PROBLEMS OF A CHURCH BODY

Vital Issues to B: Determined at the Metho list General Conference-

WOMEN DELEGATES TO BE ADMITTED

Secular Amusements a Disturbing Factor - Proposed Consolidation Measures-Bishops and Missionaries to Be Chosen.

The coming quadrennial session of the general conference of the Methodist Episcopal church, to be held in Los Angeles. opening on May 4, promises to be fraught with stirring and important issues and incidents. The nature of the work before the conference is thus detailed by Rev. Dr. Jesse Bowman Young in the St. Louis

The denomination has more than 2,000,000 members, and is the parent body of the Methodist family in this country, which includes the Methodist Episcopal church, south, with 1,500,000 members, the African, the Colored, and the African Zion Methodist Episcopal churches, with an aggregate minor denominations, making 3,300,000 memin American Protestanism.

Accordingly the meeting of the chief council of the leading Methodist denomi- mind of the church as possessing some of after an interval of four years, will command the attention of millions of directly interested people, in addition to multitudes a touch of sympathetic interest to the consideration of all movements which have in large. The legislation to be enacted, the election of officials of various sorts, bishops, secretaries, publishing agents and editors, and discussions to be carried on will be of uncommon interest.

Lay Representation.

general conference will be com posed of about '750 delegates, one-half of them laymen. Of this last body about a score will be women-a fact which divides this session of 1904 off from all former meetings of this character. Never before have women had an unchallenged right to seats as delegates in the lawmaking body of this denomination, and their appearance at Los Angeles with proper credentials and their participation in the doings of the body will register an epoch in the history of the denomination.

In May, 1888, at the opening of the general conference in New York City. five women of prominence, one of them Miss Frances E. Willard, who had been elected by lay electoral conferences as delegates, appeared to claim their rights. They were denied seats, and after a long debate it was decided that a new amendment must be adopted in order to give women equal rights with men in this regard. A fight, in the papers, in the annual conferences, and in book form, went on for a dozen years before the new con stitution, recognizing women as "laymen" with the right to be chosen as lay delegates, was adopted. Accordingly the women will be at Los Angeles, at least a score of them, as delegates.

Missionary Bishops.

The various questions pertaining to the episcopacy will attract close and interested attention, not only on the part of ceedingly fortunate in the type of men the delegates, but on the part of the church who have been selected for the high office at large. One of these questions touches of bishop. Some of them have been the method of administering the work in in full measure great administrators and foreign lands, especially in eastern and southern Asia, where great and growthful missionary operations under Methodist auspices are being carried on. For the a very creditable work. last quadrennium the work in China. Corea and Japan has been under the care of Bishop David H. Moore, formerly editor of the Western Christian Advocate in Cin- the reports of the bishops who have adcinnati. That assignment was, it is under- ministered foreign mission fields will atstood, only for the quadrennium, and a tract close attention. Bishop John H. new man, or perhaps two or three new Vincent, for instance, will report on the Bishop Moore believes that missionary pean countries where conferences have bishops should be chosen, in view of the been established. Bishops McCabe and growing needs of that section, one for Joyce have each made two visitations to each of the countries named.

bishops has proved to be a great success the work in India, and Bishop Hartzell in in Africa, under Bishop J. C. Hartzell, Africa, while Bishop Moore has spent the formerly of Cincinnati, and in India, under Bishop Thoburn, assisted by Bishop Par- Corea. ker, now dead, and Bishop Warne, on tions of these leaders the whole world in tion has largely fallen for the last four fore the vision of the general conference

islands have also developed so rapidly that eign lands 214,000 members, many of them some believe that a missionary bishop should be chosen for that field alone. India, it is announced, has asked for two additional missionary bishops, and "Latin America." including the missions in Porto Rico and in South America, needs closer | tion of the general conference. supervision than can be given by occasional visits from the "general superintendents," as the bishops of the church, in City and its depositories in Detroit, Bosdistinction from the missionary bishops, ton, Pittsburg and San Francisco with own fields alone, are sometimes justify the selection of a missionary bishop

for that region. since 1872, one of the ablest men ever occupy. The idea, however, is to consoli

to be put on the superannuated list. Bishops Hurst, Foster and Ninds have Hed during the quadrennium, and six of the others on the effective list are in their seventies. It is felt that an infusion of fresh blood is a necessity, not only to supply the vacancies created by death and retirement, but for increased effectiveness for the new quadrennium. How many will be elected no man, can now say,

The bishops themselves will report how many in their judgment are needed. The committee on episcopacy will then survey port to the general conference their convictions in the matter. Finally, that body will, by a majority vote, agree what number to elect, possibly five or six new ones, besides the missionary bishops who may be chosen.

What Men Will Be Chosen.

Episcopal timber is just now in evidence in all directions. It is not believed that the men who have been mentioned for promotion to the episcopacy have had to do with the mention of their names, or with the quiet canvass which has been going on in regard to their fitness for the great work which a Methodist bishop must do.

The ideal qualities for the office are of of a million and a half; the Methodist a high order. A bishop needs to be a Protestant, with nearly 200,000, and some preacher of more than ordinary gifts, a man of scholarly qualities and attainments, bers. All together Methodism has 6,000,000 a Judge of human nature, a man of excommunicants in the United States, mak- ecutive dispatch and of administrative ing this family by all odds the strongest ability, and of unquestioned integrity and religious devotion.

Among the men who are now in the

nation for a three or four weeks' session, these qualities are: President Bashford of Ohio Wesleyan university, Chancellor Day of Syracuse university, Dr. H. C. Jennings of the Western Methodist Book Concern, in other denominations, who are drawn by Rev. Dr. J. F. Barry of the Epworth Herald, Rev. Dr. Levi Gilbert of the Western Christian Advocate, Rev. Dr. W. them promise of good for the public at | I. Haven, one of the secretaries of the American Bible society; Rev. Dr. Henry Spellmeyer of Newark, N. J., a pastor in that city; Rev. Dr. George P. Eckman of New York City, Rev. Dr. James M. Buckley of the Christian Advocate, a man who has had at his disposal, in substance, this office for the last twelve years, but who has refused to allow himself to be put forth as a candidate because, for one thing, he has considered that the editorial field is a larger one than the episcopacy; Rev. Dr. W. F. McDowell, secretary of the Board of Education, New York City; Rev. Dr. E. M. Taylor of Boston, a field secretary of the Missionary society; Dr. A. B. Leonard, corresponding secretary of the Missionary society; Rev. Dr. T. B. Neely, secretary of the Sunday School union, New York City; Rev. Dr. N. Luccock, paster Union church, St. Louis, Mo.; Rev. Dr. John T. McFarland, pastor First church, Topeka, Kan.; Rev. Dr. W. A. Quayle, pastor Grand Avenue church, Kansas City, Mo.; Rev. Dr. P. H. Swift, a Chicago pastor; Rev. Dr. Charles J. Little, president Garrett Biblical institute, Evanston, Ill.; Rev. Dr. G. F. Boyard. president of the University of Southern California; Chancellor Buchtel of the University of Denver, Rev. Dr. Luther B. Wilson of Baltimore, and Rev. Dr. John Franklin Goucher, president of the Woman's college of Baltimore.

It is probable that the list contains without question the names of the men who will be chosen as bishop, but how many of them will reach the episcopacy at the coming general conference is, of course, now uncertain. It may be added that thus far in its history the church has been exgreat preachers, while all of them have been men of unquestioned devotion, of recognized gifts and usefulness, who have done

World-Wide Scope.

In addition to the episcopal addresses men, will be assigned to that vast field condition of the work in the various Eurothe missions in South America. Bishops Administration by means of missionary Thoburn and Warren have administered time in quadrennium in China, Japan and Through the official representaburden of the local administra- its needs and claims will be brought be-It is worth noting, further, that the de-Methodist missions in the Philippine nomination has now upon its rolls in for-

converts from heathenism. Consolidation Measures,

Two plans involving consolidation great enterprises will occupy the atten-One of them involves the unification of

the Methodist Book Concern in New York whose episcopal jurisdiction is confined to the Western Methodist Book Concern which has its location in Cincinnati, and called. Then, Mexico is a field already its depositories in Kansas City and Chilarge enough, so far as Methodist occupa- cago. An elaborate plan for the consolition and mission work are concerned to dation of all these various establishments under a single head and in unity of administration has been prepared by the It is agreed on every side that several book committee and will be considered by new men will be elected to the list of the conference at Los Angeles. It is not general superintendents. Bishop S. M. intended to uproot any of these establish-Merrill, who has been in the episcopacy ments entirely from the place they now elected to that place, will be 79 years of date the manufacturing plants in one age next September, and it has been an central place for purposes of convenience

nounced by his friends that he will ask and economy, and to elect one publishing agent with three assistants, instead of two publishing agents for the western house and two publishing agents for the eastern

house, as at present arranged. The book committee, however, is not a unit in its conviction upon this subject The discussion will first be carried on the general conference committee on book concern at Los Angeles. Its conclusio will then be brought before the general conference, and at that time there will probably be a great debate. Local interests in Chicago, New York and Cincinnati the field and consider its needs and re- are at stake, and at this writing it does not seem probable that the general conference will adopt any revolutionary

scheme of consolidation. The sentiment of the church at large however, seems to be in favor of some plan of unification of administration and form of administrative unity will be adopted, or that a commission will be appointed to consider the matter in all of its aspects during the next quadrennlum possible adoption at the general conference of 1968.

Consolidation of Benevolences.

The other consolidation scheme alluded to pertains to the coalescence of the various benevolent organizations of the church. It is proposed to divide the Missionary society in two branches, a home society and a foreign society, dealing respectively with the fields thus indicated, to consolidate with the home society the Board of Church Extension, and to fuse the Board of Education, the Sunday School union, the Tract society and the Freedmen's Aid and Southern Education soclety into one organization. This scheme will be most earnestly advocated, and, on the other hand, it will be vehemently opposed. It is understood that managers of these societies and their secretaries are not in favor of consolidation. The Freedmen's Aid society in Cincinnati, it is claimed, is too large an enterprise to admit of its being wisely joined in administrative operation with any other board of

the church. It superintends scores of schools in the south, with hundreds of teachers and 10,000 pupils. It has property interests is growing and now requires the thought and time of two secretaries to administer it, in addition to the labors gratuitously given by the Board of Managers. One arplea that there are so many societies as to involve a too requent appeal for collection, and that it would be better for all interests under consideration were the put before them at one time, rather than have so many appeals for money to support these "causes" urged upon them during the year. The discussion on this question will be one of the ablest and most stirring of all that takes place during the

Time Limit Once More. One of the inevitable themes of discussion, and of possible legislation, at the

coming general conference will be the time dmit in the funerancy, which was removed four years ago by the quadrennial conference in Chicago. From 1888 until 1900 the limit of the pastoral term had been five years; in 1804 the limit had been fixed at two years; this term was extended to three years in 1864. The new plan, whereby pastors are appointed for a year at a time, with the possibility of reappointment annually without limit, in case circumstances require, has been on trial only four years, and yet in the crowded eastern conferences considerable opposition to it has developed. Bishops have found it more difficult than formerly to "fix the appointments," and the itinerafter only four years of experimentation the church is going to retrace its steps and

readont a time limit of pastoral service. Many believe that the present system is nearly ideal in its adaptations to the needs of the church, making possible here and there a lengthy pastorate, and yet involving each year the possibility of a change in every charge. The discussions on this theme will doubtless be exciting and able, and will enlist the best debates

The Famous Paragraph 248.

Another question coming up for consideration at the general conference has to do with the matter of secular amusements. A paragraph was adopted by the general conference of 1872 which has given trouble and occasioned perplexity to pastors and people, and to the general conference as well, ever since that time. Under the head of "Imprudent and Unchristian Conduct," the paragraph aforesaid includes "dancing. playing at games of chance, attending theaters, horse races, circuses, dancing parties, or patronizing dancing schools, or taking such other amusements as are of obviously misleading or questionable moral tendency." These matters are enumerated along with "buying, selling or using intoxicating liquors as a beverage, signing petitions in favor of granting license for the sale of intoxicating liquors and disobedience to the order and discipline of the church," and pastors are instructed, in case of disobedience to this rule, first, to give private reproof; secondly, if there be no private humiliation, to admontsh the offender in the presence of one or two discreet members of the church; and, on a third offense, to bring the person accused

to trial, with a view to expulsion. The law has largely been a dead letter. Many have claimed, with some show of reason, that the various elements of conduct described in that paragraph are not at all of the same plane; that warnings against worldly amusements ought to be made advisory, persuasive and admon ftory, rather than mandatory and punitive in their character; that young people espectally can be more easily and wisely reached and managed by an appeal to their judgment, their heart and their moral sense, rather than by a method which holds a rod of terror over their heads, and that there are some questions with which the individual conscience, instead of church law, must of necessity deal.

At the general conference in Chicago four years ago after an exciting and strenuous debate, by a vote of 227 to 279, a majority report was accepted recommending that no action in regard to paragraph 26

When, however, this minority report came to be voted on finally for adoption it was laid upon the table, so that it will be clearly seen that the situation from a parliamentary standpoint during the last quadrennium has been something of a perplexity to wise administrators. Whatever action may be taken at Los Angeles, it is clear that the questions involved will be thoroughly discussed and the church under no circumstances, whether it may ratify once more or on the other hand revoke the paragraph as it now stands, will take an attitude which can be construed as favoring rather than discountenancing the forms of amusement above indicated. The question will resolve itself into a consideration of the best method of cultivating a self-denving, intelligent, considerate and enscientious form of Christian living. Of necessity considerable time and attention are given at each general conference to the duties of properly filling the various offices of the church. The other officials, as well as the new bishops, rebe of a varied and high order of

Entrancing Beauty of an Alpine Fest Given by an Ideal Host.

TYROLEAN, SCENES, SOUVENIRS, DANCES

Picturesque Costumes, Realistic Decerations, Lavish Hospitality and Rare Cotillon Favors-An All-Night Function.

BERLIN, March 20 .- (Special Correspondence to The Bee.)-On Saturday evening, February 20, It was my good fortune to be a guest at the Apine fest given by policy, and it is likely that a modified Mr. Hermann Knauer at his beautiful home in Victoria Luise Platz. Mr. Knauer is not only well known as an architect in Berlin. but his name is also a familiar one America, particularly New York and St. and report a plan for consideration and Louis, where he has branch offices. He has built the German government building at the exposition, as well as the German Tyrolean Alps concessions, which promises to be one of the most popular of the many pleasure resorts on the "Pike"

of the 1904 World's fair. A Tyrolean ball must under any and all elecumstances be very pretty, for there are no costumes more picturesque than those worn by the natives of the Tyrol. This Tyrolean ball (said to be one of the finest private affairs of the kind ever given in Berlin) was, however, particularly attractive, owing to the vast amount of time, work and money expended upon it. Three of Mr. Knauer's drawing rooms were for this occasion entirely closed, while those remaining, with the large dining room, reception hall and smaller conservatory, were transformed into a veritable Tyrolean scene-more properly speaking, many scenes.

Over windows and doors, extending from ceiling to the floor, the entire walls were covered with canvas on which was painted most realistic views of different places of this picturesque part of Germany. Every picture was perhaps five feet in width and all separated by green wood lattice work to the heighth of about six feet. In each amounting to \$2,000,000 in value. The field of these charming little nooks was a table set for six persons. A green carpet which covered the floor added to the rustic effect and reality of the scene, until one might almost fancy that one was really in the gument for consolidation consists in the Tyrolean country. It is quite impossible to describe the beauty of the entire picture. The different and attractive Tyrolean costumes of the 120 invited guests proved ever a charming study. The servants and people to have a cluster of two or three | waiters were also dressed in Alpine costume.

Lavish Hospitality.

Most elaborate was the supper menu and champagne flowed as water. Between the supper courses the guests wandered at will down the long corridor, prettily decorated with evergreens, with Eidelweis scattered here and there, to the beautiful ball room and "tripped the light fantastic" in the whirling, dizzy German fashion, to the strains of the orchestra stationed in an adjoining room; or strolled out in the conservatory.

The cotillon began, naturally, in the ball room, but the leader took us up through the billiard room down the corridor to the Tyrolean scenes, and when we returned to the dancing salle, found in the center of the room a prettily decorated little chariot in which sat the lovely sixter of our host and a young lady friend,

who dispensed the cotilion favors. Several flashlight pictures were taken of the entire company, which like everthing undertaken by Mr. Knauer, proved a success. Arranged most attractively on table in the billard room were lovely souvenirs of all sorts, brought direct from the ancy with the time limit removed has Tyrol. Here each lady received some seemed to them to be less flexible and pretty remembrance, its worth and value helpful than before in its operations. It all in accordance to her luck in throwing however, that dice. But these were not the only tangible souvenirs we had. On entering each one was given a bouquet of flowers and also a huge envelope containing pretty pictures, postal cards and a variety of other Tyrolean things.

About 12 o'clock the guests began to go frequently to the long buffet arranged in one of the rooms. Here girls in Tyrol costumes served almost anything one could wish, from all kinds of meat sandwiches cheese sandwiches, hot wienerwursts, to cake, fruit, etc., with different kinds of

wine, beer or coffee. Real Tyroleans. I mention last, but by no means least, one of the most interesting features of the evening's program. This was the arrival of sixteen real Tyroleans who are engaged to sing and dance in the German Tyrolean Alps concession in St. Louis. Mr. Knauer had them all come from the Tyrol only for this one night for the entertainment of his guests; and that his guests were appreciative was evident by the enthusiasm demonstrated each of the several times they sang and danced. Both their singing and dancing is particularly pretty and graceful, as you will all see in St. Louis this summer. The Baron von Kleydorff, who married a niece of Adolphus Busch, has a very fine baritone voice and delighted every one by one or two se-

It was 7 o'clock the next morning when the last guest reluctantly said goodby to his hospitable host, for here in Germany a costume ball is often an all night affair

All of the guests carried away a most delightful recollection of this Alpine fest, which is another proof that Mr. Knauer well deserves the reputation he is attaining in Berlin-that of being an ideal host, and an invitation to his beautiful home is greatly sought after and appreciated by his many friends.

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Couches 65 patterns from which to select. The largest line of couches we have ever shown and we believe the best values. We have plain or tufted top velour couch, solld oak frames, with claw foot, at \$8.50. A big variety of other patterns at \$9.50, \$10.00, \$11.00, \$11.75, \$12.75, \$14.00 and up.

Dining Tables New spring styles all here. We are showing 76 distinct patterns in square or round top tubles.

A solid oak, polished finish, square top table with heavy fluted legs, \$7.75. Other extra good values at \$9.00, \$9.50, \$10.00, \$11.00, \$12.50, \$14.00 and up.

Buffets These very popular pieces for the dining patterns, and you will find the choicest in design, finish and best in construction at the lowest possible We have a very pretty solld oak buffet with mirror, handsomely finished, at \$17.50, and a big variety of other patterns ranging at \$25.00, \$27.00, \$29.00, \$31.00, \$22.00, \$23.50, \$35.00, \$36.00 and up.

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