News Notes

Bishop Paul E. Martin, Houston, Texas, writes that Colonel Tom Stafford took a Bicentennial medallion which the Bishop had given him on his flight into space in June. Colonel Stafford intended to present the medallion to Bishop Martin at the session of the Texas Annual Conference on June 6, but this was not possible because the flight was delayed. However, the presentation was made to the Bishop at a later date.

Reference has been made previously to the cooperation of the Methodist Librarians' Fellowship, an organization composed of the librarians in our theological seminaries and a few other Methodist librarians. The Fellowship met at Louisville, Kentucky, June 6, and discussed ways and means of continuing the work on a Union Card Catalog of all Methodist historical materials. The Fellowship adopted the following resolution:

Resolved: That the Methodist Librarians' Fellowship is deeply grateful for the unfailing interest and the financial support of the Association of Methodist Historical Societies in the various bibliographical projects undertaken by the Fellowship.

Resolved: That the Methodist Librarians' Fellowship is especially appreciative of the leadership of Dr. Albea Godbold, Executive Secretary of the Association of Methodist Historical Societies, in undertaking programs aimed at the greater bibliographical control of Methodist historical materials.

Resolved: That the Methodist Librarians' Fellowship offers its continued cooperation to Dr. Godbold and to the Association of Methodist Historical Societies in the furthering of these bibliographical ventures already under way and those which the Association may undertake in the future.

Dr. J. Manning Potts, Editor of The Upper Room, has been interested for years in the development of a Union Card Catalog of all Methodist historical materials. At the meeting of the Methodist Librarians' Fellowship mentioned above, Dr. Potts urged that an effort be made to have a Catalog manuscript ready for publication within a year. The Fellowship agreed to work toward that end. Mr. Brooks B. Little, Upper Room Librarian and a member of the Methodist Librarians' Fellowship, will lead in the work on this project in the months ahead.

The Troy Annual Conference at its 1966 session designated three historical landmarks. They are: 1) The old Ashgrove Methodist Church, Sandgate, Vermont, which is said to be the oldest of its
kind north of New York City. 2) The Philip Embury monument in Woodlands Cemetery, Cambridge, New York. 3) The old Methodist Burial Ground, Ashgrove, New York, which is the final resting place of many original members of the first Methodist society north of New York City.

The Rev. Warren Jenkins, Executive Secretary, South Carolina Conference, Central Jurisdiction, has supplied pictures and information concerning Old Bethel Church, Charleston, South Carolina. The present building was erected in 1797. At first it was a white church; it became a Negro Methodist in 1854. Apparently Old Bethel is one of the oldest buildings in the connection in continuous use as a Methodist church.

The Bicentennial Contest Committee, Dr. W. Guy Smeltzer, Chairman, received some 60 essays which sought to qualify for the prizes offered. The committee met in July and gave serious consideration to all of the papers entered in the contest. First and second prize winners in each of four categories were designated. The names of the winners are to be announced in the church press about October 1. In accordance with the rules of the contest, all papers submitted become the property of the Association of Methodist Historical Societies and none will be returned to the writers. If any papers which did not win prizes are later published in Methodist History, they will be paid for at the usual rates.
Miller, Gene Ramsay, *A History of North Mississippi Methodism 1820-1900*. Parthenon, 1966. ($3.95, plus handling. Copies to be secured from Mrs. Russell Bailey, Coffeeville, Mississippi.)

This book is well written and interesting, and it has a number of distinctive features. Dr. Miller, so far as the reviewer knows, is the first woman to write a history of an Annual Conference, and incidentally the first woman to serve as president of a conference historical society. As the wife of a busy pastor, now a district superintendent, and the mother of four children, one marvels that she found time to do the necessary research and compile the information found on every page. The book is concise, having less than 160 pages; it served first as her doctoral dissertation at Mississippi State University. If there is any criticism of the book, it is the scholarly overtones which may make it less attractive to the average reader.

The North Mississippi Conference was organized in 1870. This volume traces Methodism from England to America and follows its steady march toward the Southwest and the establishment of the first Methodist congregations in Mississippi by Tobias Gibson around 1800. After that date Methodism came into North Mississippi from several directions. For most of its early history, more than half a century, Methodism in the northern parts of the State was included in three Annual Conferences—Mississippi, Alabama, and Tennessee—and after 1840 in the Memphis Conference. Dr. Miller traces these developments in a masterly way and gives a list of pastors serving charges in North Mississippi from each of the conferences named. There are no pictures, but the book presents a number of excellent maps and charts showing the development of Methodism in the area and the changes in boundary lines.

Camp meetings, revivals, social customs, controversies, educational institutions, slavery, two wars, and one period of reconstruction figure in this able presentation of the growth of Methodism in the upper half of the State of Mississippi.

Five pages of bibliography and an index of eleven pages indicate the thorough work done by the author in preparing this history.

—J. B. Cain

Washington, Mississippi
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