

You will quickly discover, if you have not done so already, that one of the problems in a general course is the rate of speed at which one must move to "cover the ground"

e. The Methodist Bodies

As a general rule Methodism has held itself together more than the Baptist bodies. But there are at least 25 small bodies that have directly come from the mother institution and a host of bodies not properly related to Methodism but obligated to Wesley for their theological understanding and ideals. Methodism was the growing church of the 19th century, far outgrowing any other body in terms of development and membership. We have previously sketched its roots (pages 18-19) and now need to add a few notes on the development of the body politic.

--Following the colonial work and the arrival of Coke the body was launched in 1784. A system of ordination was promulgated from Wesley so that the leadership role in the colonial church could be made up quickly. In the decade, 1780-1798, the methodists experiences a 7-fold growth... indicative of a general pattern in the next century and rather remarkable for any continuing body.

--Methodism did have a concern for the slaves but you will discover that the free acceptance of blacks in Methodist churches was not easy. Richard Allen became the first "black" bishop with the formation of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1816. Later a division called for the forming of the African Methodist Episcopal Church Zion in 1821. Both continue and are numerous.

--the founding of the Methodist Book Concern (1789) was of great importance in establishing the methodist community

--Methodism particularly flourished on the frontier. Some of the basic items responsible for this were:

- simplified theology
- episcopal control
- lay ministry
- the circuits
- evangelistic zeal
- societal compatibility.

--Slavery caused a division in Methodism in 1844. The Methodist Episcopal Church South was formed as the slavery question divided the delegates and the church at large. In the south the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church was also developed... becoming the Christian Methodist Episcopal church in 1956.