

# THE WESLEYAN DAILY RECORDER.

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## Poetry.

### WHAT IS EARTH?

What is earth, sexton?  
A place to dig graves.  
What is earth, rich man?  
A place to work slaves.  
What is earth, graybeard?  
A place to grow old.  
What is earth, miser?  
A place to dig gold.  
What is earth, school-boy?  
A place for my play.  
What is earth, maiden?  
A place to be gay.  
What is earth, seamstress?  
A place where I weep.  
What is earth, sluggard?  
A good place to sleep.  
What is earth, soldier?  
A place for a battle.  
What is earth, herdsman?  
What is earth, cattle.  
What is earth, widow?  
A place of true sorrow.  
What is earth, tradesman?  
I'll tell you to-morrow.  
What is earth, sick man?  
Tis nothing to me.  
What is earth, sailor?  
My home is the sea.  
What is earth, statesman?  
A place to win fame.  
What is earth, author?  
I'll write there my name.  
What is earth, monarch?  
For my realm it is given.  
What is earth, Christian?  
The passage to heaven.

## MEMORABLE CONFERENCES IN CANADA.

BY JOHN CARROLL.

### THE "SPECIAL" OR WOE-STRIKEN CONFERENCE, 1840.

Most gladly would I pass this Conference over in silence; but it is among the "memorable" ones, and historical facts cannot be ignored. Seven addition Conferences, since the one in 1833, had been held with a President in the chair of each, appointed by the British Conference. That of 1834 was held at Kingston, with the clear-headed, consecutive *Grinrod* in the chair, (Alder was present also); that of 1835, in Hamilton, with the bluff, pushing, yet managing *William Lord* in the chair, who always literally "hurried business"; that of 1836, presided over by *Mr. Lord* again, and held in Belleville; that of 1837, in Toronto, presided over by the urbane but pious *Harvard*, who, while he resembled General Washington in person, could hardly be said to have employed very much generalship; and the Kingston Conference of 1838, Mr. Harvard again in the chair. Then came the stormy Conference of 1839, held in Hamilton, with our much-loved *Supt. of Missions, Stinson*, at the request of the Canada Conference, elevated to our President. *The Rev. Dr. Alder* was there with a special object, which he did not quite accomplish. From that Conference till the Belleville session, in 1840, a state of antagonism prevailed between the leading influences of the native part of the Canada Conference, and the representative of British Conference interests and ideas in Canada (together with a minority in the Conference who sympathized with them), on great political questions arising from the great political changes the Province had recently passed through, and the unsettled state of the Clergy Reserves, which it would be aside from our purpose at this time to detail. Suffice it to say, that Conference claimed to be the true representatives of Canadian views and interests with the Government, while the majority of our Conference thought we "to the manor born" had an original position and Confidential interests to maintain.

A message came from the British Conference to the Canada Conference, making certain demands on the latter as a *sine qua non* to the continuance of the "Union." These, to Canadian eyes looked like new "Articles," to which we were disinclined to submit, and yet we deprecated the breaking up of our brotherly connection. In our simplicity, we thought that the new conditions propounded to us were rather the offspring of the Missionary Committee and Secretaries, and that an appeal to the Conference proper, with which the Union had been formed, would fall to convince its members of the rectitude of our position. With that view, we decided on a delegation to the next session of the parent body, which met that year in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The representatives chosen were *William and Eberton Ryerson*. The Rev. Drs. Stinson and Richey also went over, who represented the Canadians who viewed the question from the other side.

Our delegates did not feel free to yield anything, and the British Conference affirmed the demands already sent. These not being complied with, they resolved to set up separate operations at the ensuing Canada Conference, if we did not submit. In the meantime, they thought the Rev. Mr. Stinson would remain the President of this seemingly united body in a state of awful schism. But the Canadian delegates had other opinions: they thought it desirable for the Canada Conference to decide at once whether they would submit, or take measures to go on in their own independent way. This was a painful decision, but, on the whole, it was perhaps the best for both parties. The rest of the year would have exhibited the spectacle of house divided against itself; and which party would have come out of the crucible with the largest numerical gains, it is hard to say—both would certainly have come out with spiritual loss. Although the controversies and disruptions at the Conference were most deplorable, yet it was followed by a winter of revivals in both sections of Provincial Wesleyanism.

The delegates summoned the members of the Conference to a special meeting, which assembled in Toronto from the 2nd to the 9th of October, 1840. The Revs. Messrs. Stinson and Richey did not put in an appearance; and the Rev. Thomas Whitehead, the oldest Canadian preacher, was placed in the chair. The delegates gave an account of their mission and its results. There were not wanting those in the Conference who took the British view of the question, and who controverted the statements and positions of the leaders on the Canada side. Among the foremost and ablest of these was the Rev. Ephraim Evans. He was seconded by such brethren as W. Scott, Douse and Norris. Brethren Brock and Manly took a sort of middle course in the debate. There was nothing positively unchristian on either side, but the like of it may we never see again! Any one who wants to read the declarations put forth by the majority of the Conference on that occasion can turn to the 1st volume of the General Minutes, and peruse all from page 249 to 260. Those declarations claimed, in substance, that as the British Conference had withdrawn from the Union, the Canada Conference had no alternative but to appoint its own President and go on its own independent way. No changes were made in its polity. It "disclaimed any imputation on the character or motives" of the European brethren; and said, "that on the return to and recognition of the principles of Wesleyan unity on the part of the Committee in London, we will rejoice to avail ourselves of the first opportunity to bury in oblivion all the differences and unhappy feelings of the past."

Now came the hardest part of all. When the line was drawn, it was then to be seen who stood on the Canada Conference side of it. E. Evans, T. Fawcett, J. Douse, B. Slight, J. Norris, W. Scott and E. Stoney arose and announced their withdrawal from under its jurisdiction. All these cases awakened more or less feeling among their brethren whom they were leaving behind; but when the venerable Wm. Case, who had said but little, and sat back, announced his intention of "following certain leading brethren no more," the Conference was a perfect boiling. Many many heads were bowed, while scolding tears ran down their faces and literally dropped off their features. Brock and Manly withdrew because they got a chance of retiring out of the strife into another Province. Eleven in all were reported "withdrawn." We had almost lost our Secretary, the Rev. John C. Davidson, whom we entreated to stay; but who, though he was made the chairman of a district, left at the next Conference. The Rev. Matthew Lang was there, and battled by the side of Evans, but being a member of the British Conference, his was not a withdrawal. The leave-taking which followed was tender. Douse, who sat near the writer, had been my own much-loved colleague. We parted in sorrow. Evans accosted me once more as "John," like as in our boyish days. Edmund Stoney's leave-taking, trembling with paralysis, was very pitiful. But a truce to these by-gones; may they never return! The next regular Conference affirmed the proceedings of the "Special Conference."

## MINISTERS' LIBRARIES.

One of the greatest difficulties in the way of most of our ministers is their inability to obtain suitable books to assist them in their studies. If the Apostle, with all the early advantages which he enjoyed, and the special Divine assistance afforded him, needed books, surely we need not be surprised if ministers at the present day feel their need of similar aids. Many of our brethren, however, have more difficulty in obtaining suitable books, we presume, than Paul had in obtaining his from Troas. Not that the books are not to be had, but because brethren have not the means at command to procure them. Many of our churches are very attentive in supplying the personal wants of their minister and his family, and would be afflicted if they knew he was deficient in a suitable wardrobe, or in a supply for his table; but they forget the deficiency in his library, and make no suitable provision to meet it. Every church should furnish its minister with the means to procure food for his mind as well as his body. If the church neglects this, it will be the loser in the end. Every church should make a special donation to its minister, every year, for the exclusive purpose of enabling him to keep his library such works as he needs, to add him fully posted on all the great living issues of the day. Then he will be prepared to meet the enemy in the gate, and to stand as a defence for the gospel.

## THE CHURCHES ON SUNDAY.

ELM STREET.

The Rev. Lewis Warner, Chairman of the Niagara District, conducted the service at 11 a.m. He took for his text—Mark viii. 34, "Whoever will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me."

These were the words of Christ to his disciples. They did not yet comprehend the true spiritual nature of his kingdom. He gave them to understand that not position of honor and emolument, but a course of self-abnegation and toil lay before them. What he taught them, it is important for us to know. The burden of the subject of meditation, *The Terms of Christian Discipleship*. The first of these conditions was this: It must be voluntary. "If any man will," &c. The preacher showed the will to be uncontrollable and free. God forced no man, but left him to his own deliberate choice; and the person who comes to Christ must be influenced by no exterior coercion, but of his own deliberate purpose must determine to make choice of Christ for his Saviour and portion, with all that that comprehended.

The second condition of discipleship was self-denial. Our own inclinations, appetites, and preferences must be relinquished. Our will surrendered; and the will and honor and interests of Christ must be adopted for ours. Did any think these to be hard terms? Did not self-denial have to be pursued if a man cleared himself up and secured a rural estate? If he prosecuted a successful commercial enterprise and accumulated wealth? Or if he acquired the necessary training and knowledge to occupy a learned profession, fulfilled its duties, and won its honors? He spoke of the self-denying studies necessary to be a successful minister of Christ, showing that though some of these died early, and the result of their toilsome preparations might seem to be lost, yet who could say, that the qualifications gained by self-denying study would not advance their position in that world where they will be ministering spirits sent forth to be heirs of salvation? He illustrated this by some touching incidents.

Thirdly, Taking up the cross was the next condition. As the proselyte to Judaism had to give up the idolatries of heathenism, and assume the yoke of the Jewish ceremonial, so the cross was put forth as the emblem of all that was Christian; and "taking up the cross," the embracing of its doctrines—the assumption of its duties—the profession of its principles—and a submission to the sufferings, which an adherence to it might result in.

Fourthly, Following Christ was another condition. Reference in this language was made to the fact that in ancient times, teachers were not often provided with buildings and other provisions to maintain their schools of philosophy and learning in one locality, but they wandered from place to place. Sometimes a temporary residence for the school of the prophets was made by the banks of a stream. The Great Master had where to lay his head, but went wherever the people were willing to receive and sustain him and his disciples. This requirement implies a readiness to identify our interests and experiences, whether of joy or sorrow, with our Divine Master. To follow religiously is to imitate and obey.

He earnestly urged an immediate closure with Christ on these terms, and a faithful adherence to Him unto the end.

## ADELAIDE STREET.

On Sunday morning, the Rev. J. A. Williams officiated in Adelaide St. Church. The Rev. gentleman chose for his text, "Unto you is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God." Mark iv, 11. Religious certainty is the certainty of life—not logical, not inferential, but immediate. The Gospel of Jesus, intellectually great, becomes more so as we cherish a personal interest in its Author. Science and the application of scientific discovery, touch only the earthly side of our civilization, but the Gospel points to sin as the leading cause of the evils that effect the human race, and to a deliverance from sin as the highest style of life, and the true and immutable basis of progress. It is God's revelation of himself in Jesus Christ; a dispensation of truth, revealed by God to man, through the Mediator—a belief of which is necessary alike to a correct knowledge of God—and the highest good of man. Historically considered, it is a collection of facts connected with the life and death of Jesus, and a record of his sayings, doctrines and precepts—claiming supernatural power, dying for human sin, which he claims power to forgive; to be the object of religious faith—which is obligatory—while unbelief is sin; that he is the subject of religious doctrines so that his religion is in its principle final, complete and supreme. This is Historical Christianity as laid down in the books which we accept as vehicles of supernatural truth and of permanent obligation.

What then are the mysteries of this kingdom of God? What are its cardinal truths and provisions for these, until they are revealed to us in their relation to our personal wants and necessities, must remain secret and mysterious. Its great central principle is the personal manifestation of God through a Redeemer. The mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ. Christ the Mediator, is the exponent to us, under human limitations, of the mind and heart of God.

This revelation of God in Christ, is the revelation of his love. An infinite gratuity was conferred upon man, when God was brought within the range of human thought—yet we sigh for a revelation that shall meet our consciousness of moral relapse, and satisfy us that God is approachable. The cross is the mystery of love, the symbol of the infinite generosity of divine charity. In his love and in his pity he redeemed us. It is a plenteous redemption, for the first and the greatest, for the last and the least.

Mystery of love—it is a mystery of life—of life the gift of Christ—such as the soul needs—such as can reciprocate God's love—"the Adoption of Sons"—a relationship grounded on union with the blessed and only begotten Son of God. A supernatural life with the expectation of an eternal home, and the endowment of new capacities of heavenly light and strength. These are a part of his ways, but the greatest and the glory who can understand. It is asked how historical Christianity passes into the sphere of the actual, so that these hidden truths come within the range of personal consciousness? Is there religious certainty? Can the statements and offers of Christ be justified? Can his salvation become a fact of being? Can

"The things unknown to feeble sense," be so revealed in us, that his redemption shall be as personal to us as our personal sin? Yes. "If any man will do his will he shall know." Christ's promise is fulfilled in those who seek from him that which he offers; and in the domain of human consciousness Christ verifies his truth, and in such a way as to satisfy and stand all the tests of the understanding, of logic, of experience, and of life. But the knowledge is not founded in these tests, but immediately in the soul, so this we say with "the disciple of an elder time," "We know that we have passed from death unto life." Where else but in religion itself shall we find the evidence of its divineness? What then are the realities which are thus revealed us, and which no status of nature could secure? The Person and work of our Lord. We no longer see through a glass, darkly: our fellowship with the Divine Saviour rescues his life from the bare historical view, from the region of the intellectual to the region of spiritual experiences, where it speaks directly to the soul, and tells us Christ, what he was. The Gospel mysteries, the manger, the cross, the sepulchre we still visit, and the Christ that was, is present, to us as Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. He is felt to be near, as we rest and him with that faith born of our necessities,—the life becomes a loyal homage of the intellect of the heart, and of the will to a divine King with whom the whole man is in communion.

2nd. So of the fact of personal relationship to God as his children. The fact of spiritual life, which is not all future. Its consummation may be—but here and now we are the "Sons of God," and are as conscious of our filial relation to God, as of our fraternal relation to man. This is the philosophy of the incarnation that we "might receive the adoption of sons." Adoption is the production of a life, a nature, amenable to its author. Sonship is the transmission by the Divine Spirit of life—divine life through faith in the person and work of Christ, the Divine Mediator. Life—rich, full, free—producing a profound sense of the fact that God professes to me, raising us into majestic communion, and to enjoyment the greatest, the vastest and most transcendent in the kingdom of God.

3rd. This is the source of all that aid and happiness which comes to us in our development of the christian life, which is but the prolongation of the work of Christ in us. With the life comes the life of the spirit, which is the rest of all feeling and all thought, which is each man's true individual self. We repeat in his ear the troubles of our inward shame, and ask for help in the struggles of even defeated hope. Repose, rest, confidence, strength, come from intimacy with the Divine One. We grow up into Christ, gain girth and height of being as we come into the broad and vast ranges of his love—the mysteries of his kingdom. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him. We are in the spiritual world through our relation to Christ. Let us long for a clearer vision, a deeper consciousness, a more profound sympathy, a more complete and abundant life. We do not belong to an orphaned and outcast world. God's arms are around us. His love permeates it. Christ's blood redeemed it, and His Spirit waits to conduct its human souls to the felicity of a new life—a life in God. So with the certainty that we have not followed cupidity devised fables, we move on to the glory to be revealed in us, from religion as a reality to its blessed consummation, with a faith as serene and stable as a star, and as full of light.

"And when time's vail shall fall asunder,  
Our souls shall know  
No fearful change, nor sudden wonder,  
Which might weigh on a weaker under,  
But with the upward rise, and with the vastness grow."

## RATIONALISM.

The first question of an enquirer after truth in religion is, What are the sources of knowledge? On this question opinion is divided. Leaving out the Eastern church, which for a thousand years has shown little intellectual life, we find in Western Christendom three great parties,—the Roman Catholic, the Evangelical Protestant, and the Rationalist. The Roman Catholic and the Evangelical Protestant agree in admitting authoritative teaching; but this is placed by the former in the Scripture and Tradition as preserved and infallibly interpreted by the visible church of which the Pope is the head; while it is placed by the latter in the Scriptures alone as interpreted by private judgment. Rationalism rejects authoritative teaching altogether, as well as supernatural revelation. Rationalism is not properly chargeable to the account of Protestantism. Its gems existed prior to the Reformation, from the time of the revival of learning and the humanistic reaction against the scholastic theology. Rationalism has flourished in Roman Catholic as well as Protestant lands. Protestantism rather checked for a while the development of infidelity.

The Evangelical Protestant gives to reason the power of recognizing the verities of natural religion; the right to require satisfactory evidence for the fact of revelation; to determine the canon by historical investigation; to demand that nothing shall be accepted on authority which conflicts with known truth, and to interpret the Scriptures with freedom. The true relation of philosophy to truth is this; Philosophy starts with the data of consciousness; theology with

the facts of a historical revelation. Philosophy may and must proceed on its own methods, with entire independence; but its conclusions will not clash with the Gospel, since truth cannot contradict itself.

There are various current types of Rationalism. First, the systems which deny or ignore the religious nature of man. They give to religion an empirical origin, instead of discerning its deep foundations in the soul. The religious principle is to be compared, in its depth and power, to the social tendency, of which language is the sign and instrument. The system of Comte is the flower of this superficial, empirical, mode of regarding religion. There is a strong materialistic drift in the Positivists of whatever type, as is seen in Herbert Spencer and Huxley. Secondly, there are the systems which deny the miracles of the Gospel, though their advocates are not always atheistic. But a fair, historical criticism will compel the acknowledgment of the historical reality of the miracles. The shifting and conflicting views of Strauss, Renan, Baur, and others are due to the force and stress of the historical evidence. Thirdly, there are the systems which deny the inspiration of the Scriptures. Their advocates may admit revelation, but they exclude authoritative teaching.

The ultimate origin of Rationalism is in the denial of the Christian doctrine of sin. Reason and conscience are obscured and perverted by sin. Every thing bears witness to the reality of sin and to its deleterious power in the soul as well as in human society. Rationalism is Pelagian in its philosophy, and for this reason shallow and mistaken. The supremacy of reason and the moral sense are not violated when the pure and unperverted mind of Christ is admitted as the authority in reference to moral truth. The facts of Christianity also, are material from without, which reason and conscience must accept.

In dealing with Rationalism, freedom of investigation is not to be checked. The physical and natural sciences are to be fostered, but not at the expense of the humanities and the sciences of the soul. The tendency to groundless speculation is just now greater among naturalists than among metaphysicians. New truth in theology must be admitted, and extravagant theories relative to the Scriptures must be given up. The most effective antidote to Rationalism is in direct appeals to the moral and religious nature. So Socrates among the ancients, and Schleiermacher among the moderns, worked upon their generation. The one final test of all systems is their "fruit." Supernatural Christianity, received into the heart, is "the salt of the earth." Society will decay and grow corrupt without it.—*Prof. Fisher.*

## THE REFORMATION IN MEXICO.

Few countries possess as numerous and varied elements of interest as Mexico. Its natural features are of the most diversified and picturesque character. From the shores of the lake to the capital of the nation, are to be found almost every plant which flourishes from the tropics to the Arctic zone. Plains of inexhaustible fertility lie side by side with dry and barren deserts. Mountain ranges, covered with snow, rise up from valleys which have been torn and scattered by the earthquake and the volcano. On the highlands, in the vicinity of Mexico, the climate is of the most enchanting character. Surrounded by so many grand evidences of successive civilizations, in a country which the God of Nature has so signally blessed, the stranger feels almost as if under some spell of the imagination.

The monuments which remain, of the period previous to the Spanish discovery, testify to the marvellous character of its early civilization. The architecture, the literature, the philosophical and religious ideas of the East, seem strangely to have reappeared on these western shores. Its history has been full of the most romantic interest. Through the darkness which surrounds the early annals of the nation, we have glimpses of the splendid civilization of the Montezumas. Then come the wonderful events of the conquest, with its manifold results, both in the New and the Old World. Then follows a long period of the saddest misrule and anarchy, closing with the tragic fate of Maximilian.

Beyond all question, the chief cause of the degradation of Mexico has been the domination of the Church of Rome. The priesthood, until within a few years, had absorbed almost all the wealth of the country. In 1850, the property of the Church in Mexico was estimated at \$90,000,000. It is believed, on competent authority, that the annual amount derived by the priesthood, from all sources, would correspond to a capital of at least \$115,000,000.

Such a vast money-power has enabled the Church to control opinion, or, at least, its expression, in regard to political as well as religious affairs. It might be some consolation, if this immense revenue, or any portion of it, were expended in education or charity, or in any development of the intelligence or religious sentiment of the nation. But this is not the case. "The Mexican Church, as a Church," says Lempriere, "fills no mission of virtue, no mission of morality, no mission of mercy, no mission of charity. Virtue cannot exist in its pestiferous atmosphere. The code of morality does not come within its practice. It knows no mercy, and no emotion of charity ever nerves the stony heart of the priesthood, which, with an avarice that has no limit, filches the last penny from the diseased and dying beggar; plunders the widows and orphans of their substance, as well as their virtue; and casts such a horoscope of horrors around the death bed of the dying millionaire that the poor, superstitious wretch is glad to purchase a chance for the safety of his soul, by making the Church the heir of his treasures."

There are many incidents of thrilling interest connected with the work. It is carried on amid great privation and danger. But a martyr spirit seems to animate the little band of Mexican Christians. The services which are held are characterized by remarkable simplicity and fervor.

This movement, we do not hesitate to say, is one of the most momentous importance to evangelical Christians in this country. It needs our help. It has been represented here by native Christians; and now the Rev. Henry C. Riley, who has devoted himself to the evangelization of Spanish America, and has just returned from Mexico, is here, urging the magnitude and importance of the crisis now presented.—*Prof. Churchman.*