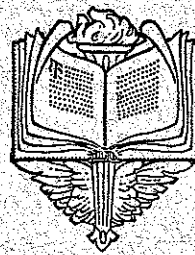


The NORTH CAROLINA
CONFERENCE OF THE
METHODIST EPISCO-
PAL CHURCH, SOUTH

Eighty-ninth Annual Session



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HELD IN
FAYETTEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA
November 11-16, 1925

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se the name of Jesus to
e spirit of Mrs. Mattie
o rejoice with the angels

15, 1861. She was the
Atwater.

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became even a greater
r brothers that she was
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t stand it. Your health
She replied, "The Lord

January, 1901, and took
whom to care. In Sep-
the Reverend John W.
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d matron, she labored
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never have I heard of
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rance, her hopefulness,
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s always found kind,

er hover above our be-

loved Orphanage and walk with every child within and
without to warn them of impending danger and to guide
them in paths of peace and righteousness for His name's
sake. And may her memory ever be green in their minds!

ETHEL THOMPSON MERCER

By D. E. Earnhardt

Ethel Waldo Thompson was born at Cary, N. C., on
August 12, 1878. She was the daughter of Rev. J. E.
Thompson, of the North Carolina Conference. Her mother
was before her marriage to Mr. Thompson, Jane Bouy.
Rev. J. E. Thompson was one of the gentlest and most
cultured ministers of his day. His wife was bright and
witty. Such a couple made an ideal parsonage home. It
was in such a home that Ethel was born. She inherited
fine traits of character from both parents. After finishing
high school, Ethel completed her education in a Christian
college. Like many college women, she entered the teach-
ing profession. Her fine training and great energy made
her way popular and successful as a teacher.

She was married to Rev. S. E. Mercer on September
25, 1900, Bishop John C. Kilgo officiating. The first years
of her life were given to home making and to service to
her Church. She entered enthusiastically into all the
works and purposes of the Church and community. There
was no cause that was worthy that did not enlist her
sympathy, and engage her service. Her fine gifts were
always at the disposal of various departments of the Church,
when called for. So many things she did well that she
drew too heavily upon her strength. After a few years
her health became impaired, but she loved to live and
work so well that she continued to take an active part in
all the activities of the Church. She was anxious always
to be of help at every point. For many years she was a
semi-invalid and finally a total invalid. Much of her time
was spent in variuos hospitals. She came from one of her
hospital experiences to take up life on crutches, and a
few years later had to depend on a rolling chair. She ad-

justed herself, however, to these handicaps in a wonderful way. She learned to live and work and be happy in spite of her limitations. She often remarked that much of the world's best work was done by those who suffered. Her eager mind was ever on the alert in acquiring more knowledge. Her memory was wonderful. Large portions of the Bible were retained in her mind, and she knew almost all of the songs of our Hymnal, and much of our best literature. She was a fine reader, and enjoyed reading with her children. Frequently she would get one of her children to roll her down to the colored section and give readings to the colored women and children. They always looked forward to those story hours. In this way she did much good, and she was loved by these colored people for the interest she took in them. She did a real home mission work in this way. Her fine sense of humor made her very attractive to the young people, and she loved to work with them. She took an active part in League, Sunday School, Woman's Missionary work, and also various forms of community work until a few months before her death. She belonged to the Shut-in Society, and with her lame hands wrote hundreds of cheering letters to invalids all over the country. She was ever taking the sorrows of others upon her own heart. Her friends sent her many beautiful flowers which she invariably passed on to others. She largely forgot her own sorrows in trying to help others. In the early part of last year, after Mr. Lee, a trained collector of fine ability, had done his best to close the Centenary work, Mrs. Mercer asked the privilege of continuing the collecting herself. In her rolling chair, she surprised the entire Church by the large amount that she collected. She did this for the love of the cause of Missions. This was her closing work. Only once or twice was she well enough to attend Church after this.

The month following was full of pain and suffering. Her faith, courage, and will power continued to inspire others to better living and service. There are a number of missionary societies in the Conference named after her.

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Her influence will continue to live on in the hearts and minds of many. Her mind retained its normal mentality until about two weeks before her death, when the rheumatism settled in her brain. Even in those hours of unconsciousness, she continued to talk of her Saviour and His love.

In the early hours of December the fifth, 1924, her soul passed into one of those mansions of which our Saviour tells about. Her tired, worn body was laid to rest in a beautiful spot in Maplewood Cemetery in Durham, N. C. The large attendance and the many beautiful floral offerings at the funeral showed how tenderly she was loved. "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

