyterian Church.94

The Jefferson Presbytery, in April, 1921, noted that the Westminster and Lafayette Presbyterian churches had merged into one corporation thereafter to be known as the Westminster Presbyterian Church. The Rev. Mr. Barr, being formerly pastor of both institutions, would remain as minister of the consolidated church at a salary equal to the combined salaries paid him by the separate congregations, namely, $3,600.95

The congregation of the former Lafayette Church then evacuated their house of worship and moved into the church building of the former Westminster Church on St. Charles Avenue. All the movable property of the late Lafayette Church having been transferred to the new location, the old church building on Magazine Street was demolished. The lot on Magazine Street was divided and sold to various individual purchasers

94 Minutes of February 2, 1921, "Minutes of the Board of Trustees of the Lafayette Church, 1912-1921," no page no.

95 Minutes of April 6, 1921, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Jefferson of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1917-1925," 94-95.
by the consolidated Westminster Church. The Presbytery of New Orleans took a very dim view of this game of musical churches engaged in by its old foe, the Rev. Mr. Barr. Stirred from its lethargy, that body once again carried an official complaint to the U.S. General Assembly. Heeding the cry of one of its presbytery children, this body appointed a committee to meet with a similar committee chosen by the U.S.A. General Assembly to discuss violations of comity agreements between the two denominations. At the 1922 annual meeting of the U.S. General Assembly its committee reported on its labors over the past two years. The commission stated that it had met twice with the committee appointed by the U.S.A. Assembly, the first meeting taking place in Richmond, Virginia on November 29-30, 1921, and the second in New York on April 12, 1922. At these sessions the discussion was conducted with the "utmost frankness and courtesy," and a "sincere effort" was made to sift all the facts and reach a common agreement on the recommendations to be drawn from these facts. The joint committee had considered three complaints by the U.S. presbyteries against violations of solemn agreements by coordinate presbyteries of the national church in Springdale, Arkansas; El Paso, Texas; and New Orleans, Louisiana. After citing the provisions of the original comity agreements of 1916, the report noted the supplementary statement issued unilaterally by the U.S.A. Executive Commission alleging that the Joint Commission had an "advisory capacity"

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only. As a result of this later astonishing resolution, the Jefferson
Presbytery had deliberately violated all provisions of the comity agree-
ments relating to the J. C. Barr case. An objective narration of the
El Paso and Springdale disputes also revealed that subordinate courts
of the national church had deliberately scrapped solemn and binding
understandings.

At the meeting in Richmond and New York the representatives of
the U.S.A. church readily admitted the culpability of its judicatory.
They could only plead that in view of the long period of time that had
elapsed since 1916, any attempt of the U.S.A. General Assembly to
enforce the original agreements would be "impractical." The Comity
Committee reporting to the U.S. General Assembly gave as its judgment
that any attempt by the southern church to obtain "substantial redress"
in any of these three cases would not entail "injury to the general
cause of Christianity and Presbyterianism." [It might well be asked,
however, whether the General Assembly of that church was either willing
or able to impose its authority on its lower courts.] Although it
could not countenance the behavior of the U.S.A. denomination, the com-
mittee recommended that the U.S. General Assembly take no further
action in any of the three cases discussed.97

The New Orleans Presbytery, however, could take satisfaction
from the knowledge that J. C. Barr was a member of the Jefferson

97Appendix, Minutes of the Sixty-Second General Assembly of the
Presbyterian Church in the US (1922), 186-91.
Presbytery and not the southern denomination. Just because the Westminster pastor had changed his allegiance, he had by no means changed his combative character. The discomforted U.S.A. church was soon to learn just how difficult it was to subject this man to church discipline.

While a member of the southern church he had demonstrated his ability as a missionary, but under the jurisdiction of the U.S.A. denomination his ability as a founder of new churches became even more apparent. In September, 1915, he reported to the Jefferson Presbytery on his and the Rev. Mr. Leith's activities since December of the previous year. Working as a team, they had organized a church at Bowie with 42 members, one at Gheens with 32, one at Harvey with 28, one at Delta Farms with 21, and one at Lafitte with 13 members. All of these were small towns located in southern Louisiana. The pastor-evangelist's strong anti-Catholic bias was evident in a number of the contemporary church records. One example was in his report to presbytery. He spoke with pleasure about the progress made at Gheens, Louisiana. Although for a time the "enemy . . . threatened to prevail," that community of former "benighted Romanists" had been evangelized. Then, speaking of the "magnificent opportunity" at the town of Lockport, Louisiana, he declared that that community of 2,000 citizens had never heard the Gospel preached by a "white Protestant minister." Even though that town (until then) had been a Catholic stronghold, he was convinced that the
"forces of darkness" could be defeated were he to receive the needed support of presbytery.98

Succeeding presbytery records note many additional congregations organized by Barr. Indeed his capacity as a missionary crusader far outstripped the ability of presbytery to fill the pulpits of the newly organized churches. Hard-pressed by the mushrooming of new churches throughout Louisiana, the Jefferson Presbytery asked the U.S.A. National Board of Home Missions to supply both preachers and money to enable these weak churches to take firm root. It will be recalled that a similar request had been made to this board many years earlier to support the fledgling churches in Texas. The earlier request had been granted and abundant capital and Stated Supplies made available to support the congregations in the Lone Star State. Consequently the national church laid very firm foundations in Texas. However, the eventual outcome was different in Louisiana.

The still wrathful enemies of Barr in the New Orleans Presbytery, hearing about his Jefferson petition, also wrote the U.S.A. Home Mission Board. They advised in the most forceful language that they considered that the Rev. Mr. Barr's evangelistic activities had damaged amicable relations between the two great Presbyterian denominations. This clamor effectively intimidated the board, and it threw the Synod of Texas, U.S.A., and the Jefferson judiciary back on their own

98 Minutes of September 18, 1915, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Jefferson of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1907-1916," 231-34.
meager resources. As a result, the very encouraging field opened up by
the Westminster pastor and his two colleagues, Brown and Leith, remained
largely uncultivated, and many of the churches organized by them died
of insanity.99

In spite of non-support of the Home Mission Board, by 1954 there
were 12 U.S.A. churches with a membership of 1,103.100 The majority of
these were founded by these three ministers with J. C. Barr as their
guiding spirit. Barr can be credited with laying the real foundations
of the U.S.A. denomination in Louisiana.101 Had the Westminster pastor
been given adequate backing by the national church there seems little
doubt that the number of congregations and parishioners would have been
far larger. The representation of the U.S.A. denomination in Louisiana
cannot be compared to that of Texas. Under the Synod of Texas, U.S.A.,
subtracting the members and churches from Louisiana, there were in 1955,
147 churches and 224,298 members.102

99 Minutes of September 18, 1915, ibid., 237-38; Fred H. Ford,
Historical Continuity of the Louisiana Presbyterian Church in the United
States of America (Fred H. Ford, Branch, New Orleans 20, La., no date
given). In church papers (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio,
Texas).

100 Statistical Record and Presbytery Rolls, Minutes of the Gen-
eral Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 5th Ser., III
(1954), 398.

101 St. Amant, History of the Presbyterian Church in Louisiana,
183-84.

102 Statistical Records and Presbytery Rolls, Minutes of the Gen-
eral Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 5th Ser., IV (1955),
388-401.
Returning to the later career of the Rev. Mr. J. C. Barr, in January, 1926, the Board of Trustees of the Westminster Church appointed a building committee to obtain sufficient funds to erect a new $60,000 house of worship to replace the old building on St. Charles Avenue. 103 At a congregational meeting in June of the same year the Westminster Church contracted to borrow $40,000 at 6-1/2 per cent interest from the New Orleans Bank and Trust Company and promised to retire the indebtedness in 10 years. The bank was given a mortgage on the church property as surety for the loan. 104 In succeeding years additional loans were made until the indebtedness to the bank stood at $90,000. It was obvious that the pastor and Board of Trustees did not hesitate to saddle the corporation with a staggering debt on the assumption the boom years of the 1920's would continue indefinitely.

Upon the arrival of the Great Depression in 1929 the Westminster Church was faced with the most profound monetary crisis in its history. In January, 1930, there was not even enough money in the church's general fund to pay all of the pastor's salary. Barr proposed that the Board of Trustees sanction the transference of $200 from the benevolence fund to the general fund so that his monthly salary could be fully met. James McArthur, church secretary, protested, asserting that during the

103Minutes of January 21, 1925, "Minutes of the Session of the Westminster Church, 1922-1930," 18. [Both the session minutes and the minutes of the board of trustees are incorporated in the session records of the Westminster Church.]

past year the pastor had plundered the construction funds of hundreds of dollars to meet his salary. Furthermore, during this same period a sizable amount had been siphoned out of the benevolence fund for Barr's retirement fund. When the members of the congregation heard how the church miscellaneous funds were being misused they would cease contributing to them.

A vigorous debate then took place between Barr and McArthur. At its conclusion the church secretary stated that he would consent to have the $200 transferred from the benevolence fund, but would never again vote for the transfer of money from one fund to another. The minister must have been shaken by the knowledge that for the first time he had met formidable opposition within his church. McArthur was not only the church secretary but also secretary of the board of managers of the Presbyterian Hospital. As the evidence was soon to suggest, Barr must have pondered what dramatic action he could take to restore his now faltering authority.

The Westminster corporation, however, had far more serious problems to grapple with than the salary of the minister. The church complex on St. Charles Avenue cost $140,000. To pay for the construction, the entire property was bonded for $80,000 by the New Orleans Bank and Trust Company. The first group of five bonds, valued at $1,000 each, was to fall due on January 1, 1930, and the second group, also totaling $5,000, was payable on December 31 of the same year. The

105 Minutes of January 12, 1930, ibid., 81-82.
annual interest of approximately another $5,000 brought the total annual cost of servicing the debt to $15,000. In addition, church's operating expenses for the year amounted to about another $7,000. Owing to the critical times it was feared that many communicants might be either unwilling or unable to meet their usual pledges.106

The Westminster Church was not the only institution to find itself in a precarious economic situation; the plight of the Presbyterian Hospital was equally critical. There were several reasons for this unhappy situation. The overly generous charity service, costing between fifty and sixty thousand dollars a year, was partially to blame. An even more important source of trouble was the overly optimistic building program engaged in by the board managers led by Barr. As in the case of the Westminster Church, this reckless construction policy burdened the hospital with a staggering debt. As security for these loans, the entire physical plant had been pledged to local banks. Already several payments had not been met, and, while these lending agencies had shown great patience, it was obvious that the days of grace were rapidly coming to an end.107

In an eleventh-hour attempt to save both the church and the hospital, Dr. Barr left on a trip to the Atlantic coast in a one-man fund-raising drive. While in Philadelphia he heard that creditors had seized the Presbyterian Hospital and closed its doors. The minister

106Minutes of February 21, 1930, ibid., 115.
107Ford, Historical Continuity, 21-22.
instantly wired the Rev. Mr. F. H. Ford, Stated Clerk of the Jefferson Presbytery, that he wished to dissolve pastoral relations between himself and the Westminster Church. For sentimental reasons, he requested that his resignation take effect on February 27, 1930, in order that he could round out 32 years of service to that congregation.\(^{108}\)

Although the minister did not spell out in his message to Presbytery his reasons for this sudden decision, he did announce to the local press his resignation not only as pastor of the Westminster Church but also as president of the board of managers of the Presbyterian Hospital. Upon hearing that the New Orleans sheriff had seized the hospital in the name of its creditors, he charged that he was the victim of a diabolical conspiracy. His fund-raising drive on the Atlantic Coast had proved a failure, because certain of his colleagues on the board of managers had sent "persistent and confidential communications" to the eastern money interests. Although the pastor was not permitted to see these letters, he was convinced that these prospective donors had been persuaded that he "stood alone" in his desire to continue operation of the hospital or that he was "inadequate" in its management. He claimed that, upon his arrival on the eastern seaboard, the response from New York and Philadelphia, although unofficial, was at first "most encouraging" and "hearty." Money to rescue the faltering institution was readily available and partially raised. Just when total success

\(^{108}\)J. C. Barr to F. H. Ford, January 24, 1930, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Jefferson of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1926-1936," 3-4.
appeared within his grasp, he found himself waylaid at every turn by
the slanderous epistles, and the sources of revenue dried up overnight.
Responsibility for failure, therefore, could not be ascribed to Barr,
but should be laid at the door of his unprincipled opponents on the
board of managers. With his hopes thus shattered the minister resigned
from both the hospital board of managers and his church because "for
the present at least I seem to have done all I can for my native city."

Two members of the board, when contacted by the press, dis-
claimed any knowledge of these alleged secret communications. One of
them, R. P. Hyams, stated "The board of managers of the Hospital did
everything possible to assist Dr. Barr. I know nothing about any let-
ters that might have discredited him. I don't know what to make of his
resignation."109

An additional official denial of the cleric's charges came from
the Secretary of the Board of Managers. McArthur, asserted that ses-
sion members and the board of managers of the hospital, who were Barr's
loyal supporters and friends, were "astonished" at his allegations in
the local press. Referring to the charge that the pastor's colleagues
on the hospital board attempted to interfere with his fund-raising
efforts, McArthur hastened to assure him that his statement was based
on either "an unwarranted, unfounded assumption or misinformation."
After careful examination of all communications between members of the
board and prospective donors in the East, the secretary declared there

was no evidence that anyone attempted to undermine the pastor's standing with the hospital, and he was convinced that Barr would come to the same conclusion upon a scrutiny of the correspondence. After expressing his personal amazement at Barr's double resignation, McArthur stated that upon reflection he had come to the conclusion that the minister's decision might "pave the way for a more logical approach to the whole matter."\textsuperscript{110}

It is impossible to render an absolute judgment on the validity of the minister's charges. However, his past career amply demonstrated his inability either to accept a defeat gracefully or to accept responsibility for failure. It appears probable that Barr left the Crescent City promising within a short time to return with the money in hand to save both the church and hospital. Upon his arrival in the East, the minister discovered that the economic blizzard then gripping the nation had terrified all prospective contributors into flatly refusing to donate a penny. Whether he actually believed he was the victim of a sinister plot or manufactured the story to cast the blame on others for his failure, is difficult to say. However, the pastor's subsequent devious activities make the latter explanation probable.

In view of later events, it would be well to quote in full the minister's letter of resignation to the Westminster Church. Addressed to "My Dear People," it stated:

\textsuperscript{110}James M. McArthur to J. C. Barr, February 5, 1930, "Minutes of the Session of the Westminster Church, 1922-1930," 100-101.
Conditions have arisen which seem to make it impossible to serve you effectively any longer. Therefore, I have asked Presbytery, with your consent, to dissolve the pastoral relations between us, on the date indicated above. It wrings my heart to make this request as my personal preference would have been to live and die with you. Always yours in Christ.

Barr, as his subsequent behavior was to prove, was insincere in his request for a dissolution of pastoral bonds. He had earlier threatened to resign twice only to be persuaded through vigorous insistence of the congregation to remain. When he spoke of "conditions" that prevented his carrying on, he implied that were these conditions removed, he might be prevailed upon to assume once again his station. Perhaps this was a power play to strengthen his hand within the church. It apparently never seriously occurred to him that the membership would accede to his request and take his letter at its face value.

However that may have been, the Rev. Mr. F. H. Ford, acting as moderator at the pastor's own request, called a meeting of the church session on January 29. When Barr's letter had been read, the session, after due deliberation and discussion, determined to call a congregational meeting to consider what action should be taken. The session further agreed, with the unanimous consent of the trustees present, to recommend to the congregation that they consent to the dissolution of pastoral relations. The words "with the unanimous consent of the trustees" were underlined with such emphasis in the record book that the pen almost bit through the paper. It was further determined that the

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111 J. C. Barr to the Session and Congregation of Westminster Presbyterian Church, January 24, 1930, ibid., 93.
ballot of membership should be secret, so that each parishioner could vote as his conscience dictated, "without any moral pressure from the opinions of others."112

The congregation met on Sunday, February 2. Ford read the minister's letter addressed to Presbytery, and McArthur read the communication sent to the session and congregation of the church, both requesting the severance of pastoral bonds. McArthur then read the minutes of the session in which its members and the members of the Board of Trustees recommended that the resignation be accepted in the best interests of the church. The vote of the membership was then cast by secret ballot, and by the fullness of the church record covering this event, it was evident that the officers of the church bent over backwards to emphasize the legality and impartiality of the vote. When the ballots were counted, it was discovered that the resolution accepting the resignation of the pastor had been adopted by a vote of 73 to 68.113 The closeness of the vote indicated the strong support Barr still had from a large faction within the membership.

The minister was residing in Clarksville, Tennessee awaiting what he confidently believed would be a unanimous call from the congregation to resume his pastoral duties. When the decision of February 2 was communicated to him, he hurriedly returned to New Orleans in an attempt to reverse this judgment. Before he could take effective

112 Minutes of January 29, 1930, ibid., 91.
113 Minutes of February 2, 1930, ibid., 94-95.
action, however, the Presbytery of Jefferson met in a specially called session on February 10 and concurred in the dissolution of the pastoral ties.\textsuperscript{114}

By the courtesy of the session of the Westminster Presbyterian Church, the minister was permitted to mount the pulpit for two consecutive Sundays. At these services on February 16 and 23, he denounced the alleged irregularity of the dissolution proceedings, and vigorously declared that he was still the legal pastor. Showing no appreciation to the session for the privilege of officiating at these services, he denounced its members for contracting to fill the pulpit with Stated Supplies for succeeding Sundays. Further, brandishing a number of letters and telegrams allegedly from ardent admirers in the congregation, he warned the officers that, if he were not reinstated, he would found a separate church in New Orleans and carry his disciples with him.\textsuperscript{115}

As if the unhappy church did not have problems enough with this incipient rebellion, the silhouette of the New Orleans Bank and Trust Company continued to loom ominously in the background. The president of that institution on February 3 wrote the church secretary tactfully pointing out that the bonds valued at $5,000 had not been taken up by the congregation when they fell due on January 1. "We are holding the bonds past due, and are anxious to get this matter disposed of at the

\textsuperscript{114} Minutes of February 10, 1930, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Jefferson of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1926-1936," 5-7.

\textsuperscript{115} Minutes of September 10, 1930, ibid., 62.
earliest possible moment,"\textsuperscript{116} he wrote. The Westminster congregation had before its eyes the example of the fate that befell the Protestant Hospital in the event the corporation failed to meet its obligations.

Officers of the Westminster Church apparently believed that Barr was a greater menace than the devouring jaws of capitalism. A session meeting was called for the evening of Friday, February 21. When the meeting was called to order, Barr attempted to take the chair as moderator. Not wishing to engage in an unseemly wrangle with the former pastor, Ford had absent himself. Over the roaring protest of Barr, the session, by a vote of ten to one, elected Mr. R. P. Hyams Moderator of the Session. However, the minister continued to make a great commotion, loudly avowing that he was both moderator and pastor of the Westminster Church.\textsuperscript{117} The session then unanimously passed a resolution requesting the Presbytery of Jefferson to investigate the "professional and ministerial conduct of Reverend John C. Barr, D.D." Asserting that they could not proceed against an ordained minister, the Westminster officials appealed to the higher church court for redress. After his "emphatic, deliberate and apparently final" letter of resignation Barr had attempted to incite a faction within the congregation to restore him to the pastorate. However, the session hinted of even darker crimes, accusing him of "other alleged grave offenses contrary

\textsuperscript{116}G. Owen Vincent to James M. McArthur, February 3, 1930, "Minutes of the Session of the Westminster Church, 1922-1930," 106.

\textsuperscript{117}Minutes of September 10, 1930, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Jefferson of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1926-1936," 61.
to the word of God and injurious to the peace and progress of the Westminster congregation.\textsuperscript{118} The record did not indicate whether or not the minister was present when the resolution was carried.

Before Presbytery could meet, the session again met on February 24 for the purpose of inquiring into the "alleged improper financial transactions" of Mrs. Anna Mabry Barr. The investigation was to "vindicate the good name of Mrs. Anna Mabry Barr, and to exonerate her from blame if such action may be consistent with the facts, or to take any other action which the peace, unity and purity of the church may seem to require." Neither Dr. nor Mrs. Barr was present at this hearing.

The Westminster congregation had previously appointed R. P. Hyams to investigate the activities of Dr. and Mrs. Barr. He then reported on the results of the investigation. On various pretexts, Mrs. Barr had borrowed or received $27,000 from numerous individuals and institutions in New Orleans. Evidently $13,000 of this amount had been turned over to the Presbyterian Hospital, but about $14,000 was unaccounted for. Since the money had been raised in the name of the Westminster Church, the congregation was liable for the missing balance. He concluded his report by saying:

I don't know just how to get this where it can be talked about and explained by Mrs. Barr and Dr. Barr, in view of their attitude. It might be possible that they can account for all of this, and I certainly hope they can, for their sakes as well as our sakes.\textsuperscript{119}

\textsuperscript{118}Minutes of February 21, 1930, "Minutes of the Session of the Westminster Church, 1922-1930," 110.

\textsuperscript{119}Minutes of February 24, 1930, \textit{ibid.}, 117-19.
No decisive action was taken in this matter.

However these problems might be resolved, the church was compelled to come to grips with the urgent financial crisis. At a called congregational meeting on Sunday afternoon, March 2, Ford stated the problem clearly and simply. The session was instituting a drive to raise $10,000 by April 1. If $5,000 were not pledged by that date, the property of the church would pass into the hands of the New Orleans Bank and Trust Company.

A faction supporting Barr interrupted the moderator numerous times, loudly declaring they would not pledge one penny until the beloved former pastor had been restored to the congregation. "Mr. E. Peters arose and said 'I will give $200.00 provided Dr. Barr will be allowed to reorganize the church; otherwise let the New Orleans Bank & Trust Company take the church.'" He then asked all those present who held that view to stand. About 40 members then arose. Peters further said "I have been a member of this church for the past ten years, and my wife has been a member all her life, and we will do anything as long as Dr. Barr remains. We will follow Dr. Barr wherever he goes." Ford retorted, "He might be going to the Devil." Peters and about 65 other persons then walked out of the church. Evidently not all those who departed were champions of Barr, for some left in general disgust at the proceedings. After $2,175 was pledged, the meeting was adjourned.¹²⁰

At a session meeting a few days later a report from the Rev. Mr. G. W. Fender, the representative of the Jefferson Presbytery, was read to the officers of the Westminster Church. It stated that Dr. Fender had had an interview with Dr. and Mrs. Barr on March 1. At that time, the former pastor had insisted that his letter of resignation had been sincere, "still he evidently did not expect the Congregation to join him in the request to Presbytery to have the pastoral relations dissolved." Since the session unanimously agreed that a new pastor was absolutely necessary, Dr. Fender attempted to persuade Dr. Barr that he should announce publicly that his resignation was final to avoid a schism within the congregation which might destroy the Westminster Church. Barr should influence his friends to remain in the church and support it financially. He evidently refused, stubbornly insisting on his unconditional reinstatement.121

In spite of his behavior, the Jefferson Presbytery appeared curiously reluctant to take decisive action against the recalcitrant minister. Although several hearings were held and testimony recorded that filled an astonishing number of pages in the minute book, he was not indicted on any specific charge.122 The judicatory evidently hoped that by threatening him with litigation and possible deposition from the ministry, Barr could be intimidated into a more conciliatory frame

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121 Minutes of March 7, 1930, ibid., 129-30.

122 Minutes of February 10, March 11, and April 16-17, 1930, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Jefferson of the Presbyterian Church of the USA, 1926-1936," 6-42.
of mind. Possibly it could persuade him to use his influence with certain communicants to unite the congregation and save the Westminster corporation and possibly the cause of the U.S.A. church in Louisiana. Although this is mere speculation, it is an educated reading between the lines of the Jefferson Minute Book.

Evidently losing patience with both the prelate and his wife, Presbytery formulated official charges against both. On April 17, 1930, the court accused Mrs. Anna Mabry Barr of "avaricious and unfair financial transactions contrary to the word of God and against the peace and unity of the church, and with securing money under false pretenses and diverting the use of the same."¹²³

On September 10 of the same year, the Jefferson Presbytery resolved itself into a court to hear the case of the U.S.A. Presbyterian Church versus Rev. J. C. Barr. The prosecuting committee appointed by the judicatory reported that an earnest attempt had been made to effect certain confessions of error on the part of Dr. John C. Barr, in order that the case might be dismissed. However, the response of the minister, "in the judgment of the Presbytery did not furnish tenable grounds for dismissing the case."

Then the commission spread official charges on the record. Barr like his wife was accused of avaricious and unfair financial methods and transactions, "contrary to the word of God and against the peace, unity, and purity of the church." Various specifications were then made. He

¹²³Minutes of April 17, 1930, ibid., 49.
was further charged with insubordination to the Presbytery of Jefferson
and with "acts and procedures in contempt of the inferior judicat-
tory of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.," and specifications were
again given. Finally, it was alleged that Barr was responsible for
"fostering a faction, fomenting strife and encouraging division in the
Westminster congregation," with specifications appended.

Although Barr was not present, he was represented by counsel,
the Rev. Mr. James E. Clark. Through agreement of the prosecuting com-
mittee and the representative of the accused, the first charge was
dropped. However, a vote of the court was taken on the last two, and
both were unanimously sustained. The sentence imposed was astonishingly
mild considering the grave nature of the allegations. The court ordered
that he was to receive an admonition to be administered by the moderator
in "all tenderness and solemnity in the presence of the judicature
only."

The tribunal directed Barr to appear at the next meeting of Pres-
bytery to receive sentence. Apparently anticipating his conviction, he
gave notice through counsel of his appeal to the Texas Synod, U.S.A.
Before adjourning, the court dismissed the charges against Mrs. Barr,
"in the interest of religion."124

Before the next meeting of the Jefferson Presbytery, however,
an undated report from a so-called special judicial commission was
inserted into the record. There is no indication whether this body was

124 Minutes of September 10, 1930, ibid., 60-66.
appointed by the Synod of Texas or the Presbytery itself. At any rate, the paper stated that an entente had been reached between representatives of the Jefferson judiciary and the former Westminster pastor. Barr abandoned his claim to be pastor of the Westminster Church and withdrew his complaint to the Synod of Texas. In return, the Presbytery removed its censure and granted him a letter of discharge and a good conduct recommendation as requested.\textsuperscript{125}

Then, in November, 1930, a called meeting was held at the Westminster Church. The Rev. Mr. Glen L. Sneed presented a letter of discharge from the Dallas Presbytery, U.S.A., and was officially enrolled as a member of the Jefferson Presbytery. A delegation from the Westminster Church presented an official call requesting Sneed to accept the pastoral duties of the church. He accepted and was installed as the new pastor of the Westminster corporation by the Jefferson Presbytery.\textsuperscript{126}

After many years of frugal and efficient management, Sneed and the board of trustees eliminated the last of the church indebtedness in the early 1940's.\textsuperscript{127}

\textsuperscript{125}Report of Special Judicial Commission, \textit{ibid.}, 71.
\textsuperscript{126}Minutes of November 22, 1930, \textit{ibid.}, 72.
\textsuperscript{127}Ford, \textit{Historical Continuity}, 22.
The last years of Dr. Barr can be quickly sketched. Serving as Stated Supply, or pastor, of a number of small U.S.A. churches in Tennessee, he finally died in Clarksville, Tennessee on May 8, 1942.\textsuperscript{128}

Yet to this day the spirit of John C. Barr haunts the Westminster corporation. In an interview with the present pastor of the church, the author was told that the congregation demonstrates an astonishing rebellion against authority and a capacity for engendering bitter feuds, kept alive over a period of many years. Furthermore, many of the communicants seem to live more in the past than in the present; the events of 1914 and 1930 are as alive to them as if they had occurred yesterday.\textsuperscript{129} However that may be, the Westminster Presbyterian Church stands today on St. Charles Avenue as a symbol of defiance to the southern Presbyterian Church, and perhaps to the U.S.A. denomination as well.


\textsuperscript{129} Interview with the Rev. Mr. John Richard Dryer, August 23, 1965.
CHAPTER VIII

HISTORY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, U.S.A., 1907-1920

The stress and storm of the union controversy was followed by a period of relative peace. The general history of the national church in Texas between the years 1907 and 1920 was characterized by comparative tranquility during which few events of great significance occurred. Nevertheless, some matters of interest were brought to the attention of the judicatories.

A committee on home missions gave a gloomy report in 1908 on the condition of churches to the Synod. It reported that the greatest disability suffered by local congregations was a turnover in membership ranging from 3 to 5 per cent a year. The denomination as a whole grew slowly during these years, for although new members were enrolled every year, almost as many delinquent communicants were dropped from the rolls. Proclaiming the loss of faith of a "Godless" generation and growing secular interests, the committee noted that the loss of church membership was a fate common to all denominations.

Another indication of the loss of church influence in contemporary America was the dwindling of contributions by communicants. In spite of a great increase in national wealth, sums contributed to the various church boards remained about the same. Throughout the U.S.A.

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denomination church members gave an average of four cents per communicant a week. Unfortunately, Texas was below even this low level. In the year 1908, thrifty Texas Presbyterians contributed less than two cents per member a week, and to the Board of Home Missions they gave only three-fifths of a cent. Texas received from the National Board of Home Missions a total of $30,971.63, and for the same period Texans gave this board $5,250.10. The National Board asked from U.S.A. communicants throughout the nation $1,200,000 for the year 1909. Texas needed to contribute $10,000 a year more than it had in the past. A total of $15,000 was not an unreasonable amount to ask of the membership considering their numbers and financial resources.

One reason for the paucity of contributions was that many U.S.A. Presbyterian churches made no contributions at all. Of its 640 congregations, only 228 contributed anything for foreign missions. Moreover, of each of the churches that did give to the boards, there were few contributing members. On an average, only about one-fourth of the communicants of contributing churches donated to these funds, and nine-tenths of the money was given by one-tenth of the members.

A third problem faced by the church was a shortage of ministers and a lack of qualifications of those who did enter the Texas field. Men were needed to serve congregations already in existence and to organize new ones. They had to be dedicated persons who were willing to labor under great handicaps.

U.S.A. Presbyterians were admonished not to become discouraged in the face of these manifold disabilities, for great opportunities
also awaited the church in spite of its difficulties. The Committee on Home Missions continued: "Texas needs the Presbyterian Church. She needs its culture, its catholic spirit, its devotion to the Bible, its high ideals of Christian character and conduct, and its intelligent evangelism."

Several years later this same committee on missions gave additional information relative to Presbyterian churches in Texas. Evolving pastoral relationships confronted the church with a new problem as the days of the long pastorate, unfortunately, appeared to have ended. Ministers moved from church to church, due in part to the exaltation of the evangelical function of the church over its educational mission, but more importantly because of the meagerness of ministerial salaries and the limited funds available to perform the duties of the church. Not only did the minister migrate from church to church, but local congregations also continually demanded new pastors. The final solution, the committee averred, would be found in a better concept of the true function of the church so that ample revenue would change conditions of modern church life.

A basic problem was that of the country church. Since Texas was largely an agricultural state, the role of the small, rural church was of siminal importance to the Synod of that state. Changing

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1Minutes of September 26, 1908, Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, Annual Meeting at Vernon, Texas, September 24-28, 1908 (Pamphlet), 19-20, 26. In church papers (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas).
populations, fragmented denominationalism, small membership, inadequate revenue, and lack of pastoral supply were the unique problems of the rural congregation.

The problem of the country congregation facing the synod can be illustrated by the large number of small rural churches enrolled on the church records. In the years 1910 and 1911 there were 456 of these churches. Of these, 38 had fewer than ten members, 158 had between ten and 25, 112 had between 25 and 50, and 85 had between 50 and 100 members. That is, of the 456 congregations in the synod, 393 had a membership below 100, and 308 had fewer than 50 members. Only 12 churches had between 200 and 300 members, five had between 300 and 400 members, one had between 400 and 500 members, and just two churches had above 500 members. The average membership of the U.S.A. churches in Texas was 58, and in spite of delinquent members being dropped from the rolls, this average had been gradually rising over a period of years. In the eight leading cities of Texas, having a total population of 473,385, the U.S.A. synod had 18 churches with a membership of 4,181. In the 38 cities having a population of between 5,000 and 25,000 and a total population of 273,303, the judicator had 29 churches with a membership of 3,731. In ten of those towns the U.S.A. denomination had no representation at all. Of 96 towns having a population between 2,000 and 5,000, the national church had no congregations in 23. In the 63 in which it had churches, the total membership was
2,834. That is to say, 56.2 per cent of the U.S.A. church membership was in communities with less than 2,000 residents.²

Moving from the background as presented by the statistics, the committee held that in order to stabilize the changing country pastorate, either more substantial contributions must be provided by local congregations or larger sums be donated by the National Board of Domestic Missions. An annual salary of $800 was not sufficient, for ministers who labored in the countryside would have to have not only theological training but also economic and sociological education. Weak country churches must federate with other Protestant churches in the same community. The elimination of contending denominationalism would perform a great service for the Master.

While this period from 1907 to 1920, as has been mentioned, was tranquil and static, it was marked by one tragic event. On March 21, 1916, at 4:30 in the afternoon, elders and deacons of the Central Presbyterian Church of Paris, Texas assembled for a meeting of the church session. This Presbyterian Church, one of the oldest in the Cumberland denomination in the state, had been founded in 1844 after the Rev. Mr. Samuel Corley and John McKee had preached to a small gathering in Paris. Originally called the First Cumberland Presbyterian Church, it was enrolled in the Red River Presbytery in the fall

²Minutes of September 23, 1910, Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, Annual Meeting at Jacksonville, Texas, September 22-26, 1910 (Pamphlet), 11-12; Minutes of September 23, 1911, Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, Annual Meeting at San Antonio, Texas, September 21-25, 1911 (Pamphlet), 13-14.
of the same year, 1844. The Paris Church was self-supporting from the beginning and remained so through much of its history. Unfortunately, by 1880 the church had lost a great deal of ground and was threatened with dissolution. In that year, however, the young Charles Manton accepted the pastoral charge, and on December 19, 1880, preached his first sermon to four men. For the next three months the congregation that gathered on Sunday ranged between four and 16, but by a strenuous visitation campaign Manton soon attracted 33 members to the congregation. Eventually he built the membership up to more than 500, making it one of the strongest churches in the Cumberland denomination in Texas. His fellow townsman greatly mourned his death in 1908.

When the union of the Cumberland and U.S.A. Presbyterian churches was effected in 1906, the Red River Presbytery was combined with the Bonham Presbytery to form a new judicatory known as the Presbytery of Paris. Because of Manton's influence, the First Cumberland Presbyterian Church of Paris transferred into the U.S.A. denomination with hardly a division. Located centrally in the heart of the Presbytery, the congregation changed its name from the First Cumberland Presbyterian Church to the Central Presbyterian Church.

This was the state of affairs when the church session gathered on the afternoon of March, 1916. As the elders and deacons bowed their heads during the opening prayer, a fire alarm sounded. One of the session members hurried into the room to announce that the entire southern
part of the town was ablaze. The house of worship was emptied as the men hurried to save their families and personal possessions.³

For a town of its size the fire that ravaged Paris, Texas was one of the most destructive in the history of the United States. Property destroyed was proportionally greater than that in the fires of Chicago, San Francisco, or Baltimore. Fifty per cent of the total area of the town was destroyed, and 95 per cent of the business district was laid in ashes. As many as 1,400 homes were consumed, leaving shelterless over 7,000 people out of a total population of 15,000. Every city and county building, all the public schools, the post office, and the federal court building were lost. Fourteen churches, including the Central Presbyterian were totally consumed in the holocaust.

Since many members of the Presbyterian house of worship lost not only their homes and all their household possessions, but also their places of business, they were temporarily unable to reestablish themselves in the community. The Presbytery of Paris appealed to the U.S.A. denomination to provide all financial assistance possible, not only for the construction of a new church, but to aid the stricken townspeople as well.⁴ Later both the town and the church were rebuilt.

³Anon., One Hundredth Anniversary, 1844-1944, Central Presbyterian Church, Paris, Texas (Pamphlet). Papers of B. A. Hodges (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas).

⁴Minutes of April 5, 1916, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Paris of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1907-1917," 8. In church papers (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas).
Aside from this disaster the church suffered from other problems such as its inability to realistically adjust to current social conditions. No mention appeared in any of the judicatory records of the incipient civil rights movement in America, and there was no indication that these clergymen were aware of the industrialization beginning to take place in the state. There seemed to be no desire to bring spiritual comfort to workers in factory towns. This apparent ignoring by the ministers of the vital issues of the day perhaps helped to explain the loss of church membership noted earlier.

The U.S.A. church was vitally aware of one major economic development and the opportunity it brought. This was the opening of the oil fields of Texas and the rush of people to them. In 1919 the committee on home missions reported to the Synod of Texas, U.S.A., "The open doors for our church are now the rapidly developing oil centers." The committee noted that within 18 months the town of Ranger, Texas grew from a population of 900 to 30,000; Eastland in 12 months expanded from a village of 1,000 to a city of 10,000; within six months Caddo expanded from nothing to 4,500; and Desdemona grew from practically nothing to a city of 12,000. The U.S.A. denomination already had a church at Ranger, and a church at Breckenridge that lapsed for 14 years had been revived. A church had also recently been erected in Eastland.5

5Minutes of October 10, 1919, Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, Annual Meeting at Dallas, Texas, Trinity Presbyterian Church, October 8-11, 1919 (Pamphlet), 35. In church papers (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas).
In spite of the fact that contemporary Texas newspapers were filled with editorials expressing alarm and dismay at the corruption and crime revealed in American life by the Muckraker journalists and these newspapers showed much interest in the Progressive movement sweeping the nation, there is no indication in any of the church records of the time that U.S.A. ministers were cognizant of or interested in these developments. Only one phase of the Progressive crusade captured the imagination of contemporary Presbyterian ministers. This was the relentless battle waged against "demon rum." Both synodical and presbytery records devoted an astonishing number of pages to this subject. In their assaults on this sinister foe these clergymen at times employed purple prose:

The hideous [sic] monster is not like the owl that prowls around at night to commit his depredations and increase his share of woe; but more like the eagle that soars aloft, brushing the clouds with his wings, and looking boldly into the fact of the sun with his eyes. He exhibits himself in every land, shows himself upon the seas, and plants himself upon the streets.6

Although this was an issue that should have attracted the attention of the ministers, the amount of space devoted in the official records made one wonder if clergymen of the period were concerned with much else. Judicatory records, however, do reveal a keen interest in also eradicating such heinous crimes as dancing, gambling,

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6 Minutes of April 7, 1910, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Brownwood of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, August, 1903-September, 1912," 272-73. In church papers (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas).
profanity, public bathing, and cigarette smoking. But next to the
war waged against alcohol, the church records give the greatest amount
of space to laments on the violation of the Sabbath. In 1907, the Ft.
Worth Presbytery inscribed a tedious four-page dissertation on this
subject in its official record book.7

One aspect of contemporary American life did, however, receive
adequate attention from the U.S.A. church. That was immigration, and
particularly the new immigrants who were then flooding America. As
early as October, 1902, the Rev. Mr. E. B. Wright offered a resolution
to the Synod of Texas, U.S.A., noting that a heavy immigration was
expected due to the low rates and combined action of the Texas rail-
roads, as well as the renewal of the state's economy. Since many of
the newcomers would certainly need the ministry of the Presbyterian
Church, the Rev. Mr. Wright moved that the Board of Home Missions of
the synod be authorized to make unusual grants of money if it believed
new and promising fields were opening up. This resolution was
accepted by the judiciary.8 Again in 1908 the Committee on Home Mis-
sions called to the attention of the Synod of Texas, U.S.A., that the

7Minutes of September 23, 1907, Minutes of the Presbytery of
Fort Worth of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1907-1910, 1916-1921,
13-16. In church papers (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio,
Texas).

8Minutes of October 31, 1902, "Minutes of the Synod of Texas
of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1900-1906," 77. In church papers
(Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas).
The tide of immigration had just begun to turn to Texas. The committee report then stated:

The alien is not our menace, but our opportunity. The flood of immigrants that is sweeping in upon us bring to the Christian citizen the chance for the assertion of the purest principles of American patriotism, and to the church a chance for the display of devoted services of her love for God and man. We cannot view indifferently this aspect of American life, nor leave unapproached this great opportunity that God has set before the Church.

The committee noted two groups of immigrants in particular, Bohemians and Mexicans. It stated that Bohemians were known to be a thrifty, hard-working group, who paid high prices for the land they worked and seldom sold it. Thus, they tended to settle in one locality and were easier to evangelize than more restless aliens. In 1908 there were over 75,000 Bohemians in Texas. Holding the balance of power in many areas of the state, they were able to shape community religious and political policies.9

Presbyterian work among the Bohemians in Texas actually had begun many years earlier. Although the committee implied that the Czechs were prosperous enough to pay high prices for their land, they had acquired their financial resources through years of thrift and hard work. Most of the Bohemians who came to Texas, both in the early pioneer days and after the turn of the century, were from the lower economic levels. Many had such meager resources that they were

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9Minutes of September 26, 1908, Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, Annual Meeting at Vernon, Texas, September 24-28, 1908 (Pamphlet), 20.
compelled to borrow their passage money. Upon their arrival in Texas, most of them settled on small farms or worked as laborers.

The earliest Bohemian Protestants were so busy sustaining themselves and their families that their religious services were very infrequent. They held church services in private homes, and then only two or three times a year. Later small congregations were formed, at first belonging to no denomination. Czech ministers rode circuit from one settlement to another, one man serving as many as three or four small churches. When salaries were paid at all, they were exceedingly small, and often the ministers supported themselves through school-teaching, farming, or other vocations. For many years services were conducted in the Czech language for the benefit of the old people, but English was later introduced for the younger generation to whom the mother tongue was a mystery. Because the Bohemian settlements were scattered throughout the State of Texas, it proved exceedingly difficult to establish a unified church government over them.\(^\text{10}\)

Many citizens in Texas were at first members of the Evangelical Reformed Church, the Calvinist denomination of the old country. Most of these Reformed congregations were later merged into Presbyterian church organizations. The Protestant Czechs in Texas, however, were divided among the Evangelical Reformed Church and the Lutheran

denomination. As Calvinist missionaries labored in the field, they met Lutheran evangelists. To avoid friction these two religious groups united in a federation known as The Evangelical Union of Bohemian Moravian Brethren. By 1911 this Evangelical Federation was composed of 17 congregations and preaching stations, together with eight church buildings.\(^\text{11}\)

The father of the Evangelical Reformed Church and thus of the Presbyterian Church among the Czechs in Texas was the Rev. Mr. Joseph Bergman. Born of Roman Catholic parents in Zapudov, Czechoslovakia in 1798, Bergman attended a gymnasium near his home town from 1816 to 1825. He later entered the monastic order of Piarist and for several years was a teacher in the gymnasium in Litomsyl. Leaving the Piarist Order in 1826, he studied philosophy and Protestant theology in the University of Breslau, Silesia. In May, 1827, Bergman became a member of the Evangelical Reformed Church in the Czechoslovakian region of Prussian-controlled Silesia.

In 1849 Bergman migrated to Cat Spring, Texas and preached in the Czech and German languages. He supported himself by teaching in Czech and German schools and by farming. From 1851 to 1853, 33 Protestant Czech families followed Bergman to Texas and established a number of small communities in Austin County. Bergman died in 1871,\(^\text{11}\)

\(^{11}\)B. A. Hodges, The Bohemians of Texas (Pamphlet) (Issued by Department of Immigration, Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1911), 1-6. In Papers of B. A. Hodges (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas).
but other Czech ministers, late immigrants to Texas and additional Bohemian settlements, were established in many parts of the state. All Czech ministers in Texas before the Civil War worked independently of each other, and none joined any established denomination.\textsuperscript{12}

John Schiller was the first Czech minister to affiliate formally with the U.S.A. denomination. He was ordained by the Presbytery of Austin in 1892 as a Bohemian evangelist.\textsuperscript{13} Schiller was born December 13, 1867 in Gemna, a county in Czechoslovakia, where he completed the public school program. Then he finished the prescribed eight-year curriculum (1879-1887) in the state gymnasium in Landskron, also in Bohemia. Following that, he studied theology in the Evangelical seminary in Vienna, where he also took some courses at the University, 1887-1890. Gaining practical experience by working under a pastor in the Czech town of Bucina, he then studied in the Free Church Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Edinburgh, Scotland, from 1891 to 1892.

Schiller responded to a call from the Evangelical Reformed Church in Industry, Texas in 1892. Although officially affiliated with the national church, he served for a number of years as pastor of the independent Evangelical Reformed congregation of Industry. From 1897 to 1925 he lived in Sealy, Texas, where in July, 1902, he

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid., 6-7.

\textsuperscript{13}Minutes of October 30, 1892, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Austin of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1887-1896," 456. In church papers (University of Texas Archives, Austin, Texas).
organized the Czech Presbyterian Church and enrolled it in the Austin Presbytery as the first Bohemian congregation under the dominion of the U.S.A. Presbyterian denomination. He also supplied several other small Bohemian churches in the vicinity. In 1906, with the union of the Cumberland and U.S.A. churches, the Sealy Church and his other congregational charges were placed under the supervision of the Houston Presbytery, U.S.A. Later Schiller and his churches were transferred to the Southwest Bohemian Presbytery, U.S.A. In December, 1925, he moved to George West, in Liveoak County, where he supplied the nearby Czech church at Port Lavaca. Schiller died at George West on June 9, 1953.\(^\text{14}\)

To give coherence and vitality to the Bohemian work, the Southwest Bohemian Presbytery was organized in the Czech Presbyterian Church of Sealy, Texas on November 3, 1911, by authority of the Synod of Texas, U.S.A. This Czech judicatory was placed under the authority of the U.S.A. synod, and its borders corresponded with the borders of the synod itself.\(^\text{15}\) At its inception, this church court contained 153 communicants, eight churches, and eight ministers. The church members contributed $2,986.50 for the year.\(^\text{16}\)

\(^{14}\text{Stalmach, History of the Ministers and Churches of the Southwest Bohemian Presbytery, 7-8.}\)

\(^{15}\text{Minutes of October 11, 1912, Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, Annual Meeting at Amarillo, Texas, October 9-14, 1912 (Pamphlet), 19.}\)

\(^{16}\text{Statistical Report, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., XXII (1912), 876. [Unfortunately, the early minutes of this presbytery have disappeared.]}\)
By 1920 the Southwest Bohemian judicatory had grown to 11 churches, 443 communicants and nine ministers, but with contributions of only $1,880.\textsuperscript{17} During its existence this church court enrolled 19 ministers and 14 churches,\textsuperscript{18} but because of a shortage of Czech ministers, it was dissolved in July, 1949, and the churches were attached to other presbyteries under the Synod of Texas, U.S.A.\textsuperscript{19} At the time of the presbytery's dissolution it contained ten churches with 555 members. Five of these churches were listed under the pastorate of Jaroslav R. Vilt, while all the other pulpits were vacant. Three other ministers were included on the rolls of the presbytery, but they were evidently too old to serve.\textsuperscript{20}

In addition to the evangelization of the Czechs in Texas, the national church also worked among the Mexicans. The Synod of Texas, U.S.A., noted that in 1911 there were 200,000 Mexicans in this area. Although the Baptists, Methodists, Disciples of Christ, and Southern Presbyterians had made attempts to convert these Latins, their efforts had been on a small scale, for in 1911 there were only about 4,000 Protestants among the Mexican-Americans in Texas. At this time the national church had done no work among this important ethnic group.

\textsuperscript{17}Statistical Report, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., XX (1920), 877.

\textsuperscript{18}Stalmach, History of the Ministers and Churches of the Southwest Bohemian Presbytery, 6-27.

\textsuperscript{19}\textit{Ibid.}, 27.

\textsuperscript{20}Statistical Records, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, Part I, 4th Ser., XI (1949), 909.
The Committee on Home Missions advised the synod that the most desirable results among the Mexican-Americans could be achieved by establishing schools, as well as churches, and thus combining the educational and religious functions of the church. Educational work could best be promoted by the women of the church, and this Macedonian Call was urged upon the women's boards.21

The U.S.A. denomination strove to meet its obligation by establishing three small mission churches—one each in San Antonio, San Angelo, and El Paso. The educational objective was fostered by attaching Sunday Schools for the instruction of Mexican children. The Rev. Mr. B. A. Hodges, chairman, has written a comprehensive history of the Mexican work of the Texas Synod, U.S.A. It was a frustrating tale with the church having to overcome serious obstacles, such as the hostility of other denominations, a desperate shortage of funds, and rapidly changing personnel engaged in the undertaking. Synodical leaders persisted, however, and through dedication and determination achieved a measure of success. Mission churches in San Antonio and San Angelo remained very small, but in El Paso the Rev. Mr. Hosea Venecia built up a congregation of 500 members in five years.22

21Minutes of September 26, 1908, Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, Annual Meeting at Vernon, Texas, September 24-28, 1908 (Pamphlet), 20.

22B. A. Hodges, A History of the Mexican Mission Work Conducted by the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (Pamphlet), (Published by the Women's Synodical Association of Texas, 1931), 1-35. In Papers of B. A. Hodges (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas). [A more detailed summary of this study will not be possible in this work.]
Lacey Simms, a remarkable man, was connected with the San Antonio mission and the work among the Mexicans. While a boy in the elementary grades in Sulphur Springs, his arms were so horribly mangled in a cotton gin at the Boomer Oil Mill that both had to be amputated half way to the elbows. Eighteen months later, the family moved to nearby Nelta, where the father took up the practice of medicine. Placed in the public schools of that town, Lacy found no difficulty in adjusting to school life. He learned to write using his two stubs of arms. Of his affliction he wrote:

Life from that time was (and still is) a happy venture of learning by trying. My handicap in life has never been physical. The loss of hands more than likely has been a blessing through limitation, and limitations may be made highly compensative. God appointed a sign for Cain so that all might know him and have mercy upon him. So my apparent handicap has been as an appointed sign from God and truly the world has been mercifully kind to me more than I can ever deserve; and so, gratitude gives me a powerful motive to serve others in partial return to God and my fellow men.23

After completing his primary and secondary school education, young Simms enrolled in East Texas Normal College, later known as East Texas State Teachers College, and finally as East Texas State University, in Commerce. Unable to complete his college education, he taught at a small country school in Hopkins County for two terms. In 1900 he and his family moved to New Mexico where he taught the fifth and sixth grades in Alamogordo for one year. After that Simms taught

in a county school in Three Rivers, New Mexico near the ranch where
his father had settled for his health. His father died in 1908. In
addition to teaching, Lacy helped dig irrigation ditches on his
father's ranch and in his spare time obtained a job carrying the mail
on horseback from the railroad station to the Three Rivers Post
Office. He also served two terms as County Superintendent of Schools
of Otero County in New Mexico.

Determined to complete his college education, Simms entered
Oberlin College, Ohio. While there he mowed lawns, collected and
delivered dry cleaning, and sold books and maps to support himself.
He was always convinced that, even though he had not obtained an
advanced education permitting him to earn a livelihood through mental
efforts, he "with a handicapped body and the will-to-do" could still
have eked out a living anywhere.

After he finished at Oberlin he decided on the Christian min-
istry as a vocation and went to Chicago. The church extension board of
the Presbytery of Chicago, U.S.A., placed him in charge of the Mexican
mission work. Simms's interest in working among the Mexicans had
begun during his residence in Three Rivers, New Mexico. There his
nearest neighbors had been Mexicans and Spanish-speaking children who
had attended the school where he taught for three terms. Simple
sociability and the beauty of the Spanish language made Lacy Simms
want to learn to speak to them. Obtaining a Spanish grammar, he
studied alone at home and then practiced on his Mexican-American
neighbors who gladly assisted him. Later, as County Superintendent of
Schools, he had need of this knowledge because many of the trustees of
the schools under his authority spoke little or no English. After he
entered the ministry and had to preach in Spanish, he continued to
study the language. Eventually he returned to San Antonio and engaged
in the mission work among the Mexicans for the U.S.A. denomination. 24
The Rev. Mr. Simms was a good example of the courageous fortitude and
self-sacrificing zeal of many of these men of God.

Considering the men and financial resources available, the
U.S.A. Church must be commended for its work among non-English speak-
ing immigrants. In 1909 the Committee on Freedmen reported to the
U.S.A. synod that the church had a great responsibility for the reli-
gious welfare of the Negro. The Negro was in the United States, and
regardless of what the white man thought, he was here to stay. Since
our forefathers were responsible for the forced migration of the Negro,
the church had the duty to bring about his moral and spiritual regen-
eration.

The committee stated that writers of note were agreed that the
American Negro had two great needs. One was for educated and pious
preachers, and the other was for faithful, Godly schoolteachers. The
committee thought that to these might well be added a third need--race
pride, without which no people could hope to rise. If these were
their three great needs, who was to aid Negroes in their attainment of

24* Ibid., 1-4.
them if not their white brothers? Did not the church, they asked, have the courage to rise to this responsibility?

This being the basic problem of the Negro, his education was now the responsibility of the church. Nationally there was a great opportunity for giving to Negro schools sponsored by the U.S.A. denomination. In the United States the U.S.A. Board of Freedmen supervised one school for Negro boys with 177 students, five seminaries for girls with 1,027 pupils, 15 co-educational boarding schools with 3,277 students, and 102 other Negro colleges, institutes and academies with 10,099 pupils, a total of 123 schools with a student enrollment of 14,500. While considering the needs of the Negro nationally, Presbyterians should not neglect the colored population within the borders of their own state. Of the United States Negro population of approximately ten million, about one million lived in Texas. About one person in five in Texas was colored. There indeed was a rare opportunity for home mission work.

Unfortunately with this great opportunity for contributing to the needs of Negroes, indifference characterized the attitude of Texas white Presbyterians. Members of the Texas Synod gave an average of two and one-half cents per member per year for the freedman's cause.

The Committee on Freedmen of the Amarillo Presbytery said further "That we owe a duty to the African upon our shores no one will

25 Minutes of September 27, 1909, Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, Annual Meeting at Hillsboro, Texas, September 23-27, 1909 (Pamphlet), 34-35.
deny. It is the duty of the strong to aid the weak, the duty that Christian men always feel for the helpless and dependent." However, the committee, perhaps unconsciously, reflected in its report the typical white southern attitude toward the black race. It recommended assistance to the black man to save him from his natural weakness and depravity. Since the granting of freedom to the Negro and the "precipitation of the all too sudden privileges of the ballot," he had become the helpless prey of the politician and trickster. Because the Negro was unable to control himself properly, his career often had been marked by drunkenness and debauchery. The church should pray that the South would soon be freed of the curse of the saloon which had inflamed the Negro's animal passions and promoted his inclination to commit many horrible crimes that had aroused public feeling against him. The report concluded: "The solemn obligation rests upon us of the South, who understand him best to give direction to his education and give him the gospel, which alone can save and develop him for citizenship and for the kingdom of our Lord." 26

The synodical committee on freedmen admitted that for many years the only concrete assistance rendered the Texas Negro was occasional expressions of goodwill and small, spasmodic contributions of

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26 Minutes of October 5, 1909, "Minutes of the Presbytery of Amarillo of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, 1907-April 10, 1913," 45-46. In church papers (Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas).
money. Conscience-stricken about this neglect, in 1911 the committee announced that it would undertake a comprehensive, accurate survey of all conditions relating to the Negro population of Texas. It would include their vocational and educational opportunities, wealth, and all other significant factors relating to the building of a happier and useful life for them. The survey would be made by a representative of the synod, conferring with the Committee on Freedmen appointed by each of its U.S.A. presbyteries. To facilitate the work, each presbyterial committee was asked to collect and compile all the information available about the colored population within the borders of its judicatory.

A year later the synodical committee reported the results of its survey. Several presbyterial committees had made partial surveys of their areas, but the information they had got was spotty and unreliable. Many committees had indignantly refused to cooperate with the project at all. Some ministers had sheepishly admitted that they were not in touch with the colored community in their districts. The synodical committee's information was, thus, too limited to be tabulated, and

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27 Minutes of September 25, 1911, Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, Annual Meeting at San Antonio, Texas, September 21-25, 1911 (Pamphlet), 50.

28 Minutes of October 11, 1916, Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, Annual Meeting at Paris, Texas, October 6-11, 1915 (Pamphlet), 52.
its inventory had been abandoned. Discouraged by this apathy and indifference, the committee made no report for many succeeding years.

An example of the attitude encountered by the synodical representatives is the statement inscribed in the official record of the Austin Presbytery in 1907. While the judicatory wished the colored man well, it asserted that his welfare could be promoted only by avoiding "intimate commingling of races in the local churches, presbyteries, and synods." The U.S.A. denomination should remain a counseling and cooperative agent in regard to the Negro, but without violating the rights, and without transgressing the social order of either race, . . . The strongest leaders and most upright members of the negro race, are not ambitious for social equality, but are content to be, and to help their people become, the best example of what God made of them, not white people; but negroes, nor yet the unwelcome intimates of white people in white homes, and white schools and churches. The best example of the Southern Colored man, has no inclination to force upon the white race, a condition of intolerable social equality, or negro political supremacy.

The products of their age and section, not all ordained preachers could be expected to rise above the mores and prejudices. No wonder the national church failed to reap a rich harvest of souls among the colored population during this period.

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29 Minutes of October 5, 1916, Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, Annual meeting at Weatherford, Texas, October 4-9, 1916 (Pamphlet), 17-18.

Administration of both Negro and Indian congregations of the national church after the union of the Cumberland and U.S.A. denominations was placed under the Canadian Synod. Its White River Presbytery, Colored, supervised all Negro churches in Texas. In 1916 this church court enrolled four small churches in East Texas. The Smith Memorial Church, of Crockett, Texas, had a total of 29 communicants. Formerly the Mary Allen Chapel, it was renamed in honor of its deceased pastor, the Rev. Mr. John B. Smith. In Rusk, Texas, was the Mount Olivet Church with 23 members. The Mount Zion Church of Jacksonville, Texas, enrolled 45 communicants. Finally, in Crockett, Texas, was established the Bellvue Church with 20 members and a mission with 10 communicants. While Smith Memorial Church's congregational contributions totaled $599 for 1916 other churches reported no financial figures. They did, however, make small contributions to other funds of the denomination.\(^\text{31}\)

When World War I broke out, the church had to turn some of its attention from evangelizing minority groups to world affairs. The U.S.A. synod came out enthusiastically in support of America's war effort. In its official pronouncements there was little questioning of the morality and justice of our intervention in that conflict.\(^\text{32}\)

\(^{31}\) Statistical Report, Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, New Ser., XVI (1916), 500-502.

\(^{32}\) Minutes of October 12, 1917, Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, Annual Meeting at Memphis, Texas, October 10-15, 1917 (Pamphlet), 25-28; Minutes of October 10, 1918, Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, Annual Meeting at Austin, Texas, October 9-10, 1918 (Pamphlet), 30-31.
During this period the church admitted that it was fighting an uphill battle in its attempt to evangelize America. A synodical committee reported that of the 100 million people living in the United States in 1916, 60 million belonged to no organized church. Furthermore, nearly 65 per cent of the population of Texas and 50 per cent of that of Louisiana were evangelized.33

The Synod of Texas, U.S.A., was losing churches but gaining members in this period. In 1921 it contained 375 churches compared with 476 in 1908 following the union of the U.S.A. and Cumberland Presbyterian Churches. A large part of this loss could be explained by the fact that many presbyteries finally dropped from their rolls churches that refused to transfer into the national church after the merger. Other losses were due to mergers of local corporations. In 1906, 93 communities in Texas had had two small Presbyterian churches and could effectively support only one. By 1920 there were only 26 such duplications. In 67 instances there had been mergers of the Cumberland and U.S.A. congregations. With regard to church membership, in 1908 the synod had 21,884 communicants; by 1921 the number had grown to 31,384, a gain of slightly more than 43 per cent. The membership in 1921 was, however, only about equal to that of the Texas Synod of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in 1906 before the merger. During these same years the membership of the U.S.A. denomination increased by 32 per

33Minutes of October 6, 1916, Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, Annual Meeting at Weatherford, Texas, October 4-9, 1916 (Pamphlet), 30.
cent so that the church in Texas grew more rapidly than the national church had in spite of the fact that it suffered from such handicaps and confusion over union, friction with the U.S. denomination, and dislocation caused by World War I.

While in 1908 the average congregational membership in Texas was 47, by 1921 it was 83. The roll of suspended members greatly depleted the church membership. Since 1908 the synod added 23,590 members, but during this same period it had to put 15,954 on the roll of those suspended. The church must find how to hold the communicants it had won.

In 1908 the Texas Synod contributed a total of $15,534.26, or 73 cents per member, in benevolences. The figures for 1921 were $66,796.13, or $2.12 per member, an increase of almost 319 per cent. In 1908 the Texas judicatory received from the Board of Home Missions of the denomination $48,541.63, while in 1921 it received $108,039.20, an increase of 122.5 per cent. In 1908 the church in Texas received from the denominational boards three times as much as the total amount it contributed. By 1921 the national Board of Home Missions gave the synod only twice the amount donated by its communicants. Thus, while the Synod of Texas, U.S.A., remained an economic liability to the national church, the amount of that liability was steadily being reduced. The church could anticipate that eventually the Texas Synod would be not only self-sustaining, but an economic asset as well.

There are two ways of judging progress—by the distance the church had come, and the distance it had yet to go. Although contributions of
members in Texas had increased, far more had to be given to equal the average amount contributed by the denominational member as a whole.

In 1921 in Texas communicants gave an average of $5.17, while the average for the entire denomination was $14.89. Such were the major events from 1906 through 1920.

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34 Minutes of October 7, 1921, Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, Annual Meeting at Wichita Falls, Texas, October 5-9, 1921 (Pamphlet), 26-28.
CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION

In this study the history of the Texas Synod of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., from 1868 to 1920 has been narrated. The first church court was established in Texas in 1840, and by the time of the Civil War a sizable establishment had been built up. During that conflict, however, most Presbyterian churches and ministers in the Confederacy severed their connections with the national church, and after the war organized the Presbyterian Church, U.S. The majority of ministers and congregations in Texas joined that newly organized denomination.

A few ministers and churches, however, continued their allegiance to the national Presbyterian Church. In 1868 three Presbyterian ministers met and organized the Austin Presbytery, U.S.A. This presbytery grew slowly, in part because the Presbyterian Church, U.S., styled itself the "southern" Presbyterian Church and so could stigmatize the U.S.A. denomination as the "northern" Presbyterian Church. Since most U.S.A. ministers who labored in Texas after 1868 had refused to support the Confederate cause and had been born in the North and trained in northern seminaries, this charge seemed to have some justification. In spite of this handicap, however, by 1878 the
Austin Presbytery had grown sufficiently to be recognized as the Synod of Texas.

From 1878 to 1906 the Synod of Texas, U.S.A., grew slowly, for it was confronted by many problems, including the hostility of other churches, a shifting and relatively poor population, and a terrible drought in West Texas. Although guilty of some neglect of racial and minority groups, the synod founded a number of schools for the education of the youth of Texas. A controversy within a church in New Orleans resulted in the virtual elimination of the denomination from Louisiana for a number of years. Then in 1900 the Galveston hurricane destroyed a long-established U.S.A. church and drowned half its members.

Soon after the turn of the century negotiations looking to an organic union of the U.S.A. and Cumberland Presbyterian churches were undertaken and concluded in 1906. Since the Cumberland church membership in Texas was much larger than that of the U.S.A. denomination, the U.S.A. synod acquired many new members and churches. Unfortunately, however, a sizable minority of the Cumberland denomination refused to accept the merger and reorganized their church, retaining the name of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. A struggle then developed between pro- and anti-unionists for control of the presbyteries of the former Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Texas. A more intensive fight followed over the possession of the property of the former Cumberland denomination. The outcome of many bitter court disputes in Texas and throughout the nation was an almost complete triumph for the U.S.A. church. The net result from the standpoint of the
Texas Synod, U.S.A., was the enrolling of many new ministers and congregations, making the U.S.A. church a serious factor in the religious life of Texas for the first time.

Partially due to the augmented strength of the denomination, the Texas Synod, U.S.A., for the first time began to have serious conflicts with the Texas Synod, U.S. Even before the consummation of the union between the U.S.A. and Cumberland churches in 1906, numerous unsuccessful attempts had been made to secure comity agreements between the U.S.A. and U.S. judicatories. However, after this date serious friction developed for the first time. Many problems between the two churches were settled by negotiations, and in many communities where both denominations had a weak, struggling church, they were united into a single strong congregation.

Two disputes between the U.S. and U.S.A. churches, however, could not be amicably settled through Christian statesmanship. One was the El Paso case. It involved the establishment of a U.S.A. mission in the Latin-American community of that city when a U.S. mission was already there. Although a joint committee appointed by the General Assembly of both denominations ordered the Synod of Texas, U.S.A. to abandon its missionary work, the church court refused to do so, and instead built a much finer church in this Latin-American community.

Another conflict involving the U.S.A. synod concerned a U.S. minister, John C. Barr, who was a pastor of a church in New Orleans. He was a man difficult to subject to church discipline, and several disputes developed between him and his judicatory, the New Orleans
Presbytery, U.S. Then, in 1914 the Rev. Mr. Barr and his church court quarreled over the possession of the property of a small church in New Orleans, and the presbytery finally dismissed him to the Synod of Tennessee, U.S.

Instead of placing himself under the Tennessee judicatory, the Rev. Mr. Barr joined the Jefferson Presbytery, U.S.A., which was under the Texas Synod, U.S.A. In addition, he carried with him into the national church his own congregation in New Orleans and several other churches and ministers in southern Louisiana. Reacting to this development, the New Orleans Presbytery attempted to depose the Rev. Mr. Barr from the ministry. Carrying its complaint to the U.S. General Assembly, the New Orleans judicatory protested that the national church had violated comity agreements between the two Presbyterian denominations. When the U.S. General Assembly passed this protest on to the U.S.A. General Assembly, the latter body ordered the Jefferson Presbytery to limit the powers of the Rev. Mr. Barr and not to enroll these Louisiana churches. Violating these instructions, the Jefferson judicatory restored his full powers to him and enrolled the Louisiana congregations. Unfortunately, the Jefferson Presbytery found him equally difficult to subject to discipline, and, after a bitter conflict with him, in 1930 succeeded in dismissing him to the Synod of Tennessee, U.S.A. However, this minister was largely responsible for reestablishing the U.S.A. denomination in Louisiana.

Few spectacular events occurred during the history of the U.S.A. Texas Synod from 1906 to 1920. The one exception was a fire
that largely destroyed Paris, Texas and completely razed the Presbyterian Church. During this time, although the synod actively promoted the interests of Mexican and Bohemian Americans, it showed an unfortunate disinterest in the welfare of Texas Negroes. Vigorously sponsoring such non-controversial issues as prohibition and violation of the Sabbath, U.S.A. ministers failed to take forceful stands on important social movements. The Texas Synod, U.S.A., continued to grow in churches and communicants during these years, but by 1920 had only attained the strength the Texas Synod of the Cumberland denomination had enjoyed before the union in 1906.

In surveying the material presented in this work, certain conclusions can be drawn. The Presbyterian Church has several advantages when compared to other denominations which permit it to compete effectively in the same field. It, unlike certain highly centralized church organizations, has a representative form of government and lay representation in all the judicatories from the congregational session to the General Assembly. Congregational meetings also add a democratic dimension to Presbyterian church government. Furthermore, the high educational standards demanded of ordained ministers give the church a good intellectual tone.

As noted above, certain shortcomings of the church were also revealed. It for instance, displayed an unwillingness or inability to take stands on vital issues of the day, while dissipating its energy in futile crusades against non-controversial objectives, such as the violation of the Sabbath. Especially noteworthy was its neglect of minority groups, particularly the Negro.
A lesson pointed up in this study is the evils of fragmented denominationalism. It is a patent absurdity for two Presbyterian Churches, such as the U.S. and U.S.A. denominations which are similar in polity, doctrine, and traditions, to compete in the same field. Such competition results in a great waste of effort and financial resources and produces misunderstandings and quarrels. In such disputes the cause of religion is the greatest sufferer.

For a merger of this kind to succeed, negotiations must be carefully and diplomatically undertaken. Congregational opinion within all the churches concerned must be carefully sounded, and if a large element of the denomination proves recalcitrant, the merger should not be forced. Time and an educational campaign will be far more effective in the achievement of Christian unity than legal coercion. If a segment of one church persists in perpetuating its autonomous existence, the property rights of the minority must be guaranteed. Otherwise, another bitter, legal struggle will be precipitated.

If it is agreed that the church as one of the foundations of American civilization must be perpetuated, an examination of the problems and achievements of one denomination might offer a guide to future action. It is hoped that this study will serve such a purpose.
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**THESSES**


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Candidate: George H. Paschal, Jr.

Major Field: History

Title of Thesis: THE HISTORY OF THE U.S.A. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN TEXAS AND LOUISIANA, 1868-1920

Approved:

Major Professor and Chairman

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

[Signatures]

Date of Examination:

April 25, 1967