

THE WESLEYAN.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21 1878.

LATEST DESPATCH FROM GENERAL CONFERENCE.

By a reference to our second Editorial Letter, it will be seen that Rev. A. W. Nicolson was re-elected Editor of THE WESLEYAN and that Rev. W. H. Hartz, was appointed Book Steward. But from a despatch just received on going to press we learn that Rev. Mr. Hartz, has resigned the office to which he was elected, and also that Rev. Mr. Nicolson followed his example. Consequently new elections were proceeded with, with the following results:—

REV. D. D. CURRIE, Editor
REV. H. PICKARD, D.D., Book Steward.
Moreover that Rev. A. Sutherland is elected Missionary Secretary in the place of Dr. Wood, resigned, but the Dr. still holds the position of honorary secretary.

EDITORIAL LETTER.

MONTREAL, Monday Sept. 9th, 1878.

Mr. Coley preached yesterday morning in great St. James St., in the absence of Bishop Pierce, who is reported as ill at home. Though the distinguished British Representative had spoken in the hearing of several members of General Conference previously, he had not met expectations, which were perhaps too extravagant. But yesterday he gave immense satisfaction. Indeed satisfaction is not the word to express the feeling of that service, it was rather a mingling of wonder, gratitude and delight. Should the sermon be published, and it would be a connexional loss to withhold it—it may find its way into the WESLEYAN, at least in part; and so I need not attempt an outline. The theological tutor was signally in that sermon, but in a manner so fresh, so original and simple, that his hearers forgot the teacher in the theme and treatment. Mr. Boyce's colloquial style will be remembered by those who heard him during his visit of ten years ago. Mr. Coley resembles him in that direct, homely, sententious manner of saying good things; but neither Mr. Boyce nor any other preacher we have ever heard equals Mr. Coley in what we may be allowed to call the genius of illustration. Mr. Taylor—"California Taylor" as he is best known—occupied St. James pulpit at night. There was a diversity of opinion as to the discourse—its probabilities of doing good; but all admitted that he is a man of almost unequalled versatility.

Monday's session gave promise that the Committees have made progress. The Discipline has been revised in part; Educational matters have been reviewed with much satisfaction; Transfer, which is to be simplified by the division of the Committee, with its two sections, like the Book Committee, has gone through its first stage. We begin to see daylight as regards a few measures which filled the Conference with anxiety and doubt.

The Missionary meeting was an extraordinary service. When the programme of General Conference services was published, readers looked with amazement at the treat which was to be provided, but particularly did the missionary meeting give promise of interest by its speakers, coming as they were from the extremes of the earth, Mr. Shannon was requested to preside in the absence of Mr. McDonald, Lay Treasurer. Eastern representatives invariably feel proud of Mr. Shannon's scholarly and fluent addresses, and on this occasion they had much cause for congratulation. Mr. Gibson, from France, son-in-law to Mr. Boyce, once our President from England, had come in upon the Conference during the day, and was secured as the first speaker at this meeting. A gentle, pleasant man, familiar with France, his heart deeply interested in everything evangelic, he gave us a beautiful and impressive narrative of Methodist affairs in that great republic, Mr. Russ from British Columbia followed, leaving a good impression as to the success of our missions in that Province, he particularly mentioned William McKay, of Charlottetown, as now a leader in everything that tends to enlarge the Redeemer's Kingdom in those regions Dr. McDonald of Japan came next, illustrating, by the exhibition of several strange idols he had brought home, the religion of that remarkable people. The Doctor is a strong man, physically, morally and mentally, not very free in utterance, but the type of sincerity and purpose in all his expressions of thought and countenance. We hope to see him for a fall campaign in the Eastern towns. Mr. Taylor was announced as a "returned Missionary from Asia, Africa and America." This cosmopolitan Missionary—this man of great body, great heart, great and varied gifts, carried the audience by storm. His addresses are a combination of philosophy, scripture, anecdote, narratives of travel, pantomimic representation of men whom he has met, sentences in foreign languages, (of which

he speaks five or six), and finally sacred songs, as sung by the people among whom he has lived in both hemispheres. Of all his powers the voice is the most remarkable, now making melody soft and sweet as a thrush's warble, and anon ringing like a trumpet-blast throughout the largest edifice. The audience laughed, wept and shouted by turns. He closed by singing first in Hindostani, Danish, finally in English, one of Bliss's familiar hymns. The great audience joined in with the chorus, and made a volume of melody which seemed to take Mr. Coley and other strangers by grateful surprise.

Tuesday's proceedings were varied from the usual routine by a spirited discussion on the Hymn Book. It was intended merely to receive the Committee's report, and send this, with any associated resolutions, down to the Committee for further consideration. But one by one interjected a warm speech, till it was felt that, in fairness to both parties, license of expression must be allowed for an hour or two. All this was incited by a masterly address from Mr. Sutherland in moving the reception of the Report, and a calm comprehensive speech by Mr. Lathern, as seconder. For an hour and a half there were rockets in the air burning with colors brilliant enough. Dr. Ryerson, Dr. Fowler, Dr. Stewart, and a few others made most effective speeches. At length the Report were sent down to committee, with instructions to print the particulars of hymns intended to be omitted or altered, and intimation of matter to be added.

The afternoon was given to a revision of the Discipline. This brought out several sharp encounters between strong men, lay and clerical, as to changes affecting the laity particularly. There was much time lost over technicalities. Laymen began here to show signs of restlessness in view of the political issues hurrying them to their constituencies. Four or five asked for liberty to retire, when one humorous brother raised much merriment by intimating that we ought to know whether there were any political reasons lying at the foundation of these requests for leave absence, "because," said he, "if there are, we wish to meet them by giving leave of absence to the other side."

That the General Conference has suffered by the absence of certain laymen, as compared with the sessions of four years ago, cannot but be acknowledged by all who have opportunity of making comparison. Yet, it was reserved for late stages of business this year to show what we really possessed in the way of lay talent. Only yesterday did we hear for the first time a speech from Hon. W. Strong of P. E. Island. Members began to awake to the consciousness of another orator from the East having a place in the Assembly, and enquiries went around, "Who is that man?" Mr. Dawson had briefly spoken on several occasions, but long enough to give the impression that he was a man of prompt, decisive business habit, and a commanding speaker. Several other gentlemen, seemingly lawyers, sheriffs, merchants, and others, have only begun to show their powers, so that we may yet have great things to report of our lay representatives. We wish they may come to the front. Speaking, like the horse in the mill, goes round in the old track, and repeats perpetually its circles of opinion from persons who have persisted in being heard and will never apparently relinquish the right. One member had the curiosity to keep tally for a day of the speakers. The result was that eight or ten men were found to monopolize three-fifths of the time. This is lamentable; the feelings provoked by it are not very complimentary to our representative body. Modest men, young men (save a very few) independent men, who submit to silence and misapprehension rather than thrust themselves into notice, conclude that it is their duty to listen and wait, rather than humiliate themselves by demanding the right to be heard. Yet it is difficult to say where the blame lies. Certainly not with the President, who simply confines the assembly to rules of order. The only difficulty is that by the time eight or ten have spoken on a subject, the vote is called for and usually decided. There ought to be on all important questions, some rule of regulating in advance, who shall speak and how many.

MONTREAL, SEPTEMBER 12th 1878.

I must attempt a description of last night's meeting for the reception of Delegates. Happily the effort is not so impossible as we have been led to fear, in view of the fact that the speaking, through very good, was not either so statistical or so exciting as might reasonably have been expected. Dr. Douglas presided, and gave at intervals his ornate and affectionate utterances in greeting the distinguished visitors. Dr. Potts, Chairman of the Committee of Introduction, occupied his proper place, and with dignity—St. James St. Church was well filled. We noticed among the audience a few prominent strangers of other churches. Mr. Coley's address was singularly

beautiful in its way. While avoiding almost entirely the great social work which Methodism is doing in England, he yet illustrated well, by his colloquial method, the church's fidelity to doctrine and class meeting. Most of his hearers regretted that we had not learned something of that progress which our beloved fathers are making educationally, as well as in the missionary and other departments of enterprise for which English Methodism is so distinguished. But Mr. Coley we presume knows wherein he excels, and so confined himself to the sphere which he can best adorn. The speech was witty withal, keeping his hearers in the best listening moods to the close.

Dr. Upham, M. E. Church North, held the audience for an hour. He is a noble speaker—not so absorbing as Simpson, so versatile as Foss, nor so electrifying as the lamented Eddy, but having a vein of the best characteristics of all three. He touched the loyal chord, as our American cousins know so well how to do, with masterly power exciting the audience very much by allusions to the Queen. On the growth of Methodism in the United States he was very eloquent. His best stroke was one of mingled sarcasm and rebuke to the lugubrious prophets in and about the church, who see the glory of its past and the decline of its future. After citing with quiet emphasis the rate of the progress of Methodism in the United States during the past decade,—building two churches a day on an average, adding during the last year, nearly 13,000 members per week to its communion, bringing nearly three preachers a day into its ministry, he naively quoted:—

"Dear Lord, and shall we ever live At this poor dying rate!"

The quaintness of his words and manner fairly electrified the house. One man caused amusement by even rising and waving his hat in the agitation. Dr. Upham is a grand speaker.

Dr. Kelly, from the M. E. Church south, was not so well in health as might have been desired. He led the people with him in real sympathy, and Dr. Douglas, who was amongst us just fresh from Southern soil, where he met the warmest greetings, could testify to the great love those southern brethren held for us in the North; but it seemed difficult for Dr. Kelly to surmount his physical disadvantages. He was hoarse and sometimes constrained in consequence. After him came Dr. Sargent, whom we are always glad to our hearts as a blessed gift of God to the Methodist Church wherever he goes. The same beautiful emphasis he gave to the Word of Life once more. The Bible becomes God's letter to the brethren in greeting, when quoted by Dr. Sargent. May God long spare him to them and us! A discussion upon Transfers has occupied the whole of to-day, as a sequel to a debate of considerable power on the same subject, alluded to already. The issue seems to be that next to unlimited authority is given to all the Presidents combined, to remove ministers, with the understanding that they may return after six or nine years. This will yet be hampered we imagine by expenses and by other difficulties. If it shall lead to a free interchange between conferences, it may do good. An Executive Committee is also proposed, which shall be a court of appeal. Should this carry, there may be inducement to magnify grievances and multiply causes of complaint. Still, our church is prudent and conservative, and should safely be trusted to keep within proper bounds.

The Educational Meeting on Thursday night was well sustained in interest till a late hour. Mr. Coley again spoke, and being within the region of his own professional work—the teaching of youth—was well qualified to give much solid information. Dr. Rice, Dr. Nellis, Professor Burwash and others, threw energy into this quadrennial meeting in behalf of our great educational work.

Before closing I have but a moment to announce the elections for the Book-rooms West and East. It was a forgone conclusion that the offices in the latter should be divided: but up to the last hour there was no settled policy among eastern representatives as to the officers to be elected. The present incumbent had honestly expected to go out entirely, in accordance with his intention announced in the WESLEYAN two months ago. It was, however, the fixed purpose, apparently, of many members that he should return in one capacity, and finding him immovable as to the Book-stewardship, the nomination of three for the office of Editor, resulted in concentrating the votes by the name of the present occupant of the office. Revs. T. Watson Smith and D. D. Currie were the other two, either of whom would have been welcomed by our readers, and certainly welcomed by the one whose name was preferred to theirs. We have not any better, or more straightforward sentiment to express, than that the office of the ministry, as it exists, in our church, is the freest, happiest place in the world. This should be a consolation to any one falling in an election to the offices named; if

would certainly have been, in similar circumstances, a sufficient consolation to the writer.

To Mr. Hartz, of Grafton Street, Halifax, came the honor of being elected Book-steward by the largest vote we have ever known cast in General Conference. This with his excellent qualities of head and heart, clearly indicate that the office is to be provisionally filled.

Dr. Rose of the Toronto Book-room, is to be succeeded by Mr. Briggs, the present Pastor of the Metropolitan Church. He is said to equal in business ability to his great preaching power. Messrs. Dewart and Withrow continue in Office as Editors.

BOOK REVIEW.

It has just been our pleasure to peruse a pamphlet entitled, "A Scriptural Refutation of the Errors of the Rev. Canon Farrar, in his Recent Writings on the Future Punishment of the Wicked." This little work is the production of John G. Marshall, Ex-Chief Justice, &c., in the Island of Cape Breton. Its aim is to bring down the awful subject of which it treats, from the misty regions of speculation and the warping magnetism of mere sentiment, to the infallible touch-stone of Scripture. By a constant appeal to the letter and spirit of Holy Writ, the able author arrests the Canon's flights of fancy and cools his fervid declamations against the orthodox view of the Divine character on the subject of eternal punishment. To appreciate the force and conclusiveness of the author's argument a careful perusal of this very able pamphlet is necessary; and such a perusal will well repay the thoughtful reader.

We cannot refrain from sharing our author's regret that a matter so momentous as is the subject of eternal punishment should have been removed for discussion from its legitimate sphere—plain and particular Scripture testimony—to the uncertainties of speculation, or to the anti-pathies of a mistaken sentiment. "To the law and the testimony." "What saith the Scripture?" While the truth remains, neither the fires of a fervid eloquence, nor the force of an innate antagonism can ever destroy "the worm that dieth not," or put out "the fire that cannot be quenched."

We hope this little pamphlet will have a wide circulation.

Rev. Joseph Gaetz, says:—"Our Tea Meeting at Middleton was a great success. The day was all that could be desired—the gathering immense—proceeds \$390.78 Many thanks to all who patronized us."

GENERAL CONFERENCE.

(Continued from first page.)

and waving their hands.) God bless England, and God bless the United States. (Loud applause,) one in religion and one in language. May the tongue be paralyzed that would speak a word to stir up strife between the two countries, and the hand withered which is raised to create discord. In the words of the Indian Chief, "let us tighten the chains that bind us together." (Applause.) With regard to statements that Methodism was declining, he quoted some astonishing figures, showing for instance, that during the past year the membership of the Methodist church of the United States increased at the rate of 1,900 per week, adding, "And can we ever live at this poor dying rate?" (Great laughter.) Having referred to the unanimity existing among the Methodists of the U. States, and other matters relating to the church there, he advocated an Ecumenical Council of Methodists of the world to be held at the old City Road chapel, of London. The speaker concluded by giving an interesting description of the progress of the Methodist work in the Southern States and in Mexico.

The President having briefly addressed Dr. Upham on behalf of the Conference. Rev. Dr. Pierce delegate from the Methodist Church South, who explained the cause of the absence of the two delegates appointed to be present, and humorously alluded to the manner in which he had been caught as a substitute in the Mountains of New Hampshire, where he had been sent for his health. In the Conference he represented the pastoral term had been extended in some cases to four years with beneficial effects to city congregations, and with no injury to those in the country. Attendance at class-meeting was not with them necessary to church membership. He gave in choice language, many encouraging facts concerning the position of Methodism in the South, and after the conclusion of his address the meeting closed.

CONFERENCE SERMONS.

REV. SAMUEL COLEY AND CALIFORNIA TAYLOR. A chief centre of attraction, not only to Methodists, but to many members of other denominations, was the St. James St. Methodist church, where Rev. Samuel Coley, in the morning, and Rev. Mr. Taylor—that remarkable evangelist whose ministrations have met with extraordinary success in California, South America, India, and other places—in the evening, preached to the immense audiences which can be crowded into that church. The styles were entirely dissimilar. The former gave a beautiful and masterly exposition of the concluding words of second Corinthians, "The communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all, amen." On this he based an address of an hour and a half, explaining the functions of the Holy Spirit, earnest, well thought, beautiful in language, and gorgeous in illustration. In considering the text he took up the three points: (1) The Divine Personality of the Holy Ghost, (2) the blessed privilege of communion with the Holy Ghost, (3) the benediction, be with you all, amen. That the Holy Spirit was a person, he said, was shown by the fact that he was a person, not a thing; you cannot have communion with a thing. One cannot read a book without finding out something about the writer—that he is witty, profound, learned, or some other thing characteristic of him. And God is the author of the Bible, because in it are Divine things, revelations which none but God could make. There was divine fitness in the Bible. No man could make a cover for this city as he made for a jewel box, with an indentation the exact

shape of every precious stone, that it might be perfectly protected. He could not make one to provide for the peak of the mountain and every church spire, every monument in the cemetery, every dwelling. Still less could he make a cover for the continent—yet the Bible is just like this. It comes down on humanity on all its kind and all its wants, and its fitness to man is one proof of its divinity, and it teaches the divinity of the Holy Spirit. There is divinity in the Bible's fulness. This Sunday there are thirty thousand preachers some of them the foremost men in the world, who will take out of it little pieces and expound them; but the best part of their sermons will be the texts. This has been done year after year, but it is still fresh as ever. What other book could stand it a fortnight. But like Niagara, whose floods flow on for ever, like the sun which never waxes dim, like the ocean, on whose aged brow wrinkles have made their imprint, God's book never changes, never loses its freshness, and retains its wonderful power of perfection, converting the soul. What other book has this power? You may say those of Doddridge, John Angel James, Wesley or others. But if you take the Bible out of them, they will never make a convert again. They borrow all their capital out of this bank, and without it they can do nothing. Again look at the divinity of the Bible, you call it a book. But in reality it is sixty books bound in one cover. Parts were written when the colors in the rainbow were new, and parts when the new Kingdom had opened. Parts were written in the wilderness and parts in cities full. Parts were flowers of gentleness, written by fishermen and herdsmen. Parts were written in Chaldee and parts in Greek. The writers never saw each other, but it is one compact whole. Could any other book be so formed? A modern artist, tired of the sneers at modern art, and the worship of what was ancient, chiselled a beautiful statue, broke off an arm, a leg, stained it to look ancient, and buried it where it would be found by inquisitive eyes. It was found and proclaimed to be a masterpiece above the powers of any of that time. The maker quickly dispelled their congratulations by claiming it as his own, and producing the missing pieces, whose jagged, broken edges fitted exactly into the statue from which they had been broken. The man who made the missing portion must have the whole. No man need now sit down and study his own writings, yet the prophets of old had to do this to see what manner of things the Spirit within them did testify. The history of the Church also could not be written without proving the personality of the Holy Ghost. There was communion or fellowship with the Holy Ghost, in this order—communication and then fellowship. The light, so scientists say, falls to the earth from the sun, ninety three millions of miles away, in a few seconds, a speed which, if it had the consistency of air, would sweep away the earth and disturb the planets in their course, yet it falls so gently that it does not disturb the rest of the sleeping babe. God made the light and made man; but the man himself must look to perceive it. The light is good, the power to use it is good, but the act is man's. So the poor soul looks and recognizes and regards in Christ the gift of God. This is the communication which is necessary to the communion. In Manchester he visited the Exchange. He went in as a poor Methodist preacher, and did no business and came out no richer. But while in there were some who wrote with pencils on little pieces of paper, and who did business to the amount of twenty thousand pounds. Just so people came to God's house. Some go away like the Methodist preacher from the Stock Exchange, having done no business and gained no profit; others have had communion with God and been greatly blessed.

It is impossible more than indicate the line of thought pursued in this masterly discourse. The Rev. Mr. Taylor's sermon as has been said, was dissimilar in style; while the remarks of one were striking from their exquisite beauty, aptness, and deep thought, those of the other attracted notice from their rigor, quaintness, and it might be said, grotesqueness. Both were simple, and easily understood.

IN THE EVENING the church was crowded by a large number of people anxious to hear the eminent evangelistic missionary of India, the Rev. William Taylor. His text was, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." St. John, xiii. chapter, 34th verse. The rev. gentleman said this was a part of the formal farewell discourse of Christ to his disciples before his betrayal. An angel of Jehovah gave out the ten commandments from Mount Sinai fourteen hundred years before, and now Christ a new one, which you may call the eleventh if you choose. He supposed they all knew the ten commandments; if they didn't they had better learn them at once. He on one occasion gave an exposition of the ten commandments before 3,000 natives of Ceylon, and afterwards invited all who were convinced that they had sinned against God by breaking these commandments, to come forward and he would show them a way out of their sins. Among others, a doctor—a Buddhist—came forward, and said that being a Buddhist, he had not believed in the existence of an individual God, but from what he had heard that day he was convinced of his mistake; he believed that there was a God who was a great King, and he was one of his subjects and had broken some of his laws. Here the missionary repeated the commandments, and asked the native doctor after each if had kept that particular commandment; some, he said, he was convicted under; and finally, after hearing an explanation of each, and of how far-reaching they were, and of how perfect an obedience was required, he confessed that he had broken each and all of the commandments, and the poor convicted sinner fell upon his face upon the ground and groaned. It is the only honest course, friends, when we are thus convicted, to repent of it thus. Now, unfortunately for all who have crossed the lines of responsibility, we like this Buddhist doctor, have broken the laws. Well, what are you going to do about it? You can do nothing under the law. This is what he had said to the Buddhist, and how despairing he looked, but oh how his face brightened when he was pointed to the only means by which he could be acquitted!—the forgiveness of sins through the blood of Christ. You want to hear something about missions; well that's all right, come to-morrow night and you will be gratified, but I am not on that line to-night. I am on the line of salvation. If you are convicted, will you accept an acquittal to-night? He then explained the way of salvation as he had been accustomed to do to the natives of India, in a simple, plain way, and made a powerful appeal to all who were convicted of sin to indicate it by standing up. He thought it was very appropriate that inasmuch as they had sinned publicly they should acknowledge it publicly.