

The bishop of the Methodist church now reverted to a great similarity to the old Roman catholic priest, altogether different from the Anglican priest. He was a man with absolute authority, and during Asbury's administration from 1784 to 1816 he controlled just as absolutely as the Salvation Army is controlled by its general, the China Inland Missions by its director. He was absolutely supreme and carried out his will at every point, absolutely arbitrary in his decisions, and he tolerated no interference with his viewpoint but he was a godly man, a man who was devoted to the interests of the spread of the gospel and in his hands there was no particular harm done by the attitude which he took. After his death the power of the bishops was cut quite considerably. Hereafter there was something of an oversight, something of a control of them although in general they remained almost supreme and to this day they remain almost supreme, although there is a certain control of them, each one over the other, there is no one supreme bishop as there was in Asbury's day and there is a certain amount of representation of the other but the bishop's power still remains supreme. It is the ideal form of organization for rapid extension of the other churches. It's the ideal for that if you have , but it has its tremendous dangers that if you get an ungodly man as bishop there is little or no restraint, and consequently as long as the bishops of the Methodist church were sound, godly men, desiring the spread of the gospel there were great revivals and great movements to win souls to the knowledge of the Lord but as soon as men came into this position who were communists or radicals or deniers of the Scripture you had a great trend in the other direction and the Methodist church could change from evangelicalism to radicalism more quickly than other church in America because of the fact that the tight method of organization makes it possible for the man at the top, or the group of men at the top to make a complete turn about with very little that anyone can do . Now in America after the revolution this work which was carried on by the Methodists was carried on much in the spirit of