

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1921

I. Title Page	169
II. Officers of the Conference	170
III. Sessions of the Conference.....	171
IV. Episcopal Directory	172
V. Officers of Societies	173
VI. Treasurers	177
VII. Educational Institutions	177
VIII. Commissions	178
IX. Boards	179
X. Standing Committees	181
XI. Special Committees	182
XII. Chronological Roll	183
XIII. The Twelve Patriarchs	185
XIV. Conference Roll and Directory:	
1. Full Members	186
2. Probationers	193
XV. Summary of Membership	193
XVI. Local Preachers and Exhorters:	
1. Buffalo District	194
2. Corning District	195
3. Olean District	196
4. Rochester District	197
XVII. Appointments for 1921-1922:	
1. Buffalo District	198
2. Corning District	200
3. Olean District	201
4. Rochester District	203
XVIII. Disciplinary Questions	205
XIX. Daily Proceedings	209
XX. Anniversaries and Special Meetings.....	232
XXI. Reports of District Superintendents.....	234
XXII. Reports of Boards and Committees.....	246
XXIII. Examiners and Examinations.....	263
XXIV. Proceedings of Laymen's Association.....	268
XXV. Proceedings of Lay Electoral Conference.....	273
XXVI. Memorial Addresses and Memoirs.....	274
XXVII. Deceased Members	299
XXVIII. Rules of Order.....	302
XXIX. Forms of Bequests	305
XXX. Report of Permanent Fund Board.....	307
XXXI. Cash Report of Conference Treasurer.....	315
XXXII. Report of Commission on Conference Expenses.....	316
XXXIII. Report of Board of Stewards.....	318
XXXIV. Analysis of Charges.....	322
XXXV. Treasurer's Tabulated Report	327
XXXVI. Report of Statistician	337

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OFFICIAL MINUTES



THE 112th SESSION



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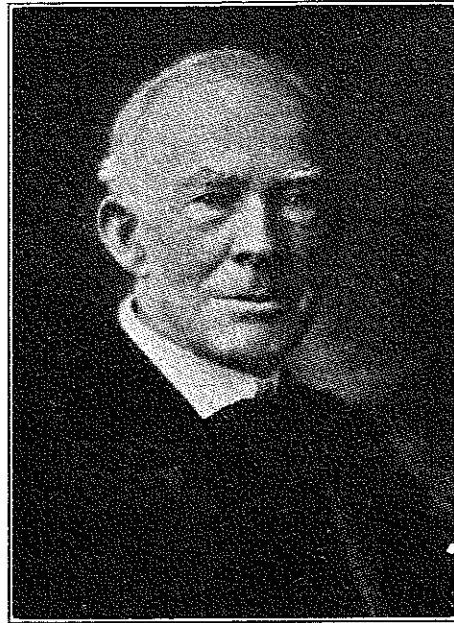
HELD AT

Richmond Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church

BUFFALO, NEW YORK

OCTOBER 5 - 10

1921



SAMUEL McGERALD

June 20, 1833—November 16, 1920

Samuel McGerald was born in Glenavy, County Antrim, Ireland, eleven miles from Belfast, June 20, 1833. His parents were devout Roman Catholics. His uncle, Samuel Young, was a Catholic priest. The young child, Samuel, was named after this uncle, who designed to educate his namesake for the priesthood. The father was a well-to-do farmer, storekeeper and draper. He afterward, by going security for a brother-in-law, lost his property. His business affairs were seriously crippled; and having a large family of children, he thought it best to immigrate to America. After living three years in Canada, the family moved to Rochester, N. Y. Here Samuel came in close contact with some pious Protestants.

Through the influence of his employer, James Henderson, he was led to read the Bible and attend, for the first time in his life, a Protestant Church. Through the influence of the "Word of God," and the life and conversation of Godly men, he was brought under deep conviction. Through much darkness, many trials and much opposition, especially from his own family, he finally came into the light, and was soundly and gloriously converted. He was soon appointed class-leader; then step by step, was led into broader fields of usefulness. He was licensed to preach in 1856; and the same year was received on trial into the East Genesee Conference; and into full membership in 1858. His appointments were: Conesus, Coke's Chapel and Bristol; Henrietta; Livonia; Pittsford; Walworth; Benton Centre; Bath; Medina; Albion; Riverside, Buffalo; Warsaw; Tonawanda. In 1885, he

was elected editor of the "Buffalo Christian Advocate," afterward named "The Christian Uplook." During these years of literary work, he also supplied Lancaster; and in 1895 and 1896, Metcalf Street, Buffalo. He took a Superannuated Relation in 1903.

Dr. McGerald was a great evangelist. He had great revivals on several charges, especially at Bath, Medina and Albion. At Albion, the work started on Christmas Eve and continued for ten weeks with two meetings each day. The entire community was swept by the power of God and these meetings. The church was crowded with people, and the altar with seekers. At both Medina and Albion, he built a new church.

At Riverside, Buffalo, he found a debt of \$16,000.00 resting upon the church. He raised the money, paid the debt, had a revival, and then went to new fields of conquest. It is said that a score of men entered the ministry as one of the results of the great revival in Bath. This enthusiasm for evangelistic meetings continued with him as long as strength permitted him to do that kind of work.

Dr. McGerald was a great Bible student. Before the Uniform, International or Berean Lessons were published or planned, he issued a booklet for his own Sunday School, entitled "The Words of Christ." His school was at that time one of the best in the East Genesee Conference.

He was one of the first co-workers with Dr. J. H. Vincent at Chautauqua. In 1874 and for years after, he taught in the Normal Classes. For twelve years he lectured on the Model of Jerusalem and Palestine every day for three weeks, during the session of this noted Assembly. So prominent did he become as a Sunday School worker that Dr. Vincent, who at that time was editor of the Sunday School publications of the Methodist Episcopal Church, offered him a position in his office in New York. He afterward said that one of the mistakes of his life was when he refused to accept the above position.

He was a good man, full of faith and the Holy Spirit. On November 16, 1920, he rose to light the fire in the grate. Not feeling well he went back to bed and was stricken with apoplexy, and died at 10:30 that evening. The night before he said to his wife, "I am impressed that my end is near and that I shall die suddenly." When the physician asked him if he would like to remain here longer, he promptly answered "Oh, no." He repeated the verse:

"Here in this body pent,
Absent from Him I roam;
Yet nightly pitch my moving tent,
A day's march nearer home."

As he neared the portals of the Eternal City, like Stephen the first martyr, his face shone. He said, "I see Jesus, Hallelujah." and with transfigured countenance, he passed to be with his Lord and Master.

The funeral services were in charge of his District Superintendent, C. X. Hutchinson, D. D., who was assisted by Dr. Bruce S. Wright, and Rev. James Moss. He was buried in Canandaigua by the side of the companion of his effective years in the ministry.

J. A. Smith.