

XVI

TO CALIFORNIA AND OREGON

THE episcopal plan of visitation for 1853 called upon Simpson to make the long journey to California and Oregon; and in December of that year he began the trip, sailing from New York via Panama.¹

He had made up his mind to write an account of his journey for publication. Travel books were much in vogue. What could be more exciting than an account of travels to the fabulous Pacific Coast? In preparation, he read extensively in history and geography of the region he was to visit; and on board the ship he was alert to every incident that might please the fancy of his Methodist readers.

There were six in his party, including Brother Nelson Reasoner, a young preacher who was transferring to the Pacific Coast; two young women who expected "to fulfil matrimonial engagements"; and two wives who were rejoining their husbands in California. Among the other passengers were several gentlemen from California who "were reputed to have amassed large sums of money," and William Kip, missionary bishop of California in the Protestant Episcopal Church, en route with his wife and son to his new diocese.²

As they set sail Bishop Simpson stood on the deck watching, impressed by the "forests of masts" and the "receding mansions and steeples of the commercial emporium of the world."

That night, when he retired early, with a slight dizziness and thoughts of seasickness, the ship was still in sight of land. But when he arose the next morning he saw only the ocean's "vast expanse with its ceaseless undulations. The heavens came down as if to greet and encircle the watery plains. The fleecy clouds now veiled and now enriched the glories of the sky. The blushing tints of the east grew brighter and brighter until the golden rays of the sun sparkled upon the waters."

They entered the Gulf Stream the second night. Simpson awakened to note the change in the temperature and the increased motion of the ship. With a mind habituated to the drawing of morals, he began to reflect upon domestic scenes. As an infant he had been rocked in a cradle or carried in loving arms which lulled him to sleep. "Why not think of this ship as a cradle rocked by the winds and waves of the Almighty!" Knowing that "the arms of the everlasting love" were around and beneath him, and that God's will was best for "time or eternity," he accommodated himself to the motion of the vessel and soon was lost in sleep. Most of the passengers, however, looked "very languid" in the morning, and several were not at the breakfast table. Nor would he intimate, the bishop slyly observed, "that it was christian philosophy that saved me from seasickness."

He reflected on the discovery of the Gulf Stream, the theories and facts concerning it, and the effects which it produced. He thought the seaweed (*Fucus natans*, he classified it in a momentary revival of his old interest in botany) accurately as well as quaintly described by Columbus as "similar to small branches of pine covered with pistachio nuts." He recorded the temperature of the water and noted that observations showed the latitude $25^{\circ} 53'$ N. and the longitude 73° from London. He was not pleased to think that American mariners still recorded their longitude from London, when "our metropolis answers equally well." Americans consulted British charts, which they considered the most reliable, and made all calculations in accordance with the plan of English navigators. He was willing to concede that "we owe much to British science—we reverence the names of her philosophers and statesmen"; but he believed America was "destined to surpass" all other nations in "commercial greatness" and its mariners ought to conform their notes to the meridian of their own metropolis.

From this little essay in patriotism, he returned to reflections on Columbus, particularly to suggestions that Commander Pinzon had persuaded him to change his course to southwesterly. Had he not done so, he would have sailed directly to Florida, and the North American continent might have been opened to Catholic settlement. But "the wisdom of God ordered it otherwise."

Flying fish at last drew him away from his digression. They "seemed to throw themselves from the water by a rapid stroke of the

tail, and skimming near the water, as they touched it, another stroke of the tail raised them again, thus resembling the flight of a bird." He could never ascertain "whether they fled from some pursuing enemy, or whether they were rejoicing in their power of rising above their watery home."

In the late afternoon of Christmas Day they saw the blue mountains of Jamaica; they rounded the point about sunset, sailed along the southern coast, and anchored off Port Royal. They would make their way up the channel to Kingston the next morning.

The passengers had several hours to observe life in Jamaica. Simpson set out with Brother Reasoner and was delighted with the tropical vegetation, "so green and luxurious even in mid-winter." He noted the scene at the wharf: women carrying baskets of coal on their heads; little boys diving for dimes and darting about in the water "like some amphibious animals"; loafers lounging on the docks; and in the background the coconut palm "tall and slender with a single issue of leaves at its summit . . . spreading like an umbrella."

On one of the principal streets they found a "crowd of colored women and boys offering for sale every species of fruit growing on the island." They pushed through "with almost as much difficulty as through a crowd of New York hackmen," heading for the Methodists' Coke Chapel. The church was wide and capacious with galleries on three sides, well finished pews and an organ of "respectable size." The main part of the floor—in strange contrast to American churches—was filled with movable benches that had no backs. The pulpit, "shaped somewhat after the tub fashion" and approached by spiral steps, looked "as though the architect designed to get the preacher as near heaven as possible." By asking questions of the pastor "in true Yankee style," Simpson secured details concerning the number of churches, the pastors, the financial condition, and the relation of church to state.

Brother Reasoner had enough of exploration and went back to the ship; but Simpson with an unquenchable curiosity made his way down to the station and took the "cars" to Spanish Town, the capital of the island. It disappointed him. In spite of a good location and an abundance of tropical shrubbery, the residences lacked architectural beauty; the rich and the poor, with their contrasting homes, lived in close proximity; and there was no indication of recent building. He saw the government square and questioned the sentinels on

guard—who, in their red uniforms, were “as black as ever night frowned upon”—about local history and government. He learned, with amazement, that there were some six hundred soldiers stationed in the place. Why, he did not know, for “the poor people had scarcely spirit enough to live.” He visited the Catholic Cathedral and the Wesleyan chapel, and inquired into the beginnings of Methodism.

As he returned to the cars he was joined by an Englishman who, upon learning that Simpson was one of five or six hundred passengers on the steamer, expressed his surprise that “so many people could be kept in *h’order*.”

Simpson, piqued by the obvious thrust, inquired why so many soldiers were on duty in Spanish Town, adding that people in the United States were “not troubled with soldiers parading our streets on guard.”

“‘Ah,’ said the Englishman, ‘yours is an ‘orrible government—it is only mob law.’”

Simpson pressed the argument, but the Englishman only repeated his original indictment. He had been in New York, and it was governed by the mob, and was wholly unsafe; and “the Irish rule Philadelphia, and keep it in a state of siege.”

The bishop retorted that many native-born American citizens had lived in the country from their youth up without being aware of any serious danger. He had “no time to dispute,” and so he “*merely remarked*,” in a burst of epideictic oratory, that his country everywhere showed signs of prosperity, that the population was increasing, the cities growing, the borders enlarging, and that they had never been more prosperous and happy.

The Englishman, with “the marks of decay and dilapidation” visible around him, was silent for a moment. Then, “giving a sigh, he replied with great emphasis” that he knew that “financially” Americans were successful, but “‘every Englishman had a perfect *h’aversion* to the form of government—there was no *h’order* in it.’”

Catching the train back to Kingston, Simpson hired a hack and drove about the streets collecting items of interest for his book. Back on the steamer, he sat down to reflect upon the life on the island, and particularly the conditions which had followed the emancipation of the slaves.

Bishop Kip also had gone ashore, and had observed the indo-

lence and degradation of the free blacks and made inquiries about them. "Lazy, shiftless, and diseased," he concluded. "Even coaling the steamer is done by women." "'Once,' " a gentleman had said to him, " 'you did not see an untidy negro in the streets. Now, look at them!' " " 3

Simpson agreed that "so much indolence, degradation, filth, and vice are seldom seen," but questioned the conclusion that the American slaves were "far superior to the free colored people of Jamaica." The women's coaling of the ship was not a result of freedom but had been a practice in the time of slavery; and it remained the practice in some islands where slavery continued to exist. Nor could the prevalence of vice be attributed to emancipation. Jamaica was "suffering the result of her former wickedness." He searched his history books and found evidence of licentiousness and concubinage among the ruling classes, and the low state of morals among the blacks before emancipation. He noted the restraining influence of religion upon the majority of the blacks, the growing strength of the Baptists and the Wesleyans. He reflected on the depression and its benefits to the blacks, a great number of whom were securing their own little farms; he pointed out with sanguine hope the tendency of the blacks to regard themselves as superior to the mulattoes, and the consequent pride of caste which was expressing itself through acquisition of property, business enterprise, and education of children. To the stranger, the appearances were unfavorable; but "full investigation will lead any reflecting mind to approve of the emancipation of the negroes in Jamaica."

II

Three days from Kingston the steamer came to Aspinwall (Colón), the Atlantic terminal of the Panama railroad. The passengers disembarked the next morning and traveled by train and boat halfway across the Isthmus to Cruces, where Simpson had reserved rooms from New York; but travelers from the Pacific had arrived first, and the hotel had no sleeping places of any sort. He hurried to the other hotel and arrived just in time to secure for the ladies the last room—a garret on the third floor—and for himself and Brother Reasoner two cots in the gentlemen's commons. That night he lay in the commons where there were nearly a hundred and fifty cots

and beds, many of them occupied by men "highly excited with drink." They sang and shouted and cursed and laughed at the jests of the "lewd women" in an adjacent room, separated from them only by a thin partition. In the barroom beneath, men who could get no cots "were drinking, swearing, and carousing, and making night more hideous by their revelry." Even in the native huts there was alternate singing and hallooing, long after midnight.

Simpson was up at four o'clock, trying to get the breakfast for which he had paid. As soon as it was sufficiently light, he looked for mules—seven of them, including one for luggage and four with side saddles for the ladies. Months ago in New York he had bought the first transit tickets for the trip, entitling him to first choice of mules—indeed, he had even received "sundry lessons" on "the qualities of mules and how to make our selection." He found the New York directions somehow not applicable to the "miserable specimens" available and first rights proved to be vested entirely in the man who was first able to seize a mule.

After much haggling they secured their mounts, and the party, in light clothes and palm-leaf hats, equipped with long-pointed spurs and whips, started on the muddy trail. Two of the women, lacking side saddles, were mounted "after the fashion of men." Now and then on the flat, spurring and whipping their mules into a gallop, members of the party would shout out gayly, like the natives, "mucha mula." "Our friends," thought the bishop, "would scarcely have recognized us."

The trip over the mountains was hazardous at times. On either side the hills "rose abruptly; the bottom of the pass was so narrow that the slender legs of the mule had scarcely room for motion." The ascents and descents were steep, and the holes worn by the mules resembled flights of stairs. It was impossible to pass another train in narrow gorges, and then the muleteers would utter shrill cries warning of their approach. Such places were well suited to robbery, and the rumor spread that a specie train had recently been seized and six persons murdered. Brother Reasoner borrowed a revolver from a Californian but had no occasion to use it.

The hot, humid climate, the difficulties of the trail, and the slow gait of the mules, made the twenty-four-mile trip exceedingly tiring. Now and then the party stopped at a stream to bathe hands, arms, and temples. At five o'clock in the afternoon, nearly exhausted, they

came out on a hillside and looked down on the twin towers of the Cathedral of Panama.

It was New Year's Eve. After supper the bishop and Brother Reasoner passed an hour with the ladies "in religious conversation," and then "bowed together in grateful prayer . . . trying to be thankful for the mercies of the past and covenanting that, if spared, the new year should be one of greater devotion to God."

The bishop, suffering from fever, called for his bed; but, despite his earlier payment, only a broken cot remained in a room where twenty men were already sleeping. He lay on the cot until it gave way, and then rolled over on the floor and rested fitfully. His head ached, his mouth and lips were dry and thirsty. Noting the "feverish throb" in his pulse, he thought with dread of the "Isthmus fever" but tried to "believe that all was right, and that arms of love were around and beneath me." Then the fever grew milder, the current of air less annoying, and he sank into a "calm and peaceful slumber."

The following day he was still weak and feverish; and, unable to find his trunk, he could not dress until after the church hour. Passengers were allowed to board the ship at one o'clock, but were given notice that it would not sail until six; so, although his fever was increasing, he took "a short walk about the town." He rested little during the first night on the Pacific. Possessed of the adventurer's love of seeing, he rose between three and four and walked out on deck to look at a part of the sky he had never seen before. The Southern Cross "shone in full brilliancy," and the North Star was but seven degrees above the horizon. "All the stars beamed with that soft planetary lustre which is peculiar to tropical climes. The sea was full of phosphorescence."

Some days out of Panama, the *Golden Gate* broke her shaft and had to lie to until it could be repaired. Meanwhile food and water were rationed, and uneasiness prevailed among the passengers. At last the repairs were completed, and the ship proceeded to San Diego. On the way out of that harbor late in the afternoon, she grounded, and wind and tide prevented her freeing herself. Another vessel answered the captain's signal for aid but failed to dislodge her. As they waited for high tide the wind rose, and the other ship made for shore. "The storm raged fiercely; the cordage creaked; the sail . . . was torn into shreds; the shrouds cracked like whip-cords. . . ."

The waves rose high, dashing furiously against the vessel, and every now and then breaking even over the top of the cabin. The foremast was cracked . . . and the cabin-work around the mainmast began to crack and give way." When midnight approached the ship leaned to the "larboard" and Simpson stood for three hours with many of the other passengers on the "starboard guard." There seemed to be "but little hope of the ship's outriding the storm." Some of the "wildest men" went to Simpson "to converse on religious subjects," and he proposed to Bishop Kip "the propriety of prayer." The ship's physician objected "lest it should increase the terror of the passengers." About one o'clock the storm began to subside, and shortly after day-break the passengers were able to go ashore.

Simpson and his party with others transferred to a smaller ship, the *Goliad*, for the rest of the trip to San Francisco.

III

From his landing in San Francisco to the opening of the conference some three weeks later at Sacramento, Simpson preached almost daily—on Sundays, two or three times. He traveled by stage, horseback or muleback to the towns on the mother lode, all still feverish with the gold rush. He visited the diggings and went afoot among the hills; he ran into old acquaintances: one was working in a groggery; another, making \$1,000 a month as a doctor; several, digging gold. The distance between appointments, which he always covered in a day, was often thirty or forty miles; once it was seventy. He encountered snow, and rain, and mud; and in climbing Moke-lumne Butte, near Stockton, he fell and tore the skin from his knuckles, "and worse still the knee of my trousers." Yet, with all the strenuous living, his health remained good.

He was delighted with California, and his brethren urged him to make his residence there. "I confess," he wrote to his wife, "were you and the children with me, I think I could spend a few years very pleasantly, in trying to lay the foundations of the Church on the Pacific coast. . . . But I think I almost see you throw down the letter and say, 'Catch me going to California!' Well, then, pick it up again, and I will drop that subject." He complained about her failure to write. He had been in California three weeks, making the rounds of

the churches, dedicating several meetinghouses, preaching before the legislature at Benicia, and returning to Sacramento, and had been away from home two months—and still no letter. Had he no one *"who loves to write letters to me"*? *

After completing his official business in California, he was scheduled to conduct the Oregon conference which was to convene on March 16. However, steamers to Portland were uncertain, and he began to fear that he would not arrive in time for any of it. At last he was able to arrange passage on a steamer due in Portland on Wednesday, the evening before the conference.

But Belknap Settlement, the small community between Corvallis and Eugene where the conference was to meet, was a hundred miles (four days' journey) south of Portland. He hoped, by traveling long days and all night Saturday, if necessary, through the "wild, woody country," to reach his brethren by Sabbath morning. He took a small steamer from Oregon City up the Willamette River, but was delayed first when at darkness they tied up to wait for the moon to rise, and again about ten miles from Salem when the boat caught on a sand bar. They finally freed the boat about nine o'clock the next morning, but were not on their way until eleven. At Salem, with the journey scarcely half over, he and the friend who had joined him at Portland hired the driver of a light spring wagon with a small team to take them "very rapidly" to Corvallis for forty dollars. In a short distance the traces broke, the wagon bed spread and let down one end of the seat. The friend then sat on his baggage and the bishop on the seat, "one end of it elevated, the other on the floor."

Along the Willamette River he caught brief glimpses of the snow peaks of the Cascades—Mount Hood and Mount Jefferson. He was pleased by the winding Willamette, the low plains green with wheat in mid-March, the wooded hills, and snow-covered Marys Peak in the Coast Range. They were still far from Corvallis when the driver lost his way. "After winding to several points of the compass," they drew up at a farmhouse, and made a new bargain for transportation.

At ten o'clock Saturday night, after supper and a little rest, they started on their way again. The bishop lay down in the back of the wagon on some oats, and thus rode "through sloughs and mud" until

two in the morning, when he reached Corvallis—still some fifteen or twenty miles from the conference. The Methodist brother who was to have accompanied him, despairing of his coming, had turned out the horses and gone on. Simpson slept until sunrise, then secured a horse, and was in the saddle a little after eight o'clock, riding rapidly in the company of two "pioneers," to Belknap Settlement. At the settlement, thinking he had reached his destination, he dismissed his guides. The meeting place was yet five miles distant! He rode on, carrying his satchel, and at last came in sight of a log schoolhouse with horses and wagons tied around it.

In the meantime, members of the conference were anxiously awaiting his arrival. On Wednesday the preachers had started coming in, from Puget Sound to the California border. "Their were Jiants in the Oregon Conference in Those days," Ketturah Belknap wrote a half-century later. "After a years seperation and hard toil they greet each other with great warmth and fervor after which their first inquiry is concerning the Bishop Has he been heard from, or, has he yet arrived, where can he be . . . is it Possible he has *been lost at Sea.*"⁵

The conference opened on Thursday morning, but no word had been received. "With sad hearts," Mrs. Belknap wrote, "the Brethren Elect the Rev. T H Pearne who is a Presiding Elder to act as Presiding oficer until the Bishop shall arrive if he comes at all." He did not come Thursday, or Friday, or Saturday. Nor had he arrived by Sunday morning. Suppose he should come during the sermon? Would anybody recognize him?

The Sabbath-day religious exercise proceeded and Pearne had reached the "peroration" of his sermon when he saw a man "wearing a linen duster and bearing a gripsack" enter and seat himself just inside the door. Pearne ceased to preach and, amid "breathless silence" said: "If the stranger who just came in is Bishop Simpson, he will please advance to the front."⁶

The stranger, badly bespattered with mud, walked slowly up the aisle, to the accompaniment of shouts and hallelujahs from all sides. "I was their," said Mrs. Belknap, "and surely the sene was beyond discription." Order was finally restored, "for all would Honor the Bishop and wait on his words."⁷

He delivered an exhortation, telling of his efforts to come to

them and of the storm in which his ship had almost been wrecked. His feelings at the time of the greatest peril, he said, were expressed in the hymn of Henry Kirke White:

Once on the raging Seas I rode
The storm was loud, the night was dark . . .

The company again broke out into shouts and hallelujahs. As soon as order could be restored he promised to preach at two o'clock. Then he was driven to the Belknap home, and lay down and slept until dinner was ready.

That afternoon the bishop, mindful of the trials and tribulations of an itinerant minister, preached on Paul. Transporting his listeners to a time long past, he re-created one by one the persecutions which Paul had suffered—thrice beaten with rods, once stoned, and five times given forty stripes save one. Every preacher in the congregation had endured his own share of want and deprivation and was able to project himself into the struggles of the great apostle, suffering with him, but conquering too, and at last shouting in triumph with the bishop who straightened himself to his full height, drew his coat about him, and uttered the words of Paul: "But none of these things move me."

"Who shall describe the indescribable or speak the unutterable" one enthusiastic hearer said of the sermon: "Its imagery was celestial, its pathos divine, its power omnipotent. It was more than Bishop Simpson's own; it was God's and Christ's." Mrs. Belknap too enjoyed it, for when the bishop came to portray heaven, "he just Soared A way up and took the Congregation with him." However, with shrewd insight, she observed that the sermon was "more for the Preachers than the comen People."^a

Two days later, having concluded his conference, the bishop returned down the Willamette to Portland. After a short but perilous trip by steamer and canoe up the Columbia to The Dalles and back, he sailed for San Francisco and thence home. On the newly completed Panama railroad he crossed the Isthmus in a few hours. Early in June, he was once more with his family in Pittsburgh.

XVII

THE OLD ORDER CHANGETH

BISHOP SIMPSON returned from the Pacific coast to find his reputation as an orator greatly enhanced by the reports of his success. In California he had walked "with the tread of a giant." The preachers and people at the conference in Sacramento thought that he had preached "the king of sermons—the very greatest and best to which they had ever listened." It had been "permeated by that peculiar fire which sanctified genius alone can kindle." Indianans read the report and nodded their heads. "It could not be otherwise" with the man who had moved among them leaving such an impression of "devotedness and eloquence."¹

Where he had been regarded as effective and popular, he now became known as an orator of power, and the press began to publish extravagant accounts of his eloquence. He combined emotion and reason; he was, oddly enough, both "abundant in knowledge" and "rich in speech." When fully fired he was "unsurpassed in the majesty, weight, and richness of his truth." Like the mesmerist, he had the strange power of seeming to transfigure himself into a medium—but he was the "strong and gifted medium of an idea," and the truth which he thus preached was "the pure metal unalloyed, unadulterated, and perfectly solid."²

In appearance, too, the bishop had become more imposing. He had gained in weight without becoming corpulent, and so had lost something of the angular, the loose and shuffling features of his earlier years. He had not yet become "handsome," wrote one of his journalist friends, tauntingly, "and we presume he never will"; but he had developed into "what might be denominated a fine looking man." His slightly graying hair softened the asperity of his features. Under the emotion of speech his eye might kindle in a moment "all aglow," and the emotion would leap from speaker to audience with

the tingling of an electric spark. The people heaped adulation upon him, but he maintained a "singularly gentle air" which was yet "impressive with sweet dignity."³

In his first quadrennium in the episcopacy, Simpson had struck out a new pattern. All his predecessors in the office of bishop had yielded to the routine of conference business; not one was remembered for eloquence, although an extraordinary sermon had brought about William McKendree's election in 1816, and Robert R. Roberts had been known in the West for his power in the pulpit. Simpson was the first who turned to the lecture platform with a message of enlightenment to the people: none before him had accepted the duty to teach as well as to preach.

Greatly pleased with their preaching bishop, delegates to the general conference of 1856 began to talk about sending him to England and Ireland as a fraternal delegate. Who could better represent American Methodism?

Simpson knew his power and sensed his responsibility. He welcomed opportunities to preach, that he might set an example for the young men in the ministry. He wondered if he ought not take time at each of the annual conferences for a special series of lectures to the younger preachers. Could he not meet them, say, at six o'clock in the morning before the regular breakfast hour and talk to them on homiletics and practical theology? In the winter, when he was free from conference duties, he went on lecture tours—out into Ohio and Indiana, east to Philadelphia and New York City to answer calls for his old lecture on the Preternatural and for his new one, "The Influence of the Bible on Language."⁴

The old order was changing, and Methodism must change with it. An educated people demanded an educated ministry. The founding of a theological school at Evanston, Illinois, in 1856 met Simpson's hearty approval. He defended the venture on the basis that, although American Methodists had always demonstrated an antipathy for theological seminaries—manufactories for preachers—the church "had always carefully exacted study of her ministers."⁵

Peter Cartwright, muscular itinerant from Illinois, never very friendly to Simpson, took vigorous exception to the new emphasis on theological training. Holding a low opinion of the "extorted concessions from these velvet-mouthed and downy D.D.'s" who spoke "in rapturous and exalted strains" of the old pioneer preachers and yet

demanding an improved and educated ministry, he thought that they really felt the circuit riders owed their success to the ignorance of the people! ⁶

But the bishop was adamant. He thought it "the destiny of man upon earth" to learn "all that can be learned of nature." There yet slumbered "unreached truths of a scientific and economical nature, which only await the evoking power of expanded intellect." This expansion was conditioned upon "the more general and equal enlightenment of nations." Then "like the galvanic battery, when the number of plates is increased, the quantity of electricity remaining the same, the intensity is heightened." ⁷

Simpson was not satisfied with an educated ministry. Since his election as bishop he had become increasingly aware that "the great social changes" demanded other changes in Methodism. The followers of John Wesley had been humble, but they had also been virtuous and enterprising. They had done well in the world. John McLean, associate justice in the United States Supreme Court and an aspirant in 1856 for the Republican nomination for the Presidency, was a Methodist. So were Joseph W. Wright, governor of Indiana, and the four Harper brothers, proprietors of the largest publishing house in America. Simpson's former student, James Harlan, had been elected United States Senator from Iowa in 1855, and William M. Daily, former chaplain to the United States House of Representatives, was now president of Indiana University. Dr. John Evans of Indiana had joined the staff of Rush Medical College in Chicago. In that rapidly growing metropolis of the West, he had learned to conduct real estate and railroad operations with a great deal of success. A devoted Methodist as well as a successful businessman and brilliant physician, he helped to establish Northwestern University and Garrett Biblical Institute; and the city of Evanston was named for him.

Everywhere, at the insistence of the local ministers and congregations, Simpson was entertained in the "best" homes. Thus he came to know Mark and Oliver Hoyt, New York leather merchants who lived in Stamford, Connecticut, and Daniel Ross, a New York banker. In Philadelphia he was the guest of Colonel A. W. Cummings, editor of the *Evening Bulletin*, in a beautiful mansion near Girard College.⁸ Simpson himself, although always pinched for money, was doing well for a Methodist preacher. As bishop he received a salary of \$3,500, and expenses. Although he never demanded a fee for his lectures, he

often received payments of \$25 to \$100. Mrs. Simpson owned property in Pittsburgh including a warehouse which yielded an annual income of \$500, lots in Jeffersonville, Indiana, valued at \$7,000, and with her husband had other investments in Indiana, in Chicago, and, under Harlan's supervision, in Iowa.⁹

With an increasing number of "respectable" people assuming leadership in the church, ought it not to undergo some changes? Simpson pondered the question. Take architecture, for instance. The typical Methodist church was an unadorned meeting house, more like a warehouse than like a temple or a cathedral. And yet might it not be said that a church was "a house of God's glory," that it was erected "for the honor of his great name," and was, therefore, "partly monumental"? On the frontier of civilization a log cabin might show forth the glory of God as fully as a large edifice in a great city; but when men built houses for themselves "lined with cedar" ought not the house of God to be equal to the "grandest edifices of men"? Such a house would be a "source of great social refinement," "the keystone of the arch of literature, of science, and of art," an inspiration of noble undertakings— orphanages, homes for the aged and the infirm—the dwelling place of God, the ark of salvation.¹⁰

Methodism ought to have such churches, Simpson believed. With his encouragement Pittsburgh led the way and completed in 1855 Christ Church, the first Gothic structure in America built by Methodists.¹¹ Other cities followed, and he answered many demands for help in raising funds and in dedicating the new edifices.

If the churches were architecturally more beautiful, and if in some instances—as at Christ Church—the seatings were formal pews, might not the use of liturgy be justified? Simpson thought so, and believed that in time some of the churches would adopt a more formal ritual of worship. Could not liturgy be justified by the example of John Wesley? Were not his rules for the Methodist societies based upon the assumption that they would remain within the Church of England? Would he not, otherwise, have set forth rules governing liturgy? As a beginning, it might be a good idea to publish a new edition of John Wesley's prayer book.¹²

No less important was lay participation in church management. The preachers and bishops constituted the sole governing body, setting forth the doctrines, the disciplinary rules, and even naming the preachers for the local congregations. The church had split over lay

participation in 1828, when the Methodist Protestant Church was founded. At the 1852 general conference Simpson had been named chairman of a committee to consider lay representation in the conference, and its report, although unfavorable, left the door open for future action: it was then "inexpedient" to admit laymen. But as he had traveled about in his official duties, enlarging his acquaintance among laymen as well as with clergymen, Simpson had come to look with increasing favor upon taking laymen into the councils of the church; and in 1856 he was confident that it was only a matter of time until the general conference would make the change.¹³

Surely the old order was giving way to the new.

II

In one particular, Simpson was against change: the old discipline of the church was good enough for handling the problem of slavery, in spite of the anxiety and alarm felt all over the country with the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854 and the beginning of the bloody strife in Kansas. One of his students at Indiana Asbury, a border preacher, had died from maltreatment by a mob, and another Methodist preacher had been tarred and feathered in Missouri. Simpson himself, in 1855, was forced to move his conference to St. Louis, because citizens of Independence, Missouri, refused to provide entertainment for the delegates and warned that the presence of antislavery preachers might "lead to results and acts to be regretted."¹⁴

To Simpson, the times called for moderation. He believed that the church was as thoroughly antislavery in its policies as conditions would permit. It forbade slaveholding among its active ministers, and slave trading by its lay members; and it permitted slaveholding among the latter only when their state laws forbade emancipation.

Many Methodists of the North, however, took a different stand. Alarmed by the situation in Kansas, taunted by Garrison, Theodore Parker, and others for holding a proslavery attitude, and embarrassed by the fact that there were slaveholder members in the church, they began to prepare for decisive action at the 1856 general conference. Some church papers carried on a campaign, not only for antislavery action but for withdrawal of the church from the border.

Feelings still ran high when the conference assembled at In-

dianapolis in May. The regular address of the bishops, read to the conference by the mild-mannered Bishop Janes, pointed out the importance of the church's work in slave territory and declared that "the existence of these conferences and churches does not tend to extend or perpetuate slavery." Moreover, the bishops doubted that the general conference had the authority to change the constitutional rule on slavery without prior action by the annual conferences.¹⁵

The address was "very severely criticized by the ultra party and strongly denounced." Simpson, writing to his wife, was concerned over the possibility of a split in the church, though he hoped for the best. He had no doubt, however, that the editors and other officers elected by the conference would be "anti-slavery men of strong type." The peace of the church for the next four years could not be guaranteed.¹⁶

Some of the antislavery brethren remembered Simpson's vigorous attack on the Fugitive Slave Law in 1850 and came to him for "counsel and support" in amending the discipline. He thought the proposed action unconstitutional, and told them so. "I suppose I have pretty deeply offended them," he wrote, sorry for having had to take so firm a position, for it was these same brethren who had said they were going to send him to England. Now he thought they would not support him. Ellen, at least, would be pleased, for then he would have more time to be at home.¹⁷

However reluctant to antagonize his friends, Simpson was thoroughly opposed to the constitutional change advocated by the anti-slavery delegates and sought to defeat it. Bishops were not permitted to participate in open floor debate, but he prepared the argument in collaboration with Abel Stevens and others. Stevens, a New Englander, had once been strongly antislavery; but since moving to New York in 1852 to edit the church's newly launched *National Magazine* he had imbibed much of the spirit of moderation and tolerance toward the border.

As brilliant in declamation as in writing, Stevens swept the conference before him, scattering the abolitionists. His argument was historical: the church from the early days, although strongly antislavery in sentiment, had permitted slaveholding; in short, it had always been both an antislavery and a slaveholding church, and to make it otherwise without approval of the annual conferences would change the basis of membership, and would therefore be uncon-

stitutional.¹⁸ In lieu of the drastic change proposed by the anti-slavery forces, he was prepared to introduce a mild, declaratory resolution which Simpson had drafted with the hope that it would gain the support of both factions, stating simply that the church was opposed in spirit to "slaveholding for mercenary purposes" and that it was the duty of the pastors of the churches to apply the general rule.¹⁹

In the parliamentary skirmishes which followed the debates the whole antislavery matter was put off, and Stevens had no occasion to introduce Simpson's resolution. The conference, suddenly grown conservative, turned out the radical editor of one of the church papers and elected Stevens to the most important editorial post in the church—that of the New York *Christian Advocate and Journal*.

And it named Matthew Simpson as one of two fraternal delegates to the Wesleyan conference in England. He was to attend the British and Irish conferences of 1857, to go as a delegate to the Evangelical Alliance meeting at Berlin, and to oversee Methodist interests in Germany and the Scandinavian countries.

XVIII

ENGLAND, THE CONTINENT, AND THE HOLY LAND

WITH a dream at last come true, Matthew Simpson carefully planned his travel abroad. He arranged his episcopal duties and his affairs at home to permit extending his itinerary from the scheduled conferences to eastern Europe and the Holy Land. He contracted to supply travel letters to the *Pittsburgh* and the *Western Christian Advocate*; through his New York banker friend, Daniel Ross, he established a credit of £500 with a Liverpool banking house; and he put in a supply of guide and travel books and an ample volume for his own note-taking and journalizing.¹ With his seventeen-year-old son Charles, he sailed from New York in the middle of May, 1857.

Ellen Simpson went with them to New York and to the dock to see them off. Father and son stood at the rail, waving until they could no longer identify her and the group of friends. That last white handkerchief he saw waved: was it Ellen's? Matthew fancied so. If all went well it would be nearly a year before he again set foot on American soil and joined the family at Pittsburgh, a year away from Ellen and the children. He wrote good-humoredly: "I waved, and Charles waved, and we all waved. But when . . . we quit waving our pocket-handkerchiefs . . . we kept waving away, sometimes a great deal more than we wished. At least Charles thought so."²

After a routine passage to Liverpool the bishop was immediately caught up in a whirl of conferences, special preaching engagements, and sight-seeing. In July he was to attend the Irish Wesleyan conference at Cork and the English Wesleyan conference at Liverpool; but first he made a hurried visit to his church's missionary projects in northern Germany and Norway.

En route, he indulged his passion for sight-seeing. At Antwerp

he visited the Cathedral of Notre Dame and viewed in awe and admiration the paintings by Rubens; at Aix la Chapelle he saw the throne and the tomb of Charlemagne, and watched with mild astonishment as a priest exhibited a hair from the head of John the Baptist, a tooth of St. Stephen, pieces of the true cross, and a cloth that had "wiped the sweat and blood from the face of the Saviour." He looked intently on the face of the priest "to see whether he could possibly seem to believe these stories." In Copenhagen he visited the old round tower where Tycho Brahe had watched the heavens, and up whose stairway Peter the Great is said to have driven with a coach and four; he went by railroad and steamer north to the 61st parallel, beyond the reach of night, for it was the time of the summer solstice.⁸

Back in the British Isles, the bishop preached at London, Liverpool, Belfast, Dublin, and Limerick, and crowded his free time with side trips to points of interest. He and Charles visited the Lakes of Killarney, saw the famous stone at Blarney Castle, the Round Tower at Antrim ("the most perfect in Ireland"), and the pleasant grounds of Antrim Castle. It was late afternoon when, with Dr. McClintock, they reached the Giant's Causeway; but they spent two hours "inspecting the wonders." Returning to town too late to find a room, they ate a hearty supper and went to sleep on the floor of the sitting room. The next morning they "took another run to the Causeway in the rain." In England, Simpson was particularly interested in the places made sacred to Methodists by the activities of John Wesley. He went to Epworth and stood on the site of Wesley's birthplace; he sought out the tombstone of the first Samuel Wesley, where his son John had preached in the open air to the crowd; he went to Leeds and searched out the spot where John Wesley had first asked for volunteers to carry the gospel to America. In London he climbed the steps to the pulpit in City Road Chapel where Wesley himself had stood.⁴

At the Liverpool conference the bishop not only gave fraternal greetings from the American church but defended its policy on slavery (the English papers, prompted by the southern Methodists and northern Abolitionists, had openly accused him of proslaveryism). It was a tense situation, thought an American friend in the audience, heightened by the "proverbial English reserve." The bishop's argument was a hard one, put pointedly to his English brethren.

The action of the Methodist Episcopal Church in refusing to accept a slaveholding episcopacy had resulted in the withdrawal of nearly half a million members. "By that one act of resisting the progress of the spirit of slavery among us we lost," he said, "more members than you ever had in the Methodist body in Great Britain." Most of his remarks were much more felicitous, and the argument on slavery was thrust down in the middle of the speech, at a point where he had long since gained the favor of the audience. He had spoken but a few minutes when there was a murmur of "Hear, hear!" all over the house, and in a short while the English reserve, the "well-nigh paralyzing" chill, melted and the thaw became a flood as the audience stamped and shouted its approval. Even a southern Methodist who regarded the address as a "flaming speech" of "bitterness against the South," thought the bishop one of the most "eloquent and powerful" speakers he had ever heard.*

II

From England, Bishop Simpson went to Germany to oversee the Methodist Mission Conference and to attend, as delegate, a convention of the Evangelical Alliance. Sponsored chiefly by churches of Europe, the convention was attended also by representatives from England and the United States. The majority of the delegates were German Protestants, and the deliberations were carried on primarily in German. On the agenda were papers to be read, addresses to be given, discussions to be conducted. W. F. Warren, young Methodist preacher in Germany and correspondent for the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, was not very hopeful of the achievements of the Alliance. Among other topics, he said, the delegates were to discuss religious liberty. However, they would be invited to affirm the principle on "religious, as distinct from political, grounds." The Prussian government would admit of no free discussion. In fact, the convention was given over to a rather vigorous discussion of theological points of likeness—of the unity of faith notwithstanding the differences in creeds. But once the assembly convened, young Warren forgot the business of the conference in his concern for the effect of Methodist speakers upon the gathering.*

Two American Methodists had prominent places on the program: Bishop Simpson and his old friend Joseph A. Wright, now

the American Minister to Prussia. Wright had already won a certain renown among the diplomatic corps by his dramatic refusal to serve wine at an important dinner engagement. As a believer in democracy he protested to his home government against the "miserable humbug of dress in foreign courts" and "all kinds of flummery" required of an American diplomat before he could see the head of a principality whose territory, frequently, was not "larger than a hoosier's corn-field." None the less, he was popular with the Prussian Court; and there can be little doubt that the bishop owed his own prominent place on the Alliance program to the influence of his friend, the Minister to Prussia.⁷

The court preacher, Dr. Krummacher, opened the convention with an address which Warren felt "hardly worthy of him," for it was only a garbled lecture that he had delivered before; but Simpson's colleague John McClintock thought it "exceedingly well-conceived," especially in the reference to Methodism as "the angel flying through the heaven, summoning the dead churches to a new Christian life." Wright made the first response to the welcome in a brief address with such "great force and earnestness of voice and manner" that the audience was "fairly taken by surprise." Simpson followed immediately with a few remarks on the object of the convention, the "sublime spectacle to the world" of Christians being one in Christ Jesus. Yet it was not a union of creeds, nor of organization, but rather of "heart and Christian activity." It was like the little streams that rose among the hills, some flowing faster, some slower: "they might, indeed, singly quench the thirst of the passing traveller, but only by union could they bear the treasures of commerce, and so bring the ends of the earth together." Or the union might be compared to that of the several sovereignties of Germany and the United States, each securing to its subjects "freedom of thought and action, while the confederation gave strength and power to the whole." Dr. Baird, an American Presbyterian, Sir Culling Eardley, president of the British branch of the Alliance, and "one or two other English brethren" followed Simpson. Warren reported with some pride, that he had overheard a Congregationalist express preference for Bishop Simpson, because his remarks had "some substance."⁸

On the Sabbath, Simpson was invited to preach in the Garrison Church at Berlin. Never before had an evangelical minister from England or America been invited to a pulpit of the established

church in Prussia. The Methodists, as spiritual descendants of the despised Moravians of Herrnhut, were justifiably proud of the honor to their bishop. McClintock thought the event not the least of the wonders of his European trip. Some Lutherans, however, were affronted by the spectacle of these foreigners, American schismatics, exulting in "voluble tongue" as if they had wrung from the Germans the admission, "Your Lutheran church is also nothing but a sect."⁹

The building, which was under the direct control of the king, was large, impressive, and aristocratic. Six doors led from the street to as many different sections of the church. Each person, "from the king and his ministers down to the forlornest *Dienst-matchen*," was expected to find his or her place according to political and social status. Simpson, as he approached the pulpit, was impressed by the contrast: the grandeur and the aristocracy of the edifice, the humble and democratic genesis of the speaker. But he had "a fine English & American congregation," and so, he reported to Ellen, "I talked just as I usually do in plain Methodist style."¹⁰

He chose for his discourse the theme on which he had spoken at the opening of the convention: Christian unity. It was a sermon which he had often preached from the Methodist pulpit, and which he would preach many times more. Some men see chiefly that which is different in the ideals and beliefs of men: Simpson saw that which was alike. He searched for the common denominators of mankind; and, finding a basic humanity, he found also a strong hope.

The doctrine of unity was not an easy one to preach to Methodists or to any other religious denomination of that day. Not the least of the admirers of Methodism was Simpson himself; but with the Methodist disdain for doctrine he had no blind attachment to the lesser items in its creed. In speaking on Christian unity, therefore, he combined action and thought, the energetic promotion of Methodism and the appreciation of truth beyond the denominational horizon. His sermon pointed the way toward Methodist participation in the ecumenical movement, and contained the seeds of a tolerant religious humanism.

He saw the principle of unity as undergirding all life—the same law for "the tides which rise upon our seas, the particles of dust which float in our atmosphere, the vapors which surround our earth." And yet he recognized that there was endless variety. If men could

view so simple an object as an orange only partially, how could they be expected to see alike on religious matters? They would not perceive oneness in all the details of a creed, nor could they agree upon the forms and practices of worship. There were some principles "around which the light of heaven shines so clearly that we all see them alike. There is the unity of the Divine character; there is, to some extent, the depravity of the human heart; the necessity of man's becoming vastly improved; a consciousness of human weakness; the relation of man to God."

But the unity of which Christ spoke (Simpson's text was "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one") arose from the "glory" which God had given him. What was this glory? It was not his divinity, for he did not receive that; nor was it his suffering, for that he could not give to another. What, then, was it? "Was it not the glory of benevolent effort, the glory of . . . wiping away the tear, the comforting of the sorrowful, the making the lame to leap, the blind to see, the deaf to hear . . ." Was not the legacy of the church "to do good, to make the world happier, to teach, to bless, and to improve this earth"? ¹¹

McClintock, with the Methodist critic's concern for the feelings of an audience, thought the sermon "masterly, both in the structure and the filling up." He noted in the congregation that "many an eye was dimmed with tears." An Englishman felt the impact of the statement of principle and the sudden spurt of illuminating illustration and said to him: "Ah, sir, that was preaching; what a backbone of hard stout thinking was behind all that tenderness and unction." ¹²

III

When the Berlin convention adjourned on September 17, Simpson had already written to Ellen that he could be home in October, but that "if life, health, and circumstances should permit," he would be pleased to visit the East. Now that his official business was over, how much he would enjoy "one hour's real romp with the children," and how he would love to look into Ellen's "bright eyes and cheerful face." But how many years had he dreamed of a journey to the Holy Land? and how often since early childhood had he yearned for those gardens where in imagination he saw blooming the rose of

Sharon and the lily of the valley? Ought he not deny himself the pleasure of a quick return to his family? ¹³

At the last moment a kind Providence intervened in his behalf. Three young men volunteered to go with him: W. F. Warren, the fellow Methodist whom he had met first on his arrival for the convention; a Lutheran minister from Pennsylvania; and Ambassador Wright's son. Placing Charles in a German home and school at Hameln with the admonition to "play the man," he turned his eyes to the East.¹⁴

From Berlin he went to Leipzig, to Weimar, to Halle. He sought out the places made famous by Luther and Melancthon, traveled all night on a stage to Eisleben to see the house where Luther was born; he stood in the square in Wittenberg where Luther burned the papal bull, saw the table at which he wrote, the gown he wore, the beads he counted, the wall hit by the inkstand he aimed at "his Satanic majesty." Castles, paintings, ornaments "almost without number," he saw. At Dresden he bribed the guards to admit him to a gallery of paintings in the royal palace. At the sight of the money, he said, "the guards thought it a pity that travellers should be prevented from the privilege [*sic*] of examination, and passed us in." ¹⁵

He went to the village of Herrnhut, reflecting the while upon the humble Moravians and their profound influence on Wesley. He stopped a day at Prague and was so stirred by "thoughts of the martyrs of old Bohemia, the preaching of Huss and Jerome, the bloody contest" that he could scarcely sleep that night.¹⁶

When he took the steamer from Vienna down the Danube he felt for the first time that his face was really turned to the lands of the East. He stopped over the Sabbath at Pest, visited a number of churches, followed the Archduke Albert and his retinue into the Cathedral for mass—a Sabbath service conducted, to his surprise, "without one word of sermon or instruction." He talked with friends of Kossuth who regarded him highly as a man, scholar, and orator, but had no confidence in his ability as a leader.¹⁷

After six days the party reached the Black Sea, and proceeded to Constantinople and Smyrna. The idle fancy struck the bishop of growing a beard, and in due time he made a picture, sitting on deck, with his low, soft white hat secured to his buttonhole by a ribbon, and his book in his lap—his beard white on his chin, brown on his cheeks, and sandy on his upper lip. What would Ellen say! He could

see her curl her lip, or draw down her eyebrows and flash her eyes with indignation. Well, he would find a barber before he reached civilization again. In the meantime he had a notion to have a daguerreotype taken, just to preserve for her his "Oriental antiquity."¹⁸

On the passage through the Aegean the bishop, excited by the Trojan shore, Chios' rocky isle, and, more than all, Patmos, could scarcely take time from the deck for food or sleep. Great was his amusement when a Scotch professor ventured a question in Latin to a Greek priest and mistook the answer, "Nescio" ("I do not know"), for the name of an island.¹⁹

En route from Crete to Beirut he became very ill. He thought at first that he had malaria, but his fever did not rise. He was too weak to walk; but there were outbreaks of the plague in the East, and he feared a panic would follow if he were taken off the boat on a stretcher. His young traveling companions therefore dressed him and, placing his arms about their shoulders, carried him upright between them. Sick as he was, he turned his eyes to the coast, where he could see the "bold mountains of Lebanon." On shore, one of his companions summoned a physician, a missionary of the American Board who applied anodynes, leeches, mustard plasters, blisters, and poultices.

After three days between life and death, the bishop began to mend. He sat up and insisted that his companions ride inland to Damascus without him. The day was November 3, the twenty-second anniversary of his marriage. He thought of the tall, awkward young man and the young woman who had stood trembling beside him in the parlor in Penn Street, Pittsburgh, as they exchanged their vows, and he sent across the Atlantic "greetings of unchanged, undying affection" to the woman who was "not now quite so roseate, but more thoughtful, and even more worthy to be beloved." "How strange to whisper affection from Asia to America."²⁰

That night he had the best rest he had had in a week. In another day he felt well enough to walk about and to tease Ellen a little: Mrs. Ford, the wife of the missionary, had brought him some jelly, very good; he thought that he would call on her. Might he?²¹

Although he was scarcely strong enough to leave Beirut when his companions returned from Damascus, he insisted on continuing with them. He started off early in the morning with Warren and rode at a slow walk, leaving the luggage to the others' care. Almost too weak

to sit in the saddle, he none the less took note of the rocky hillside, the prickly pear along the way, the treelike hedges, and the black guard who talked French.

Constantly battling the recurring illness, he traveled the length and breadth of Palestine, much moved by the "sublime associations." He stood on the plains of Hebron and drank from the fountain where the servants of Abraham had watered the flocks. He saw Nazareth, the Sea of Galilee, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, the Mount of Olives, and the Garden of Gethsemane with the old olive trees, knotted and gnarled, "perhaps some of the very trees beneath which the Savior prayed and sweat great drops of blood." He visited every spot in the Holy Land which, according to the scriptural account, "was trodden by the Savior's feet," save Caesarea and Philippi.²²

Ellen, very much worried, expressed her concern about the dangerous Arabs. "Dismiss all fears," he reassured her. "There is no danger whatever. Think not of me as among strangers. Three young men are with me. And then I find friends everywhere. At the Hotel here they speak English." When she reported that she had been reading about Palestine and thought of making the trip herself, he was amused: "It would be an utter impossibility for you to travel in the Holy Land, unless carried in a kind of chair by men as some are. When you take a horse and ride up and down the various paths on the side of Coal Hill at Pittsburgh you might form some idea of travelling in Judea."²³

He went to Egypt late in December and visited the catacombs, wondered over the ruins of old Memphis, saw the petrified forest, and climbed the highest of the pyramids—a "hard task." He sailed from Alexandria to Athens and thence to Naples. In Greece he was delighted with Mounts Parnassus and Helicon, which "raise their snow-capped summits towards the clear blue skies." As in Palestine, everything reminded him of the past. "Achilles carries my luggage; Ulysses rows the boat; Demetrius acts as pilot; Themistocles waits to carry a passenger in an old rickety wagon; and Hercules carries, if not *the club* . . . a good stout cudgel to ward off the furious dogs."²⁴

All the time he was quite unfit for travel. Now and then he stopped over an extra day for rest; at Sidon, when he was too ill to ride his horse any further he engaged a boatman to row him to Haifa. Twice, doubting that he would live until morning, he gave Warren farewell messages for his family and friends. Several times

he considered going home at once; but then he regained enough strength to travel, and hoped to improve in health as he continued the tour.²⁵

Meanwhile, his wife, worried over his long illness and extended absence from home, wrote with some complaint about his taking the Eastern trip. He "*lived to himself*," she said, without any real thought for the happiness of his wife and family. For these thoughts, he replied, he could not chide her, nor would he complain, but he could not feel "other than . . . sad." He thought he had her full concurrence or he would never have made the trip. And Providence seemed in so many ways to open the way for him. As for his family, strange as it might seem to her, the happiness of his wife and children was ever before him. For what else should he live? Next to God and his church, no other interest so impelled him onward.²⁶

He had not yet told her, however, about the purpose of his travels in the East: his intent to write a book. Uncle Matthew knew or surmised, and admonished him to look at things as though he happened upon them: "Having no previous knowledge of their existence the Idea will in that way be more original than if looked at with the memory occupied with other mens descriptions." He should go to places where others had not gone; then his descriptions would be "read with the interest which novelty gives."²⁷

IV

As Bishop Simpson neared the end of his travels in the East, he awaited with anxiety the receipt of his spring conference appointments. He still had much to see, time was short, and his illness made it necessary to travel slowly and rest frequently. If the first appointment was in New England or New York, and late in the spring, he would still have time to complete his tour and fulfill his conference duties on the way home to Pittsburgh. When the schedule came he was greatly disappointed to find that his colleagues had assigned him to the Arkansas conference, in late March, and that he would have to hurry home. He had visited Arkansas only three years before, and could not see why he should go again. Suspecting Ames, he complained to his wife and his friend Alexander Cummings of Philadelphia, but cautioned her against "unpleasant feelings" in her heart, or "unkind words of any concerned": The plan "*must* be all

right . . . For even if it were designed for evil, God can overrule it for good." Ellen none the less accosted Ames with a good deal of spirit, and Colonel Cummings, through a friend, passed the complaint on to Bishop Janes. The bishops hastily explained that they had assigned Arkansas to Simpson because that conference least needed a presiding bishop: Simpson could supervise the work without visiting the territory. He was determined, however, to hurry home to meet his official responsibilities.²⁸

At Naples in mid-January he was again prostrated by illness and had to rest for a week. He still chafed under the arrangement for conferences which did not allow him time "to lie by with sickness" and then to complete his route. Already in Italy, he would pass within eight hours of Rome but must give it up.²⁹

By the time he reached Paris his health had improved. He stopped to purchase books, maps, and plates. In London, early in February, he devoted a few days to the same purpose, concentrating on Methodist materials. In explaining his delay, and his excursions to places of interest in England, he revealed to Ellen his intention to write the book: "After spending so much money and so much time I wish . . . to get some return from it." His desires were confidential, for he did not "wish the one half of the plans . . . to be guessed at by anybody." Charles was again with him and in good health.³⁰

He was ill again in London, confined to his bed on the order of his physician, who said he must rest, for his liver and right lung were "in great danger."³¹

Late in February he at last reached Pittsburgh; but he was still too ill to attend the Arkansas conference, or to perform his other official duties, or to write his book.

XIX

FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

THE days and months of 1858 dragged on for the Simpson family. The bishop's illness was a recurring one. With Ellen hovering over him, he slowly gained strength, only to be prostrated again. In July he was able to attend the meeting of the board of bishops in New York, but six weeks later he was once more at the point of death.

For weeks Matthew Simpson was unable to leave his upstairs room. Quietness hung over the place: Ellen shushed the children, and Mary, the chambermaid, tiptoed about her household duties. Friends and neighbors brought delicacies to tempt the bishop's appetite: Dr. Dickson, a pheasant; Dr. Wright's wife, two dressed squirrels; Mrs. Kidd, a bowl of tapioca; Mr. Knox, a tumbler of blackberry jam. Mr. Heazelton sent fifty pounds of buckwheat flour; Colonel Cummings and other friends in Philadelphia sent a tidy sum of money; the Hoyt brothers of New York, a thousand dollars to help him with his extra expenses. Mrs. Bradley of Pittsburgh presented him with a photograph of Mr. Bradley.¹

Bishop Ames visited him in the fall and, shocked by the pale, gaunt figure stretched out on the bed, scribbled to Bishop Janes: "I fear Bp Simpson will never again mingle with us in labor." Uncle Matthew fretted lest his nephew's friends, crowding in by day and sitting with him by night, kill him with kindness: How could they be "so blind and so injudicious"?²

Late in the fall Bishop Simpson began to mend, and his physician allowed him to sit up. Calling for his journal, he began making entries, to pass the time. He itemized the gifts brought in by friends; he made long lists of "winter provisions to be attended to," marking the items off in categories in usual pulpit style. He must have meats—beef, and a barrel for salting; pork, cask for salting; lard; venison;

fish—mackerel, herring, cod, salmon, sardines; flour—buckwheat, cornmeal, unbolted.³

When he was stronger he made an effort to put his travel notes in shape, and for that purpose read extensively in the books he had brought from England. The Methodist Publishing House wanted a narrative in two volumes to be sold at one dollar each, and Harper & Brothers reminded him that he would "meet with no difficulty in finding a publisher so long as your old friends of Franklin Square can command the use of a printing press." He wrote at length of his travels in central Europe but borrowed heavily from the guide books and histories, with only an occasional refreshing experience of his own. The project bogged down, perhaps as much from its own weight as from the fact that the business of the church began to make demands upon him.⁴

Late in January, 1859, he was well enough to get out on the street. Mrs. Bradley called in her carriage and took him and Mrs. Simpson to see a friend. They had "a pleasant ride, dined and returned without injury"—his first carriage ride since September. Soon his physician was saying that he might take up his official duties—the preaching omitted.⁵

He went reluctantly from his home and family to the first of his spring conferences. The long absence in Europe, the protracted and serious, almost fatal illness, his frequent thoughts of death, had rendered him emotionally tender. He tried to comfort Ellen with admonitions to "look upward," to remember that "life at best is short, its scenes will soon pass away, eternity will be our home—our *only* home." He assured her of his wish to be with his family, so far as duty permitted. However, God could take care of his loved ones in his absence. Sometimes he asked himself: "What if God had removed me altogether when I was sick? What then for my loved ones?"⁶

He listed his engagements for Ellen—by July he was able to preach again, "out of doors, without much injury"; he picked up bits of gossip and reported them. Sometimes he teased her. What about the new bonnet? Had she bought it, and did it please her? And were the ribbons "greenish-blue," or "bluish-green?" And was it the new "coal-scuttle" pattern or the old "kiss-me-quick" shape? He preferred the latter.⁷

Now nearing his fiftieth birthday, he thought of himself as

growing old and wrote often in a tender, even sentimental, and reminiscent mood. "How blest is it that hearts once joined may be united forever." Other things might change—their bodies grow old, their eyes weak, their limbs infirm—but the heart would remain ever young. And why should they not love more truly and strongly as they grew older? Their playmates and schoolmates had, one by one, passed on or parted from them; but they still had each other and their children to love. They had started down the river of life together, and together they would sail on until they should reach the great ocean, or one of them drop from the other to perish in the waters. But why should he moralize? Were his heart silent, other hearts would beat on. A few hearts would bleed, a few eyes would weep, and then all would be as though he had never been.⁸

II

All through his long illness one problem had worried Simpson considerably: should he change his episcopal residence from Pittsburgh? Baltimore wanted him. So did eastern Pennsylvania, and Chicago. The problem was a complex one involving his interest in theological training for ministers, his concern over slavery in the church, his close friendship with Dr. John Evans of Chicago, his desire to live in the East, and the increasing strain upon his private finances involved in his role as bishop.

Chicago made the strongest appeal. Dr. Evans was anxious to secure close support from Simpson for the new Garrett Biblical Institute. If the bishop moved to Chicago or Evanston, he could devote time between conferences to the theological school and, what was more important, could lend it his name. Furthermore, his presence on the faculty would assure the institution of success. Simpson thought well of the idea, and Evans offered the further inducement of an episcopal residence, to be built and presented by friends of the church.

An exciting interval in the negotiating occurred when Bishop Ames decided to move to Chicago. Simpson's friends wanted none of this "financial speculator," whom they regarded as sympathetic to slavery. They needed a "pious man—& one devoted to God & to the building up the Church of God and saving souls." When a committee confronted Ames with the argument that they must have

Simpson's help for the newly organized Garrett Institute, he "cordially assented" to the arrangement.

Late in 1859 the Simpson family moved to Illinois and settled in the village of Evanston. The move was an important one, for down in Springfield was a man whom he would come to know, and the association would have a considerable influence upon Matthew Simpson's place in the history of his country and his church.⁹

III

The northwest winds blew cold in Evanston that winter, and the snow swept down the village streets swirling about the trunks of the old oak trees and drifting high in the yards of the villagers. Alongside Garrett Biblical Institute the muddy waters congealed in the ditch, mockingly called the Rubicon, and the blue waters along Lake Michigan's edge gave way to ice and snow. How often that winter did the bishop draw his great coat tightly about him as he hurried from his home on Hinman Avenue to the railroad cars, bound for Chicago and wherever episcopal duties led him.

And yet the winds scarcely blew so cold as the events that lashed at his spirit. Thoughts of what lay in store for his church chilled him to the marrow. May 1, 1860, the general conference would gather. That quadrennial meeting, once the seat of optimism and self-approbation, had become a convocation of dissension and threatened schism. There had been no peace in the church since the advent of abolitionism. Only for a brief interval had the agitation ceased, after the withdrawal of Andrew and his southern cohorts in 1844. Simpson himself, through Abel Stevens, had helped to quiet the unrest at the 1856 general conference.

But much had happened since 1856, catastrophic events that lightly swept aside appeals for unity and revealed the deep cleavage between North and South: Dred Scott, Negro, free, they said, in Illinois, enslaved again in Missouri, and now his name a coal on the lips of every dedicated Isaiah of the North; the Missouri Compromise, negated by Dred Scott, pronounced null and void in fact by the Supreme Court; firebrands of the South spreading the inflammatory doctrines of John Calhoun, and a tall gaunt man on the prairies solemnly warning the new Republican party and the nation, in the words of Jesus, "A house divided against itself cannot stand"; John

Brown and the blood coursing thick and red at Pottawatomie and Osawatomie; and John Brown storming the arsenal at Harpers Ferry, seizing citizens as hostages, barricading himself in the engine-house, captured at last by the United States marines, tried in the Virginia courts, hung by the neck until dead. But John Brown's body went marching on, a signal of frenzied alarm to the South and a shibboleth and a battle cry to the North. They debated John Brown that winter in Evanston, at the Methodist college, from two o'clock in the afternoon until seven-thirty: "Resolved, That the Harper's Ferry crisis is calculated to create a separation between North and South."¹⁰

The growing tension in the nation was fully reflected in Methodism. Methodist papers, North and South, screamed at each other, and conferences, preachers, bishops rebuked their erring brethren above or below the Mason-Dixon line. A mob broke up the northern conference in Bonham, Texas; and citizens of Dallas, in public meeting assembled, condemned northern preachers as "'wolves in sheep's clothing,' who with Bible in hand and evil in their hearts" went forth preaching "the most dangerous and insurrectionary doctrines." Now and then a northern preacher in a border state or in southern territory was pulled from his pulpit, ridden on a rail, threatened with tar and feathers, or locked out of his chapel. Ardent churchmen of the Southwest threatened to take the life of Anthony Bewley if he did not stay out of Arkansas and Texas; and a Virginia legislator introduced a bill to exclude all "nonresident, incendiary preachers" from the state.¹¹

Simpson, exasperated by the tactics of the South, was much more concerned by the troubles within his own church. His people, united in their bitter struggle with the Church, South, were divided among themselves: New England against Baltimore, northern conferences against the border, "progressives" against "conservatives." How long had New England been proud of the antislavery rule of the discipline, proud of the courage of 1844 that had accepted division in preference to slaveholding by a bishop! Simpson himself had made the boast in England in 1857. But the pride crumbled under the bludgeoning facts of slavery. Theodore Parker, he who had battered down the door of a jail to free a Negro, knew how to use such facts—one buttressed by another—to demolish the fiction of antislavery Methodism. William Lloyd Garrison used them, too, not to batter,

but to lash and scourge the Methodists with charges of proslaveryism, with charges that they harbored proslavery members, that they were unable to muster sufficient strength to alter the ambiguous general rule of the discipline.¹²

Where did Parker and Garrison get their evidence? Why, from among the Methodists themselves: the Reverend J. D. Long of Philadelphia charging that his own conference sheltered as many as 1,000 slaveholders, that a wealthy Methodist of Cambridge, Maryland, a licensed local preacher, had advertised a reward of \$300 for the capture and return of two runaway slaves; Hiram Mattison of Black River Conference reprinting a Methodist advertisement that called for the return of "fourteen head" of runaway slaves, seven of them children under eight years of age; a Methodist, rebuking Bishops Simpson and Janes for appearing on the platform and participating in dedicatory services with the slaveholding Bishop George Pierce of Georgia. The southern church joined the chorus of condemnation. Would Bishop Simpson deny, asked the *Richmond Christian Advocate*, that there were "many slaveholders and slave-workers among the private members, and official members, and ministers of the Northern division of the M. E. Church"? Nor was the South embarrassed by apparent inconsistency in labeling New England proslavery and the border abolitionist. The paradox was easily explained: the North was hypocritical. It preached dangerous abolitionist doctrines, but in its mad desire for power and bigness it practiced slavery.¹³

Lashed by Garrison, taunted by the South, and scourged by conscience, the radical Methodists of the North, the "progressives," redoubled their efforts to strengthen the church's rule on slavery. The border caught between two fires—called abolitionist by the South, proslavery by the North—renewed its threats to secede and form a new church.

Simpson was engulfed by the struggle but not a party to it. Although he was a "progressive" by nature and "the most able man on the Methodist bench of Bishops," a correspondent of Theodore Tilton's *Independent* explained that he was held "in check" by his episcopal office. No bishop had ever been "seen in any Church anti-slavery meeting or convention even as a spectator, much less as a participant." Some of Simpson's friends knew that he had proposed rewriting the chapter on slavery to include a "Golden Rule" decla-

ration; but no one had drawn his name into the public controversy.¹⁴

His position was moderate and cautious, one of watchful waiting. Despising slavery—perhaps as much for the dissension and strife it brought into the church as for what it did to bind men's souls—he dared not strike at it lest he destroy the unity of northern Methodism. He believed that his first task was to preserve the church. In due course, the states along the border would abolish slavery of their own accord. Was it not wise in the meantime, while bearing witness to the evil, to avoid action which would drive border Methodists into the proslavery southern church?

The bishops opened the general conference of 1860 with an attempt to pour oil on troubled waters. The presence of the border conferences in the church "does not tend to extend or perpetuate Slavery," they said, reiterating the statement of 1856.¹⁵ But the anti-slavery forces, greatly in the majority and dominating the committees, grimly went about the business of altering the discipline. Without the two-thirds majority requisite for a constitutional change to exclude slaveholding members, they easily carried a "new chapter," a "golden rule declaration" against slavery, similar to that which Simpson had recommended in 1856.¹⁶

What might have been acceptable to both parties in 1856 now appeased the North but inflamed the border. The general conference had scarcely adjourned when the radical majority in Baltimore began to make good their threats of secession. In conventions, church meetings, and private conversation, laymen and ministers alike denounced the new chapter. A friend wrote to Simpson that there were only two parties in the Baltimore conference: those who called for secession, and those who sought to repeal the chapter in a constitutional manner.¹⁷

For months the battle raged, with Simpson directing the strategy. John Lanahan, one of his ablest lieutenants, had already written to the *Baltimore Sun* (from the general conference) that he believed the new chapter "a more mild and temperate expression of doctrine than could have been hoped for." Encouraged by Simpson, he now conducted an intensive and sometimes ruthless campaign among the preachers. He argued that the new chapter was mild, he pleaded with them to remain loyal to the church of their fathers, he searched the record to find flaws in the character of leading secessionists, assuring Simpson that he would reveal all, in the event of a crisis.

Taking a leaf from Cicero, he saw a Catiline in every pulpit where the preacher was not avowedly for the new chapter; he accused leading men of a conspiracy, not simply to form a new church as they asserted, but to collaborate with the southern bishops in taking the conference over bodily to the Church, South.¹⁸

Simpson's efforts quickly showed results. A presiding elder reported that he had succeeded in blocking the extra session of the Baltimore conference which some had demanded, and, although he could not prevent the call of a laymen's convention, he had induced all the churches of his district to send conservatives. A timid preacher in Baltimore, unwilling to speak out on the subject, confided to the bishop that he would not leave the church; and although Thomas Sewall, eloquent defender of the border at the general conference, wavered, he at last stayed with the North. Members of the Laymen's and Ministers' Union, attempting to exercise a conservative influence, established a new paper in New York, the *Methodist*, and circulated it freely on the border. Much more ably edited than the official papers of the church, the *Methodist* decried the aggressiveness of the antislavery forces, and pleaded with the border to remain with the old church.¹⁹

Political developments—the dramatic secession of the southern states, and the inability of statesmen to effect a compromise—intensified the struggle. John Lanahan, bold and crafty in his operations and intensely loyal both to the church and to the government, seized upon patriotism and love of Methodism as double leverage to keep the preachers in the church. At the same time, the Baltimore conference ministers who resided in Virginia, and constituted nearly two-thirds of the membership of the conference, found in the political affairs new motives for ecclesiastical separation.

Meanwhile the conflict with the Church, South, grew in bitterness and violence. Bishop Pierce, throwing restraint to the winds, declared that southern Methodism was free to go anywhere: "She knows no North, or South, or East, or West." His brethren, however, continued to resist the presence of northern preachers in the South, not only with words but with tar, feathers, and rails. In Missouri a preacher, treated rather roughly, mobbed twice, ridden on a rail, annoyed the crowd by singing "with animation,"

Children of the Heavenly King,
As we journey let us sing.

But he agreed to leave town. Anthony Bewley, itinerant preacher with whom Simpson had traveled to Texas in 1855, accused of conspiracy, was pursued when he fled into Missouri, taken back to Texas, and hanged by the mob.²⁰

Inevitably, the cherished doctrine of the "separation" of church and state, as interpreted by the Methodists, broke down. In North and South alike ecclesiastical interests were too intimately bound up with those of the civil powers to admit of such separation. In fulfillment of the prophecy George Pierce had made at Louisville in 1845, nearly every Methodist conference in the North established its committee "on the State of the Country," which then made demands on the state or federal government. Long before the election of 1860, the North Carolina *Christian Advocate* warned that, if Lincoln were named President, "a dissolution of the Union, within twelve months, is inevitable." Five days before South Carolina seceded from the Union, the Methodist conference of that state declared itself in favor of the action. Alabama, Virginia, Georgia quickly fell into line. The northern Methodist press, equally quick to denounce the secession of the southern states, demanded "the prompt execution of the national law." The "inevitable conflict," stated the *Northwestern Christian Advocate* of Chicago, will be "short, sharp, and bloody" but "necessary," because it is a "greater calamity to permit the spirit of mobocracy to remain rampant."²¹

The Baltimore conference, at its spring session in March, 1861, angrily voted itself "separate and independent" from the Methodist Episcopal Church. Forty-one members abstained from the vote; the presiding bishop refused to recognize the action as official; and the great majority of the Maryland preachers and members remained in the "old church." But more than 100 ministers and nearly 12,000 laymen, most of whom lived in Virginia, withdrew from the conference.²²

It was scarcely a month until Sumter.

IV

War was still a month off, but the lower South had already seceded: South Carolina in December, Alabama, Mississippi, and Florida in early January, followed in quick succession by Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas. The southern leaders had gathered at Mont-

gomery, deliberated for five weeks, brought forth a new constitution and elected a provisional President. While Abraham Lincoln journeyed from Springfield to Washington, making commonplace remarks to the curious crowds along the way, President elect Jefferson Davis, en route to Montgomery, hurried from one ovation to another. Lincoln pledged in his inaugural address on March 4 that there would be no invasion, no bloodshed, no civil war, unless the South itself proved the aggressor; none the less he warned his southern countrymen that he was sworn to "preserve, protect, and defend" the federal government. That same afternoon in Montgomery, in the presence of a "large concourse of spectators on Capitol Hill," Letitia Tyler, granddaughter of the venerable ex-President, John Tyler, her heart "throbbing with patriotic emotion," released the new Confederate flag—the Stars and Bars—to the staff and the breeze.²³

North Carolina, Virginia, Tennessee, and Arkansas still clung to the Union and the faint hope that disaster might somehow be averted. A segment of the northern press continued to plead for moderation. But there had been outbursts of patriotism in the North as well as the South, little flames of hysteria that needed only to be blown upon to envelope the whole nation in a holocaust: the *Star of the West* fired upon in Charleston harbor; a Palmetto flag torn from the staff of old Fort Kearney in Nebraska Territory, and the Stars and Stripes run up in its place; Washington's birthday celebrated in every northern city; citizens of Massachusetts "exalted" by Governor Andrew's presentation to the legislature of two Revolutionary muskets bequeathed by Theodore Parker; "The Star-Spangled Banner" or "Hail, Columbia" sung at public concerts; and everywhere, North and South, flag-raising a signal for the outburst of patriotic feeling. How men's hearts throbbed as they watched the folded bunting drop from its own weight, pull at the cord, yield to the stiff breeze, and swell and ripple as it rose to the top of the staff. Cannons roared, and men shouted themselves hoarse. Northern sentiment was rapidly fashioning itself into a holy crusade.²⁴

Then Sumter, long awaited, more than half expected; yet it finally came as an electric shock, a surcharge that instantly polarized North and South. For weeks the newspapers had been filled with speculation about the fort: the necessity for abandoning it; assurances that it could be defended; Major Anderson's need of provi-

sions; the opinion of General Scott; the opinion of Senator Douglas; the deliberations of the cabinet; the unexpected appearance in Charleston of the President's personal emissary; rumors of activity in the navy yard; word that transports bearing provisions were en route; the call in Washington and the mustering in of the Voluntary Militia. In Charleston "fearful excitement" prevailed. Business was suspended, General Beauregard ordered out 5,000 more troops, and South Carolina's new floating battery lifted anchor and moved from the harbor to a point near Fort Sumter. "It is plain," stated the Montgomery, Alabama, *Telegraph*, "that a gigantic war is about to be inaugurated."²⁵

At half past four in the morning of April 12, the batteries along the shore began their bombardment, and Sumter returned the fire. The New York *Tribune* reported in hopeful headlines: "MAJOR ANDERSON STRONGER THAN SUPPOSED. SEVERAL REBELS WOUNDED." But before the day was over the walls of the fort were crumbling, two of its guns were silenced, and the supply of ammunition was running out. For forty hours the bloodless bombardment continued, and then Anderson surrendered. Beauregard permitted him to salute the flag and withdraw his men to a Union transport.

That was Saturday night. On Monday morning Lincoln called for 75,000 troops. Already 20,000 had tendered their services in Boston alone. Governor Morton of Indiana pledged 30,000; New York offered to lend the government a million dollars, and Pennsylvania appropriated half a million to buy munitions. On Wednesday the first detachment of troops from Minnesota passed through Chicago en route to Washington. Ten thousand people were at the station to greet them. The war had begun.²⁶

V

The first official expression of the Methodist Episcopal Church on the war came from the New York East conference, which was in session when Sumter fell. "While we love peace and are the ministers of Peace," said the members in a series of resolutions compounded of piety and patriotism, "yet we hold it to be the sacred duty of all men to love their country and to cherish freedom, and especially in times of peril to offer our civil rulers our aid and sympathy."²⁷

Within a month every Methodist journal in the North had asserted that the war was a religious duty. The bishops too, for once, took an unequivocal stand upon a public question. Secession was "rebellion without any plausible excuse," said Thomas A. Morris, the senior bishop. E. R. Ames, in a rousing address to the ministers of Genesee conference said that, were it his duty to join the Union army and fight the rebels, he should shoot very fast, he would "fire into them most benevolently."²⁸

Simpson, in central New York when war broke out, rushed to Washington as soon as official business permitted. He had met Abraham Lincoln earlier in the year at the Illinois capital, where he and John Evans had gone in behalf of a bill to recharter Northwestern University. On the morning of February 11, he was one of the company at the Chenery House to wish Lincoln well, and a little while later in the cold drizzly morning he stood with the throng of citizens at the depot to hear the words of the Farewell Address.²⁹

Now he called on the President at the White House. Lincoln received him cordially. The cabinet was to meet that morning, and several members dropped in, including Seward. In the course of general talk about the war and its conduct Simpson expressed the opinion that 75,000 was but a beginning of the number of men needed. Seward wondered, acidly, how a clergyman could judge of these matters. Another present defended Simpson: as a traveling bishop he had an opportunity that few persons possessed to test the temper of the people, North and South. As the time for the cabinet meeting approached, the bishop bowed out; but he was to come again.³⁰

He was back in Evanston for the last Sunday of the month. For the second consecutive Sabbath the quiet of the little town was broken by the whistles and the thundering of railroad trains. The thoughts of the people were more on the war than on the "God of battles" whom they tried to worship. Fresh from Washington, the bishop was an awesome figure as he strode down Hinman Avenue to the little white chapel on Church Street, his son Verner clutching at his hand and trotting to keep up. There was a grimness about his face as he knelt to lead the congregation in prayer—such an assault on heaven for the triumph of the Union arms and the overthrow of human bondage as few among those present had ever thought to hear from human lips. "The very air seemed surcharged

with the thunder and lightning of God's wrath against secession and slavery." ³¹

That afternoon Bishop Simpson spoke in Chicago at the Wigwam, which had been constructed for the Republican convention of 1860, and six thousand people crowded into the great hall to hear him. He developed first a religious theme, showing that God reigns over a world of order, that God's government is one of wisdom, righteousness, goodness, and power, and that God's hand is in history, directing the affairs of His people and destroying whom He chooses. But the nation had sinned. Raised up of God to be "a pattern of piety" and "to bear the truth abroad through the nations of the world," it had not given of its wealth for the dissemination of the gospel. There were dark spots upon the nation's escutcheon, among them the great national sin itself which thwarted God's justice and the very purpose for which He had raised up the nation. He believed that God would not permit the government to be destroyed. It would survive the baptism of blood, cast away its sin, and stand once more, united, pure, and eloquent, a source of hope to the struggling peoples of Europe. But if God had laid the foundation of this government it was man's duty to protect it. Therefore "the man who goes to the war, goes in the order of God, goes to uphold order, goes to uphold the government, 'ordained of God,' goes for the right." ³²

Simpson was in Washington again in July shortly after the disaster at Bull Run, a "messenger of God" self-commissioned to assure Simon Cameron, the Secretary of War, that God was "with our country." The defeat of the Union forces, the wild disorder of the retreat, the shame of the North followed by anger and grim determination, only deepened his conviction. Did not God chasten His own before he redeemed them? ³³

All that summer, raising funds for church missions, and that fall and winter and spring at his conferences, he preached God, church, and country. At Rockport and South Bend, Indiana, at Rockland, Maine, at Washington, to the Eighth Illinois Cavalry regiment, at St. Louis, in Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, he traced the hand of Providence in the affairs of the nation. His calm sure voice rose at moments to the frenzy of the zealot.

He was like a medium, his tall, angular figure tense, his face

transparent and glowing with an all but supernatural light, his voice a high, lyrical, hypnotic chant. Men and women sat or stood silent and breathless, giving way now and then to tears or to applause.

The peroration of his first war address at Chicago had brushed aside the curtain which hides the future to reveal the great white throne of God, the clouds dispersed, the darkness rolled away, the peoples of all nations, all realms, purified at last, shouting: "Alleluia! The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth!" But as the high hopes of an early end to the war were ended by defeat at Bull Run and Wilson's Creek, by inconsequential victories, by the paralysis of the Union armies, and as tensions increased and people sought release for their emotions, he developed a new peroration. He pictured his travels abroad, his illness, his sense of remoteness and alienation, and then the sheer joy that came to him when he beheld the flag of his country, the Stars and Stripes, rippling from the top of a tall mast. Surely some angel's hand had "cut those stars and that patch of blue out of the fair field of heaven" and sent them on "their mission of benevolence to us and to the nation. Flag of my country, ever wave; be not one star erased." Yet there was a higher symbol than the flag: the cross. "The cross first, our country next. Let us, by its benign influences, cultivate love to our enemies while we love our country and our God." ³⁴