SCORES REVIVAL OF BOOTH 'MYTH'

M. E. Pastor Discounts Dr. Wilson's 'Evidence' Lincoln Assassin Escaped Pursuers

EXPLAIN STORY'S ORIGIN

Supposed documentary evidence tending to prove that John Wilkes Booth, assassin of President Lincoln, had lived years after he was supposed to have been shot, presented to Methodist clergy here in executive session, was today labeled by one who attended the session as "revival of an old myth."

The Rev. Dr. Clarence True Wilson, secretary of the Methodist Episcopal Board of Prohibition, Temperance and Public Morals, presented the evidence concerning a "Mystery Man" at the closed session of the Methodist Preachers of Philadelphia and vicinity yesterday in the Wesley Building, 17th and Arch sts.

Several years ago a national magazine investigated the evidence then presented by Dr. Wilson, and its investigator reported: "I am absolutely confident that the body now preserved is not the body of John Wilkes Booth." This investigator offered to X-ray the leg of the preserved body and see if the bone had been broken, as it was known Booth's leg was broken in jumping from the theatre box. This permission was refused at that time.

"The body of the mystery man is on exhibition in California now," said Dr. Wilson in an interview before the meeting. "I do not make any claims but present the evidence on a subject that has interested me since I was fourteen."

The Rev. Thompson W. McKinney, pastor of the Miller Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church, 5th and Clearfield sts., who at the time it was announced Dr. Wilson would present his evidence to the local preachers labeled the story as a myth, said today, "Barnum was right."

"The myth of the escape of John Wilkes Booth has recurred with considerable persistency. The most ardent promoter of this strange tale was one Finis L. Bates, of Memphis, Tenn. This lawyer declared that he met Booth in Texas in 1872 and became his counsel and confidential friend. Bates said that Booth, at the time he knew him, traveled under the name of John St. Helen and later died under the assumed name of David E. George. Dr. Wilson has made a study of this matter in the space of forty years, and speaks quite convincingly on the subject.

"He appears to brush aside with a gesture the indisputable evidence of the death of Booth, established by the sworn testimony given in the three great trials following the assassination of President Lincoln.

"The origin of the myth is not difficult to understand, for there was a most strenuous effort made by the Army, the Secret Service and private detectives to capture Booth, and to get the reward. Those who failed, immediately charged that Booth had not been taken, and therefore the Secret Service men had no right to the reward. So the story grew.

"General Lew Wallace when interrogated regarding the myth in 1898, said: 'In reply to yours of the 25th instant, I beg to say that to my certain knowledge John Wilkes Booth was buried under the brick pavement in a room in the old penitentiary in Washington City; and, also that after having lain there for a time, at the request of his friends, his remains were taken up and transferred to Baltimore.'

"The alleged mummified body of Booth is yet unburied and is at this time being shown by a carnival company in California.

"Barnum was right."

Radio Weather Forecast

Reception from the South and West should be fairly strong tonight. Northern stations will be slightly weaker. Some static may accompany distant reception.

Try for These

11.00—WQJ—Stevens Orchestra.
11.45—WSB—Concert.