

derstand better, Lay-Preachers, and displaying qualifications for a more extended sphere of usefulness, they are proposed to the Quarterly Meetings by the superintendent ministers of the circuit in which they respectively reside, and, if approved by them, undergo a personal examination by the ministers of the district, at their annual assembly: and having passed satisfactorily through this course of careful and varied enquiry, they are at length recommended to the conference. The number of candidates so recommended from the Home and foreign stations, is this year unusually large, amounting to 120, 63 of whom offer themselves for the Home Ministry, and 52 for the Missionary service. The vacancies occasioned by death, and the demand for an increased number of "labourers in the vineyard," both at home and abroad, require a large and constant supply.

FRIDAY FORENOON.

The next question to which the attention of the conference is directed, relates to the Deaths which have taken place amongst the ministers of the Connexion, in the course of the year. It is, on all occasions, a solemn and affecting enquiry. "Our Fathers, where are they? The Prophets, do they live forever?" To the Christian Church itself, the removal of its ministers, by death, is a mournful bereavement; but, the stroke is felt with additional solemnity, by their fellow labourers.

The President, upon introducing the question, said "We now have to enquire, who have departed from the scenes of their earthly labours to their rewards of glory. And whilst we examine these records of Death, let us remember that, 'We are to the margin come, and we expect to die.' God has favoured us with a gracious manifestation of his presence and we rejoice in the tokens of his favour. I would call to your recollection the pious and animated strains, in which our Beloved Ex-President, in anticipating the period of his own dissolution, expressed his hope of his glorious immortality. He seemed to be carried into an ecstasy:—

Thrice blessed bliss inspiring hope
It lifts the fainting spirits up,
It brings to life the dead.

Let the question I am about to propose lead us to close self-examination in reference to the period when we ourselves shall be "written among the dead."

The following list contains the names of the ministers who have, during the past year, exchanged mortality for life. Some of them were venerable for age and services of the most extensive usefulness. Revered and loved by their brethren, they passed full of days and honours to their eternal rest. "Their bodies are buried in death;" but their "souls are in the hands of God," and "their name liveth."

1. John Gaultier; 2. William Pollard; 3. Edward Oakes; 4. Thomas Twiddy; 5. Joseph Burgess; 6. John Ogilvie; 7. Humphrey Jones; 8. James Fussell; 9. John Fairbourne; 10. Jonathan Barker; 11. William Arnett; 12. Benjamin Barrett; 13. Samuel Thompson; 14. Robert Ramm; 15. John Mercer; 16. John Ward, sen.; 17. John Wright; 18. Thomas L. Bakewell; 19. Philip Hardcastle, sen.

IN IRELAND.

20. Henry Lucy; 21. John Remington; 22. Alexander Sturgeon; 23. William Smith; 24. John Howe; 25. John Marshall, sen.; 26. Gideon Ousley.

IN THE FOREIGN MISSIONS.

27. Thomas Henry Bewley; 28. Thomas Wall; 29. Edward J. Peard; 30. Thomas Filwards, Jun.; 31. Robert H. Crane; 32. Henry Fleet.

A brief sketch of the life and character of each deceased minister is usually read to the Conference, which is subsequently entered on the journals, and inserted in the printed Minutes. Tributes of affection, too, are spontaneously paid to his memory, by his surviving friends, in their testimony to his virtues, his talents, or his labours.

At the conclusion of this mournful inquiry, the President said—we have gone through these records of mortality and our spirits have been deeply affected. Standing on the margin of the graves of our departed brethren, we have looked into the eternal world; we have thought of the period when others will make similar records of us to those which we have now made of them who have entered into "the joy of their Lord." God grant that we may die the death of the righteous, and that our last end may be like theirs."

The President then called upon the Conference to unite in singing the following appropriate verses:—

Shrinking from the cold hand of death,
I too shall gather up my feet;
Shall soon resign this fleeting breath,
And die my Father's God to meet.

Number'd among thy people, I
Expect with joy thy face to see,
Because thou didst for sinners die;
Jesus, in death, remember me.

The next in order relates to the religious and ministerial character of the Preachers. In no religious community are its ministers subjected to a more strict and frequent scrutiny. First, in their annual district meetings, and afterwards at the general Conference, the question is asked, "Are there any objections to any of our Preachers?" The names are called over "one by one," and a separate answer required in reference to each individual.

The President said—we are passing from one important subject to another deeply affecting. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." Contemplating the days of departed goodness and worth, we feel that we are nothing. Now we are about to enter upon an investigation, which to my mind, is so solemn and affecting. On these occasions I have sat in silent examination of my own heart. We are naturally led by the question to an interior and faithful investigation; and were we seen by our brethren as we appear to the eye of God, the inflictions of a punitive discipline might be justly assigned to us. Let us guard against the danger of losing that spirituality of mind which is the life and soul of piety; without which our public services are a mere form; and which, if lost, we have lost that which constitutes the secret of our power, and glory, and beauty. That lost, we have lost the source of our enjoyment; we have lost that which alone gives efficacy to our ministry;—we have lost the ear and hand of God, and our ministry is then valueless. Go with me into this faithful examination, with fervent prayer, with vigilant watchfulness, and with resolute devotion to God. When we call to our recollection the words of the Apostle, the greatest of men, one who trod nearest to the path of his divine master, "I keep under my body and bring it into subjection; lest that, by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast away,"—well may we, worms as we are, tremble. Let us conduct this examination with candour, with kindness, and with firmness. We are mutual friends, guardians of each others' character, and may speak out here with the greater freedom. Thank God, we are united in the bands of fraternal love; and while as a body, we are spreading to the north and south, the east, the west, touching the utmost frontiers of the world, the secret of our strength lies in our faithful devotion to the service of God, and our cordial, honest love to each other. The enquiry comprehends