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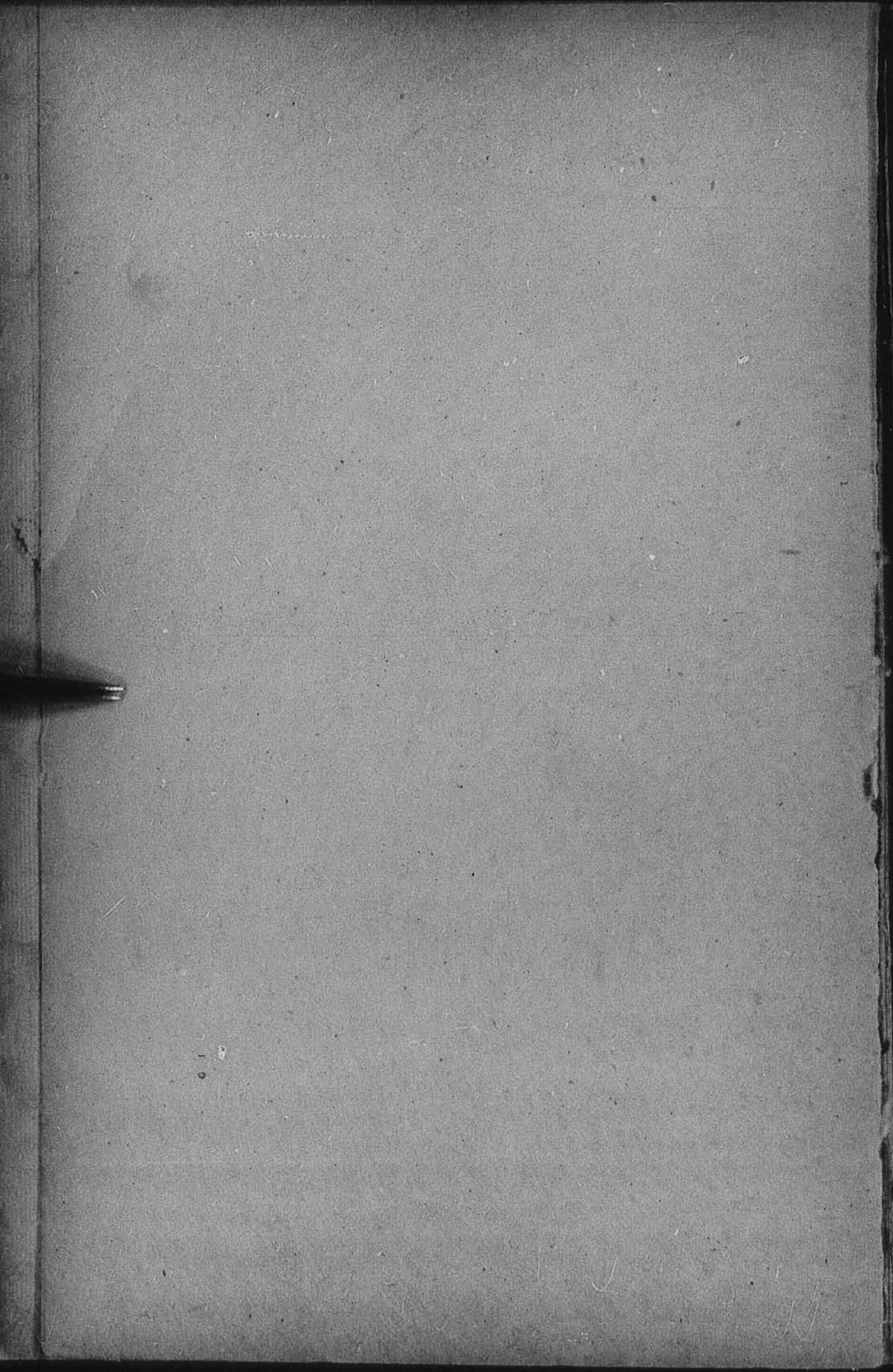
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DOCTRINES
AND
DISCIPLINE
OF THE
FREE METHODIST
CHURCH

*"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all
the flock."*—PAUL.

CHICAGO, ILL.,
FREE METHODIST PUBLISHING HOUSE,
1903.

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the church on various charges and allegations, but really for their adherence to the principles of Methodism; especially to the doctrine and experience of "entire sanctification."

¶ 4. Appeals were made to the general conference, which were denied. Those excluded could not join any other Methodist body, for there was none that agreed with them on the issues on which they were thrust out. Therefore they felt compelled to form a new organization.

¶ 5. The Free Methodist church was organized by a convention of laymen and ministers, which met at Pekin, Niagara Co., N. Y., on the 23rd day of August, 1860. The first general conference met on the second Wednesday of October, 1862, at St. Charles, Ill.

¶ 6.^a The Free Methodists are a body of Christians who profess to be in earnest to get to heaven, by conforming to all the will of God, as made known in his word. They do not believe that either God or the Bible has changed to accommodate the fashionable tendencies of the age. They solemnly protest against the union of the church and the world. The conditions of salvation, as they teach, are the same now that they were eighteen hundred years ago. He who would be a Christian in reality, as well as in name, must deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Jesus. He must come out from the world and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing.

¶ 7. In doctrine they are Methodists. They believe in the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, in a general atonement, in the necessity of the new birth,

in the witness of the spirit, and in future rewards and punishments. They insist that it is the duty and privilege of every believer to be sanctified wholly, and to be preserved blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Every one who is received into full connection, either professes to enjoy that perfect love which casts out fear, or promises to diligently seek until he obtains it.

¶ 8. They look upon practical godliness as the never-failing result of a genuine religious experience. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Hence they insist that those who profess to be the disciples of Christ should come out from unbelievers and be separate, abstaining from connection with all secret societies, renouncing all vain pomp and glory, adorning themselves with modest apparel, and not with gold, or pearls, or costly array. We have no right to abolish any of the requirements made by Christ and the apostles; or to make obedience to them a matter of small consequence. The golden rule, they hold, applies equally to all mankind.

¶ 9. The government is not aristocratic; but the members have an equal voice with the ministers in all the councils of the church, except that, in addition to the regularly elected ministerial representatives in the general conference, the general superintendents are *ex officio* members of that body. Both the annual and the general conferences are composed of as many lay as ministerial delegates, who have an equal voice and vote in all the proceedings. The stationing committee, by which the appointments are made, is composed of the district

elders and an equal number of laymen chosen for that purpose. The official boards are selected by the members of circuits, and not appointed by the preachers. They have district elders, who may be appointed to circuits the same as the rest of the preachers. They have general superintendents, elected once in four years, whose duty it is to preside at the annual conferences, and travel through the connection at large. The rights of the members are carefully guarded.

¶ 10. They endeavor to promote spirituality and simplicity in worship. Congregational singing is universal, and performances upon musical instruments, and singing by choirs in public worship are prohibited. They believe in the Holy Ghost. If men are really converted and sanctified, it is through the Spirit of God. When he works there is a stir. As President Edwards says, "Eternal things are so great, and of such vast concern, that there is great absurdity in men being but moderately moved and affected by them." "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." The Free Methodists, while they do not believe in any mere formal noise, yet, when the Spirit comes, like "a rushing mighty wind," as on the day of Pentecost, do not dare to oppose the manifestations of his presence. As Edwards says, "Whenever there is any considerable degree of the Spirit's influence upon a mixed multitude, it will produce, in some way, a great visible commotion." To resist his operations is to hinder the work of God.

¶ 11. They do not believe in resorting to worldly policy to sustain the gospel. Christ has said, that

whosoever giveth a cup of cold water in his name, shall in no wise lose his reward. But it is the motive, and not the amount done that secures the divine approbation. There is no more virtue in giving to the cause of God for carnal pleasure, than there is in any other purely selfish action. Hence they give no countenance to modern expedients for promoting Christianity, such as selling or renting pews, picnics, Christmas trees, festivals, lotteries, fairs, and donation parties. To say that the church cannot be sustained without these contrivances to beguile the world into its support, is to confess that professing Christians are "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." It is to pronounce Christianity a failure. The gospel possesses an inherent power that will not only sustain itself, but make its way through all opposition, wherever its advocates live up to its requirements and rely upon its promises.

¶ 12. All their churches are required to be as free as the grace they preach. They believe that their mission is two-fold—to maintain the Bible standard of Christianity, and to preach the gospel to the poor. Hence they require that all seats in their houses of worship shall be free. No pews can be rented or sold among them. The world will never be converted to Christ, so long as the churches are conducted upon the exclusive system. It has always been contrary to the economy of the Christian church to build houses of worship with pews to rent. But the spirit of the world has encroached, by little and little, until, in many parts of the United States, not a single free church can

be found in any of the cities or larger villages. The pew system prevails among nearly all denominations. They are thoroughly convinced that this system is wrong in principle and bad in tendency. It is a corruption of Christianity. Free churches are essential to reach the masses. The provisions of the gospel are for all. The "glad tidings" must be proclaimed to every individual of the human race. God sends the true light to illuminate and melt every heart. To savage and civilized, bond and free, black and white, the ignorant and the learned, is freely offered the great salvation.

But for whose benefit are special efforts to be put forth? Who must be particularly cared for? Jesus settles this question. "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up," and, as if all this would be insufficient to satisfy John of the validity of his claims, he adds, "and the poor have the gospel preached to them." This was the crowning proof that he was the one that should come. In this respect the church must follow in the footsteps of Jesus. She must see to it that the gospel is preached to the poor. Thus this duty is enjoined by the plainest precepts and examples. If the gospel is to be preached to all, then it follows, as a necessary consequence, that all the arrangements for preaching the gospel should be so made as to secure this object. If it be said that seats would be freely given to those who are unable to pay for them, they answer, this does not meet the case. Few are willing, so long as they are able

to appear at church, to be publicly treated as paupers.

¶ 13. You will find in this book the doctrines and form of government of the Free Methodist church as adopted by the general conference.

We do not wish any to subscribe to it unless they believe it will be for the glory of God and the good of their souls. We have no desire to build up simply a large church; but we do hope that our societies will be composed, exclusively, of those who are in earnest to gain heaven, and who are determined, by the grace of God, to live up to the requirements of the Bible.

It is of the greatest importance that those who come into this organization shall be of one heart and one mind.

DOCTRINES

I. OF FAITH IN THE HOLY TRINITY.

¶ 14. There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body or parts, of infinite power, wisdom and goodness, the maker and preserver of all things, visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead there are three persons of one substance, power and eternity—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

II. OF THE WORD, OR SON OF GOD, WHO WAS MADE VERY MAN.

¶ 15. The Son, who is the Word of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the blessed virgin, so that the two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very man, who truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for the original guilt, but also for actual sins of men.

III. OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

¶ 16. Christ did truly rise again from the dead, and took again his body, with all things appertain-

ing to the perfection of man's nature, wherewith he ascended into heaven, and there sitteth until he returns to judge all men at the last day.

IV. OF THE HOLY GHOST.

¶ 17. The Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty and glory with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God.

V. THE SUFFICIENCY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES FOR SALVATION.

¶ 18. The holy scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation. By the term holy scriptures we understand those canonical books of the Old, and New Testament of whose authority there was never any doubt in the church.

NAMES OF THE CANONICAL BOOKS.

Genesis,
Exodus,
Leviticus,
Numbers,
Deuteronomy,
Joshua,
Judges,
Ruth,
The First Book of Samuel,
The Second Book of Samuel,

The First Book of Kings,
 The Second Book of Kings,
 The First Book of Chronicles,
 The Second Book of Chronicles,
 The Book of Ezra,
 The Book of Nehemiah,
 The Book of Esther,
 The Book of Job,
 The Psalms,
 The Proverbs,
 Ecclesiastes, or the Preacher,
 Canticles, or the Song of Solomon,
 Four Prophets the greater,
 Twelve Prophets the less.

All the books of the New Testament, as they are commonly received, we do receive and account canonical.

VI. OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

¶ 19. The Old Testament is not contrary to the New; for in both the Old and New Testaments everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and man. Wherefore they are not to be heard who feign that the old fathers did look only for transitory promises. Although the law given from God by Moses, as touching ceremonies and rites, doth not bind Christians, nor ought the civil precepts thereof, of necessity to be received in any commonwealth; yet, notwithstanding, no Christian whatsoever is free from obedience to the commandments which are called moral.

VII. OF ORIGINAL OR BIRTH SIN.

¶ 20. Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam, as the Pelagians do vainly talk, but it is the corruption of the nature of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil and that continually.

VIII. OF FREE WILL.

¶ 21. The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and works to faith and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasing and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ enabling us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will.

IX. OF THE JUSTIFICATION OF MAN.

¶ 22. We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works or deservings; wherefore, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort.

X. OF GOOD WORKS.

¶ 23. Although good works, which are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, cannot put away our sins and endure the severity of God's judgments, yet they are pleasing and acceptable to

God in Christ, and spring out of a true and lively faith, insomuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known as a ~~tree~~ is discerned by its fruit.

XI. OF WORKS OF SUPEREROGATION.

¶ 24. Voluntary works—besides, over and above God's commandments—which are called works of supererogation, cannot be taught without arrogancy and impiety. For by them men do declare that they do not only render unto God as much as they are bound to do, but that they do more for his sake than of bounden duty is required: whereas Christ saith plainly, When ye have done all that is commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants.

XII. OF SIN AFTER JUSTIFICATION.

¶ 25. Not every sin willingly committed after justification is the sin against the Holy Ghost, and unpardonable. Wherefore the grant of repentance is not to be denied to such as fall into sin after justification. After we have received the Holy Ghost, we may depart from grace given, and fall into sin, and by the grace of God rise again and amend our lives. And therefore they are to be condemned who say they can no more sin as long as they live here, or who deny the place of forgiveness to such as truly repent.

XIII. ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION.

¶ 26. Justified persons, while they do not outwardly commit sin, are nevertheless conscious of

sin still remaining in the heart. They feel a natural tendency to evil, a proneness to depart from God and cleave to the things of earth. Those who are sanctified wholly are saved from all inward sin—from evil thoughts and evil tempers. No wrong temper, none contrary to love remains in the soul. All their thoughts, words and actions are governed by pure love.

Entire sanctification takes place subsequently to justification, and is the work of God wrought instantaneously upon the consecrated, believing soul. After a soul is cleansed from all sin, it is then fully prepared to grow in grace.

XIV. FUTURE REWARD AND PUNISHMENT.

¶ 27. God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ, according to the gospel. The righteous shall have in heaven an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. The wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment, where there worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched.

XV. OF SPEAKING IN THE CONGREGATION IN SUCH A TONGUE AS THE PEOPLE UNDERSTAND.

¶ 28. It is a thing plainly repugnant to the word of God and the custom of the primitive church, to have public prayer in the church or to minister the sacrament in a tongue not understood by the people.

XVI. OF THE CHURCH.

¶ 29. The visible church of Christ is a congregation of pure men, in which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered, according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.

XVII. OF THE SACRAMENTS.

¶ 30. Sacraments ordained of Christ are not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but also they are certain signs of grace, and God's good-will toward us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken but also strengthen and confirm our faith in him.

XVIII. OF BAPTISM.

¶ 31. Baptism is not only a sign of profession and mark of difference, whereby Christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized; but it is also a sign of regeneration or the new birth. The baptism of young children is to be retained in the church.

XIX. OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

¶ 32. The supper of the Lord is not merely a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another, but rather is a sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death, inasmuch that, to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the same, the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ; and likewise the cup of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christ.

Transubstantiation, or the change of the substance of bread and wine in the supper of our Lord, cannot be proved by holy writ, but it is repugnant to the plain word of scripture, overthroweth the nature of a sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions.

The body of Christ is given, taken and eaten in the supper, only after a heavenly and spiritual manner. And the means whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the supper, is faith. The sacrament of the Lord's supper was not by Christ's ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshiped.

XX. OF THE ONE OBLATION OF CHRIST, FINISHED UPON THE CROSS.

¶ 33. The offering of Christ, once made, is a perfect redemption, propitiation and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone. Wherefore the sacrifice of the masses, in the which it is said that the priest doth offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, is a blasphemous and dangerous deceit.

XXI. OF THE RITES AND CEREMONIES OF CHURCHES.

¶ 34. It is not necessary that rites and ceremonies should in all places be the same, or exactly alike; for they have been always different, and may be changed according to the diversity of countries, times and men's manners, so that nothing be or-

dained against God's word. Whosoever through his private judgment, willingly and purposely doth openly break the rites and ceremonies of the church to which he belongs, which are not repugnant to the word of God, and are ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly, that others may fear to do the like, as one that offendeth against the common order of the church, and woundeth the consciences of the weak brethren. Every particular church may ordain, change or abolish rites and ceremonies so that all things may be done to edification.

XXII. OF CHRISTIAN MEN'S GOODS.

¶ 35. The riches and goods of Christians are not common, as touching the right, title and possession of the same, as some do falsely boast. Notwithstanding, every man ought, of such things as he possesseth, liberally to give alms to the poor according to his ability.

XXIII. OF A CHRISTIAN MAN'S OATH.

¶ 36. As we confess that vain and rash swearing is forbidden Christian men by our Lord Jesus Christ, and James the apostle; so we hold that the Christian religion doth not prohibit, but that a man may swear when the magistrate requireth in a case of faith and charity, so it be done according to the prophet's teaching, in justice, judgment and truth.

NOTE: This article shall not deprive of membership in our church those who have conscientious scruples against taking an oath.

DISCIPLINE

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL RULES.

¶ 37. In the latter end of the year 1739, eight or ten persons came to Mr. Wesley in London, who appeared to be deeply convinced of sin, and earnestly groaning for redemption. They desired, as did two or three more the next day, that he would spend some time with them in prayer, and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come, which they saw continually hanging over their heads. That he might have more time for this great work, he appointed a day when they might all come together, which, thenceforward, they did every week, namely, on Thursday, in the evening. For these and as many more as desired to join with them, for their number increased daily, he gave those advices from time to time which he judged most needful for them, and they always concluded their meetings with prayer suited to their several necessities.

¶ 38. This was the rise of the united society, first in Europe, and then in America. Such a society is no other than "a company of men having the form and seeking the power of godliness, united

in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation."

¶ 39. That it may the more easily be discerned whether they are indeed working out their own salvation, each society is divided into smaller companies, called classes, according to their respective places of abode. There are about twelve persons in a class, one of whom is styled the leader. It is his duty,

I. To see each person in his class once a week, at least, in order,

1. To inquire how their souls prosper.

2. To advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort, as occasion may require.

3. To receive what they are willing to give toward the relief of the preacher, the church and the poor.*

II. To meet the ministers and the stewards of the circuit, in order,

1. To inform the minister of any who are sick, or of any who walk disorderly, and will not be reproved.

2. To pay the stewards what they have received of their several classes during the week.

¶ 40. There is only one condition previously required of those who desire admission into these societies,—“a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins.” But wherever

*This part refers to towns and cities, where the poor are generally numerous, and church expenses are considerable.

this is really fixed in the soul, it will be shown by its fruits.

¶ 41. It is therefore expected of all who continue therein, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

First, by doing no harm, by avoiding evil of every kind, especially that which is most generally practiced; such as,

The taking of the name of God in vain.

The profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work therein, or by buying or selling.

Drunkenness, buying or selling spirituous liquors, or drinking them, unless in cases of extreme necessity.

The buying, selling, or holding of a human being as a slave.

Fighting, quarreling, brawling, brother going to law with brother; returning evil for evil, or railing for railing; the using many words in buying or selling.

The buying or selling goods that have not paid the duty.

The giving or taking things on usury; i. e., unlawful interest.

Uncharitable or unprofitable conversation, particularly speaking evil of magistrates or ministers.

Doing to others as we would not they should do unto us.

Doing what we know is not for the glory of God; as,

Belonging to secret societies.

The putting on of gold or costly apparel.

The taking of such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Singing those songs or reading those books which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God.

Softness or needless self-indulgence, especially snuffing, chewing, smoking, growing, manufacturing or selling tobacco, or the habitual use of opiates.

Laying up treasure upon earth.

Borrowing without a probability of paying; or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them.

¶ 42. It is expected of all who continue in these societies, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

Second, by doing good, by being in every kind merciful after their power, as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort and as far as possible to all men.

To their bodies, of the ability which God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping those who are sick or in prison.

To their souls, by instructing, reprovng, or exhorting all with whom we have any intercourse, trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine, that "we are not to do good unless our hearts be free to do it."

By doing good, especially to those who are of the household of faith, or groaning so to be; employing them preferably to others, buying of one another, helping each other in business; and so much the more, because the world will love its own, and them only.

By all possible diligence and frugality, that the gospel be not blamed.

By running with patience the race which is set before them, denying themselves and taking up their cross daily; submitting to bear the reproach of Christ, to be as the filth and off-scouring of the world; and looking that men should say all manner of evil of them falsely for the Lord's sake.

¶ 43. It is expected of all who desire to continue in these societies, that they should continue to evidence their desire for salvation,

Third, By attending upon all the ordinances of God; such are,

The public worship of God;

The ministry of the word, either read, or expounded;

The supper of the Lord;

Family and private prayer;

Searching the scriptures; and,

Fasting or abstinence.

¶ 44. These are the general rules of our societies, all of which we are taught of God to observe, even in his written word, which is the only rule, and the sufficient rule both of our faith and practice. And all these we know the Spirit writes on truly awakened hearts. If there be any among us who observe them not, who habitually break any of them, let it be known unto them who watch over that soul as they who must give an account. We will admonish him of the error of his way. We will bear with him for a season. But if then he repent not, he hath no more a place among us. We have delivered our souls.

CHAPTER II.

RECEPTION OF MEMBERS.

¶ 45. None shall be admitted on probation until they give evidence of a desire to flee from the wrath to come, by bringing forth fruits meet for repentance, and give affirmative answers to the following questions: 1. Have you the assurance of sins forgiven? 2. Do you consent to be governed by our general rules?

¶ 46. None shall be received into full connection, unless they give evidence of a renewed heart, by living up to the requirements of the general rules, and have met in class six months on probation, have been *baptized, have, wherever practicable, been recommended by the official members of the society, and give satisfactory answers to the following questions, which shall be proposed to them before the society:

1. Have you the witness of the Spirit that you are a child of God?
2. Have you that perfect love which casteth out fear?

(If the candidate shall answer no, then this ques-

*Persons baptized in infancy must publicly assent to the baptismal covenant.

tion shall be asked: "Will you diligently seek until you obtain it?")

3. Is it your purpose to devote yourself the remainder of your life wholly to the service of God, doing good to your fellow men, and working out your own salvation with fear and trembling?

4. Will you forever lay aside all superfluous ornaments, and adorn yourself in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array, but, which becometh those professing godliness, with good works?

5. Will you abstain from connection with all secret societies, keeping yourself free to follow the will of the Lord in all things?

6. Do you subscribe to our articles of religion, our general rules, and our Discipline, and are you willing to be governed by the same?

7. Have you Christian fellowship and love for the members of this society, and will you assist them, as God shall give you ability, in carrying on the work of the Lord?

¶ 47. The person giving affirmative answers to the above questions shall, with the consent of three-fourths of all the members present at a society meeting, be admitted to all the privileges of a member. Any person in good standing in any evangelical church may be received into full connection, upon his meeting the other requirements of this chapter, without his having been on probation in our church.

¶ 48. Where societies already organized, or several persons design to unite with the Free Metho-

dist church and form a new society, they should adopt the Discipline as a whole, and then each person should be admitted in his individual capacity as provided for above.

CHAPTER III.

DRESS.

¶ 49. We insist on the rules concerning dress. This is no time to give encouragement to superfluity of apparel. Therefore, receive none into the church till they have left off superfluous ornaments. In order to this: 1. Every one who has charge of a circuit shall read Mr. Wesley's sermons on dress, at least once a year in every society. 2. In visiting the classes be very mild but very strict. 3. Allow of no exempt case; better one suffer than many.

CHAPTER IV.

MARRIAGE.

¶ 50. We do not prohibit our people from marrying persons who are not members of our church, provided such persons give evidence of being converted to God; but we are determined to discourage their marrying those who do not come up to this standard.

¶ 51. Some of our members have married with unsaved persons. This has produced bad effects. They have either been hindered for life or have turned back to perdition. To discourage such marriages: 1. Every preacher shall publicly enforce the apostle's command, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers," 2 Corinthians vi, 14. 2. All should be exhorted never to marry without advising with some of the more serious of their brethren.

¶ 52. In general a woman ought not to marry without the consent of her parents. Yet there may be exceptions. For if, 1, a woman believes it to be her duty to marry, and if, 2, her parents absolutely refuse to let her marry any Christian, then she may, nay, ought to, marry without their consent.

We recognize no other ground for divorce than that permitted in the word of God—Matt. v, 32, and Mark x, 11 and 12. Any person guilty of a

violation of this law shall have no place among us.

¶ 53. Our preachers shall not officiate at the marriage of any person who is under eighteen years of age, unless the parents or guardians be present or have given written consent, and unless at least two witnesses, knowing the contracting parties, be present. They shall in every case refuse to officiate at the marriage of divorced parties, unless furnished with satisfactory evidence that the case is such as would not conflict with the law of divorce recognized in the preceding paragraph.

CHAPTER V.

SECRET SOCIETIES.

¶ 54. Voluntary associations are not necessarily sinful because they are secret. But secrecy is always a ground of suspicion. Evil works instinctively incline to darkness. Good works grow up in light. God commands us to let our light shine. Even a good cause under the shadow of secrecy invalidates its claim to the confidence of open and honest men. Grace and guile can have no affinity. All secrets necessary to be kept can be kept without an oath. A bad institution should not, and a good one need not, be secret. Philanthropic associations claiming our co-operation on Christian grounds, must do so with open face. They must lift the veil while demanding our salutation, or we cannot salute them by the way. Therefore, all secret societies are to be eschewed.

Any society requiring an oath, affirmation, or promise of secrecy, as a condition of membership, is held to be a secret society; and any member joining or continuing in such, violates his covenant obligations, and shall in due form be excluded from the church; and the preacher shall report that he is excluded for infraction of our rules and regulations.

CHAPTER VI.

TEMPERANCE.

¶ 55. A spirit of self-denial is indispensable to the Christian character. A large proportion of the crime and pauperism of the country is caused by strong drink. The Spirit of Christ never leads one to countenance the use or sale of intoxicating liquor as a beverage.

¶ 56. The stewards on all our circuits shall make provision to use the unfermented juice of the grape in celebrating the Lord's supper. In no case shall intoxicating wine be used for this purpose.

¶ 57. Every man of God should break away from party trammels, and never knowingly give his vote or influence to elect any man to office who will use his official or personal influence to legalize the traffic in intoxicating liquors as a beverage. As Christians we are bound to do all we can to prohibit by law this nefarious traffic.

CHAPTER VII.

THE OFFICIAL BODIES.

SECTION I.

DEPARTMENT AT THE CONFERENCES.

¶ 58. It is desired that all things be considered on these occasions as in the immediate presence of God; that every person speak freely whatever is in his heart. While we are conversing, let us have an especial care to set God always before us. In the intermediate hours, let us redeem all the time we can for private exercises. Therein let us give ourselves to prayer for one another, and for a blessing on our labors.

SECTION II.

THE GENERAL CONFERENCE.

¶ 59. The general conference shall be composed of the superintendents, and an equal number of ministerial and lay delegates belonging to the Free Methodist church, to be appointed by the annual conferences, at their respective sessions next preceding the session of general conference.

¶ 60. Each annual conference shall be entitled to one ministerial and one lay delegate, and an addi-

tional one of each kind for every eight hundred members in full connection within the bounds of the conference. Each annual conference shall be entitled to one additional ministerial and lay delegate in the general conference, whenever there is belonging to it an additional fraction of six hundred members in full connection.

¶ 61. In electing delegates to the general conference, the preachers and laymen shall vote separately, each branch electing by ballot; the preachers from the elders in full connection in the conference, and the lay delegates from the members in full connection in our church within the bounds of the conference, the delegates to which they are respectively entitled.

¶ 62. Whenever two-thirds of the annual conferences shall demand it, the superintendent or superintendents, or, if there be none, the secretary of the general conference, shall call an extra session of the general conference, fixing the date thereof, and the time of assembling, later than the next ensuing session of each of the annual conferences.

¶ 63. The general conference shall meet on the second Wednesday of June, 1903, and once in four years thereafter, at such place as it may designate.

¶ 64. At all times, when the general conference is met, it shall take two-thirds of all the delegates elected by the annual conferences to form a quorum to do business; but a smaller number may adjourn from time to time, until a quorum is obtained.

¶ 65. One of the general superintendents shall preside in the general conference; but, in case no general superintendent be present, the general con-

ference shall elect, by ballot, an elder as president pro tem.

¶ 66. Each general conference shall elect, by ballot, one or more general superintendents, a secretary and treasurer, an editor of *The Free Methodist*, an editor of our Sunday school literature, a publishing agent and an assistant publishing agent. The secretary shall continue in office until his successor is elected, and shall be the custodian of the general conference records and journal.

¶ 67. The members of the general conference shall deliberate and vote as one body, nevertheless, upon a call of one-fourth of the members present and voting, the house shall divide; and it shall require a majority of the ministerial and of the lay delegates present to pass any vote, or transact any business.

¶ 68. The general conference shall have full power to make rules and regulations for our church, under the following limitations and restrictions:

1. The general conference shall not revoke, alter, or change our articles of religion, or the general rules of the united societies, or establish any new standards or rules of doctrine contrary to our present, existing and established standards of doctrine.

2. They shall not change or alter any part or rule of our government, so as to do away with lay delegation, or an itinerant ministry, or general superintendency, or the free-seat system in our churches.

3. They shall not have power to deprive our preachers or members of the right of trial by an impartial committee, and of an appeal.

¶ 69. Provided, nevertheless, that upon the con-

current recommendation of three-fourths of all the members of the several annual conferences, who shall be present and vote on such a recommendation, then a majority of two-thirds of the general conference succeeding, shall suffice to alter either of the above restrictions, except the last; and also, whenever such alteration, or alterations, shall have been first recommended by two-thirds of the general conference, as soon as three-fourths of the members of all the annual conferences shall have concurred as aforesaid, such alteration or alterations shall take effect.

SECTION III.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

¶ 70. The executive committee shall consist of the general superintendents, five traveling elders, and five laymen, to be elected by the general conference from its members.

¶ 71. The executive committee shall meet annually, and whenever the superintendents or one-third of the committee shall deem it necessary. A majority of the members elected shall constitute a quorum for transacting business.

¶ 72. If any vacancy or vacancies occur in the intervals of the general conference, the remaining members of the executive committee may elect from the elders, or laymen, or both, as the case may be, belonging to the last general conference, a sufficient number to fill such vacancies.

¶ 73. If any vacancy or vacancies occur in the superintendency in the intervals of general con-

ference, the executive committee shall meet together and elect a superintendent, or superintendents, who shall serve until the ensuing general conference.

¶ 74. The executive committee shall constitute a court of appeals, which shall, if necessary, hold a session once a year, for the purpose of trying all appeals that may be taken by any traveling preachers, from the decision of an annual conference. The executive committee shall have the power to decide all questions of law referred to it in the intervals of the general conference. One of the general superintendents shall preside at the trial of appeal cases. Seven members of the committee on appeals shall constitute a quorum. The executive committee shall have charge of the publishing interests of the church, subject to the regulations adopted by the general conference of 1882.

See also index, title Executive Committee.

SECTION IV.

THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

¶ 75. Each annual conference shall be composed of all the traveling, supernumerary and superannuated preachers who have been duly received into full connection, within its bounds, and of lay delegates elected by the several circuits, as provided for in paragraph 93 (2).

¶ 75½. Each circuit shall be entitled to one delegate, and whenever there shall be more than one preacher traveling upon a circuit, if the preacher or preachers be members in full connection in conference, the circuit shall be entitled to one additional

delegate for every such additional preacher, provided, nevertheless, that in no case shall a preacher be counted more than once in the election of delegates.

¶ 76. There shall be the following annual conferences, to wit: The Genesee, the Illinois, the Susquehanna, the Michigan, the Kansas, the Minnesota and Northern Iowa, the New York, the Iowa, the Wisconsin, the North Michigan, the Ohio, the Central Illinois, the Texas, the Missouri, the West Kansas, the South Dakota, the Pittsburg, the California, the East Michigan, the Louisiana, the Oregon, the West Iowa, the Wabash, the Colorado, the North Minnesota, the North Indiana, the Nebraska, the Southern California, the Arkansas and Southern Missouri, the Columbia River, the Washington, the Platte River, the Western Ontario, the Eastern Ontario, the Kentucky and Tennessee, the North Dakota, the Oil City, the Oklahoma and such others as may be organized as hereinafter provided.

¶ 77. Whenever a new society shall be organized near the boundary line between any two conferences and the conference in whose territory the new society is located shall have no organized work within forty miles of said new society, such new society shall be permitted to decide for itself to which conference it shall belong.

¶ 78. Each annual conference shall appoint the place, and, with the concurrence of the superintendents, the time of its own sessions. If for any reason a conference cannot be held at the place appointed, the determination of the place shall be left

with the district elders and the secretary of the last conference.

¶ 79. (1) In the absence of the superintendent, or of the elder whom he may have appointed, they shall elect, by ballot, an elder from their own number, to preside. (2) And they shall elect a secretary who shall record in a suitable book the proceedings of the annual conference, and send said record to the general conference for examination.

¶ 80. The ministers and laymen composing the annual conference shall deliberate and vote as one body; but at the call of one-fourth of all the members present and voting, the house shall divide, and the ministers and laymen vote separately; and it shall require a majority of both branches to constitute a vote of the conference.

¶ 81. The territory embraced by each annual conference shall be divided into districts, and over each of these one of the elders shall be appointed by the conference as district elder.

¶ 82. The district elders and an equal number of laymen to be elected by ballot the first day of the session, together with the president of the conference, shall constitute a stationing committee, of which the president shall be chairman, and have a casting vote. No person who is recommended to the annual conference to be received on trial, though acting as a delegate, shall be eligible to serve on the stationing committee. It shall be the duty of the stationing committee to appoint the preachers to their several fields of labor. No preacher shall be appointed to the same circuit more than three years in succession except in the case of ap-

pointments among foreign speaking or colored people.

¶ 83. It shall be the duty of each annual conference having claimants, to appoint a committee at each annual session on claimants and claims, composed of the president of the conference, two ministers and two laymen nominated by the president and elected by the conference. No minister shall be placed on the superannuated list without having first been recommended by this committee. It shall also be the duty of this committee, at the session during which it serves, to report as to who are claimants and to estimate the amount necessary for their support for the ensuing year, subject to the approval of the conference, which shall forward the same to the secretary of the board of claimants.

¶ 84. An annual conference may, upon the unanimous recommendation of the stationing committee, leave a preacher without an appointment.

¶ 85. Any preacher so left without an appointment two years in succession, may be located by vote of the annual conference.

¶ 86. When a preacher is located, or discontinued by an annual conference, the stationing committee shall fix the place of his membership.

¶ 87. A preacher may be appointed to a circuit without having charge of the same; in such cases the administration of the circuit shall devolve upon the district elder and the official board.

¶ 88. Each annual conference shall inquire—

1. What are the names of preachers and delegates having a seat in this conference?

2. Who are the stationing committee?
3. What preachers are admitted on trial?
4. Who remain on trial?
5. Who are admitted into full connection?
6. Who are the deacons?
7. Who have been elected and ordained elders this year?
8. Who have located this year?
9. Who are the supernumerary preachers?
10. Who are the superannuated or worn-out preachers?
11. Who have been received by transfer and from what conference?
12. Who have withdrawn from the conference this year?
13. Who have been given certificates of good standing with a view to transfer to another conference?*
14. Are all the preachers blameless in life and conversation? Have they, during the past year, discharged their duties to God, themselves, and one another, as required by sections 6, 7 and 8, chapter viii, of the Discipline?†
15. Who have died this year?
16. What is the number of church members?
17. Amount collected for conference claimants? For the superintendents? For general missions? For the annual conference missionary fund? For foreign missions? For educational fund?

*It shall be the duty of the conference receiving a preacher by transfer to notify the secretary of the conference from which he was transferred of his reception.

†Let the president call attention to sections 6, 7 and 8 of chapter viii, of the Discipline.

18. Number of Sunday schools? Of officers and teachers? Of scholars? Of volumes in library?

19. What has been expended during the year, on the circuits for Sabbath school purposes?

20. How many copies of the Free Methodist are taken?

21. What amounts are necessary for the superannuated preachers, and the widows and orphans of preachers?

22. At the session next preceding the session of the general conference, the question shall be asked—What amount is necessary for us to raise towards defraying the expenses of delegates to the general conference?

23. What has been collected on the foregoing accounts, and how has it been applied?

24. Where are the preachers stationed this year?

25. Where, and when, shall our next conference be held?

We recommend our people to observe the Friday preceding each annual and general conference as a day of fasting and prayer.

See index, title, Conferences.

SECTION V.

THE QUARTERLY CONFERENCE.

¶ 89. 1. The quarterly conference shall be composed of the traveling preachers and the members of the official boards of the district.

2. Four sessions of the quarterly conference

shall be held each year, in connection with the general quarterly meetings, at such times and places as it may designate.

3. The district elder shall be president of the quarterly conference, and in his absence the quarterly conference shall elect one of its members to preside.

4. A secretary shall be elected by the quarterly conference, who shall keep a faithful record of its proceedings, and shall send the said record to the annual conference for its examination.

5. The quarterly conference shall (1) hear complaints, (2) try appeals, (3) grant and renew licenses to preach, (4) and recommend suitable persons to the annual conference to be employed as traveling preachers. No person shall be licensed as a local preacher until he has been previously licensed as an exhorter and has been recommended by the official board of the circuit to which he belongs, and until he has first been examined by the quarterly conference, or district elder, in regard to his piety, his soundness in doctrine, his gifts, and his usefulness. No one shall be licensed until satisfactory answers are given to all the questions found in section xix, Chap. viii: "Of the examination of those who think they are moved by the Holy Ghost to preach." (5) The quarterly conference shall also, in connection with the district elder, appoint and hold camp meetings as the interests of the cause of God may require.

See also index, title, Conferences.

ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR QUARTERLY CONFERENCES.

- ¶ 90. 1. Conference called to order by the district elder, or, in his absence, by the secretary.
2. Devotional exercises.
3. Calling the roll. (At the first session of the conference year, a secretary should be elected and the roll made out and then called.)
4. Reading the minutes of the previous session.
5. Are all the local deacons and elders blameless in life and faithful in the performance of their ministerial office (¶ 125)? The name of each local deacon and elder should be separately called and his character passed.*†
6. Are there any recommendations for local preachers' license? (¶ 89. (5.))
7. Are there any recommendations for evangelists' license? (¶ 128, (1.))
8. Are there any licenses to be renewed?
9. Are there any suitable persons to be recommended to the annual conference to be employed as traveling preachers?*
10. Are there any recommendations of local preachers to the annual conference for ordination as deacons or elders? (¶ 123, 124.)*†
11. Are there any complaints? (¶ 89, (5.))
12. Are there any appeals? (¶ 89, (5.))
13. Shall we hold any camp meetings this year? If so, how many? when? where?
14. Appointment of committees.

*At the last session of the year only.

†Preachers should retire while their characters or their licenses are under consideration.

15. Report of committees.
16. Unfinished business (not to be asked at the first sitting of the year).
17. Report of preachers on condition of their circuits and on Sunday schools. (§ 141, (3.))
18. New business.
19. Financial report of the district elder.
20. Fix place and time for holding the next session of the quarterly conference. (§ 89, (5.))
21. Reading of the minutes.
22. Adjournment.

SECTION VI.

OFFICIAL MEETING.

§ 91. 1. An official meeting, composed of the pastors, local preachers, exhorters, evangelists, stewards, class leaders, Sunday-school superintendents who are members of our church and belong on the circuit, and trustees of church property when such trustees are members of our church on the circuit where the church property is located, shall be held in each circuit once a month whenever practicable.

2. The preacher in charge shall be chairman of the official meeting, except as provided for in § 97, and in his absence a chairman shall be elected.

3. A secretary and treasurer shall be elected by the official board. The secretary shall keep in a suitable book, provided for that purpose, faithful minutes of the proceedings of the official board, and also of the meetings of the circuit and shall properly record all marriages and baptisms. The treasurer shall keep a record of all money raised

on the circuit for religious purposes, and of the manner in which the same was expended, and give a full report of the same at the annual circuit meeting.

4. The official board shall look after the spiritual and temporal interests of the Circuit.

ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR OFFICIAL MEETING.

¶ 92. 1. Devotional exercises.

2. Calling of the roll.

3. Reading of the minutes of the previous meeting.

4. Inquire, Are there any sick?

5. Are there any poor needing help?

6. Are there any whose probation has expired?

7. Are there any walking disorderly and who will not be reprov'd?

8. Are there any recommendations from the society for exhorter's license?*

9. Are there any exhorters' licenses to be renewed?

10. Are there any exhorters to be recommended for local preacher's license?

11. Have the collections been taken as ordered by the conference?

12. What amount has been raised for pastoral support?

13. What amount has been raised for the district elder's claim?

14. What amount has been raised for religious purposes, and how has it been applied?

*No person should be licensed to exhort without a recommendation from the society of which he is a member.

15. Is there any money in the treasury?
16. Are there any claims to be presented?
17. Is there any unfinished business, or are there any committees to report?
18. Is there any new business, or are there any committees to be appointed?
19. Are there any vacancies in the board of trustees?
20. Is the title of the church property secure?
21. Is the church property insured?
22. Reading of the minutes.
23. Adjournment.

SECTION VII.

CIRCUIT MEETING.

¶ 93. 1. Every circuit shall have, within three months prior to the session of the annual conference to which it belongs, an annual circuit meeting, of which the preacher in charge shall be chairman, and the secretary of the official board shall be secretary. Such circuit meeting shall be announced in each society at least ten days before said meeting shall be held.

2. At this meeting the members of the church in full connection on the circuit, shall elect, by ballot, one or more of their number to represent them in the annual conference according to the provisions of paragraph 75½. No person on trial in an annual conference shall be eligible to election as a delegate.

3. The annual circuit meeting shall elect, by ballot, not less than three, nor more than nine stew-

ards for the circuit, who shall hold their office for one year, or until others shall be elected in their place. Any vacancy may be filled at any regular society meeting.

4. At this meeting there shall be a full report presented by the trustees of the church property. See paragraph 204.

5. The preacher in charge of a circuit, or in his absence or refusal to do it, a majority of the official board, may call a meeting of the circuit, whenever in their judgment the interests of the church require it.

SECTION VIII.

SOCIETY MEETING.

¶ 94. 1. The society meeting shall be composed of all the members of our church who meet together stably in one place for worship.

2. The preacher in charge shall be chairman of the society meeting; and a record of its proceedings shall be kept by a secretary elected for that purpose.

3. It shall be the duty of the society meeting to recommend suitable persons for exhorters' and evangelists' licenses, and for band workers; to fill vacancies in its board of stewards, elect Sunday-school superintendents; to select persons to act as a committee in case of the trial of members; decide the propriety of incorporating; elect trustees subject in all cases to the statutes of the state, territory or country in which the society is located.

CHAPTER VIII.
OFFICERS AND MINISTERS.

SECTION I.

GENERAL SUPERINTENDENTS.

¶ 95. The general conference shall elect by ballot one or more traveling elders as general superintendents, to remain in office during the four years following, or until others shall be appointed.

¶ 96. It shall be the duty of the superintendent:

1. To travel through the connection at large.
2. To oversee the spiritual and temporal interests of our church, and to labor to promote its purity, peace and prosperity.
3. To establish new societies.
4. To receive and suspend preachers, according to the provisions of the Discipline.
5. To change preachers from one district to another, where the districts are presided over by different elders, with the consent of the preacher to be removed and of the district elders, and a majority of the official board of the circuit from which he is to be removed.
6. To transfer a preacher from one conference to another, with the consent of the preacher and of the conference to which he is transferred, and, in the intervals of the sessions of the conference, with the

consent of the district elders of the conference to which he is transferred; provided, that no preacher shall be transferred to another conference without a certificate of his good standing and general acceptability, given by his annual or quarterly conference.

7. To form new conferences in the intervals of general conference, as the wants of the work may demand, subject to the approval of the general conference. Provided, that no new conference shall be formed without the consent of the conference whose territory is affected, and also, without the consent of at least two-thirds of the members of the executive committee; provided, also, that no new conference shall be organized with less than five preachers in full connection and one hundred members in full connection within its bounds.

8. To preside at the sessions of the general conference, the executive committee, the annual conferences; and at the trial of appeals taken from quarterly or annual conferences, and to decide all questions of law therein, subject to an appeal to the general conference.

9. To report their labors and the state of the work to the general conference, and annually to the executive committee, such report to be published in the church paper.

10. The general superintendents shall estimate the amount necessary to pay the expenses of delegates to the general conference, and shall apportion the same among the several conferences. Any annual conference deficient in its apportionment shall have such deficit deducted from the amount

appropriated for the expenses of its delegates to the general conference.

11. The superintendents shall be amenable to the general conference for the discharge of their official duties, and for their Christian conduct to the annual conferences to which they respectively belong.

See index, title, General Superintendents.

SECTION II.

DISTRICT ELDERS.

¶ 97. It shall be the duty of the district elder—

1. To look after the spiritual and temporal interests of our church within his district; to take the charge of all circuits without a preacher; and the oversight of the work on his district, according to the Discipline.

2. To see that every part of the Discipline is duly enforced.

3. To visit every circuit on his district whenever he may judge it expedient. The district elder is especially directed and required to visit any circuit in his district, when so requested by the official board, in case of any dispute or difficulty, or any emergency that may arise. In such cases he shall have power to call an official, society or circuit meeting, and to preside over the same.

The circuit sending for him shall pay his traveling expenses.

4. To hold four general quarterly meetings in his district during each year.

5. To hold quarterly meetings once in three

months in each circuit within his district, and to labor as an evangelist within his district, if in the judgment of the annual conference the cause of God can be best served thereby. He shall also make a statement of the growth and progress of the work on the district at each general quarterly meeting.

6. When a district has a traveling district elder he may hold an official, circuit, or society meeting on each circuit, in connection with his quarterly meetings.

7. To appoint, receive, suspend and change preachers in his district or districts in the intervals of the conference. Provided, he shall not change any preacher contrary to his wishes unless by the request of two-thirds of the members of the circuit.

8. To see that deeds of lands upon which it may be proposed to build any church or parsonage within the bounds of his district are properly made out and recorded, or that a good and sufficient bond or contract is given for such deed before such building is begun.

9. To give the superintendent all the necessary information of the state of his district.

10. The district elder shall not have power to employ a preacher that has been rejected by the annual conference, without permission of said conference.

11. The district elder may, with the consent of the preacher in charge, and the official board, divide a circuit in the intervals of the annual conference, if the interest of the work require it.

12. No district elder shall preside over the same district in the same conference more than four years in succession.

13. Traveling district elders shall be elected by ballot in open conference, without debate.

14. Stationed district elders shall be nominated by ballot by the stationing committee, and elected by ballot in open conference, without debate.

15. In case there should be a vacancy in the office of district elder during the intervals of the sessions of any annual conference, the president of the conference or his successor shall have power to fill such vacancy, subject to the approval of the ensuing quarterly conference of the district.

16. Whenever in the judgment of an annual conference the interests of the work can be best subserved thereby, the same district elder may be appointed to more than one district at the same time.

17. The district elder shall be a member of the quarterly conference on the district which he serves; and, in case he be appointed to two or more districts, the stationing committee shall fix his quarterly conference relation.

18. The district elder shall be supported by the circuit to which he is appointed, unless he devotes all his time in labors as an evangelist, as provided for above, in which case he shall receive his support from the district, each circuit contributing its proportion, as agreed upon in the quarterly conference.

See index, title, District Elder.

SECTION III.

ELDERS AND DEACONS.

¶ 98. Traveling Elders: 1. Every traveling deacon shall exercise that office two years before he is eligible to the office of elder, except in the case of missions, when the conference shall have authority to elect him to the elder's office sooner if they judge it expedient. A traveling deacon shall be constituted a traveling elder by the election of a majority of the conference and by the laying on of the hands of the president and some of the elders present, after having passed a satisfactory examination in the required course of study.

2. It is the duty of an elder to administer baptism and the Lord's supper, to officiate in marriage ceremonies and all parts of divine worship, and, when appointed to a charge, to perform all the duties of a traveling preacher.

¶ 99. Traveling Deacons: 1. A minister who has been employed in the regular itinerant work for two successive years after his reception on trial, and who has passed a satisfactory examination in the required course of study, may be constituted a traveling deacon by the election of a majority of the conference, and the laying on of the hands of the president.

2. It is the duty of a deacon to baptize, to officiate in marriage ceremonies, to assist the elder in administering the Lord's supper and, when ap-

pointed to a charge, to perform all the duties of a traveling preacher.*

100. No elder or deacon who ceases to travel, without the consent of the annual conference, certified under the hand of the president of the conference, except in case of sickness, inability, or other unavoidable circumstances, shall on any account, exercise the peculiar functions of his office, or even be allowed to preach among us; nevertheless, the final determination in all such cases is with the annual conference.

SECTION IV.

RECEIVING PREACHERS FROM OTHER DENOMINATIONS.

101. 1. Ministers from other evangelical churches who desire to unite with our church, may be received according to our usages, on condition of their giving satisfactory answers to the questions which we propose to our own members and ministers before receiving them into full connection, and of their giving satisfaction to an annual conference of their being in orders, and of their agreement with us in doctrine, discipline, government and usages; provided the conference is also satisfied with their gifts, graces and usefulness.

2. Every minister, whether local or itinerant, whose ordination is recognized by an annual conference, shall be entitled to a parchment from the president of the conference, certifying the fact of his ordination.

*No unordained preacher of the Free Methodist church shall be authorized to solemnize the marriage ceremony.

SECTION V.

RECEPTION OF PREACHERS.

¶ 102. A preacher may be received on trial by an annual conference after passing a satisfactory examination in the prescribed course of study, and after having been duly recommended by a quarterly conference, and when so received he shall receive from the annual conference a certificate of his relation, signed by the president and secretary. But the requirements of this paragraph shall not be so fully enforced as to preclude the reception of a person converted or called to preach in middle life, who, in the judgment of the annual conference, is possessed of natural gifts and graces such as to promise at least a fair degree of success in the work of God; such exceptions in all cases to follow the unanimous recommendation of the stationing committee.

¶ 103. A traveling preacher may be received into full connection after having been employed in the regular itinerant work two successive years subsequent to his reception on trial by an annual conference, and after passing a satisfactory examination in the required course of study, and giving satisfactory answers to the following questions, namely:

1. Have you faith in Christ?
2. Have you present assurance of sins forgiven?
3. Do you believe in Christian perfection?
4. Have you attained to this rich experience in

your own heart? (If not,) are you groaning after it?

5. Are you resolved to devote yourself wholly to God and his work?

6. Do you know the general rules? Do you keep them?

7. Do you regularly attend the sacrament?

8. Have you read our Discipline?

9. Are you willing to conform to it?

10. Have you considered the rules for a preacher?

11. Will you keep them for conscience' sake?

12. Are you determined to employ all your time in the work of God?

13. Will you endeavor not to speak too long nor too loud?

14. Will you diligently instruct the children in every place?

15. Will you visit from house to house?

16. Will you recommend fasting, or abstinence, both by precept and example?

17. Are you in debt?

SECTION VI.

RULES FOR A PREACHER'S CONDUCT.

¶ 104. Be diligent. Never be unemployed; never be triflingly employed. Never trifle away time; neither spend any more time at any place than is strictly necessary.

Be serious. Let your motto be, Holiness to the Lord. Avoid all lightness, jesting and foolish talking.

Converse sparingly and conduct yourself prudently with women. 1 Tim. v, 2.

Take no step toward marriage without first consulting your brethren.

Believe evil of no one without good evidence; unless you see it done, take heed how you credit it. Put the best construction on everything. You know the judge is always supposed to be on the prisoner's side.

Speak evil of no one, because your word, especially, would eat as doth a canker. Keep your thoughts within your own breast, till you come to the person concerned.

Tell every one under your care what you think wrong in his conduct or temper, and that lovingly and plainly as soon as may be; else it will fester in your heart. Make all haste to cast the fire out of your bosom.

Avoid all affectation. A preacher of the gospel is the servant of all.

Be ashamed of nothing but sin.

Be punctual. Do everything exactly at the time. And do not mend our rules, but keep them; not for wrath, but for conscience's sake.

You have nothing to do but to save souls; therefore, spend and be spent in this work; and go always not only to those who need you, but to those who need you most.

Observe: it is not only your business to preach so many times, and to take care of this or that society, but to save as many as you can; to bring as many sinners as you can to repentance, and with all your power to build them up in that holiness

without which they cannot see the Lord. And remember that a Free Methodist preacher is to mind every point, great and small, in the Free Methodist Discipline! Therefore, you will need to exercise all the sense and grace you have.

Act in all things not according to your own will, but as a son in the gospel. As such it is your duty to employ your time in the manner in which we direct: in preaching, and visiting from house to house; in reading, meditation and prayer. Above all, if you labor with us in the Lord's vineyard, it is needful that you should do that part of the work which we advise, at those times and places which we judge most for his glory.

¶ 105. The following, smaller advices may be of use:

Be sure to never disappoint a congregation.

Begin at the time appointed.

Let your deportment be serious, weighty and solemn.

Always suit your subject to your audience.

Choose the plainest texts you can.

Take care not to ramble, but keep to the text, and make out what you take in hand.

Avoid everything awkward or affected, in your gesture, phrase or pronunciation.

Do not usually pray more than eight or ten minutes, at most, without intermission.

Frequently read and enlarge upon a portion of scripture; and young preachers should often exhort without taking a text.

Always avail yourself of the great festivals, by preaching on the occasion.

SECTION VII.

QUALIFICATION OF PREACHERS.

¶ 106. A preacher is to be qualified for his charge, by walking closely with God, and having his work greatly at heart; and by understanding and loving discipline, ours in particular.

¶ 107. We should frequently ask each other the following questions:

Do you walk closely with God? Have you now fellowship with the Father and the Son? At what hour do you rise? Do you punctually observe the morning and evening hours of retirement? Do you spend the day in the manner which the conference advises? Do you converse seriously, usefully and closely?

To be more particular, you should use all the means of grace yourself, and enforce the use of them on all other persons.

They are either instituted or prudential.

The instituted are:

1. Prayer—private, family and public; consisting of deprecation, petition, intercession and thanksgiving.

Do you use each of these? Do you forecast daily, wherever you are, to secure time for private devotion? Do you practice it everywhere? Do you ask everywhere, Have you family prayer? Do you ask individuals, Do you use private prayer every morning, and evening in particular?

2. Searching the scriptures—reading regularly, some part every day; regularly, all the Bible in or-

der; carefully, with notes; seriously, with prayer before and after; fruitfully, immediately practicing what you learn there. Meditating at set times and by rule. Hearing the word every opportunity, with prayer, before, at, after. Have your Bible always about you.

3. The Lord's supper. Do you use this at every opportunity? With solemn prayer before? With deliberate self-devotion?

4. Fasting. Do you use as much abstinence and fasting every week as your health, strength, and labor will permit?

5. Christian conference. Are you convinced how important and difficult it is to order your conversation aright? Is it always with grace, seasoned with salt, meet to minister grace to the hearers? Do you converse too long at a time? Is not an hour commonly enough? Would it not be well always to have a determined end in view, and pray before and after?

The prudential means we may use either as Christians, as Free Methodists, or as preachers.

As Christians, what particular rules have you in order to grow in grace? What arts of holy living? As Free Methodists, do you never miss your class? As preachers, have you thoroughly considered your duty? Are you conscientious in executing every part of it? Do you meet each society and its leaders?

These means may be used without fruit. But there are some means which cannot; namely—watching, denying ourselves, taking up our cross and living always as in the presence of God.

Do you steadily watch against the world? Yourself? Your besetting sin? Do you deny yourself every useless pleasure of sense, imagination, honor? Are you temperate in all things? Instance, in food? Do you use only that kind and that degree which is best both for body and soul? Do you see the necessity of this? Do you eat no more at each meal than is necessary? Are you not heavy or drowsy after dinner? Do you use only that kind and degree of drink which is best both for the body and soul? Do you choose and use water for your common drink? And only take wine medicinally or sacramentally? Wherein do you take up your cross daily? Do you cheerfully bear your cross, however grievous to nature, as a gift of God, and labor to profit thereby? Do you endeavor to set God always before you? To see his eye continually fixed upon you? Never can you use these means but a blessing will ensue. And the more you use them, the more you will grow in grace.

See index, title, Preachers.

SECTION VIII.

DUTIES OF PREACHERS IN CHARGE.

¶ 108. The duties of a preacher who has the charge of a circuit are, to receive and dismiss members according to the Discipline.

To see that the other preachers in his circuit behave well, and need nothing.

To examine each of the leaders concerning his method of leading his class, observe which leaders

are the most useful and have these meet the other classes as often as possible, and see that all the leaders are persons not only of sound judgment, but truly devoted to God. (See also ¶ 131 (4.)

To hold watch-nights, and love-feasts, and to see that the sacrament is administered at least once in three months.

To take care that every society is duly supplied with books.

To take an exact account of all members in the societies of their respective circuits, keeping the names of all local elders, deacons, and preachers, properly distinguished, and deliver such account to the annual conference, that their number may be printed in the minutes.

To give an account of his circuit every quarter to the quarterly conference of the district.

To report to the society at least once a quarter, the names of those who have been received into the church, or excluded therefrom during the quarter, also the names of those who have been received or dismissed by certificate, and those who have died or withdrawn from the church.

To make a regular catalogue of the societies in towns and cities, giving the residence of each member by street and number.

To leave his successor a particular account of the circuit, including an account of the subscribers for our periodicals.

To enforce vigorously, but calmly, all the rules of the society.

As soon as there are four believers in any place to put them into a class.

To meet the societies and classes; to visit the sick; to visit all members and probationers on his circuit, at least once in three months, and all members of his congregation whenever practicable; to preach out of doors wherever an attentive congregation can be found; to raise money for the purchase of tracts and attend to their distribution upon his circuit; to see that all the collections ordered by the conference are raised in full. All members shall pay their claims for the entire year to the circuit from which they were last reported to an annual conference.

To warn all, from time to time, that none are to remove from one circuit to another without a certificate from the preacher in charge, in these words:

"A. B., the bearer, wishing to remove from this society, we hereby certify that.....is an acceptable member of the Free Methodist church in..... and cordially commend.....to the Free Methodist church in.....,or in any other place. When admitted to another society his membership in this society shall cease. This certificate is good for one year only, unless renewed."* Inform them that without such a certificate, they will not be received into the church in other places.

When a pastor gives a certificate of membership with a view to transferring a member to another society, he shall at once notify the pastor of the society to which the certificate is addressed that such certificate has been given.

*The person holding this certificate remains a member of the society by which it was given until the certificate has been deposited in another society.

If any of our members live at a great distance from the class to which they belong and are unable to attend, they shall, once a quarter, send to the leader or preacher their testimony as to their religious state. If they fail to do this, or to pay their conference claims, they may at the end of one year be recorded on the register as "Removed without a letter." If such person afterwards claims his membership, the official board may restore it. A member holding a certificate shall be amenable to the circuit from which the certificate was taken until the certificate is received in another place. After the certificate has been handed in on another circuit, he shall be responsible for his conduct during the time he held the certificate to the circuit which he shall have joined. It shall be the duty of the preacher receiving such certificate of membership to notify the preacher in charge of the circuit from which the certificate was given, in these words: "You are hereby notified that A. B. has been duly enrolled as a member of this church upon a certificate issued from the church of which you are a pastor, signed"

To recommend everywhere decency and cleanliness.

To read the rules of the society, with the aid of the other preachers, once a year in every congregation, and once a quarter in every society.

To see that the trustees are duly elected according to the law of the state; and that the real estate belonging to the church is duly secured according to law.

To see that no steps be taken involving the cir-

cuit in financial liability, without the consent of the official board.

To see that a fast be held in every society in his circuit, on the Friday preceding every quarterly meeting.

To execute all the rules fully and strenuously against all frauds, and particularly against dishonest insolvencies; suffering none to remain in our church, on any account, who are found guilty thereof.

¶ 109. During the sittings of the conferences all appointments should stand according to the plan of the circuit. Engage as many local preachers and exhorters as will supply them; and pay them for their time in proportion to the allowance of the traveling preachers. If preachers and exhorters cannot attend, let some person of ability be appointed in every society to sing, pray and read one of Mr. Wesley's sermons. But if that cannot be done, let there be prayer meetings.

See index, title, Preachers and Sunday Schools.

SECTION IX.

MATTER AND MANNER OF PREACHING.

¶ 110. The best general method of preaching is:
1. To convince. 2. To offer Christ. 3. To invite.
4. To build up. And to do this in some measure in every sermon.

¶ 111. The most effectual way of preaching Christ is to preach him in all his offices, and to declare his law, as well as his gospel, both to be-

lievers and unbelievers. Let us strongly and closely insist upon inward and outward holiness in all its branches.

SECTION X.

WHERE TO PREACH.

¶ 112. We do not deem it advisable to preach in as many places as we can without forming societies. We have made the trial in various places, and that for a considerable length of time. In all cases the seed has fallen by the wayside. There is scarcely any fruit remaining.

1. We should endeavor to preach most where there is the greatest number of quiet and willing hearers, and where there is most fruit.

2. We ought diligently to observe in what places God is pleased at any time to pour out his Spirit more abundantly; and at that time to send more laborers than usual into that part of the harvest.

SECTION XI.

PASTORAL VISITATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF PRACTICAL RELIGION.

¶ 113. We should endeavor to assist those under our care, and to aid in the salvation of souls by instructing them in their own homes. What unspeakable need there is of this!

We can but just touch on a few particulars. How little faith is there among even professing Christians! How little communion with God! How little living in heaven, walking as for eternity, deadness to every creature! How much love of the

world, desire of pleasure, of ease, of getting money! How little brotherly love! What continual judging one another! What gossiping, evil-speaking, tale-bearing! What want of moral honesty! To instance only one particular: who does as he would be done by in buying and selling?

Family religion is wanting in many branches. And what avails public preaching alone, though we could preach like angels? We must, yea, every traveling preacher must instruct the people from house to house.

Our religion is not sufficiently deep, or universally uniform. It is superficial, partial, uneven. It will be so until we spend half as much time in this visiting, as we now do in talking uselessly. — Can we find a better method of doing this than Mr. Baxter's? If not, let us adopt it without delay. His whole tract, entitled *The Reformed Pastor*, is well worth a careful perusal. Speaking of this visiting from house to house, he says, "We shall find many hindrances, both in ourselves and the people."

1. In ourselves there is much dullness and laziness, so that there will be much ado to get us to be faithful in the work.

2. Some of us have a foolish bashfulness. We know not how to begin, and blush to contradict the devil.

3. But the greater hindrance is weakness of faith. Our whole motion is weak, because the spring of it is weak.

4. Lastly, we are unskilled in the work. How few know how to deal with men so as to get within them, and suit all our discourse to their several

conditions and tempers; to choose the fittest subject, and follow them with a holy mixture of seriousness, terror, love, and meekness!

Undoubtedly this private application is implied in those solemn words of the apostle: "I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering."

O, brethren, if we but could set this work on foot in all our congregations, and prosecute it zealously, what glory would redound to God! If the common lukewarmness were banished, and every shop and every house were busied in speaking of the word and works of God, surely God would dwell in our habitations, and make us his delight.

¶ 114. It is objected, I. "This will take up so much time we shall not have leisure to follow our studies." We answer, 1. Gaining knowledge is a good thing, but saving souls is better. By this very thing you will gain the most excellent knowledge, that of God and eternity. 2. You will have time for gaining other knowledge too. Only sleep no more than you need; "and never be idle or triflingly employed." But, 3. If you can do but one, let your studies alone. We ought to throw by all the libraries of the world, rather than be guilty of the loss of one soul.

It is objected, II. "The people will not submit to it." If some will not, others will. And all the success with them will repay all your labors. O, let us herein follow the example of St. Paul! 1. For

our general business, Serving the Lord with all humility of mind. 2. Our special work, Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock. 3. Our doctrine, Repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. 4. The place, I have taught you publicly, and from house to house. 5. The object and manner of teaching, I ceased not to warn every one night and day, with tears. 6. His innocence and self-denial herein, I have coveted no man's silver or gold. 7. His patience, Neither count I my life dear unto myself. And among all other motives, let these be ever before our eyes: 1. The church which he hath purchased with his own blood. 2. Grievous wolves shall enter in; yea, of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things.

Write this upon your hearts, and it will do you more good than twenty years' study. Then you will have no time to spare; you will have work enough. Then, likewise, no preacher will stay with us who is as salt that has lost its savor. For to such, this employment will be mere drudgery. And in order to do it, you will have need of all the knowledge you can procure, and all the grace you can obtain.

The sum is, Go into every house in course, and teach every one therein, young and old, to be Christians, inwardly and outwardly. Make every particular plain to their understandings. Fix it in their minds, write it on their hearts. In order to this, there must be line upon line, precept upon precept. What patience, what love, what knowledge is requisite for this! We must needs do this, were it only to avoid idleness. Do we not loiter

away many hours in every week? Each try himself. No idleness is consistent with a growth in grace. Nay, without exactness in redeeming time, you cannot retain the grace you received in justification.

¶ 115. Why are we not more holy? Why do we not live as for eternity? Why do we not walk with God all the day long? Why are we not all devoted to doing good, breathing the whole spirit of missionaries?

Chiefly because we do not properly use the means. 1. How few wait upon the Lord in secret prayer until his blessing comes on the soul? 2. Do we know the obligation and benefit of fasting and abstinence? 3. How often do we practice it? 4. How little there is of self-denial? 5. How few bring their tithes and offerings into the storehouse of the Lord? 6. How much there is of consecration to our own wills instead of to the will of the Lord? 7. How few manifest a disposition to submit themselves one to another? 8. What a want there is of properly governing the tongue! The neglect of these alone is sufficient to account for our feebleness and faintness of spirit. We should amend from this hour.

¶ 116. How shall we guard against Sabbath breaking, evil speaking, unprofitable conversation, lightness, expensiveness or gayety of apparel, and contracting debts without due care to discharge them?

1. We should preach expressly on each of these heads. 2. Read in every society the sermon on evil speaking. The leaders should closely examine

and exhort every person to put away the accursed thing. 4. The preachers should warn every society that none who is guilty herein can remain with us. 5. Extirpate from our church all buying or selling of goods which have not paid the duty laid upon them by government.

Allow none with us who will not totally abstain from this evil in every degree. Extirpate bribery, receiving anything, directly or indirectly, for voting at any election. Show no respect to persons herein, but expel all that touch the accursed thing. And strongly advise our people to discountenance all treats given by candidates before or at elections, and to not be partakers in any respect, of such iniquitous practices.

SECTION XII.

EMPLOYMENT OF TIME.

¶ 117. We advise you, 1. As often as possible, to rise at five. 2. From five to six in the morning, and from five to six in the evening, to meditate, pray, and read the scriptures with notes, and the closely practical parts of what Mr. Wesley has published. 3. From seven in the morning till twelve (allowing one hour for breakfast) read with much prayer, some of our best religious books.

Other reasons may concur why the people under our care are not better, but the chief is, because we are not more knowing and more holy.

But why are we not more knowing? Because we are idle. We forget our first rule, "Be diligent. Never be unemployed. Never be triflingly employed. Neither spend any more time at any place

than is strictly necessary." We fear there is altogether a fault in this matter, and that few of us are clear. Which of us spend as many hours a day in God's work as we did formerly in man's work? We talk—talk or read what comes next to hand. We must, absolutely must, cure this evil, or betray the cause of God. But how? 1. Read the most useful books, and that regularly and constantly. 2. Steadily spend all the morning in this employment, or at least five hours in the four and twenty. "But I have no taste for reading." Contract a taste for it by use, or return to your former employment. "But I have no books." Be diligent to spread the books, and you will have the use of them.

SECTION XIII.

UNION AMONG OURSELVES.

¶ 118. We should be deeply sensible, from what we have known, of the evil of division in principle, spirit, or practice, and of the dreadful consequences to ourselves and others. If we are united, what can stand before us? If we divide, we shall destroy ourselves, the work of God, and the souls of our people.

In order to a closer union with each other,

1. We should be deeply convinced of the absolute necessity of it. 2. Pray earnestly for, and speak freely to each other. 3. When we meet, let us never part without prayer. 4. Take care not to despise each other's gifts. 5. Never speak lightly of each other. 6. Defend each other's character in everything, so far as is consistent with truth. 7. Labor in honor each to prefer the other before

himself. 8. We recommend a serious perusal of *The Causes, Evils and Cures of Heart and Church Divisions.*

SECTION XIV.

UNION WITH OTHERS.

¶ 119. We have Christian fellowship and love for all persons of whatever denomination, who show by their lives that they "Follow peace with all men, and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord." We will unite with all well disposed persons, in an open, Christian manner, in promoting social and civil reforms. But we cannot unite, where we are required to compromise our principles, in holding union meetings with any person, or denomination, whose practical standard of Christian character and church fellowship, is obviously below that plainly set forth in the New Testament.

SECTION XV.

SUPERNUMERARY AND SUPERANNUATED PREACHERS.

¶ 120. A supernumerary preacher is a member of an annual conference whose efficiency is temporarily impaired, and whose relation as a supernumerary is fixed by a vote of his conference on recommendation of the stationing committee. His annual conference may give him an appointment or leave him without one, as in its judgment may seem best. In no case shall he have any claim on the superannuated fund. When left without an appointment, his quarterly conference relation shall be determined by the stationing committee.

¶ 121. A superannuated preacher is one who is

so disqualified by physical disability or old age that he cannot take charge of a circuit or occupy any position in the church which will afford him sufficient income for his support. The question as to his disability shall be determined by his conference, on the recommendation of the committee on claimants and claims. His quarterly conference relations shall be fixed by the stationing committee.

SECTION XVI.

LOCAL PREACHERS.

¶ 122. The quarterly conference shall take cognizance of all the local preachers in the district, and shall inquire into the gifts, labors and usefulness of each preacher by name.

¶ 123. A licensed local preacher shall be eligible to the office of deacon after he has preached four years from the time he received a regular license, and has obtained a recommendation from the quarterly conference, after proper examination as to his Christian character, his usefulness as a preacher, and a satisfactory knowledge of the prescribed course of study.

¶ 124. A local deacon shall be eligible to the office of elder after he has preached four years from the time he was ordained a deacon, and has obtained a recommendation from the quarterly conference of which he is a member, certifying his qualifications in doctrine, discipline, talents and usefulness, and has passed a satisfactory examination in the prescribed course of study.

¶ 125. Every local elder, deacon or preacher, shall be amenable to the quarterly conference where

he belongs for his Christian character and the faithful performance of his ministerial office. He shall have his name recorded on the journal of said conference, and also enrolled on a class paper, and shall meet in class; and in neglect of the above duties, the quarterly conference, if they judge it proper, may deprive him of his ministerial office. Provided, no ordained local preacher shall be deprived of his ministerial functions without due form of trial and conviction.

¶ 126. Let the appointments be so arranged as to give the local preachers regular and systematic employment on the Sabbath.

¶ 127. When a local preacher is employed as a supply, his membership shall be on the charge where he labors. He shall take a regular church letter whenever he may be so employed outside of the district where his membership may be.

See index, title, Preachers.

SECTION XVII.

EVANGELISTS.

¶ 128. Evangelists are a class of preachers called of God to preach the gospel, to labor to promote revivals of religion, and to spread abroad the cause of Christ in the land; but not in all cases called to a pastoral charge or to government in the church.

I. Any brother or sister in good standing in our church, feeling called of God to this work, may, upon recommendation of the society to which he belongs, be licensed by the quarterly conference,

after due examination, according to section 19, chap. viii, of our Discipline entitled, "Examination of Those who Think They are Moved by the Holy Ghost to Preach." Such evangelists shall be members of the quarterly conference, amenable to it, and shall pass an examination in the course of study for local preachers.

2. Those who labor successfully as evangelists for the period of four years, may, upon recommendation of the quarterly conference, be licensed by the annual conference; and such license shall hold good until revoked by the action of said annual conference.

3. Members of an annual conference may be appointed as evangelists. They shall be entitled to the rights and privileges of those appointed to circuits, and shall be subject to the same rules and regulations as far as they apply to their circumstances. They shall be subject to the restrictions of ¶ 128 (7).

4. The general conference may elect a general evangelist, or two general evangelists, to travel through the country at large, open new fields of labor, organize new societies, and provide and place over them, temporarily, pastors, preparatory to the organization of new conferences where we have none. If he should form new societies in any of our existing conferences, they shall be under the care of the district elder of the adjacent district.

5. The general evangelist shall have the oversight of other evangelists laboring in immediate connection with him.

6. Such evangelist shall be amenable to the annual conference to which he belongs.

7. No evangelist shall appoint or hold meetings where they will interfere with the regular work of any preacher duly appointed to a circuit or station.

8. Evangelists shall depend upon the fields in which they labor for their support, except in case of general evangelists, who may receive appropriations from the general missionary board, on recommendations from the general superintendents.

See index, title, Evangelists.

SECTION XVIII.

BAND AND BAND WORKERS.

¶ 129. 1. District elders and evangelists appointed by the general or annual conferences, or licensed by an annual conference, may organize bands for evangelistic work; but no person shall become a member of such a band without recommendation of the society to which he belongs.

2. The rules and regulations of such bands shall be subject to the approval of the annual conference to which the leader belongs, or within the bounds of which he holds his membership.

3. All bands shall be under the direction of the district elder or evangelist organizing the same, and no band leader shall appoint or hold meetings where they will interfere with the regular work of any preacher duly appointed to a circuit, or station, or district.

4. Those who labor successfully in a band for one year, may be licensed by the quarterly conference from year to year, as band workers.

SECTION XIX.

EXAMINATION OF THOSE WHO THINK THEY ARE MOVED
BY THE HOLY GHOST TO PREACH.

¶ 130. 1. The following questions shall be asked, namely: Do they know God as a pardoning God? Have they the love of God abiding in them? Do they desire nothing but God? And are they holy in all manner of conversation?

2. Have they gifts as well as grace for the work? Have they in some tolerable degree a clear, sound understanding, a right judgment in the things of God, and a just conception of salvation by faith? Has God given them any degree of utterance? Do they speak justly, readily, clearly?

3. Have they fruit? Are any truly convinced of sin, and converted to God by their preaching?

As long as these marks concur in anyone, we believe he is called of God to preach. These we receive as sufficient proof that he is moved by the Holy Ghost.

SECTION XX.

CLASS LEADERS.

¶ 131. 1. Class leaders shall be elected in the last quarter of the conference year. The preacher in charge may nominate and the class shall elect the leader by ballot, and if any person not nominated by the preacher receive a majority of votes, he shall be declared elected. Any member of the society shall be eligible to election as leader.

2. Each leader should carefully inquire how each

soul of his class prospers; not only how each observes the outward rules, but how he grows in the knowledge and love of God.

3. The leaders should converse with those who have the charge of their circuits.

4. Let the preacher in charge see that improper leaders are changed by a new election.

5. The leaders should frequently meet each other's classes.

SECTION XXI.

STEWARDS.

¶ 132. 1. The stewards should be persons of solid piety, who both know and love the Free Methodist doctrine and discipline, and of good natural and acquired abilities to transact temporal business.

2. The number of stewards in each circuit shall not be less than three, nor more than nine.

3. Stewards shall be elected by the annual circuit meeting, by ballot.

¶ 133. The duties of stewards are: 1. To take an exact account of all the money or other provisions collected for the support of ministers in the circuit. 2. To make accurate returns of every expenditure of money, whether to the preachers, the sick, or the poor. 3. To seek the needy and distressed in order to relieve and comfort them. 4. To inform the preachers of any sick or disorderly persons. 5. To tell the preachers what they think wrong in them. 6. To attend the quarterly meetings of their circuit. 7. To give advice, if asked, in planning the circuit. 8. To attend committees

for the application of money to churches. 9. To give counsel in matters of arbitration. 10. To provide ~~pro~~visions for the Lord's supper. 11. To write circular letters to the societies in the circuit to be more liberal if need be; as also to let them know, when occasion requires, the state of the temporal concerns of the circuit at the last quarterly meeting.

See index, title, Stewards.

CHAPTER IX.

MEANS OF GRACE.

SECTION I.

PUBLIC WORSHIP.

¶ 134. For the establishment of uniformity in public worship among us on the Lord's day: 1. The morning service shall consist of singing, prayer, the reading of a chapter of the Old Testament, and another of the New, and preaching. 2. The afternoon service shall consist of singing, prayer, the reading of one or two chapters of the Bible, and preaching. 3. The evening service shall consist of singing, prayer and preaching. 4. But on the days of administering the Lord's supper, the two chapters in the morning service may be omitted. 5. In administering the ordinances and in the burial of the dead, we recommend that the form of the Discipline be used. We advise that the Lord's prayer also be used on occasions of public worship in concluding the first prayer, and the apostolic benediction in dismissing the congregation.

6. The classes shall meet, wherever practicable, on the Sabbath day.

The preachers should join as one man and enlarge on the impropriety of irreverent and secular conversation before and after service, and strongly ex-

hort those who are concerned, to do it no more. If the people assemble before the hour of service or remain after it, let the time be improved in singing, prayer and testimony.

SECTION II.

SINGING.

¶ 135. We should guard against formality in singing. Therefore,

1. Choose such hymns as are proper for the occasion, and do not sing too much at once. Seldom more than four or five verses. 2. Have the tune suited to the sentiment, and do not suffer the people to sing too slow. 3. In every society it shall be the duty of the preacher in charge to see that due attention be given to the cultivation of vocal and sacred music. 4. If you cannot, yourself, sing, let one or two be chosen in each society to lead the singing. 5. As singing is a part of divine worship, in which all ought to unite, therefore exhort every person in the congregation to sing, not one in ten only. 6. In no case let there be instrumental music or choir singing in our public worship. Let the preacher in charge see that in all cases the Free Methodist Hymn Book be used in the regular services.

SECTION III.

LOVE-FEASTS.

¶ 136. A love-feast shall be held on each circuit at least once in three months.

No person not a member of our church shall be admitted to our love-feast without the consent of the preacher having charge of the same.

SECTION IV.

CLASS-MEETINGS.

¶ 137. The chapter on general rules says of those who compose our societies, That it may the more easily be discerned whether they are indeed working out their own salvation, each society is divided into smaller companies, called classes, according to their respective places of abode. There are about twelve persons in a class, one of whom is styled the leader. It is his duty,

1. To see each person in his class once a week at least; in order, (1) To inquire how their souls prosper. (2) To advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort, as occasion may require. (3) To receive what they are willing to give toward the relief of the preacher, church and poor. 2. To meet the ministers and stewards of the circuit in order, (1) To inform the minister of any that are sick, or of any that walk disorderly, and will not be reprov'd. (2) To pay the stewards what they have received of their several classes during the week.

¶ 138. There shall be a general class meeting held in each society the first Sabbath in every month.

¶ 139. When any member of our church wilfully and repeatedly neglects to meet his class, the preacher in charge, his assistant, or the leader should visit him, whenever it is practicable, and ex-

plain to him the consequences, if he continues to neglect, namely, censure, suspension, and finally, expulsion.

If he does not amend he should be brought to trial for neglect of duty.

See index, title, Classes.

SECTION V.

SUNDAY-SCHOOLS AND THE RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION OF CHILDREN.

¶ 140. For the moral and religious instruction of the children it shall be the special duty of preachers having charge of circuits, with the aid of the other preachers, to form Sunday-schools in all our congregations where ten children can be collected for that purpose, and to engage the co-operation of as many of our members as they can; to visit the schools as often as practicable; to preach on the subject of Sunday-schools and religious instruction in each congregation at least once in six months; and to form Bible classes wherever they can for the instruction of the larger children and youth, and where they cannot superintend them personally, to see that suitable teachers are provided for that purpose. It shall be the duty of pastors in charge of circuits to establish and maintain mission Sunday-schools wherever there is an opening, and in such schools members of our church shall be employed as officers and teachers as far as practicable.

¶ 141. 1. It shall be the duty of preachers to enforce faithfully upon parents and Sunday-school teachers the great importance of instructing chil-

dren in the doctrines and duties of our holy religion; to preach to the children, and publicly catechise them in the Sunday-schools, and at special meetings appointed for that purpose.

2. To pay special attention to the children, speaking to them personally and kindly upon the subject of experimental and practical godliness, according to their capacity, pray earnestly for them, and diligently instruct and exhort all parents to dedicate their children to the Lord, in baptism, as early as convenient.

3. He shall lay before each session of the quarterly conference, to be entered on its journal, the number and state of the Sunday-schools and Bible classes in his charge, and the extent to which he has preached to the children and catechised them, and make the required report on Sunday-schools to his annual conference.

¶ 142. The superintendent of the Sunday-school shall be elected by a society meeting. The preacher in charge may nominate.

¶ 143. A Sunday-school board meeting shall be held in each society once a month whenever practicable, composed of the pastors and officers and teachers of the Sunday-school. The officers of this Sunday-school board shall be a president, vice-president, a secretary and a treasurer, and shall be elected at the beginning of each conference year. The teachers shall be elected by the Sunday-school board. The superintendent may nominate. In the organization of new schools, the preacher or preachers in charge and the superintendent shall appoint the teachers, and these with the preacher or preach-

ers in charge and the superintendent shall constitute the Sunday-school board at its beginning. It shall also be the duty of this board to decide upon the Sunday-school literature and to attend to all other business connected with the Sunday-school not otherwise provided for in the Discipline.

CHAPTER X.

SUPPORT AND SUPPLIES.

¶ 144. 1. It shall be the duty of a committee appointed by the official board, who shall be members of our church, to make, after consulting with the preacher in charge, an estimate of the amount necessary for the support of the preacher or preachers stationed with them; which estimate shall be subject to the action of the official board.

The stewards shall provide by such means as they may devise to meet such expenses, in money, or otherwise.

2. Every class leader shall, at the commencement of the year, ascertain how much each person in his class is able and willing to pay, per week, for the support of the preachers, and note the same in his class-book, and diligently see to it that the collections are made weekly, duly credited, and paid over to the steward for the benefit of the preachers.

3. The stewards should circulate among our friends, a subscription payable quarterly to supply the deficiency in the preacher's allowance; and if there shall be any surplus arising from the class collections and the quarterly subscriptions, it shall be appropriated for the support of missions, unless otherwise ordered by the official board.

See index, title, Support.

CHAPTER XI.

MISSIONS.

¶ 145. The name of this Board is the General Missionary Board of the Free Methodist Church of North America. The objects for which this corporation is formed are:

To collect, receive, hold, expend, pay out or dispose of any property, real or personal, or of whatever nature, and wherever situate as allowed by law, that may be given, obtained or held in aid of the General Missionary work of the Free Methodist church.

To acquire by purchase, gifts or devise, real estate or personal property in the United States of North America, or in the foreign land, and to hold or sell or convey the same as in its judgment may be necessary in the prosecution of its missionary work.

¶ 146. The General Missionary Board shall be composed of the General Superintendents, three members of the W. F. M. S., elected by the General Society at its quadrennial meeting, a member from each of the General Conference missionary districts, a Secretary and a Treasurer to be elected by the General Conference by ballot. The President of the General Board shall be elected from their own number by ballot. This Board shall continue in office until the next session of the General Conference,

and until others shall be elected in their places. It shall have an annual meeting, a personal notice of which, signed by the President and Secretary, shall be sent to each member of the Board three weeks previous to the meeting and shall appear in two issues of the Free Methodist. If from any cause a member of this Board shall cease to be a member of the Free Methodist church or shall remove from the bounds of the district that he represents his place upon the Board shall be declared vacant. Vacancies shall be filled by the Board from the districts where the vacancy occurs, excepting the office of the Secretary and the Treasurer, which vacancies shall be filled by the Executive Committee. It shall be the duty of this Board to act as an Advisory Committee to its Directors.

¶ 147. It shall be the duty of the Directors of the Board to take charge of all moneys raised for general and foreign missionary work, and appropriate the same to the extension and support of the general and foreign mission work, provided they shall appropriate all the moneys to the purpose for which they were contributed.

The Directors of the Board shall accept and appoint missionaries to their respective fields, order the expenditure of funds upon each field, make appropriations from the contingent fund to meet exigencies as they may arise from time to time, and perform all the duties of the Board and such other work as is contemplated in the articles of incorporation.

¶ 148. The Secretary of the General Missionary Board shall keep the records of the Board, receive

and answer all correspondence relating to the missionary work of the church, and pay over to the Treasurer of the Board all moneys received by him, taking his receipt for the same. He shall also have charge of the missionary interests of the church, subject to the orders and under direction of the Directors of the Board, excepting in some sudden emergency, when he may be at liberty to act without waiting for orders from the Directors, provided that such action taken shall be subject to the approval or disapproval of the Board of Directors. He may with the consent of the President of the Board of Directors and a majority of the Directors make general calls from time to time for a special collection, or for donations for some particular purpose, in order to provide for contingencies that may arise on the mission fields.

¶ 149. The Treasurer shall receive all moneys accruing to foreign and general missions by collections, donations, bequests, or otherwise, giving receipts for the same, and shall pay over, upon order of the Secretary, whatever sums have been appropriated by the Directors of the Board. He shall deposit all funds in some national bank or trust company, selected by the Board, in the name of the General Missionary Board of the Free Methodist Church of North America, to be drawn only upon the order of the Secretary and Treasurer.

¶ 150. The treasurer shall receive all moneys accruing to foreign and general missions, by collections, donations, bequests, or otherwise, giving receipts for the same, and shall pay over, upon order of the secretary, whatever sums have been

appropriated by the board. He shall deposit all funds in some national bank, selected by the board, in the name of the General Missionary Board of the Free Methodist Church of North America, to be drawn only upon the order of the treasurer and secretary.

¶ 151. The president of the board shall, with the consent of a majority of its members, make a general call from time to time, for a special collection, to provide funds for any contingency that may arise in the mission fields.

¶ 152. It shall be the duty of the board to take charge of all moneys raised for general and foreign missionary work, and appropriate the same to the extension and support of the general and foreign mission work, provided they shall appropriate all moneys to the purpose for which they were contributed.

¶ 153. Titles to land purchased for missions in foreign lands shall be in the name of the General Missionary Board of the Free Methodist Church of North America, and deeded to trustees elected by the general missionary board, the tenure of whose office shall be subject to said board.

¶ 154. The missionary board shall publish in the official organ of the church, quarterly reports of all receipts, and make full reports to each annual conference, of receipts for the preceding year; and to the general conference at their respective sessions of all moneys received and disbursed by them, and of the results of such appropriations as far as can be ascertained.

¶ 155. It shall be the duty of each preacher in

charge of a circuit to hold one or more missionary meetings on his circuit during the year, and take a collection and circulate a subscription for the support of foreign missions.

¶ 156. It shall be the duty of each preacher in charge of a circuit to raise for general missions, by public collection or otherwise, a sum not less than fifteen cents per annum, for each member in full connection, to be forwarded to the treasurer of the general missionary board.

¶ 157. Each annual conference may organize a conference missionary society, which shall have charge of all missions within its bounds. It shall have power to employ missionaries to labor within its bounds, who, with the concurrence of the president and district elders, shall be authorized to establish new societies where the interests of the cause of God require, provided that it makes provision and be responsible for the support of all the missionaries which it employs.

¶ 158. Each annual conference may, from time to time, by vote, appropriate of its mission funds such sums to the general missionary board as in its judgment may be deemed proper. Each annual conference may, by such means as it shall judge best, raise funds for the support of missions within its bounds.

¶ 159. The various annual conferences shall be grouped in general conference missionary districts as follows:

District No. 1—Genesee, New York, and Eastern Ontario. No. 2—Susquehanna, Oil City, and Pittsburg. No. 3—East Michigan, North Michigan, and

Western Ontario. No. 4—Michigan, Ohio, North Indiana, Wabash, Kentucky and Tennessee, Louisiana, and Texas. No. 5—Central Illinois, Illinois, Kansas, Missouri, Arkansas and Southern Missouri. No. 6—Iowa, Minnesota and Northern Iowa, North Minnesota, Wisconsin, West Iowa, North Dakota, and South Dakota. No. 7—West Kansas, Nebraska, Platte River, Colorado, California, Southern California, Oregon, Washington, Columbia River, and Oklahoma.

¶ 160. Members of the board: Edward P. Hart, Burton R. Jones, Walter A. Sellew, Wilson T. Hogue, Benjamin Winget, secretary; Samuel K. J. Chesbro, treasurer; for district No. 1, Thomas Sully; district No. 2, John S. McGear; district No. 3, Frank J. Calkins; district No. 4, William B. Olmstead; district No. 5, J. H. Porter; district No. 6, J. Graham; district No. 7, C. E. Harroun, Jr.; for W. F. M. S., Mary L. Coleman, Tressa R. Arnold, Mary M. Robinson.

Directors of the board: Burton R. Jones, Benjamin Winget, Samuel K. J. Chesbro, Wilson T. Hogue, William B. Olmstead.

CHAPTER XII.

CLAIMANTS AND CLAIMS.

¶ 161. The missionary board shall constitute a board of conference claimants.

¶ 162. The funds of this society shall be known as the conference claimants' fund, and shall consist of the proceeds accruing from the endowment fund and collections taken by the annual conferences for said claimants' fund.

¶ 163. It shall be the duty of every preacher in charge of a circuit to raise annually an amount equal to five cents per member in full connection, which money, together with gifts, bequests and legacies which may be received for this purpose, shall constitute a perpetual endowment fund which shall be invested by the board, the proceeds therefrom to be appropriated to the conference claimants' fund.

¶ 164. The claimants upon this fund shall be superannuated preachers, missionaries to foreign lands, and the widows and children of deceased preachers and missionaries to foreign lands; and no claimant shall receive annually from said fund an amount greater than the regular disciplinary allowance.

¶ 165. In the case of superannuated missionaries who have served in foreign lands the amount allowed shall be fixed by the missionary board.

¶ 166. The allowance for superannuated preachers shall be five dollars per year for the first ten years of effective service after having been received into the conference in full connection, and ten dollars per year for the next ten years, making one hundred and fifty dollars the full claim—provided the preacher is without so much of worldly goods as shall be necessary for his support. By “effective service” shall be understood the time actually employed by a preacher as directed by his conference.

¶ 167. The above provision shall apply to the widows of traveling and superannuated preachers, as long as they shall remain members of the Free Methodist church, and if the superannuated preacher die, then his full claim shall be paid to his wife at the ensuing annual conference. If a minister should marry after being superannuated, no claim shall be allowed his widow or children, the issue of such marriage.

¶ 168. The board of conference claimants shall be provided with blanks furnished by the Publishing House on which the applicant for a claim on the superannuate fund shall state in full to the committee on conference claimants and claims, the circuits or charges in any of the annual conferences on which he has labored since becoming a member of the conference, and shall also make a certified statement of all his worldly resources and of his actual yearly income, and also a statement of his bodily disabilities.

¶ 169. On the death of a preacher, leaving a child or children without so much of worldly goods as shall be necessary to his, her or their support, the

annual conference of which he was a member shall estimate, according to the provision of this chapter, a yearly sum for the subsistence of such orphan child or children, until he, she or they shall have arrived at fourteen years of age, the amount of which yearly sum shall be fixed by committee of the conference at each session in advance. This sum shall in no case exceed thirty-six dollars for each child.

¶ 170. Each annual conference may, in its discretion, order collections for necessitous cases amongst its claimants or other laborers, and the money so collected shall be divided by the annual conference as in the exercise of its discretion the necessities of each case may demand.

¶ 171. Each annual conference is earnestly recommended to provide houses as far as practicable for the use of the superannuated preachers or the widows of preachers. If any of our people who have property will do so, let it be deeded to the trustees of the Free Methodist Church for the use of superannuated preachers.

¶ 172. It shall be the duty of the board to estimate the amount necessary to be raised for the claimants in addition to the endowment fund, and apportion the same pro rata upon the entire membership of the church, which apportionment, together with five cents per member for the endowment fund, shall be raised by conference collections.

¶ 173. We recommend that each annual conference employing men or women, or both, as supplies on circuits make suitable provision for their preser-

vation from financial embarrassment when worn out or broken down in the work.

¶ 174. It shall be the duty of the board to make a division of its funds based upon the number of claimants, and not to exceed their regular disciplinary allowance, and to forward the same to the general superintendent presiding at each annual conference, which shall divide it according to the appropriation of said conference.

¶ 175. The board shall make a report of all its doings to the general conference.

¶ 176. Any annual conference deficient in its collection shall have the amount of its deficiency deducted from the amount of its appropriation by the board.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE CHURCH EXTENSION SOCIETY.

¶ 177. The missionary board shall constitute *The Church Extension Society of the Free Methodist Church of North America.

¶ 178. The object of this society shall be to aid needy churches or societies by donations or loans for the erection of churches.

¶ 179. Each annual conference shall appoint a society of five members which shall constitute a conference church extension and aid society, the officers of which shall be a president, secretary and treasurer.

¶ 180. The conference church extension and aid society shall be auxiliary to the general society, and shall, under its direction, have charge of all the work of the church extension and aid society within its bounds.

¶ 181. The treasurer of the conference society shall, at least once in three months, remit all funds in his hands to the treasurer of the general society.

¶ 182. It shall be the duty of the conference society to arrange for a collection to be taken at each appointment on every circuit, for church extension, to be forwarded to the treasurer of the church extension society. We recommend that an amount

*The incorporate name of this society.

equal to at least ten cents per member be raised for this fund.

¶ 183. All applications for aid shall be made in accordance with blank forms furnished by the general society, and shall set forth:

1. The number of members of the Free Methodist Society, and the size of the congregation.

2. The fact that the board of trustees is legally incorporated.

3. The size and valuation of the site, the validity of the title, and whether deeded to the Free Methodist Church.

4. A description of the building for which aid is asked.

5. The estimated cost.

6. The amount of available and reliable means secured.

7. Any other information that the general society may require.

¶ 184. All such applications for aid shall be first submitted to the conference society, and said society shall certify its action thereon to the general society; and aid shall be granted only by the concurrent action of the general society and the conference society.

¶ 185. The conference society shall make a full report of its work to the conference at its annual session.

¶ 186. The church extension society shall publish in the official paper of the church an annual report of its work, and also submit a full report quadrennially to the general conference.

CHAPTER XIV.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

¶ 187. In order to promote the educational work of the church there shall be a board known as the board of education of the Free Methodist Church of North America.

¶ 188. This board shall be composed of the members of the executive committee and the editor of The Free Methodist.

¶ 189. The board shall be incorporated under the laws of the state of Illinois, with its headquarters at the Publishing House in Chicago.

¶ 190. The said board shall manage its own affairs, subject to the provisions of its chapter and the rules and regulations of the general conference.

¶ 191. The board of education shall recognize as under the auspices of the Free Methodist church, and therefore entitled to be mentioned in its classified list of educational institutions and to receive aid from its connectional funds, all those schools of the church which are now known to have the approval of the conferences in which they are respectively located and of such other conferences as may be associated in their management; and also all such schools as shall hereafter be established in accordance with the foregoing conditions and with the approval of the majority of the members of the

educational board, expressed by a vote in one of its regular meetings.

¶ 192. No educational institution shall be recognized by the board as provided for in the foregoing part of this section unless it is established and operated in accord with the conditions hereinbefore mentioned.

¶ 193. In case any institution be hereafter established contrary to the provisions of the foregoing part of this section, the board of education, on formal complaint made to it by any annual conference interested, shall fix a time and place for hearing the authorities of the said institution, and other institutions affected thereby, and shall advise such adjustment of the relations between them as shall seem wise and proper under the circumstances.

¶ 194. The board of education shall receive, invest and disburse all moneys which shall be contributed, collected or otherwise committed to it for general educational purposes.

¶ 195. It shall be the duty of every pastor to preach on Christian education and to take a public collection once a year, in every congregation over which he presides, for general educational purposes.

The money so collected shall be paid over to the treasurer of the annual conference auxiliary to the board of education, if such an auxiliary exists; but where there is no such auxiliary the money shall be forwarded to the treasurer of the board of education, and his receipt taken therefor and brought to the next session of the annual conference. The first Sunday in August is recommended as the time for taking such collections.

¶ 196. It shall also be the duty of every pastor to arrange for every Sunday-school under his charge to observe the first Sunday in June, or, if that date is impracticable, the most convenient Sabbath in the month of June, as children's day, in which one of the regular services shall be a religious service for the children.* As a part of the service a collection shall be taken for the Sunday-school children's fund. He shall forward the amount so collected directly to the treasurer of the board of education, taking his receipt therefor and reporting the same to his annual conference under the head of "children's fund."

¶ 197. All educational money other than the children's fund shall be reported under the head of "general educational fund."

¶ 198. The board of education shall administer the children's fund and all other funds to assist properly accredited young men and young women, who are members of the Free Methodist Church and feel called of God to ministerial or missionary work or teaching in our schools, to procure such educational training as preparation for their work requires; provided, that no part of the children's fund shall be appropriated to any student except such as shall have been a regular scholar in some Free Methodist Sunday-school for a period of six months or more, and also provided, that none of the educational funds shall be appropriated to any student

*It shall not be permissible, however, in connection with the "Children's Day" service to introduce anything of a character disapproved by paragraphs 11 and 135 of the Discipline.

except such as pursues his studies in some one of the institutions recognized as Free Methodist schools. The aid shall be granted only in the form of loans, but the board may cancel such loans, in part or in whole, for protracted illness, or for five years of actual missionary service.

¶ 199. The board of education shall publish an annual report of all the business transacted, including moneys or other property received, funds invested and funds disbursed. Their report shall also include a classified list of all the educational institutions under the patronage of the Free Methodist church.

¶ 200. The board of education shall recognize as auxiliaries such educational societies as may at any time be created by an annual conference, provided such societies prosecute their work in harmony with the principles and methods of the board of education.

¶ 201. The schools now recognized as under the auspices of the Free Methodist church are divided into two classes—colleges and seminaries. According to this classification the list is as follows:

COLLEGES.

Greenville College.

SEMINARIES.

The A. M. Chesbrough Seminary.

Spring Arbor Seminary.

Evansville Seminary.

Wessington Springs Seminary.

Seattle Seminary.

Orleans Seminary.

CHAPTER XV.

CHURCH PROPERTY.

I.—TRUSTEES.

¶ 202. The board of trustees for church property shall consist of not less than three nor more than nine persons, at least two-thirds of whom shall be members of the Free Methodist church.

¶ 203. In all cases where the law of states or territories require a specified mode of election, that mode shall be observed; otherwise such trustees shall be elected at the society meeting. All trustees shall hold their office till their successor shall be elected.

¶ 204. Boards of trustees shall report all business transacted to the annual circuit meeting, and to the society whenever requested to do so by the preacher in charge, the official board or by the society. They shall also make an annual statement of the financial condition of the property in their care.

¶ 205. If a member of our church holding the office of trustee withdraws from the church, is dismissed by letter or expelled, or removes beyond the bounds of the circuit for which he was elected, the society may declare his place in board vacant, except in states or territories where the law will not allow this to be done.

¶ 206. No other denomination shall be permitted to hold stated appointments in any of our churches

without the consent of both the preacher in charge and a majority of the trustees.

II.—INCORPORATION AND DEEDS.

¶ 207. Before any real estate is purchased for either church or parsonage property let the society consult some reliable lawyer, provide him with a copy of our Discipline for reference, and wherever the law of the state or territory will permit, proceed legally to incorporate the society. Let the articles of incorporation, where the laws will permit, provide that the society shall be subject to the provisions of the Discipline of the Free Methodist Church of North America and that the secular affairs of the corporation shall be managed and controlled by trustees elected according to the provisions of said Discipline. When such incorporation is completed, let the deed be made out directly to the society in its corporate name and not to individual trustees, and in all cases it shall contain the trust clause in the next paragraph.

¶ 208. In states where the law requires church property to be held by trustees and in states where incorporations can not be secured as provided for in the preceding paragraph, let all deeds be made to trustees, naming them and their successors in office and containing the following trust clause: "In trust for the use and benefit of the membership of the Free Methodist Church of North America, incorporated under the name of 'Free Methodist General Conference of North America,' subject to the Discipline, usages and ministerial appointment of said church, as from time to time authorized and

declared; and, if sold, the proceeds shall be disposed of and used in accordance with the provisions of said Discipline; and in further trust and confidence that in the houses of worship now erected or that may hereafter be erected on said premises hereby conveyed, the seats shall be forever free; and in further trust and confidence that the said trustees and their successors in office shall permit at all times the preachers who may be duly authorized according to the Discipline of the said Free Methodist church, to hold religious services in said houses of worship according to said Discipline."

¶ 209. No deed shall be accepted which contains a clause by which the land conveyed may revert to the original grantor, his heirs or assigns.

¶ 210. All deeds should be immediately recorded and in all their parts should be made to conform to the laws, usages and forms of the state or territory in which the property may be situated.

¶ 211. In no case shall the church or parsonage property be sold, mortgaged or encumbered for current expenses.

¶ 212. Whenever it may become necessary or advisable to dispose of any church property, the trustees may sell and convey the same by first securing the authority of the society for such sale, and the approval of the district elder and the consent of the general conference, or in the intervals of the same, of two-thirds of the members of the executive committee, provided that in all cases the proceeds of such sale shall be used either for the purchase or improvement of property for the same uses and deeded to the same corporation or trustees; or if

not so used, shall be held subject to the order of the annual conference in whose territory such property may be situated.

¶ 213. Whenever any church property is abandoned or is no longer used for church purposes, it shall be the duty of the trustees, if any remain, to sell such property and turn over the proceeds of such sale to the annual conference. If no such trustees remain, it shall be the duty of the annual conference to take possession of such property by any means lawful in the state or territory in which the property may be situated, and the annual conference may sell and convey the same, the proceeds of such sale to be used as said conference may direct.

III.—BUILDING CHURCHES.

¶ 214. All our houses of worship must be built plain and neat, without steeples, and no more expensive than is absolutely required for comfort, convenience and stability, and with all seats free.

¶ 215. No step shall be taken involving pecuniary liability in erecting houses of worship, parsonages or in purchasing church property of any kind, until two-thirds of the amount necessary to meet the estimate of cost be secured in good, reliable subscriptions.

¶ 216. No houses of worship, parsonages or other church buildings shall be erected on leased ground, except on reservations or other places where it is impossible to secure a deed in fee, or without the unanimous consent of the conference board of church extension and aid society of the annual conference in whose territory the property is situated.

CHAPTER XVI.
CHURCH TRIALS.

SECTION I.

¶ 217. The great object of church discipline is to reclaim and restore the erring member. This should be steadily kept in view in every step that is taken. Every effort that love can suggest should be made to bring back to the Lord one who, while under our care, has wandered from him.

¶ 218. In all cases of personal trespass, and in other cases where the circumstances permit, let the duty be lovingly and faithfully performed, which our Lord enjoins in Matthew xviii, 15th to 17th verses: "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican."

¶ 219. If the last duty becomes necessary, let it be performed in the following manner:

SECTION II.

GENERAL DIRECTIONS.

¶ 220. 1. Every crime forbidden in the word of God, sufficient to exclude a person from the kingdom of grace and glory, shall subject a member to expulsion from the church.

2. An accused person shall be entitled to the assistance of such counsel as he may select from the members or ministers of our church.

3. Both the accused and the accuser shall have the right of challenge for cause, the validity of which shall be determined by the presiding officer at the society meeting where the committee to try the case is elected.

4. In all trials the proceedings shall be taken down by a secretary appointed by the court; and when an appeal is taken, the case shall be decided from the testimony as it appears upon the record.

5. In appeal cases, no person shall be allowed to sit who has previously voted in the decision of the case.

6. In all appeal cases the appellant shall present the counsel for the church a statement in writing of the grounds of his appeal, at least five days before the trial of the appeal.

7. In the trial of appeal cases the court shall either affirm or reverse the verdict rendered in the former trial, or remand the case for a new trial; and in cases of remanding for a new trial no person shall be eligible as a juror in the new trial who voted on the first trial.

8. After such forms of trial and expulsion, such

persons shall have no privileges of society or sacraments in our church, without contrition, confession and reformation satisfactory to the conference or society from which they have withdrawn or by which they have been expelled.

SECTION III.

TRIAL OF MEMBERS.

¶ 221. The neglect of duties required by the word of God, or indulgence of sinful tempers, words or actions, shall subject the person so offending to private reproof by the official members of the church having the oversight of the offender; and in case of persistence after proper admonition and labor, to trial and censure, being placed on probation, or expulsion, as the committee may determine, provided that no charge of the character referred to in this paragraph, including the charge of falsehood, shall be entertained until the party complained of has been labored with as required by ¶ 218.

¶ 222. Any member against whom a charge is brought shall be furnished by the persons bringing the charge, or by the presiding officer of the tribunal to which he is judicially responsible, with a copy of the charges against him, at least fourteen days before the trial, unless the parties against whom charges are brought shall demand an earlier trial. He shall also be notified of the place of the election of the committee to try the case at least ten days prior to its election.

¶ 223. When charges are preferred against a member, the preacher who is to preside at the trial shall call a meeting of the society, who shall select

a committee of not less than three, nor more than nine, who shall be members of our church, within the bounds of the annual conference, to try the case.

¶ 224. The preacher in charge shall preside at the trial of members, but the district elder may, for sufficient reasons, appoint some other traveling preacher in full connection to preside at any particular trial. The district elder shall not preside at such trial.

¶ 225. Any member who has been tried and convicted by a committee, shall be entitled to an appeal to the next quarterly conference, provided he did not voluntarily absent himself from the trial, and provided he gave notice of his intention to appeal at the time of his condemnation, or within thirty days after he shall have been notified thereof.

¶ 226. In case a member who has been expelled from the church shall afterward be proven innocent of the charge upon which he was expelled he may be restored to full membership in the church by vote of the society from which he was expelled.

SECTION IV.

TRIAL OF PREACHERS.

¶ 227. The neglect of duties required by the word of God, or the indulgence of sinful tempers, words, or actions, as well as the dissemination of false doctrine, shall subject a preacher so offending to private reproof by the official member of the church having the oversight of the offending brother; and, in case of persistence after proper admonition and labor, to trial, suspension from ministerial functions or expulsion.

¶ 228. Any preacher against whom a charge is brought, shall be furnished by the person preferring the charge, or by the presiding officer of the tribunal, to which he is judicially responsible, with a copy of the charges against him, at least ten days before the trial, unless all the parties agree upon an earlier time for trial.

¶ 229. An accused local preacher shall be tried by the quarterly conference of which he is a member; or, at his option, by a committee of not less than three nor more than nine, chosen for this purpose by the quarterly conference, which shall have power to reprove, suspend or expel, according to the nature of the case and as righteousness may require. The district elder shall preside at the trial.

¶ 230. If a charge of gross immorality is brought against a local preacher in the interval of the quarterly conference, the district elder shall call a committee of not less than three members of the quarterly conference, which shall have power to suspend until the next session of the quarterly conference, with which shall rest the decision of the case.

¶ 231. A preacher on trial in an annual conference shall be accountable for his moral and Christian conduct to the quarterly conference of the district within the bounds of which he travels. If charges are brought against him, he shall be tried the same as a local preacher.

¶ 232. Any local preacher feeling aggrieved at the decision of his case, shall be allowed an appeal to the ensuing session of the annual conference.

¶ 233. Any traveling preacher who wilfully neglects or refuses to do the work assigned him by his

annual conference, except in case of sickness or other unavoidable circumstances, shall be brought, by the district elder, or the superintendent, before a committee of three ministers and three laymen, which shall have power to suspend him from all the functions of a preacher, until the ensuing session of the annual conference, with which the final determination of the case shall rest, and which shall have power to render the suspension final.

¶ 234. If a charge of immorality or of unchristian conduct is brought against a traveling preacher in the interval of the annual conference, the district elder shall call a committee of not less than three or more than six traveling preachers, and an equal number of laymen, which shall have power to suspend until the next session of the annual conference, with which shall rest the decision of the case.

¶ 235. But if the accused be a district elder, then three of the preachers of his district shall call in the district elder of an adjoining district, who shall call the accused before a committee as above provided, and preside. The district making such a call shall pay the traveling expenses of the district elder so called.

¶ 236. Each annual conference shall have original jurisdiction over all the preachers belonging thereto, and shall have power to reprove, suspend, locate for inefficiency or want of usefulness, or expel according to the nature of the case, and as righteousness may require. This shall not be so construed as to deprive traveling preachers of the ten days' notice provided in ¶ 228, except in case of a preacher charged with gross immorality who voluntarily ab-

sents himself from the session of his annual conference.

¶ 237. All cases brought before an annual conference, either by complaint or by appeal, may be referred to a committee of not less than four from each branch, which, in the presence of the president of the conference, or an elder whom he may appoint (provided that neither party objects to the person so appointed) shall, either during its session or after its adjournment, try the case and decide upon its merits, and its decision shall have the same effect as that of the annual conference.

¶ 238. In all cases of trial and conviction of traveling preachers, an appeal to the ensuing general conference or court of appeals, as the appellant may choose, shall be allowed, if the condemned person signifies his intention to appeal, at the time of condemnation, or within thirty days after he shall have been notified thereof.

¶ 239. All cases brought before the general conference by appeal, may, with the consent of both parties, be referred to a committee of not less than six ministerial and six lay delegates, which, in the presence of one of the superintendents, shall hear the case, and decide upon its merits; and its decision shall have the same effect as that of the general conference.

SECTION V.

FORMS OF PROCEDURE.

I.—FORM FOR A BILL OF CHARGES.

- ¶ 240. 1. Charge. (Name the offense.)
 2. Specifications. (Name the acts, times and places.)

II.—ORDER.

ORDER OF CONDUCTING CHURCH TRIALS.

¶ 241. 1. Devotional exercises.

2. Reading of the action of the society meeting or conference by which the committee to try the case was appointed, and the names of the committee.

3. The appointment of a secretary.

4. Reading the charges and specifications by the secretary.

5. Answer by the accused in person or by counsel.

6. Statement of the case, and line of evidence by the prosecution.

7. Evidence of the prosecution, and cross-examination by the defense.

8. Statement of the case and line of defense, by the defense.

9. Evidence for the defense, and cross-examination by the prosecution.

10. Rebutting evidence for the prosecution.

11. Rebutting evidence for the defense.

12. Summing up the case by the prosecution.

13. Summing up the case by the defense.

14. In case it be deemed proper to allow the prosecution to reply, the defense shall also be permitted to reply.

15. The verdict.

SECTION VI.

RESTORATION OF CREDENTIALS.

¶ 242. 1. When a member of an annual conference is deprived of his credentials, by expulsion or otherwise, they shall be filed with the papers of his

conference; and should he, at any future time, give satisfactory evidence to the said conference of his amendment, and procure a certificate from the quarterly conference of the charge where he resides or from an annual conference which may have received him on trial, recommending to the annual conference of which he was formerly a member the restoration of his credentials, the said conference may restore them.

2. When a local elder or deacon shall be expelled the district elder shall require of him the credentials of his ordination, to be filed with the papers of the annual conference within the limits of which the expulsion has taken place; and should he, at any future time, produce to the annual conference a certificate of his restoration, signed by the president and countersigned by the secretary of the quarterly conference, his credentials may be restored to him.

3. If an ordained elder or deacon shall refuse to surrender his credentials of ordination when lawfully required to do so, he thereby forfeits his parchments, and, at its first session thereafter, his annual conference should declare them forfeited.

SECTION VII.

INSOLVENCIES AND THE SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES.

¶ 243. In case of disputes between two or more members of our church, concerning the payment of debts, or other matters not involving personal character, which cannot be settled by the parties concerned, the preacher who has charge of the circuit shall inquire into the circumstances of the case;

and shall recommend to the contending parties a reference, consisting of one arbiter chosen by the plaintiff, and another chosen by the defendant, which two arbiters so chosen shall nominate a third; the three arbiters being members of our church.

¶ 244. But if one of these parties be dissatisfied with the judgment given, such parties may apply to the ensuing quarterly conference for allowance to have a second arbitration appointed; and if the quarterly conference see sufficient reason, they shall grant a second arbitration, in which case each party shall choose two arbiters, and the four arbiters shall choose a fifth, the judgment of the majority of whom shall be final; and any person refusing to abide by such judgment shall be excluded from the church.

¶ 245. And if any member of our church shall refuse, in case of debt or other disputes, to refer the matter to arbitration, when recommended by him who has charge of the circuit, or shall enter into a lawsuit with another before such measures are taken, he shall be expelled by a regular trial, according to discipline, unless the case be of such a nature as to require or justify a process of law.

¶ 246. Whenever a complaint is made against any member of our church for non-payment of debt, when the accounts are adjusted, and the amount is ascertained, the preacher in charge of the circuit shall call the debtor before a committee of at least three, to show the cause why he does not make payment. The committee shall determine what further time shall be granted him for payment; and in case the debtor refuses to comply he shall be expelled; but in such case he may appeal to the quarterly

conference, and their decision shall be final. And in case the creditor complains that justice is not done him, he may lay his grievance before the quarterly conference, and their decision shall be final; and if the creditor refuses to comply he shall be expelled.

¶ 247. To prevent scandal, when any member of our church shall fail in business, or contract debts which he is not able to pay, two or three judicious members of the church shall inspect the accounts, contracts and circumstances of the case of the supposed delinquent; and if he has behaved dishonestly, or borrowed money without a probability of paying, he shall be expelled.

See index, title, Trials.

THE RITUAL.

SECTION I.

BAPTISM.

¶ 248. 1. Adult persons and the parents of each child to be baptized, shall have the choice either of immersion, sprinkling, or pouring.

2. We will on no account whatever, make a charge for administering baptism, or for burying the dead.

SECTION II.

BAPTISM OF INFANTS.

[The minister coming to the font, which is to be filled with pure water, shall use the following:]

¶ 249. Dearly beloved, forasmuch as our Savior, Christ, saith, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven;" and as the holy apostle St. Peter, declares that, "The promise is unto you and to your children," therefore this child has been brought hither that he may be consecrated by this solemn ordinance to the service of his Creator, and that he may receive the sign and seal of the covenant of grace

into which God is mercifully pleased to enter with all his children;

I beseech you to call upon God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that of his bounteous mercy he will grant unto this child, that he being made partaker of the divine nature may grow up into Christ our living head, in all things, till he comes in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; and unto these parents the needed grace that they may properly discharge all the duties they owe to this child which God has given them.

[Then shall the minister say:]

Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, the aid of all who need, the helper of all who flee to thee for succor, the covenant-keeping God, we thank thee that thou hast made it our privilege to dedicate our children to thy service, that they may live to thy glory, and gain everlasting life. We call upon thee for this child that he may be delivered from the power of sin and Satan, and be sanctified by the power of the Holy Ghost, and enjoy the everlasting benediction of thy heavenly washing. We pray thee for these parents, that they may realize how great is the responsibility resting upon them touching the proper training of those entrusted to their care; we beseech thee to grant unto them the aid of thy Holy Spirit, that both by precept and example they may so lead this child in the narrow way of life, that both parent and child may come to the everlasting king-

dom, which thou hast promised by Christ our Lord. Amen.

[Then shall the people stand up and the minister shall say:]

Hear the words of the gospel written by St. Mark, in the tenth chapter commencing with the thirteenth verse:

They brought young children to Christ, that he should touch them. And his disciples rebuked those that brought them; but when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he cannot enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them and blessed them.

[Then shall the minister demand of the parents severally, as follows:]

¶ 250. Ques. Dost thou, in the presence of God, and of these witnesses, solemnly dedicate this child to the Lord, that he may live in his service all his days?

Ans. I do.

Ques. Dost thou, so far as thou canst, in his behalf, renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same, and the sinful desires of the flesh, so that, in the training of this child, thou wilt not follow nor be led by them; and so that, as tar as

in thee lies, thou wilt prevent him from following the same?

Ans. I do.

Ques. Dost thou believe in the holy scriptures of the Old and New Testament?

Ans. I do.

Ques. Wilt thou, out of the same, diligently teach this child the statutes and commandments of the Most High; and wilt thou train him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?

Ans. I will.

[Then the minister shall take the child into his hands and say to the friends of the child:]

Name this child.

[And then, naming it after them, he shall sprinkle or pour water upon it, or, if desired, immerse it in water, saying:]

N., I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

[Then he shall say, all kneeling:]

Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

[Then shall the minister conclude with extemporary prayer.]

SECTION III.

BAPTISM OF ADULTS.

¶ 251. Dearly beloved, since all men are by nature sinners, and have nothing in themselves by which they can be delivered from the guilt and pollution of sin, and attain to that holiness without which no man can see the Lord, we invite you to join with us in fervent prayer for these persons, that they may have grace always to keep their covenant with God, and that they may continually enjoy the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.

[Then shall the minister say:]

Almighty and immortal God, the aid of all that need, the helper of all that flee to thee for succor, the life of them that believe, and the resurrection of the dead; we call upon thee for these persons; that they, coming to thy holy baptism, may receive the inward baptism of the Holy Ghost. Receive them, O Lord, as thou hast promised by thy well-beloved Son, saying, Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; so give now unto us that ask; let us that seek, find; open the gate unto us that knock; that these persons may enjoy the everlasting benediction of thy heavenly washing, and may come to the eternal kingdom which thou hast promised by Christ our Lord. Amen.

[Then shall the people stand up, and the minister shall say:]

Hear the words of the gospel written by St. John, in the third chapter.

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I say unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but thou canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

[Then the minister shall speak to the person to be baptized in this wise:]

Well beloved, who are come hither, desiring to receive holy baptism, ye have heard how the congregation hath prayed that our Lord Jesus Christ would vouchsafe to receive you, and bless you, to give you the kingdom of heaven, and everlasting life. And our Lord Jesus Christ hath promised, in his holy word, to grant all those things that we have prayed for, which promise he for his part will most surely keep and perform.

Wherefore, after this promise made by Christ, you must also faithfully for your part, promise, in the presence of this whole congregation, that you will renounce the devil and all his works, and constantly believe God's holy word, and obediently keep his commandments.

[Then shall the minister demand of each of the persons to be baptized severally:]

Ques. Dost thou renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same, and the carnal de-

sires of the flesh, so that thou wilt not follow nor be led by them?

Ans. I renounce them all.

Ques. Dost thou believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth? and in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord? and that he was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary? that he suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; that he arose again on the third day; that he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty, and from thence shall come again, at the end of the world, to judge the quick and the dead?

And dost thou believe in the Holy Ghost, the communion of saints; the remission of sins; the resurrection of the body, and everlasting life after death?

Ans. All this I steadfastly believe.

Ques. Wilt thou be baptized in this faith?

Ans. This is my desire.

Ques. Wilt thou obediently keep God's will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of thy life?

Ans. I will endeavor so to do, God being my helper.

[Then shall the minister say:]

O merciful God, grant that the old Adam in these persons may be so buried, that the new man may be raised up in them. Amen.

Grant that all carnal affections may die in them, and that all things belonging to the Spirit may live, and grow in them. Amen.

Grant that they may have power and strength to have victory, and triumph against the devil, the world and the flesh. Amen.

Grant that they, being here dedicated to thee by our office and ministry, may also be endued with heavenly virtues, and everlastingly rewarded through thy mercy, O, blessed Lord God, who dost live; and govern all things, world without end. Amen.

Almighty, ever-living God, whose most dearly beloved Son, Jesus Christ, died for the forgiveness of our sins; and gave commandments to his disciples that they should go and teach all nations and baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; regard, we beseech thee, the supplications of this congregation; and grant that the persons now to be baptized may receive the fullness of thy grace, and ever remain in the number of thy faithful and elect children, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Congregation be seated
 [Then shall the minister take by the right hand each person to be baptized, and placing him conveniently by the font, according to his discretion, shall ask the name, and then sprinkle or pour water upon him (or if he shall desire it, shall immerse him in water), saying:]

N., I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

[Then shall be said the Lord's Prayer, all kneeling, concluding with extemporary prayer and the benediction.]

SECTION IV.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

GENERAL DIRECTION.

¶ 252. 1. Let all our ministers exercise due care to see that no person known to be living an immoral life, or to be guilty of any disreputable practice be admitted to the Lord's table among us until he shall have given satisfactory evidence of repentance and amendment of life.

2. All persons properly included in the general invitation may be allowed to partake of the Lord's supper among us.

ORDER FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

[The elder may say:]

¶ 253. Ye that do truly and earnestly repent of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbors, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking henceforth in his holy ways, draw near with faith, and take this holy sacrament to your comfort; and make your humble confession to Almighty God, meekly kneeling upon your knees.

[Then may this general confession be made:]

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men; we acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we from time to time most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against thy

Divine Majesty, provoking most justly thy wrath and indignation against us. We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us. Have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us, most merciful Father, for thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, forgive us all that is past; and grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please thee in newness of life, to the honor and glory of thy name, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

[Or in place of it the elder may say the Lord's Prayer, the people repeating after him every petition.]

Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

[Then may the elder say:]

O Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of thy great mercy hast promised forgiveness of sins to all them that with hearty repentance and true faith, turn unto thee; have mercy upon us; pardon and deliver us from our sins, confirm and strengthen us in all goodness, and bring us to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

THE COLLECT.

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are opened, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are

hid; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name, through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

[Then may the elder say:]

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, Almighty and everlasting God.

Therefore, with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name, evermore praising thee, and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of thy glory, Glory be to thee, O Lord most high. Amen.

[Then may the elder say:]

We do not presume to come to this thy table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy table. But thou art the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy; grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son, Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may live and grow thereby, and that being washed through his most precious blood, we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

[Then may the elder say the prayer of consecration, as follows:]

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of thy tender mercy didst give thine only Son, Jesus

Christ, to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there, by his oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy gospel command us to continue a perpetual memory of that his precious death until his coming again; hear us, O merciful Father, we most humbly beseech thee, and grant that we, receiving these, thy creatures of bread and wine, according to thy Son, our Savior Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion may be partakers of his most blessed body and blood; who in the same night that he was betrayed, took bread;

[Here the elder may take the plate of bread into his hand.]

and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me. Likewise after supper he took the cup;

[Here he may take the cup in his hand.]

and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this; for this

[And here he may lay his hand upon all the vessels which contain the wine.]

is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins; do this as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me. Amen.

[Then may the minister first receive the communion in both kinds himself, and then proceed to deliver the same to

the other ministers in like manner (if any there be present), and after that to the people also, in order, into their hands. And when he delivers the bread he shall say:]

The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy soul and body unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart, by faith, with thanksgiving

[And the minister that delivers the cup may say:]

The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy soul and body unto everlasting life. Drink this in remembrance that Christ's blood was shed for thee, and be thankful.

[If the consecrated bread or wine shall be all spent before all have communicated, the elder may consecrate more, by repeating the prayer of consecration.

When all have communicated the minister shall return to the Lord's table and place upon it what remaineth of the consecrated elements, covering the same with a fair linen cloth.

Here the elder may offer extempore prayer, concluding with this blessing:]

May the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord; and the blessings of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, be among you and remain with you always. Amen.

FORM OF ORDINATION.

SECTION V.

ORDAINING ELDERS.

¶ 254. [When the day appointed for the ordination is come there shall be a sermon or exhortation, declaring the duty and office of elder; how necessary that order is in the church of Christ, and also how the people ought to esteem them in their office.]

One of the elders shall then present unto the president all who are to be ordained, and say:]

I present unto you these persons present to be ordained elders.

[Their names being read aloud, the president shall say unto the people:]

Brethren, these are they whom we purpose, God willing, this day to ordain elders. For after due examination, we find not to the contrary, but that they are lawfully called to this function and ministry, and that they are persons meet for the same. But if any of you know any impediment or crime in any of them, for which he ought not to be received into this holy ministry, come forth in the name of God, and show what the crime or impediment is.

[If any crime or impediment be alleged, the president shall cease from ordaining that person until such time as he shall be found clear of the crime.]

[Then shall be said the collect, epistle, and gospel as follows:]

THE COLLECT.

Almighty God, Giver of all good things, who by thy Holy Spirit hast appointed divers orders of

ministers in thy church, mercifully behold these, thy servants, now called to the office of elder, and replenish them so with the truth of thy doctrine and adorn them with innocency of life, that both by word and good example they may faithfully serve thee in this office, to the glory of thy name and the edification of thy church, through the mercies of our Savior, Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen.

THE EPISTLE.

Eph. iv, 7-13. Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

[After this shall be read for the gospel, part of the tenth chapter of St. John, 1-16.]

Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth

up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice; and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him; for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers. This parable spake Jesus unto them; but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them. Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers; but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door; by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture. The thief cometh not but for to steal and to kill, and to destroy; I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is a hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth; and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is a hireling, and careth not for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.

[And that done, the president shall say unto them as follows:]

¶ 255. You have heard, brethren, in the exhortation which was now made to you, and in the holy lessons taken out of the gospel, and the writings of the apostles of what dignity, and of how great importance this office is whereunto ye are called. And now again we exhort you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you have in remembrance, into how high a dignity and to how weighty an office ye are called; that is to say, to be messengers, watchmen and stewards of the Lord, to teach and to premonish, to feed and to provide for the Lord's family, to seek for Christ's sheep that are dispersed abroad, and for his children that are in the midst of this evil world, that they may be saved through Christ forever.

Have always, therefore, printed in your remembrance, how great a treasure is committed to your charge. For they are the sheep of Christ, which he bought with his death, and for whom he shed his blood. The church and congregation whom you must serve, is his spouse and his body. And if it shall happen, the same church, or any member thereof, do take any hurt or hindrance by reason of your negligence, ye know the greatness of the fault, and also the horrible punishment that will ensue. Wherefore, consider with yourselves the end of the ministry toward the children of God, toward the spouse and body of Christ; and see that you never cease your labor, your care and diligence until you have done all that lieth in you according to your bounden duty to bring all such as are or shall be committed to your charge unto that agreement in

the faith and knowledge of God, and to that ripeness and perfectness of age in Christ, that there be no place left among you, either for error in religion or for viciousness in life.

Forasmuch then, as your office is both of so great excellency, and of so great difficulty, ye see with how great care and study ye ought to apply yourselves, as well that ye may show yourselves dutiful and thankful unto that Lord who hath placed you in so high a dignity; as also to beware that neither you yourself offend, nor be occasion that others offend. Howbeit ye cannot have a mind and will thereto of yourselves; for that will and ability is given of God alone; therefore ye ought, and have need to pray earnestly for his Holy Spirit. And seeing that ye cannot by any other means compass the doing of so weighty a work, pertaining to the salvation of man, but with doctrine and exhortation taken out of the holy scriptures, and with a life agreeable to the same; consider how studious ye ought to be in reading and learning the scriptures, and in framing the manners, both of yourself and of them that specially pertain unto you, according to the rule of the same scripture; and for this selfsame cause, how ye ought to forsake and set aside (as much as ye may) all worldly cares and studies.

We have good hope that you have all weighed and pondered these things with yourselves long before this time; and that you have clearly determined, by God's grace, to give yourselves wholly to this office, whereunto it hath pleased God to call you; so that as much as lieth in you, you will apply yourselves wholly to this one thing, and draw all

your cares and studies this way, and that you will continually pray to God, the Father by the mediation of our only Savior, Jesus Christ, for the heavenly assistance of the Holy Ghost; that by daily reading and weighing of the scriptures, ye may wax riper and stronger in your ministry; and that ye may so endeavor yourselves from time to time to sanctify the lives of you and yours, and to fashion them after the rule and doctrine of Christ, that ye may be wholesome and godly examples, and patterns for the people to follow.

And now that this present congregation of Christ, here assembled, may also understand your minds and wills in these things, and that this, your promise, may the more move you to do your duties, ye shall answer plainly to these things which we, in the name of God and his church, shall demand of you touching the same.

256. Do you think in your heart that you are truly called, according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the gospel ministry, and to perform the duties of an elder?

Ans. I think so.

President: Are you persuaded that the holy scriptures contain sufficiently all doctrines required of necessity for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ? And are you determined out of the said scriptures to instruct the people committed to your charge, and to teach nothing as required of necessity to salvation but that which you shall be persuaded may be concluded and proved by the scriptures?

A. I am so persuaded, and have so determined by God's grace.

P. Will you then give your faithful diligence always so to minister the doctrines and sacraments and discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded?

A. I will do so by the help of the Lord.

P. Will you be ready with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's word; and to use both public and private monitions and exhortations, as well to the sick as to the whole, within your charge, as need shall require and occasion shall be given?

A. I will, the Lord being my helper.

P. Will you be diligent in prayers, and in reading the holy scriptures, and such studies as help to a knowledge of the same, laying aside the study of the world and the flesh?

A. I will endeavor so to do, the Lord being my helper.

P. Will you be diligent to frame and fashion yourself and your family according to the doctrine of Christ; and to make both yourself and them, as much as in you lieth, wholesome examples and patterns to the flock of Christ?

A. I shall apply myself thereto, the Lord being my helper.

P. Will you maintain and set forward as much as lieth in you, quietness, peace, and love, among all Christian people, and especially among those who are or may be committed to your charge?

A. I will do so, the Lord being my helper.

[That done, the president shall pray in this wise, and say:]

Let us pray.

Almighty God and heavenly Father, who of thine infinite love and goodness toward us hast given to us thine only and most dearly beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Redeemer, and the author of everlasting life; who after he had made perfect our redemption by his death, and was ascended into heaven, sent abroad into the world his apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, by whose labor and ministry he gathered together a great flock in all parts of the world, to set forth the eternal praise of thy holy name; for these so great benefits of thy eternal goodness and for that thou hast vouchsafed to call these thy servants here present to the same office and ministry appointed for the salvation of mankind, we render unto thee most hearty thanks; we praise and worship thee; and we humbly beseech thee by the same, thy blessed Son, to grant unto all who either here or elsewhere call upon thy name, that we may continue to show ourselves thankful unto thee, for these, and all other, thy benefits, and that we may daily increase and go forward in the knowledge and faith of thee and thy Son, by the Holy Spirit. So that as well by these thy ministers, as by them over whom they shall be appointed thy ministers, thy holy name may be forever glorified, and thy blessed kingdom enlarged, through the same, thy Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee in the unity of the same Holy Spirit, world without end. Amen.

[When this prayer is done, those to be ordained should remain kneeling, and the president, and the elders present, shall

lay their hands severally upon the head of each of them, and the president shall say:]

The Lord pour upon thee the Holy Ghost for the office and work of an elder in the church of God now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands. And be thou a faithful dispenser of the word of God, and of his holy sacraments; in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

[They shall continue to kneel, and the president shall deliver to each one of them, the Bible into his hands, and shall say:]

Take thou authority to preach the word of God and to administer the holy sacraments in the congregation.

[Then the president shall say:]

Most merciful Father, we beseech thee to send upon these thy servants thy heavenly blessings, that they may be clothed with righteousness and thy word spoken by their mouths may have such success, that it may never be spoken in vain. Grant us also that we may have grace to hear and receive, what they shall deliver out of thy most holy word, or agreeably to the same, as the means of our salvation; and that in all our words and deeds we may seek thy glory and the increase of thy kingdom through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Assist us, O Lord, in all our doings, with thy most gracious favor, and further us with thy continual help, that in all our works begun, continued and ended in thee, we may glorify thy name, and

finally, by thy mercy, obtain everlasting life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord; and the blessings of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be among you, and remain with you always. Amen.

SECTION VI.

MANNER OF ORDAINING DEACONS.

¶ 257. [When the day appointed for the ordination is come, there shall be a sermon or exhortation, declaring the duty and office of such as come to be admitted deacons.

After which one of the elders shall present to the president the persons to be ordained deacons, and their names being read aloud, the president shall say to the people:]

Brethren, if any of you know any crime or impediment in any of these persons presented to be ordained deacon, for which he ought not to be admitted to that office, come forth in the name of God and show what the crime or impediment is.

[If any crime or impediment be alleged, the president shall cease from ordaining that person until such time as he shall be found clear of the crime.

Then shall be read the following collect and epistle:]

THE COLLECT.

Almighty God, who by thy divine providence has appointed divers orders of ministers in thy church, and who didst inspire thy apostles to choose into the order of deacons thy first martyr, St. Stephen, with others; mercifully behold these thy servants,

now called to the like office and administrations; replenish them so with the truth of thy doctrine, and adorn them with innocency of life, that both by word and good example they may faithfully serve thee in this office, to the glory of thy name, and the edification of thy church, through the merits of our Savior, Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and forever. Amen.

THE EPISTLE. I Tim. iii, 8-13.

Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

[Then shall the president examine each one of those who are to be ordained, in the presence of the people, after the manner following:]

Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you the office of the ministry in the church of Christ, to serve God for the promoting of his glory and the edification of his people?

Ans. I trust so.

President. Do you unfeignedly believe all the canonical scriptures of the Old and New Testament?

A. I do believe them.

P. Will you diligently read or expound the same unto the people whom you shall be appointed to serve?

A. I will.

P. It appertaineth to the office of a deacon to assist the elder in divine service. And especially when he ministereth the holy communion, and to help him in the distribution thereof, and to read and expound the holy scriptures; to instruct the youth, and in the absence of the elder to baptize. And, furthermore, it is his office to search for the sick, poor, and impotent, that they may be visited and relieved. Will you do this gladly and willingly?

A. I will do so by the help of God.

P. Will you apply all your diligence to frame and fashion your own lives (and the lives of your families) according to the doctrine of Christ; and to make (both) yourselves (and them) as much as in you lieth, wholesome examples of the flock of Christ?

A. I will do so, the Lord being my helper.

P. Will you reverently obey them to whom the charge and government over you is committed, following with glad mind and will their godly admonitions?

A. I will endeavor so to do, the Lord being my helper.

[The president, laying his hands severally upon the head of each one of them, shall say:]

Take thou authority to execute the office of a deacon in the church of God, in the name of the

Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.
Amen.

[Then shall the president deliver to each one of them the Holy Bible, saying:]

Take thou authority to read the holy scriptures in the church of God, and to preach in the same.

[Then one of them, appointed by the president, shall read the gospel.]

Luke xii, 35-38. Let your loins be girded about and your lights burning, and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching. Verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.

[Then shall the president proceed in the communion, and all that are ordained shall receive the holy communion.

The communion ended, immediately before the benediction, shall be said the collects following:]

Almighty God, Giver of all good things, who of thy great goodness hast vouchsafed to accept and take these thy servants into the office of deacon of thy church; make them, we beseech thee, O Lord, to be modest, humble and constant in their ministration, and to have a ready will to observe all spiritual discipline; that they having always the testimony of a good conscience, and continuing ever

stable and strong in thy Son, Christ Jesus, may so well behave themselves in this inferior office, that they may be found worthy to be called into the higher ministries in thy church, through the same, thy Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ; to whom be glory and honor, world without end. Amen.

Assist us, O Lord, in all our doings, with thy most gracious favor, and further us with thy continual help; that in all our works begun, continued and ended in thee, we may glorify thy holy name, and finally, by thy mercy, obtain everlasting life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

The peace of God which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, be among you, and remain with you always. Amen.

SECTION VII.

FORM OF SOLEMNIZING MATRIMONY.

¶ 258. [At the day and time appointed for the solemnizing of matrimony, the persons to be married standing together, the man on the right hand of the woman, the minister shall say:]

Dearly beloved, we are gathered together here in the sight of God, and in the presence of these witnesses, to join together this man and this woman in holy matrimony; which is an honorable estate, instituted of God in the time of man's innocency, signifying unto us the mystical union that is between Christ and his church; which holy estate Christ adorned and beautified with his presence, and

first miracle that he wrought in Cana of Galilee, and is commended of St. Paul to be honorable among all men; and therefore is not by any to be taken in hand unadvisedly; but reverently, discreetly, and in the fear of God.

Into which holy estate these two persons present come now to be joined. Therefore, if any can show any just cause why they may not lawfully be joined together, let him now speak, or else hereafter forever hold his peace.

[And also speaking unto the persons that are to be married, he may say:]

I require and charge you both (as you will answer at the dreadful day of judgment, when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed) that if either of you know any impediment why you may not be lawfully joined together in matrimony, you do now confess it, for be ye well assured, that so many as are coupled together otherwise than God's word doth allow, are not joined together by God, neither is their matrimony lawful.

[If no impediment be alleged, then shall the minister say unto the man:]

M., wilt thou have this woman to be thy wedded wife, to live together after God's ordinance, in the holy estate of matrimony? Wilt thou love her, comfort her, honor, and keep her, in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all other, keep thee only unto her, so long as ye both shall live?

[Then the man shall answer:]

I will.

SUPPLEMENT

CONFERENCE BOUNDARIES.

¶ 260. 1. Genesee (1860).—The Genesee conference shall embrace that portion of the state of New York lying west of the Genesee river, including Rochester, Mount Morris, Groveland, Belmont, Scio and Wellsville.

¶ 261. 2. Illinois (1860).—The Illinois conference shall embrace all that part of the state of Illinois north of a line beginning at Fort Madison, Iowa, running east to the Illinois river, thence down the river to a point due west of Fowler, Indiana, thence east to the state line.

¶ 262. 3. Susquehanna (1862).—The Susquehanna conference shall embrace the counties of Tioga, Lycoming, Sullivan and Bradford in the state of Pennsylvania, all that part of the state of New York east of Genesee conference, and north of a line beginning at Great Bend, in Pennsylvania, and running due north to the Albany and Susquehanna railroad, thence east along said railroad to Oneonta, and thence due east to the state of Massachusetts; but not including the villages situated immediately upon that portion of the said Albany and Susquehanna railroad.

¶ 263. 4. Michigan (1865).—The Michigan con-

ference shall embrace that portion of the state of Michigan lying south of the base line.

¶ 264. 5. Kansas (1871).—The Kansas conference shall include all that portion of the state of Kansas lying east of a line running due north from Oklahoma territory, along the west line of McPherson county, Kansas, to the southwest corner of Cloud county, Kansas; thence east to the southeast corner of the said Cloud county; thence due north to the Nebraska state line.

¶ 265. 6. Minnesota and Northern Iowa (1872).—The Minnesota and Northern Iowa conference shall embrace that portion of the state of Minnesota south of a line running due west from Stillwater, Minnesota, to Lac-qui-parle lake and thence up the north and east bank of the Minnesota river, to the 46th parallel of latitude, and thence west across to the west line of Dakota, except Nobles, Rock, Pipe Stone, Murray, Lincoln, Lyon, Yellow Medicine and Lac-qui-parle counties in Minnesota, and shall include that portion of Iowa not included in the Iowa, West Iowa, and South Dakota conferences.

¶ 266. 7. New York (1873).—The New York conference shall embrace all parts of the states of New York and Pennsylvania not included in the Genesee, Pittsburg, Oil City and Susquehanna conferences, and the states of New Jersey, Maryland, Delaware and Virginia.

¶ 267. 8. Iowa (1875).—The Iowa conference shall include that portion of the state of Iowa lying east and south of the following lines: beginning at the southeast corner of Decatur county, thence

north to Hamilton county, thence along the east line of Hamilton and Wright counties to the northeast corner of Wright county, thence east to Clayton on the Mississippi river. It shall also include the city of Des Moines according to its present incorporate limits (1898).

¶ 268. 9. Wisconsin (1875).—The Wisconsin conference shall include the state of Wisconsin.

¶ 269. 10. North Michigan (1876).—The North Michigan conference shall embrace that portion of the state of Michigan lying north of the base line from the southeast corner of Eaton county, and southwest corner of Ingham, thence north parallel with the meridian line to Lake Huron. It shall also include the Upper Peninsula and Drummond's Island, together with St. Joseph's Island in Ontario.

¶ 270. 11. Ohio (1879).—The Ohio conference shall embrace the state of Ohio, except the towns included in the Pittsburg conference.

¶ 271. 12. Central Illinois (1879).—The Central Illinois conference shall include that portion of the state of Illinois not included in the Illinois and Wabash conferences. It shall also include the city of St. Louis, Missouri.

¶ 272. 13. Texas (1881).—The Texas conference shall include the state of Texas.

¶ 273. 14. Missouri (1883).—The Missouri conference shall embrace all that portion of the state of Missouri lying north of a line beginning at Carondolet and running directly west through the state, via Warrensburg, to the west line of the state, except the city of St. Louis.

¶ 274. 15. West Kansas (1883).—The West Kansas conference shall include all parts of the state of Kansas not included in the Kansas conference.

¶ 275. 16. South Dakota (1883).—The South Dakota conference shall embrace the state by that name and that part of North Dakota lying south of the 46th parallel of north latitude and shall also include Lyon, Osceola, O'Brien and Sioux counties in the state of Iowa, and Nobles, Rock, Pipe Stone, Murray, Lincoln, Lyon, Yellow Medicine and Lac-qui-parle counties in Minnesota.

¶ 276. 17. Pittsburg (1883).—The Pittsburg conference shall include all that part of the state of Pennsylvania lying west of a line running across the state due north and south through the east boundary line of Potter county, not included in the Oil City conference. It shall also include all the towns from the Pennsylvania state line to Bridgeport on the west bank of the Ohio river in which the Pittsburg conference now has organized societies, and the state of West Virginia.

¶ 277. 18. California (1883).—The California conference shall embrace all of the state of California lying north of San Luis Obispo, Kern and Inyo counties.

¶ 278. 19. East Michigan (1884).—The East Michigan conference shall embrace all that part of Michigan lying north of the base line, and east of a line beginning at the southwest corner of Ingham and southeast corner of Eaton counties, thence north running parallel with the meridian line to Lake Huron.

¶ 279. 20. Louisiana (1884).—Louisiana conference shall include the state of Louisiana.

¶ 280. 21. Oregon (1885).—The Oregon conference shall include all that part of the state of Oregon lying west of the summit of the Cascade mountains.

¶ 281. 22. West Iowa (1885).—The West Iowa conference shall embrace all that part of the state of Iowa lying west of the Iowa conference, and south of a line running west from the northeast corner of Wright county along the county lines to the Big Sioux river.

¶ 282. 23. Wabash (1885).—The Wabash conference shall include all that part of the state of Indiana not embraced in the territory of the North Indiana conference and that portion of the state of Illinois bounded by a line running west from Fowler, Indiana, to a point six miles west of the Chicago branch of the Illinois Central railroad, and thence running southwest, parallel with said railroad to the south line of Shelby county, and thence along the line of the Springfield branch of the Ohio and Mississippi railroad to Shawneetown.

¶ 283. 24. Colorado (1886).—The Colorado conference shall embrace the state of Colorado, the state of Utah and the southern part of Wyoming.

¶ 284. 25. North Minnesota (1887).—The North Minnesota conference shall embrace all that part of the state of Minnesota not included in the Minnesota and Northern Iowa conference.

¶ 285. 26. North Indiana (1887).—North Indiana conference shall embrace that part of Indiana north and east of a line running east along the line of the Toledo, Peoria and Warsaw railroad to the second principal meridian, thence due south to the south

line of Boone county, thence due east to the Ohio state line. It shall include the whole of Union City.

¶ 286. 27. Nebraska (1890).—The Nebraska conference shall commence at the southwest corner of Thayer county, Nebraska, thence due north to the northwest corner of Platte county, Nebraska, thence west on the base line to the southeast corner of Grant county, thence north to the state line of South Dakota, thence east to the Missouri river at Yankton, thence down the Missouri river to the south line of Nebraska, thence west to the southwest corner of Thayer county, the place of beginning.

¶ 287. 28. Southern California (1891).—The Southern California conference shall embrace all of the state of California not embraced in the California conference, together with the territories of Arizona and New Mexico.

¶ 288. 29. Arkansas and Southern Missouri (1895).—The Arkansas and Southern Missouri conference shall embrace the state of Arkansas together with that part of Missouri not included in the Missouri conference.

¶ 289. 30. Columbia River (1896).—The Columbia River conference shall embrace all those portions of the states of Oregon and Washington lying east of the summit of the Cascade mountains, and shall also include the state of Idaho.

¶ 290. 31. Washington (1896).—The Washington conference shall embrace all that part of the state of Washington lying west of the summit of the Cascade mountains.

¶ 291. 32. Platte River (1896).—The Platte

River conference shall include all that part of the state of Nebraska not included in the Nebraska conference.

¶ 292. 33. Western Ontario (1896).—The Western Ontario conference shall include all that part of the province of Ontario lying west of the following boundary line: the Niagara river, the west bounds of the counties of Peel and Simcoe, and the west bounds of the Muskoka, Parry Sound and Nippissing districts, excepting St. Joseph Island.

¶ 293. 34. Eastern Ontario (1896).—The Eastern Ontario conference shall include all that part of the province of Ontario not included in the Western Ontario and Michigan conferences.

¶ 294. 35. Kentucky and Tennessee (1896).—The Kentucky and Tennessee conference shall include the states of Kentucky and Tennessee.

¶ 295. 36. North Dakota (1897).—The North Dakota conference shall include all of the state of North Dakota not included in the South Dakota conference.

¶ 296. 37. Oil City (1899).—The Oil City conference shall include that part of the state of Pennsylvania lying west of a line beginning at the northeast corner of ~~Franklin~~ county in said state and running due south to the south bounds of the state. This line, north and south, is also the east boundary line of the Pittsburg conference. The southern boundary line of the Oil City conference shall be as follows: beginning at the Ohio state line and running due east along the south bounds of Lawrence county to the west bounds of Clearfield county, thence south to the southwest corner of

Clearfield county, thence east along the south bounds of Clearfield and Centre counties to the eastern boundary line of the Oil City and Pittsburg conferences above mentioned.

¶ 297. 38. Oklahoma (1899).—The Oklahoma conference shall include all of Oklahoma and Indian territories.



COURSES OF STUDY

SECTION I.

COURSE OF STUDY FOR TRAVELING PREACHERS.

PRELIMINARY COURSE.

¶ 298. English grammar, arithmetic, modern geography, Free Methodist Discipline, spelling and composition, Binney's Theological Compend, Wesley's Plain Account of Christian Perfection.

FIRST YEAR.

The Bible—Doctrines.

¶ 299. Define the following doctrines, and give three proof texts of each:

The existence of God; the attributes of God, namely, unity, spirituality, eternity, omnipotence, ubiquity, omniscience, immutability, wisdom, truth, justice, mercy, love, goodness, holiness; the trinity in unity; the deity of Christ; the humanity of Christ; the union of Deity and humanity; personality and deity of the Holy Ghost; depravity; atonement; repentance; justification by faith; regeneration; adoption; the witness of the Spirit; growth in

grace; Christian perfection; possibility of final apostasy; immortality of the soul; resurrection of the body; general judgment, rewards and punishment.

Ralston's Divinity, Part I., Books 1, 2 and 3; Hand Book of Homiletics and Pastoral Theology, by Wilson T. Hogue, Part I.; Lockwood's Lessons in English—first six chapters.

Present a written sermon.

Read Wesley's Sermons, Vol. 1; Robert's Fishers of Men;* Briggs On The Sabbath; Schaff's Person of Christ; Hart's Reminiscences of Early Free Methodism.

SECOND YEAR.

The Bible—Sacraments.

¶ 300. Baptism—its nature, design, obligation, subjects and mode; the Lord's supper—its nature, design and obligation.

Ralston's Divinity, Part I., Books 4, 5 and 6, and Part II.; Lockwood's Lessons in English—the last five chapters; Hogue's Homiletics and Pastoral Theology, Part II.; Wayland's Moral Science; Nast's Introduction to the Gospels; Hurlburt's Biblical Geography.

Present a written sermon.

Read Wesley's Sermons, Vol. II.; Wood's Perfect Love; Spurgeon's Addresses to Students; W. Robertson Nicoll's The Church's One Foundation; The Life of Wesley by Telford.

*Until a new edition of Fishers of Men is published Finney's Revival Lectures shall be substituted.

THIRD YEAR.

The Bible—History and Chronology.

¶ 301. Candidates to be prepared upon the leading events of the Old and New Testaments; Ralston's Divinity, Parts III. and IV.; Jevon's Logic; Blackburn's Church History; Hopkin's Outline Study of Man.

Present a written sermon.

Read Stevens' History of Methodism, Life of Redfield; Walker's Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation, and Roberts' Holiness Teachings.

FOURTH YEAR.

¶ 302. Review the whole course.

Butler's Analogy.

Present a written sermon.

Read D'Aubigne's History of the Reformation; Reed's Rules of Order and the Digest of Free Methodist Law.

SECTION II.

COURSE OF STUDY FOR LOCAL
PREACHERS.

In which to be examined by the quarterly conference.

FIRST YEAR.

¶ 303. Sims' Helps to Bible Study, second edition, and Articles of Religion and General Rules as set forth in the Discipline.

Binney's Compend.

Read Wesley's Sermons, Vol. I.; Fishers of Men,* and Schaff's Person of Christ.

SECOND YEAR.

The Bible—Doctrines.

¶ 304. Repentance, justification, adoption, entire sanctification and the divinity of Christ.

Wesley's Plain Account of Christian Perfection; Handbook of Homiletics, by W. T. Hogue.

Read Wesley's Sermons, Vol. II.; Arthur's Tongue of Fire, and W. Robertson Nicoll's The Church's One Foundation.

SECTION III.

COURSE OF STUDY FOR LOCAL PREACHERS.

Who wish to be ordained deacons.

The Bible—Doctrines, same as first year for traveling preachers.

¶ 305. Field's Handbook of Theology, first half; Wesley's Plain Account of Christian Perfection.

Read Arthur's Tongue of Fire; Roberts' Fishers of Men, and Life of Wesley by Telford.

COURSE OF STUDY FOR LOCAL DEACONS.

Who wish to be ordained elders.

The Bible—Sacraments, history and chronology.

¶ 306. Field's Handbook of Theology, second half; Wood's Perfect Love.

*See footnote on page 157.

Read Selections from Wesley's Sermons; Roberts' Holiness Teachings; Walker's Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation.

N. B.—The examination of local preachers who wish to be ordained shall be conducted by the annual conference. Let the examining committees and candidates to be examined be present at the seat of conference for examinations not later than the first day of the conference session. Candidates not present at such time forfeit their right to examination for that year. In conducting examinations, examiners shall report the standing of each candidate in each book according to a scale of ten, six being satisfactory.

INCORPORATION

INCORPORATION OF THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH.

¶ 307. "An act to incorporate the Free Methodist General Conference of North America, passed April 30, 1873."

The people of the state of New York, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. The General Conference of the Free Methodist Church of North America shall be, and is hereby declared to be a corporate and politic body, by the name and style of the "Free Methodist General Conference of North America," and by that name it shall have perpetual succession; shall be capable of suing and being sued in any court whatever; and shall have and use a common seal, which they may alter and change at pleasure.

2. It shall be lawful for the regular members of said general conference, at its regular constitutional meetings, to appoint such officers, and to make and ordain such by-laws and regulations in relation to the management and disposition of their real and personal estate, the duties of their officers, and the management of the corporate offices, as they shall think proper; provided they are not in-

consistent with the constitution of the United States.

3. The said corporation shall have power to hold in trust church property, and deeds of other beneficent, educational or publishing institutions; and of taking, holding and receiving any property—real or personal or mixed—by virtue of any devise, bequest, grant or purchase, subject to the restrictions and limitations of existing laws; provided the annual income of such property shall not exceed the sum of two hundred thousand dollars, and that the same shall be appropriated to religious, charitable, missionary, or educational purposes; and to sell, deed and convey any real or personal property, when necessary to serve the purposes of the corporation.

4. The officers of said corporation shall hold over until their successors are elected and qualified, and shall exercise such powers and do such duties as shall be authorized by the by-laws of said corporation.

5. This act shall take effect immediately.”

I—1. The following named persons shall be the trustees of the “Free Methodist General Conference of North America,” as provided for in the act of corporation, passed April 30, 1873, by the legislature of the state of New York, to wit: J. Travis, J. G. Terrill, John Ellison, J. L. Ward, O. P. Rogers, D. W. Abrams.

2. The said trustees shall have full power to take possession of and to receive and hold, subject to the order and direction of the general conference, any property, real, or personal, or mixed, which

may be owned by or belong to the said general conference, by virtue of any devise, bequest, grant or purchase.

3. The said trustees shall be divided into two classes, as follows, to-wit:

The first class shall comprise *J. Ellison, J. L. Ward, O. P. Rogers.

The second class shall comprise J. Travis, J. G. Terrill, D. W. Abrams.

The first class, elected this year, shall hold their office for four years, and until others are appointed in their place.

The second class shall hold their office eight years, and until others shall be appointed in their place.

4. The said trustees shall elect their president, secretary, and treasurer, who shall perform the duties usually pertaining to their office.

5. The said trustees shall make a full report of all their proceedings to each successive general conference.

6. If the place of any of these trustees shall become vacant during the intervals of a general conference, it shall be filled by the remaining trustees.

7. Seal.—We recommend the procuring of a seal inscribed "The Free Methodist General Conference of N. A."

¶ 308. Form of bequest of money or other personal property: "I give and bequeath to the Free

*N. B.—The terms of S. K. J. Chesbro, W. A. Sellew, and O. P. Ray expire in 1907. The terms of E. P. Hart, B. R. Jones and W. T. Hogue expire in 1911.

Methodist General Conference of North America the sum of dollars, to be used and appropriated by that body to religious, charitable, missionary or educational purposes.

Real estate:

"I grant and devise (full description of the land)."

DECISIONS AND RULES

DECISIONS OF SUPERINTENDENTS.

Approved by general conferences, and general conference resolutions having the force of law.

1866.

¶ 309. On Hop-Growing.—Resolved, That in our opinion, the raising of hops for the general market is a violation of the rule of Discipline prohibiting “evil of every kind;” and also of the rule prohibiting the “doing of what we know is not for the glory of God.”

¶ 310. Resolved, That the executive committee be empowered to elect an additional superintendent, if, in their judgment, the cause of God demands it.

¶ 311. On Missions.—Resolved, That the general superintendents have charge of all missions outside of the recognized bounds of the annual conferences.

¶ 312. On Boundaries.—Resolved, That any question of boundaries that may arise, be referred to the executive committee.

¶ 313. Disapproval of Conference Action.—Resolved, 1, That the action of the Susquehanna conference in passing a certain resolution on the use of tobacco, be disapproved; the said conference having transcended its powers in attempting to enact laws.

(The resolution referred to was passed by the Susquehanna conference of 1886, and read as follows: "Resolved, That if any of the preachers of this conference are known to indulge in the use of tobacco, either by chewing or smoking, during the coming year, they shall, at the next session of the conference, be discontinued from the traveling connection.")

2. That the action of the Susquehanna conference, in receiving W. J. Selby into full connection after but one year's trial, be disapproved.

¶ 314. Law Question: "Has an annual conference authority under the Discipline, to try a probationer upon charges of immoral conduct?"

Conference voted nay 12 to 5.

1870.

¶ 315. On the Admission of Ministers.—It was decided by the president that as all the disciplinary questions may be acted on at any time during the session of an annual conference it is right to report ministers received into full connection, as having a seat in the conference. On motion, conference sustained the decision.

¶ 316. On Conference Resolutions.—No annual conference shall pass resolutions or adopt reports interpreting discipline, and then hold any minister or member to trial for violating such resolutions or reports.

¶ 317. Every member of our church in good standing removing to another circuit, or desirous of uniting with any other evangelical church, is entitled to a certificate of his good standing.

¶ 318. No person who wishes to leave our society, without uniting with any other society or church, is entitled to a certificate of membership.

¶ 319. If complaints are made against a member, involving immorality or a violation of our rules, he is entitled to a speedy trial, unless said complaints are otherwise disposed of.

¶ 320. No secretary of any annual conference has a right to insert anything in the conference records other than actual conference business.

¶ 321. Resolved, That we disapprove of the practice of calling a quarterly conference together in any other way than that prescribed by the Discipline.

1874.

¶ 322. Resolved, That it is the sense of this conference that the rule of our Discipline, forbidding the wearing of gold, applies to those who wear gold wedding rings.

1878.

¶ 323. In the case of S. Irwin, who was refused admission as delegate to the New York conference; it being claimed that he was not a member of the church which elected him:

The president held, "That in the admission of a delegate to which objection is made, an annual conference may inquire,

1. If the society meeting was held and the election fairly conducted according to Discipline.
2. If the returns were correctly made.
3. If the person elected was eligible.

But the chair decided that each society has the right to determine who are its members; that an annual conference has no right to decide who are or who are not members of any particular society."

This decision was appealed from, and the conference voted not to sustain the chair—by 11 nays, 5 yeas.

This action was reported by the committee on conference records, of the general conference of 1878, as a violation of Discipline. The report was adopted, thus sustaining the decision of the president.

¶ 324. On Past Enactments, Resolutions, etc.—Resolved, That all enactments, decisions and resolutions of the various general conferences, that are inconsistent with our Discipline, as revised by this general conference, are hereby repealed.

¶ 325. On Salaries of General Superintendents.—Resolved, That the salaries of our general superintendents be raised by conference collections; and that the executive committee be instructed to make the apportionment to the respective conferences and so arrange the time for taking the collections for the same among said conferences that some shall be taken in each quarter of the year.

1882.

¶ 326. On the Membership of Probationers in Annual Conferences.—The following questions were answered by B. T. Roberts at the Genesee conference, 1882:

1. Are preachers on probation in an annual conference still members of a society? Answer, No,

2. Should they be reported from the circuit as local preachers? Answer, No.

3. Should their licenses be renewed by the quarterly conference, as others? Answer, No.

¶ 327. Women Eligible as Delegates.—B. T. Roberts decided at the New York conference that women are eligible to election as delegates to the annual conference. Approved.

¶ 328. The following questions were asked and answered at the general conference of 1882:

1. If a preacher believes the Bible to be opposed to women taking a part in the governmental affairs of the church, and has not hitherto regarded the language of the Discipline as admitting of the election of women as delegates to the annual conference, is he bound by the action of this conference to rule that the Discipline does now admit of it?

Answer—By President B. T. Roberts: It is my opinion that he is.

2. Would it be maladministration of Discipline to rule that it is not disciplinary to elect women as delegates?

Answer—In my opinion it would.

The general conference approved these answers as correct.

¶ 329. Absent Delegates.—Resolved, That it is the sense of this conference, that a delegate is not a member of an annual or a general conference until he is present, and has presented his credentials.

¶ 330. Preserving Original Minutes.—Resolved, That the secretaries of the several conferences be required to keep the original or so-called rough

minutes, as approved by the conference, in a book to be preserved with the journal.

1886.

¶ 331. Resolved, That when a certificate is given to a member of our church who wishes to unite with some other evangelical denomination, the certificate shall read as follows: "A. B., the bearer, wishing to become a member of another evangelical church, we hereby certify that he has been an acceptable member of the Free Methodist church, and cordially commend to the fellowship of any such church with which may desire to unite. His membership in the Free Methodist church ceases when this certificate is given."

¶ 332. The following questions were asked and answered at the general conference of 1886:

1. If a certificate of membership be given a member of one of our churches, and that member shall, at a subsequent time, present his certificate of membership to one of our churches in some other place, he having, since the reception of the certificate, been guilty of unchristian conduct, is the church to which the certificate shall be presented obliged to receive the certificate?

Answer—By President B. T. Roberts: It is.

2. When an annual conference organizes a circuit and appoints a preacher to it, but the preacher declines to travel it, and the chairman being unable to supply it with another preacher, may he blend the unsupplied circuit with an adjacent circuit without the consent of the official board of the unsupplied circuit?

Answer—By President B. T. Roberts: I think he could not.

3. When a preacher has been appointed to a circuit, has the chairman a right to appoint said preacher to the charge of another circuit while he retains charge of the first?

Answer—By President B. T. Roberts: No. He may add to the circuit, but cannot appoint a preacher to two circuits at the same time.

¶ 333. The following question was asked at the sixteenth session of the Kansas annual conference, and was answered by President B. T. Roberts; from whose decision an appeal was taken to the general conference of 1886, by which the decision of the president was unanimously sustained:

If a man in his sinful state be divorced from his wife, but not on scriptural grounds, and she be married to another man, after which the divorced man becomes converted and joins our church, do the facts in the case as afore stated clear him in the eyes of the law, the eyes of God and the eyes of our Discipline, so that he has the right to marry again? The president decided that in the case stated, the legal divorce separates the man from his wife in the eyes of the law, and that the subsequent marriage of the woman separates the man from the woman in a scriptural sense; he is therefore entitled to a divorce on scriptural grounds; but as he cannot obtain it, he is in the sense of the scripture entitled to marry again.

¶ 334. Resolved, That the reports adopted by the annual conference should be kept on file and not recorded in the journal, except the financial

reports, and such as may be recorded by order of the annual conference.

¶ 335. Whereas, Conflicting decisions by the superintendents in the intervals of the general conference are liable to make divisions, and tend to annoy and confuse the spirit of harmony among us, therefore,

Resolved, That when one of the general superintendents has rendered a decision on any point of law in any annual conference, said decision shall be the rule in the case, until the decision is reversed by the general conference.

1894.

¶ 336. Resolved, That when satisfactory evidence is received that a conference minister has united with another church, he shall be considered as having withdrawn from the church and the conference, and shall be so recorded on the conference journal.

¶ 337. An elder of North Michigan conference, having withdrawn from the church, was given a letter by Superintendent Hart, stating that he had been an ordained elder in the North Michigan conference, and recommending him "to all Christian people." He afterwards presented the letter to the same conference, and Superintendent Coleman decided that he could not be received on the letter—that he was out of the church. The committee on general superintendency recommended that the decision be approved. The recommendation was adopted by the conference.

¶ 338. Law Question.—"Can the appellate court

go outside of the grounds of appeal as submitted to it by the appellant?"

Answer by the Chair.—“In the decision, I should say it must confine itself to the grounds of the appeal in the case. It is entitled, however, to all that will throw light upon the appeal as presented.”

¶ 339. “Does the Discipline make final the decision of the committee on appeals without approval by the general conference when such committee renders its verdict while the general conference that appointed it is in session?”

Answer: “The Discipline makes the decision of a committee on appeals final. There can be no appeal therefrom.”

¶ 340. At the close of the election of the general superintendents, E. P. Hart moved, That it is the sense of the conference that W. T. Hogg is entitled to his seat and office as general superintendent until the close of this session. Superintendent Coleman in the chair decided that it would be proper to place the newly-elected superintendent in the chair if the conference saw fit to do so. An appeal was taken from the decision, and the conference refused to sustain the chair. W. T. Hogg was thus authorized to act as superintendent until the final adjournment of the conference.

¶ 341. The committee on superintendency reported that at the session of the West Kansas conference an appeal from a quarterly conference came before that body, complaining of the refusal of the quarterly conference to renew the license of a woman on the ground that the Discipline did not authorize the licensing of women to preach.

Superintendent Roberts in the chair rendered the following decision:

“Sex in itself is not, according to our discipline and usages, a sufficient reason for withholding a local preacher’s license. Therefore, it was a violation of our discipline and usages to refuse to renew the license of the person in question, solely because she is a woman.”

The committee disapproved of the decision. The conference, by a vote of 45 to 26 adopted the report of the committee.

¶ 342. A resolution being offered during the sitting of Thursday afternoon, October 24, 1894, to reconsider the action locating the publishing house at Chicago, the chair decided that a vote by ballot could not be reconsidered. An appeal from the decision was taken and the conference refused to sustain the chair.

¶ 343. Resolution.—In response to a memorial from the Southern California conference in regard to the wearing of neckties, the conference adopted the following:

“It is the sense of the conference that this matter is one concerning which ‘every man should be fully persuaded in his own mind,’ and guided by his personal convictions.”

1898.

¶ 344. The following question was asked at the Susquehanna Conference of 1897, and was answered by President E. P. Hart, from whose decision an appeal was taken to the general conference of 1898:

“Is previous labor necessary before bringing

charges against a preacher belonging to an annual conference?"

The president decided that no previous labor is necessary in case of charges at the annual conference, as that body has original jurisdiction over the preachers composing it.

The decision of the president was sustained by the general conference.

¶ 345. The following questions were asked at the Kansas conference of 1895, and were answered by the president, B. R. Jones. An appeal was taken from his decisions to the general conference of 1898:

"1. If a man obtains a divorce from his wife on other than scriptural grounds and afterward marries a woman who had obtained a divorce from her husband without scriptural reason, would the parties thus divorced and remarried be entitled to membership in the church?"

Answer: I think they would not.

2. "Is it a violation of Discipline for a minister to receive a person into the church who has obtained a divorce on other than scriptural grounds?"

Answer: In my opinion it is.

3. "Would the preacher receiving into the church persons thus divorced be liable to the charge of maladministration?"

Answer: I think he would.

These decisions were approved by the general conference.

¶ 346. Resolved, That in no case shall the report of the committee on ministerial relations be expunged from the records of an annual conference

without the consent of the minister whose case had been under consideration.

¶ 347. Whereas, The general conference of 1890 decided that section 5, chapter viii., of the Discipline, did not admit of receiving women into annual conference on trial or in full connection; therefore,

Resolved, That it is the sense of this conference that since the aforesaid action it has been a violation of Discipline to receive a woman into an annual conference on trial or in full connection.

1903.

¶ 348. The general conference ordered that the following action of the executive committee be inserted in the Discipline:

In 1899 a petition was presented from the Central Illinois conference asking whether membership in the "miners' union" was a violation of our Discipline. The committee decided as follows: We are of the opinion that these trade unions are, as a rule, secret organizations, and, from a cursory glance at their nature, trend and practical workings, we consider that membership in any of these minor secret orders contravenes membership in the Free Methodist church.

In 1900 a preacher of the Iowa conference asked the decision of the committee on a question pertaining to the rights of our people to hold membership in certain labor unions. The answer of the committee was as follows:

As the question of our relation to secret societies and labor unions has again been brought be-

fore us by an aggrieved member of our church, this committee thinks it expedient to make the following statements:

We reaffirm our position regarding secret societies as expressed in our discipline and affirmed by this committee at their meeting in October, 1899. We are unequivocally opposed to all secret societies and cannot make any change in our rules on this subject, nor can we relax in the least our determination to vigorously enforce this rule without exception or favor.

We cannot, however, allow this position to be misinterpreted and misconstrued as opposition to organized labor as such. We are not opposed to such proper organizations as seek to promote the interest of the laboring man. It would be unreasonable and inconsistent for us to do so, as fully three-quarters of our membership are found among the laboring classes. To oppose organized labor that seeks the betterment of the laboring classes would be to oppose our own interests.

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