AN ABOLITIONIST AT THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

by William R. Locke*

William D. Cass was a member of the New Hampshire Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The History of the New Hampshire Conference shows his picture with this description under it: "A man of heroic mould. An inveterate worker. Did not spare himself. One of the strong men of his time." These words are quoted from his memoir: "With limited early advantages, destitute of elegance of figure and captivating manners, he accomplished more than a score of men who have all of these without his untiring energy, his flaming zeal, and his indomitable will."

Mr. Cass was my great-grandfather's brother. These three letters came down in the family. The second one was owned by my father, the Rev. William B. Locke, and the other two were in the possession of my uncle, the Rev. George R. Locke. I have inserted some punctuation and paragraphing, but have tried to retain the original spelling.

W. R. L.

New York, May 6th, 1844

Dearly beloved Wife

Through the mercy of God my health is better than it was when I saw you last, and my mind is calm and peaceful. I should like to see you this morning, but as I cannot, I will give you some account of affairs since I left you.

I arrived safely at Rochester on Wednesday Eve. Found all well as usual. I called on sister Gowen. She was feeble. It is probable I shall not see her again. Mr. Carley's child died the day I arrived at Rochester. Poor thing it has escaped from its sufferings.

Thursday morning I went to Dover and as I did not get a chance to go to Lowell until Friday morning, I put up at Brother Currier's. At 5 o'clock I took a seat in the cars and about 8 arrived at Lowell.

Brother A. D. Merrill met me at the cars and went with me to brother Chandler's house on Chapel Hill. I found him and his family all well. He has two fine children. They attend meeting and Sabbath School at St. Paul's Church. I met Brother Cahoon in Lowell I called

*This article first appeared in the High Point College Review in 1967.


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on Zelpha Holms, Dr. Moore, Brother Hatch, Wm Fisher, Aunt Dyer and Eliza and found them in good health and spirits.

On Saturday I took a trip to Nashua having my fare paid from Lowell and back. I put up with Brother Barrows on Saturday night and with brother Mansfield on Sunday night. The Methodist have opened a meeting and Sabbath School in the new Baptist house. I preached on Sabbath morning at the new house & in the P.M. at the old house and in the evening at the new house. Had a good time. I called on brother Jonas Drown Chapman and Sister McClenathan. Had good visits. I also had an opportunity of seeing many of the old members and among the rest Sister M'Davit or rather Parker for she has not only gotten a bill from Parker's hand but has had her name changed but she is the same affectionate sister Jane that she used to be.

Monday morning I took the cars for Lowell and boston. Here I found brother Dow. We arrived in Boston about 9 o'clock. I called and saw Wm found him well. He is steady and enjoys religion. His wages are rather low, but he is learning a trade. It is probable that he will be home on a visit the last of June. I also called on Abner French he appears to be doing great business I think he has not much religion. He was very glad to see me and I also found Wm Clough he has got a good place the young men he is to work with are Methodist. I conversed with one of them about getting him to class he said he would try to get him out the next night. I took dinner with brother Merrill. At 4 o'clock we took the carrs for Norwich and arrived at about 8 o'clock eve. and steped out of the carrs into the steam boat. The next morning at a little past 8 we found ourselves in New York City all safe and well. I board with brother Cahoon at Brother Wm Hunt's 20 st. No. 203 have a good boarding hall in a fine part of the City near four miles from where we enter the City and two miles from the Conference. You may think I am nerly out of the City. I am all in sight of the North river opposite the Jersey shore but the City extends near 5 miles north of this place. I preached twice yesterday had very good meetings. I should like to give you an account of the doings of the conference but must leave that for some other time.

It appears now that we shall have rather stormy time on Slavery. The slaveholders have a battle among themselves. The Baltimore Conference has suspended one of their Preachers because he has become a slaveholder by marriage and he has appealed and the case is to be tried tomorrow. The report is that Bishop Andrew has come into possession of slaves by marriage. I hope things will come round right may the Lord direct.

I should have said that the friends at Nashua desire to see you
very much.

I have sent you several papers and shall send you more. If you write, please direct me N Y 20 Street No 203.

Please say to Sarah Jane that I have bought her a Shawl but I cannot send it in this letter very well. Love to all the friends.

Yours affectionately

Mrs. Betsy C. Cass

Wm D. Cass

Mr. Cass took his time and planned his route to allow visits with relatives and friends and his former parishioners in Rochester and Nashua. He left home on Wednesday, April 24, and arrived in New York on Tuesday, the thirtieth. Anyone familiar with the map of New England and with the old railroad lines will recognize that on the way from Sanbornton Bridge (now Tilton) to Nashua Mr. Cass traveled northeast, north, southeast, south, southwest, and north again. Nashua was fifty miles from his home, and he had traveled 130 miles in getting there.

From Boston to New York the popular way was by train and steamboat: in this case, train to Norwich, Connecticut, and steamer over night to New York. The party arrived Tuesday morning in time for the opening of Conference on Wednesday.

The General Conference continued from May 1 to June 10. In the early sessions a large amount of time was consumed in receiving memorials. All of these were presented on the floor of the Conference, and some of them were read. The bulk of the memorials came from the North and dealt with the subject of slavery, and more came from the New Hampshire Conference than from any other.

On May 3 the delegates from the New Hampshire Conference presented 38 memorials on the subject of slavery, announcing for each the name of the church and the number of signers. "W. D. Cass presented memorials as follows: Dover, 72; Epping, 60; Seabrook, 70; Great Falls, 200; Rochester, 117; E. Sanford, 44."2

Day by day the memorials kept coming. On May 4 J. G. Dow presented 18 memorials from the New Hampshire Conference on the subject of slavery. (These were from churches in Vermont, which until 1844 were included in the New Hampshire Conference).3 On the same day two more memorials came from New Hampshire churches and three from the Annual Conference: one on slavery and two on related

3Journal, p. 19.
matters. Elihu Scott wanted to read the Annual Conference documents. Objection was raised because reading would take time and because the subject matter was controversial. T. Crowder of Virginia protested: "These memorials contain the arguments on one side of the question, while it would be out of order for us to reply to them by presenting our views. We have no chance to answer them. The fact of their reading being announced to the public, without the fact of opposing views uttered at the same time, will make an impression altogether favorable to them and unfavorable to us."

By vote of the Conference, the memorial was read. The reporter did not give its exact words, but summarized it: "The memorial urged, in a very respectful, though decided and earnest manner, that some clearly-defined position would be assumed by the General Conference on the subject of slavery, alleging, as their solemn conviction, that if something was not done, in advance of the past actions of this body, and to rescind the injurious acts of its last session, great mischief to the church would follow. The memorial referred to the seceding brethren who had gone off recently. Of course they were complained of, but the apprehension was expressed, that in the event of nothing of moment being accomplished by the Conference, the small rivulet toward which the turbid waters of secession are now drawing off, will become a mighty river, resistless and overwhelming in its course."

May 6: eleven memorials from churches in the New Hampshire Conference on the subject of slavery. It began to look as though the New Hampshire Conference delegates were deliberately bringing in a few every day. "W. A. Smith now spoke. 'I would ask these brethren if they have any further memorials on the subject.' I have observed these same brethren every day submitting memorials when their conference is called. And they seem desirous of occupying a part of the time this way, each day.'

J. Perkins replied: 'We are receiving them every day, and I cannot say whether we shall have any more or not.'

A committee was appointed to receive these memorials on slavery, and a motion was presented to instruct the committee to reply to the arguments advanced and the facts alleged. W. A. Smith, supporting this motion, complained that the memorials were prepared by ministers and presiding elders. "I repeat it — we know only what Methodist ministers think and feel from these memorials. They lead the people in

4Debates, p. 19.
5Ibid., p. 20. The reference is, presumably, to the Wesleyan Methodist separation which occurred in 1840. The reporter was himself a member of that connection.
6Journal, p. 25.
this matter, who, but for them, would not trouble us on this subject."

P. Crandall [New England Conference] replied to this argument: "The ministers do not take the lead. The ministers do not keep pace with the members in this movement. So tardy, in their opinion, has been the action of the ministry on this question that some members have left the church, and more will leave, unless they move more vigorously."

J. G. Dow spoke in the same vein: "I must also correct the mistake with reference to New Hampshire. We are driven up to it by the people — we are pushed on to this subject. I have a private letter now in my possession from the private membership, urging me to present, without fail, the memorials on this subject."

H. Slicer, of Baltimore, affirmed: "I claim, sir, to be a conservative. . . . I hold that this Conference is a conservative body. I hold that the Discipline is conservative." He went on to plead with the North to stop agitation, and he warned that if the church came to the point where it must separate, this would mean "the death-knell of the Union . . . for I am well persuaded that no power has more to do with binding the remote parts of our country together, than the itinerancy and general superintendency of the M. E. Church." He concluded with a plea for forbearance and compromise. "To these New England brethren I say, Forbear. The Discipline cannot be altered. The General Rule on slavery cannot be altered. And I beseech the brethren of the South not to mix up the Temperance question with this matter. . . ."

"W. D. Cass rose and re-affirmed the necessity of acting as they did, from the feelings of the people. 'But if the ministers did take the lead, which is not true, however, it would be a credit to them to be found in the front ranks of this and every other great moral reform. They ought to be opposed to every thing that was opposed to God and religion. And it had not been shown, and could not be shown, that in opposing slavery they were opposing religion. Mr. Wesley says, no man has a right to hold property in another.' He went on to discuss the merits of the question until a point of order was called. The Bishop ruled him out of order, and he concluded: "I did not mean to trespass on the rules, I only followed the track of those who took a wide range. But I am no conservative. The Discipline is not conservative, which will be shown in the proper place hereafter."

Five days later W. D. Cass presented memorials "from eight

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8Ibid., p. 28.
9Ibid., p. 30.
10Ibid., p. 31.
11Ibid., p. 32.
12Ibid., p. 33.
churches and from the P. E. and several traveling and local preachers of Dover district." At the time he presented these memorials, W. D. Cass was, himself, the P. E. of the Dover district, but the memorial may have come from the man who held that office the preceding year. We wonder whether there was any connection between Mr. Cass' visits to Dover, Lowell, and Nashua and the memorials which came from those places.

Memorials continued to trickle in until May 16, when J. G. Dow presented one from E. Barnard [Vermont] with the explanation: "I received this since I returned home, with a special injunction to present it. And as the servant of the church I comply."

An appeal from the decision of the Baltimore Conference was announced in the General Conference on May 4 and was taken up on May 7. This was the situation: When the name of Francis A. Harding was called in the Annual Conference, "it was objected to him because he had become connected with slavery by marriage." A committee, appointed to inquire into the particulars, reported that he had married a lady who owned five slaves. A plan for him to emancipate them was recommended by the committee. "They also required him to give a pledge that he would comply with the instructions of the committee during the conference year." Their report was adopted, but "F. A. Harding announced the impracticality of compliance." He was suspended, and he signified his intention to appeal to the General Conference.

W. A. Smith of Virginia delivered a long and eloquent address, urging that the decision of the Baltimore Conference be reversed. He argued that Mr. Harding could not possibly emancipate the slaves as the committee recommended. He pleaded for conservatism, and he said: "Slavery is a great evil, but not necessarily a sin! Both sides are looked at in this. Those who seek for its extirpation, and also those who are compelled to submit to it. . . . We know slavery to be an evil. We acknowledge that we feel it to be an evil. But we are compelled to submit. The wrong has been inflicted upon us by those very brethren from the North who now withhold from us their sympathies and prayers, and refuse to pity us and help us in this our time of need. Their interference has prevented our deliverance from it, and perpetuated the wrong for an unlimited period of time to come."

J. A. Collins of the Baltimore Conference argued that the decision

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13Journal, p. 36.
14Debates, p. 75.
15Ibid., p. 89; Journal, p. 48.
16Debates, p. 34.
17Ibid., p. 41.
of the Conference be upheld, and the matter came to a vote on May 11. A motion that the decision be reversed was lost 117-56. Wm. D. Cass, with the other New Hampshire Conference delegates, voted Nay.  

New York, May 17th, 1844

Affectionate and beloved Wife

Your letter was recd. yesterday. I was glad and thankful to hear of your health and also that the friends were generally well. Through the mercy of God my health is very good and my mind is peaceful.

Last Sabbath I had the privilege of consecrating the Elements of the Lords Supper and assisting in the administration of the same to six or eight hundred church members. The Lord was with us. The Methodists in this city so far as I have seen are very plain in their dress and spiritual. I trust they will be as salt in this corrupt city.

I suppose you have all-ready learned that anti-slavery principles prevail in the General Conference. More than two-thirds of the delegates are opposed to slavery. The south are in trouble, but I believe they will have to yield the point. One thing is settled that a slaveholder can not be elected to the Episcopal office and that Bishop Andrew who has been a slaveholder for two years must go out of his office.

This morning Bishop Soul gave notice that the Deligates in the slaveholding states were requested to meet and that those in the free states were requested to meet by themselves at 3½ o'clock this P.M. The Baltimore Conference which includes the state Maryland and nearly one half of Virginia goes with the north. What the result of the meetings will be this P.M. I cannot tell. But I am sure that slavery cannot triumph. I believe that God in his good providence will yet deliver the M. E. Church from the curse of slavery. May he cut the work short.

I have become acquainted with the Presiding Elder from Ill. who is acquainted with your uncle Joseph and his family. He gives a very good account of them says they are finely situated and are doing well. Br. Fuller has written to me he is not here. Br. Cole's folks have not come yet. Sister Cahoon has arrived here and found her husband in safety after having been absent from him by her own choice for two months.

This is a great city but not very pleasant on some accounts. The streets are not very wide and are very irregular and dirty. The hogs are very plenty in the streets. I have been informed that they are common property. When ever a poor man wants pork he can take swine from the street and fit them to kill. This is rather a new order of things to me.

18Ibid., p. 65; Journal, p. 33.
The children are very plenty. I have attended the Sabbath School anniversary of the M. E. Church. The meeting was on what they call the parade ground. (This place used to be called the potters fields. I have been informed that over thirty thousand were buried there. It is all smooth paths and set out with shade trees and teams with life. I cross it several times every day.) There were in attendance at the meeting 5400 children and probably 5000 people. This was a fine meeting. I had the privilege of seeing all the children as they all passed by where I stood.

I hope you will not be melancholy. I believe our kind and heavenly father who has taken care of us thus far will continue to be with us to the end. Be of good cheer. When you write please direct to New York only as I shall receive it as soon and the postage will be less. I have sent you a paper nearly every day since I have been here. They go directed to me. Please inquire for papers directed to me.

Yours Affectionately

Wm. D. Cass

Mrs. Betsy C. Cass

Conference Room
Friday 2½ o'clock P.M.

The issue of slavery was brought to the General Conference by memorials from the North and by the appeal case from the Baltimore Conference. On May 7 a committee was proposed "to take into consideration the subject of harmonizing the church on the slave question." In Debates no reference is made to this committee until a week later. The Baltimore Conference case produced such a display of oratory and emotion that the appointment of a committee was called for and agreed to by a unanimous vote. In recording this action, the reporter threw in his own comment: "Our reports next week will be full of thrilling interest. The Church is on the edge of a volcano! If the abolitionists maintain their ground, there must be a split; if they do not, there will be secession."19

At noon on Wednesday, May 15, business was suspended, and Bishop Soule led the General Conference in a prayer meeting for unity. On Thursday the "Committee on Pacification" asked for more time, and on Friday morning they reported no progress. It was then that Bishop Soule, speaking for the committee, requested "that the members from the North meet in the upper part of the house at 3 o'clock P.M. to-day, and the members from the South in the vestry of this house at the same hour."20

Mr. Cass' letter indicates that — in his mind at least — Bishop

19Debates, p. 83.
20Ibid., p. 89.
Andrew's case was settled before the General Conference acted. The letter is dated May 17, three days before the case reached the floor of the Conference. When this letter was written, the northern delegates had not yet met in their separate session, but among themselves they had talked and reached an agreement.

On May 20 Mr. Collins, of the Baltimore Conference, introduced a resolution: "Whereas a report is in circulation that one of the Superintendents has become connected with slavery, and whereas the Conference has a right to know the fact in the case, therefore, Resolved, that the Committee on Episcopacy examine into the case, and report the facts tomorrow morning."21

A report from the Committee on Episcopacy, presented May 22, noted that James O. Andrew had become a slaveholder since being elected to the episcopacy and concluded that "he is hereby affectionately requested to resign his office as one of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church."22 The resolution was discussed at length.

Next morning, after more discussion, J. B. Finley [Ohio Conference] offered a substitute motion: "Whereas Bishop Andrew has become connected with slavery . . . and this act having drawn after it circumstances which in the estimation of the General Conference will greatly embarrass the exercise of his office as an itinerant General Superintendent, if not in some places entirely prevent it, therefore, Resolved, that it is the sense of this General Conference that he desist from the exercise of this office as long as this impediment remains." This motion was debated until June 1, and was then passed.23

Dr. Stephen Olin [New York Conference], referred to as "the eloquent man who spoke for both sides"24 supported the substitute. He spoke in admiration of Bishop Andrew: "Had I a thousand votes to give, I would give them all for him as a Bishop in preference to any other man I know. . . . If it is then necessary to take action on the subject, deal with him tenderly."25

Wm. D. Cass opposed the substitute on the ground that it was too lenient. "He said, if he understood the question, it was to remove Bishop Andrew from office on the ground of expediency, and not for a violation of any rule of the church or of morality. The ground of this expediency, he understood to be the supposition that some of the

21Ibid., p. 99; Journal, p. 58.
22Journal, p. 64.
23Ibid., pp. 66, 83.
people will secede if he is suffered to remain, and not that it is wrong to be a slaveholder. To such a procedure he objected, for it could not be right to displace the Bishop to accommodate the wrong views and feelings of any part of the church. The general feeling of the North, he understood to be, that slavery is wrong in the nation and in the church. If this be so, it calls for the removal of Bishop Andrew, if he be a slaveholder. If you can make out that he is not a slaveholder, or if you can prove that slavery as he is connected with it, is not wrong, then this whole procedure against him must be wrong. I assure the Conference that the action proposed, upon the ground that it is proposed, while the Bishop is expressly cleared of all blame, will not satisfy a large body of the North. Let this Conference say that it is not wrong to hold slaves, and we of the North stand upon a volcano, and we shall be blown up. . . .

"I do not ask, at this time, that the Conference convict him of immorality, but only that they say he has done wrong. . . . With all my veneration for the Episcopacy, and I have no objection to it, I must say that I think he has done wrong. When you admit that slavery is right, then you may write Ichabod upon our banner. The resolution does not speak out in language that will satisfy those whom the action is designed to save. It is said that the Southern brethren will go off if we press this point. They say what they know, that the South will go to a man. How do they know? Have they consulted and learned the opinions of all the membership? It is presumed, that the South knew it all, and that the North knew nothing. We know that four conferences would vote unanimously not to receive a slaveholding Bishop. He believed that the North would go off generally; though he had been let into no secret on the subject; he only gave it as his opinion. . . .

"Mr. Cass said that it had been argued that this Conference could not do away the General Superintendency. This, he thought proved that Bishop Andrew must be removed. His connection with slavery would prevent his discharging the duties of his office in a large portion of the work; his superintendency, therefore, could not be general; and to let him remain was to do away the general character of the superintendency." Mr. Cass went on to quote John Wesley, and he still held the floor when the time for adjournment arrived; but next morning he declined to take up the five minutes still allowed him.

"Mr. Pierce the younger, of Georgia," was next. "He did not believe so much evil would be the result to the church in the North as was represented if nothing is done; he believed the middle ground men could control it if they would. The difficulty appeared to exist among
the preachers more than among the people: persons who were called by the apostle meddlers with other men's matters. Are we told that New England will suffer? And who but New England has produced the excitement, and given substance to the evil now dreaded? and shall they now be saved from it by destroying the South? Let New England secede: I would to God she would secede, rather than that resolution should pass, and the whole South be ruined. Let them all go! What is New England that she should demand so much at our hands? She has been a thorn in the flesh for the last twenty years — the messenger of Satan to buffet us. If she will not desist from her course of agitation, it would be a blessing to the church if she would secede; we would then have peace. We are at peace in the South; we dwell by the side of still waters, and feed in green pastures, and the God of peace is with us.”

Another delegate from Georgia, A. B. Longstreet, opposed the motion under debate; but his reasons were the opposite of those that led Mr. Cass to oppose it. “He said the history of all churches was nearly the same. While churches have been contented to occupy their appropriate sphere and attend to the preaching of the gospel, without attempting to interfere with the civil power, their success was wonderful... but as they increased they formed what you call the church, and they soon began to incorporate human legislation with the divine law...”

“The speaker said he must enter his protest against all new tests of membership and ministerial character. Some would make slavery a test; some would have a temperance test, and some would have an education test; but he protested against them all. He had no bitterness in his heart to that abolition brother, pointing to Mr. Cass of New Hampshire. Where are we? The truth is doubtless between us somewhere....”

Mr. Longstreet went on with reference to Bishop Andrew. “If slaveholding disqualifies him from the office of Bishop, it disqualifies him for a minister; and if it disqualifies him it disqualifies us all, and our constitutional rights must stand or fall with his; and can we expect to be silent and see him crushed, knowing that we must be the next victims of the wheel? Pass that resolution, and our rights are stricken to the ground.”

New York, May 26th, 1844

Dearly Beloved Wife

As I am at leisure this P.M. I with pleasure devote a portion of

28Ibid., p. 145.
29Ibid., pp. 146, 147, 148.
my time in writing to you not doubting that you will be happy to hear from your best earthly friend. Through the mercy of God my health is much better than when I left home. It has been good all the time since I came here. My trust is yet in God he is my portion and my ever lasting all.

I should be very glad to see you. Home is very desirable to me, but when I shall be able to return to New Hampshire I cannot now say. Business goes on very slow in the conference. Bishop Andrew’s case has occupied the conference for two days past and probably will for several days to come. The proposition before the conference is that the conference request him to desist from using his office as a Bishop until such time as he shall be free from slavery not on the ground that he is sensurable as a christian or a minister but it is in-expedient for him to exercise his office at the conference and especially in the New England Conferences. The doctrine which is held by a majority of the General Conference I believe is that being a slaveholder and buying and selling slaves in certain instances does not lessen his right to christian fellowship or ministerial character. It has been avowed by a member on this conference floor to day that he was a slaveholder and that he had bought and sold slaves sometimes. There is not much abolitionism here. I believe our deligation are nearly all true but there is some doing by those who call themselves abolitionist.

It is my opinion that if there had been no fear of secession Bishop Andrew would have had but little disturbance. He was read of to day to preach next sabbath. I fear no personal troubles as I have made up my mind to say nothing let things go as they will. I calculate they will not go as I should like to have them and yet all may come out well in the end. I am determined to let God direct. From what I can now see the methodist church is doomed to be connected with slavery so long as it exists in America. Slavery never looked so bad to me as now but I do not think I shall runn wild.

Brother and Sister Cole left here this morning for Phelidelphia. The people were all well when they left Rochester. Sister Gowen was then living. Things were going on well there sabbath school & C. You must continue to trust in God who has been with you at all times. Pray for me. I believe we shall meet again to enjoy each other’s society in the land of the living.

I think of buying you an Alapacker dress light collor very nice cotton and worsted one dollar per yard. Please say when you wright if you would like to have one. My love to all the friends. Perhaps you had better not make this letter very publick. I hope you will write when you receive this without fail.

Yours most Affectionately
Wm D Cass
Mrs. Betsy C. Cass

What the outside temperature was in New York City in May, 1844, we do not know; but the temperature inside Green Street Church was raised by heated debate that continued day after day. During a very trying session on May 29 Bishop Soule was asked to address the Conference, and he tried to maintain calm. "I am perfectly calm in my feelings, I was never more calm in my life; nor is it the calm of indifference, but the calm that arises from settled conviction and fixed principles." I know that some of my brethren of the North are involved in such a way that I cannot see how they can compromise this question. If I understand them, it involves, in their view, a principle. . . . What is that principle? . . . It was advanced by my worthy brother Cass the other day. He cannot compromise the principle, and you must convince him that it is wrong, before he can yield it. The principle is, that slavery under all circumstances is a sin against God."

"Mr. Cass explained, by saying that he did not say that slavery was a sin against God under all circumstances, but that it was a moral evil."31

Fearing what the Conference would do, and knowing in his heart what his own convictions would drive him to do, Bishop Soule concluded: "I say I know that the decision the Conference is about to make may seal my fate. Let me go: but I pray you, do not let go of sound principles; hold to your principles; and with these remarks I submit the whole to your decision under God's direction."32

A final plea for compromise came in a document from the Bishops. "At this painful crisis, they have unanimously concurred in the propriety of recommending the postponement of farther action in the case of Bishop Andrew, until the ensuing General Conference. . . . Until the cessation of the embarrassment, or the expiration of the interval between the present and the ensuing General Conference, the undersigned believe that such a division of the work of the general superintendency might be made without any infraction of constitutional principles, as would fully employ Bishop Andrew in those sections of the church in which his presence and services would be welcome and cordial."33

This report was signed by four bishops: Soule, Hedding, Waugh, and Morris. It was received, and action on it postponed until the next

30Ibid., p. 234.
31Ibid., p. 241.
32Ibid., p. 244. Although he was a native of Maine and had been a member of the New England Conference, Bishop Soule sided with the South. When the first General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, met in May, 1846, Bishop Soule offered his services to the Church and was accepted.
33Ibid., p. 268.
day. Next morning before action was taken, Bishop Hedding asked to withdraw his name from the document. He said that he signed it: "With the hope that it would be a peace measure, but instead of that it appears to become a bone of contention. I signed the paper with the hope that it would meet with a general approval of the body, but I have now no hope of that, and therefore I wish to withdraw my name." 34

McTyeire, in commenting on this action, quotes the Methodists Quarterly Review (April, 1871) as authority for the report that the delegates from the New England conferences forced Bishop Hedding to withdraw. 35

The recommendation of the bishops was laid on the table by a vote of 95 to 84. All the New Hampshire delegates voted with the majority. 36 Then at last the motion of J. B. Finley — "That he [Bishop Andrew] desist from the exercise of his office so long as this impediment remains" — came to a vote and was adopted. Again all the New Hampshire delegates voted with the majority. 37

Another week passed before the General Conference could complete its business. Another "long and heated debate" followed the presentation of a document signed by the delegates from the Southern conferences. In this document they affirmed that the action of the General Conference "renders a continuance of the jurisdiction of the General Conference over these Conferences inconsistent with the success of the ministry in slaveholding states." 38 In spite of their protest, the Southern delegates remained in the General Conference and took part in the election and consecration of two new bishops.

On June 10, when a "minority report" was presented, the Conference found itself again discussing the character of Bishop Andrew and his connection with slavery. By this time everyone was tired. "It being now a very late hour in the evening, and the conference anxious to adjourn sine die, having been so long absent from their charges and their families, the remainder of the night was taken up by the adoption of reports, and the passage of sundry resolutions." The final actions were votes of thanks; "and then, at a quarter past 12 o'clock, after prayer by Mr. Dunwoody, of South Carolina, the conference adjourned sine die." 39

And Mr. Cass went back to New Hampshire, satisfied that he had done his duty and upheld the cause of right.

34Ibid., p. 275.
35McTyeire, op. cit., p. 636.
36Journal, p. 82.
37Ibid., p. 83; Debates, p. 278.
38Debates, p. 291.
39Ibid., pp. 325, 326.