

DISTRICT MEETINGS, 1877-8. Arrangements. Arranged by Rev. J. C. Parker, President; D. D. Currie, Secretary.

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OUR ENGLISH LETTER.

PROFESSOR HENRY ROGERS.

DEAR MR. EDITOR.—The death of Mr. Rogers takes from the ranks of the Nonconformists of this country one of high culture and distinguished literary power. He was pastor of a Congregational Church for a few years but was compelled on account of failing health to retire from the ministry. The time thus placed at his disposal was occupied in writing, and he contributed several powerful articles to the Edinburgh Review, which commanded much attention, and were afterwards published in a separate form. The greatest work and that by which he is best known and will be longest remembered is that entitled

THE ECLIPSE OF FAITH,

written in reply to a remarkable book by Professor Newman. Mr. Rogers performed valuable service as a Professor at University College, London, and at Spring-hill College, Birmingham, and since 1858 he has been the honored and highly beloved Principal of the Lancashire Independent College. He was upwards of seventy years of age when he passed away, and had fulfilled a long and useful career both in literature and active service in the Church of God.

THE INDIAN FAMINE

has assumed such terrible proportions, and the cry for help is so imploring, that the matter has been taken in hand by the people of England in thorough earnestness, and subscriptions have already been received by the Lord Mayor amounting to nearly £200,000. Meetings are being held in most of the towns in England, and money will be forthcoming from all quarters, but it will not be in time to save the lives of vast numbers who are at the present time dying of starvation. The leading Missionary Societies have also made earnest appeals for help, as numbers of Christian families are in circumstances of extreme want and peril. The Methodist people of England are at once responding to this urgent demand, and the special fund at the Mission House will soon amount to a goodly sum, which placed at the disposal of our missionary brethren will be of invaluable service in aiding many who having made great sacrifices on account of their profession of Christianity, are now overwhelmed with the terrible calamity of famine.

THE APPEAL FOR ST. JOHN

has been well and urgently put before our ministers and people by the zeal and ability of Bro. Sprague. It has also been further urged in a special circular from the President of the Conference, in which it is lovingly recommended to our liberality, in common with the appeal from India. It is to be regretted that two cases so really imperative in their claims should come at the same moment before the Methodist public, and it will of necessity reduce the amount of attention and interest which St. John would otherwise have received from the ever-giving and large-hearted Methodists of the old country.

THE DEATH OF M. THIERS

is an event of very great note at the present crises in the affairs of France. The veteran statesman fell very suddenly under the final attack, and his death will prove a loss of no ordinary magnitude to the great country in the history of which he has borne a distinguished part for more than half a century. It was at first supposed that his death would be an immense gain to the Government of Marshal MacMahon in its struggle for a majority at the forthcoming elections, but from the turn affairs are taking, it appears that the spirit of the people is being more than ever stirred up to resist the attempt to overthrow a popular form of Government, and to introduce one of

despotism, and priestly interference. The elections will soon take place, and it will be a fiercely contested struggle. It will indeed be strange if the fine republican majority of the late House of Representatives is scattered and an adverse body of men be elected. But at this moment, it is a sore loss to France that her aged and loyal statesman, of eminent ability, in harmony with the advanced liberal tendencies of the day, and yet in direct opposition to all that is fanatic, communistic and destructive, should have been summoned hence by the call of death.

THE MINUTES OF CONFERENCE

for 1877 are issued, and form quite a respectably sized book; perceptibly bulkier than that of last year. The adopted plan for working the new scheme of Lay Representation is quite a feature in the new minutes. The plan is most carefully elaborated and the division of business skillfully arranged. The apportionment of an exact amount of time in which each part of the proceedings are to be transacted, looks somewhat mechanical and suggests either undue haste, or in some cases a decided lack in the business. These however need not be final and irreversible arrangements, and when tested, can be confirmed or altered as may be found needful. The provisions for temperance organizations are also found in the new minutes, and will be welcomed by thousands who have long desired the Conference to make an onward movement in that direction. Sept. 17, 1877. "B."

LETTER FROM THE U. STATES BY CECIL.

The vacation season is past, and ministers and churches are again at work in their respective fields of labor. Some of the ministers have returned greatly improved in health, while others seemed to have derived but slight advantages from their respite from ministerial work. Vacations have become a permanent institution, and are no doubt, highly beneficial when properly observed, but we have the impression that our ministerial brethren who spend them in fishing and hunting, will experience but little good either physically or mentally.

THE CAMPMEETING SEASON

was unusually active, and was no doubt a great blessing to multitudes of the people. Campmeetings are increasing in number but not, we judge, in spiritual power. Many of them are held for recreation and pleasure, and not solely, as formerly, for the salvation of men. That they do good in their present form is unquestionable, but their good result are not so marked and immediate as formerly. Many of our campgrounds are villages of from one to two and three hundred cottages, occupied about three months of the year. Living in these cottages with all the home comforts is very different from the old fashioned campmeeting, when the people lived on very simple fare, and lay on the straw with a single covering of cotton cloth over them. Still we like the modern campmeeting, believe in it and regard it of great benefit to the people, but wish it might be attended with greater spiritual good.

SPIRITUAL.

The churches since the vacation and campmeetings are enjoying a good spiritual harvest. Revival influence is quite generally experienced. In some instances, the work of grace is quite powerful. The prospect of extensive revivals during the fall and winter is quite encouraging.

FINANCIAL.

Business is improving. Throughout the country there are signs of financial prosperity. This is certainly cheering after so long a season of business depression. We are beginning to rise from the disastrous effects of the late war, and it will be some time yet before we shall reach that high state of business prosperity desired. But we are encouraged in the hopeful financial prospects before us.

LITERARY.

Among the very welcome volumes just at hand is the seventh volume of McClintock & Strong's Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Cyclopaedia—a work of critical learning, diligent research, practical good sense, impartiality and adaptation to the objects of such work, has no equal, and will long stand as a monument to

American literary genius and talent. The publishers Messrs. Harpers have issued the "Creeds of Christendom," by Philip Schaff, D. D., LL.D., in three volumes—a work which none can afford to do without, and which is of especial value to the religious public at the present time, throwing great light as it does on the present phase of doctrinal controversy, and settling many important points long in dispute by the different religious sects. Its excellent spirit, and careful, deep, extensive research, are beyond all praise.

The "Cyclopedia of Methodism," by Bishop Simpson, which has already been noticed in the WESLEYAN, is just the work needed by all the branches of Methodism, and it is a matter of thanksgiving that the author, so well qualified for the undertaking every way, has undertaken its preparation. It will be of great value for reading, study and reference in every Methodist family. When completed, which will be at an early day, it will contain about one thousand super-royal octavo pages, and will embrace every topic and subject desired in such a work. It is issued in the best style by Messrs. Ewart & Stewart, Philadelphia.

Rev. George G. Smith, Jr., has written a history of "Methodism in Georgia and Florida," and issued by Messrs. Burke & Co. It is a valuable contribution to Methodist historic literature, and is written in a style to give it peculiar interest to the reader. The events and scenes of early Methodism are narrated in great vividness, showing the present generation what privations and trials our fathers endured in planting Methodism in this country. The work is particularly valuable for its biographical notices of many of the early Methodist ministers who travelled through the country, and even visited Canada to preach the Gospel to the people. They were extraordinary men, and the nation owes them a debt of gratitude. Mr. Smith has done nobly in collecting and arranging the materials of his work; and his labors will be appreciated by the Methodist public.

Messrs. E. P. Dutton & Co., have issued "Notes on Genesis," by Frederick W. Robertson, M. A. These notes consist of thirty-one lectures which the author delivered to his people, and we venture to say that nothing the author has ever written is of more interest and importance than what is contained in this volume. The lectures discuss important and vital questions—questions that interest the people at the present time—and we know of nothing better calculated to meet certain phases of the scepticism of the day. No writer has more clearly described human nature and explained the mysteries of life than the author, and his wonderful power of description is strikingly given in the Notes. And we are sure that all who read them, will not only be interested but profited, and will have a clearer insight into the wonderful book of which the author writes.

The "Autobiography and Memoir" of Rev. William Arnot, is from the press of Messrs. Carter & Bros., and is a work of great interest and excellence. We have the life of the most able and successful minister of the age, and one whose memory will be cherished by multitudes in all parts of the world. The volume is finely written, and no one commencing reading it will desire to lay it down till the last line is reached. We know of but few autobiographies and memoirs more interesting and profitable to read.

ASSAULT UPON WESLEYAN MISSIONARIES IN CHINA.

To the Editors of the Watchman: DEAR SIRS.—I enclose for publication a letter from Mr. Nightingale, one of our missionaries in the Hankow District, which gives an account of an assault upon himself and his colleague, Mr. Brewer, in Wuchang by a party of Chinese students. Upon this communication it may be necessary to observe, first, that this outrage does not represent the feeling of the Chinese people. The students come to Wuchang for their examinations from all parts of the kingdom; some of them to look upon the foreigner for the first time, and with not the slightest information respecting Anglo-Chinese intercourse to soften their antipathy to Englishmen. There is little doubt, I think, that the officials of Wuchang and Hankow will be anxious to save their towns from reproach by bringing the offenders to justice. And

secondly, it does not appear that Mr. Nightingale, who was first attacked, was imprudently risking his safety in walking on the parade-ground at that time; for, although during the examination season foreigners are cautioned to avoid the resorts of the students, it wanted ten days of the date at which the young men might have been expected. We await further information, however; meantime, our friends in England will unite with us in thanksgiving to Almighty God for preserving the lives of his servants from the imminent peril that threatened them. Mr. Brewer's injuries are very severe, but his recovery is progressing favourably. I am yours truly, E. E. JENKINS. Wesleyan Mission-house, Bishops-gate St., Within, London, Sept. 17.

WESLEYAN MISSION, WUCHANG, July 23.

To the General Secretaries of the Wesleyan Missionary Society:

REV. AND DEAR SIRS.—I am sorry to inform you that Mr. Brewer and myself were lately the subjects of an assault from a large mob of military students who are collected in Wu Chang from the surrounding districts to undergo their examinations. The lives of both of us, though in peril, were, through the overruling and protecting providence of God, preserved. Mr. Brewer has sustained severe injury, his right shoulder blade and three ribs having been fractured, and will require rest and quiet for a month or six weeks. I forward the account of the correspondent of the Shanghai Courier, who is himself a missionary residing in this city, and who, with other kind friends, very promptly came to render us what assistance they could. 12th July, 1877.

Our poor city is in for another item to its discredit, but as usual it is non-residents who are to blame. On the 11th inst. the Rev. A. W. Nightingale, of the Wesleyan Mission, who lives not very far from the city parade-ground, started for his usual evening walk, and not thinking of the preliminary gathering of those about to be examined on the 10th of this Chinese month, he turned to go across the open square. Coming near it he saw the crowd and tried to pass round at the back of it, instead of going on what they might consider as their special property. But he was seen, and an unruly crowd made towards him. He turned and spoke to those in advance, but with no good effect, and stones were coming so quickly that retreat was the only course left to him. The first turn was into a garden, but there being no rear exit he had to face the crowd and get through it as best he could. A man of friendly disposition gave him the shelter of his cottage and stood in front to defend it. But it was of no avail. The mob brought beams of wood, and windows, doors, and part of the wall gave way before them; again he had to face his assailants, and then run in the open for quite a distance. At last he distanced all pursuit, and very faint and sick, pushed on till he could get a chair, and was brought home ready to faint, with a badly sprained hand and other bruises, and tokens of the stoning he had been through. His summer coat was ripped clean down the back when he had to face and get through the throng. Meanwhile his colleague, the Rev. J. W. Brewer, hearing that he had been attacked, sallied out to his help if aid were possible. He soon came to the crowd, who called out "Here is another one," and made at him. Hat and spectacles were soon gone, but he fortunately was able to retain his cane after a struggle. He got into the guard-house with a plucky convert, who stood by him well all through the after trouble. The doors being closed he determined to remain quiet until forced out, in order that the officials might see how serious the hostile feeling was. Though it was an official place, a ram in the shape of a heavy piece of timber was soon applied with the military skill of these braves, and the door came flying in. A side room was also broken open, and then a rush was necessary. Unfortunately a trip at the door sent the fugitive flat. He rose as quickly as possible only to receive a blow from a beam on the back which fractured the shoulder-blade. He had strength left, however, to brandish his stick and the cowards were scattered, while he rushed on, they closing in and stoning, of course. One heavy stone just missed his head and left a bad bruise on his shoulder, but keeping on he got clear, and was not far from home, so that his strength held out to land him there. No doctor was within reach, and we other aliens could only get the news after some delay and go and offer our help. The officials were prompt in coming to apologize, and had the city gates opened at our request; but no boatman could be induced to cross in the dark so late as 11 p. m. In the early morning the missionary physician came over and confirmed our hopes that no very serious damage had been done, though undoubtedly much had been meant. Though it is easy to say the danger was run into, yet it must be remembered that this very parade-ground is usually one of the quietest of walks, and there were yet ten days to the examination. Cool reason may

blame the second exposure, but what generous mind could sit still in the house while a brother might be lying stricken and bleeding? I am sorry, for my friend's sake, that this is so stirring an item, but the news would get to you in some way or other, and you may as well have it at least as straight as I myself got it.

I am, dear Sirs, Respectfully and sincerely yours, A. W. NIGHTINGALE.

ENGLISH METHODISM.

The English Methodist published an extra on the 21st ult. giving lists of the Ministers who have travelled on their Circuits their first, second and third years. This will be an excellent guide for Committees who hold the guardianship of ambitious Churches, looking out for next year's supply. The lists are very large, giving an idea of the vast extent of the Connexion at home.

President Pope has issued an excellent Pastoral letter, in which, after pointing out the duty of God's people in regard to devotion, he suggests as suitable objects of charity the sufferers by the St. John Fire and the Indian Famine.

We quote from the Table Talk of the Methodist:—

"The Rev. Thornley Smith announces that he has in the press, and will publish shortly in two volumes, his Expository Lessons on the First and Second Epistle of St. Peter. The price of each volume will not exceed four shillings, and the names of subscribers will be received by the author, Rickmansworth.

Some one has sent me the Irish Ecclesiastical Gazette of late, and I am happy to find it so severe in its way on the Wesleyan Conference and Primitive Wesleyans. It is a good sign. It shows that the advance of Methodism, Lay Representation, and Methodist Union are dreaded by the enemies of our Church. But why should members of the various Christian communities entertain harsh feelings against each other, or even become enemies of other denominations? Caterpillars, accustomed to eat of one leaf, have been known to die rather than eat of another. There are myriads of men, Christians too, who will never eat of any leaf but their own. God said "of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat except one." It is sad when people so entirely pervert the good way of the Lord that they will only eat of just one. They may die!

I see by the Fermanagh Farmer's Journal the report of a sermon recently preached by the Rev. Richard Verschoyle on the proposed severance of the Primitive Wesleyans from the Church of Ireland, and against them joining the Wesleyan Methodists. He gives the old apostolic succession arguments, and cannot be objected against for striving to retain part of his congregation. Still, if the Methodist union can be prevented by such a deliverance as I have just read, from Mr. Verschoyle, it would not be worth striving for.

It is interesting to note the course of say twenty-five young men who step across the threshold of life from some great school; who "go forth upon the trackless ocean of existence to battle with relentless fate and win renown or a glorious death in the arena;" it would be found that perhaps a dozen were driving quills very hard for very little, two or three were in most prosaic trades, one was starved to death before he had been long in the strife, a few were getting their living very queerly a few doing very well, and a few doing nothing, letting their widowed mothers keep them. The fact is when age grapples his hooks into a man's collar he shakes all the arena, and battles business out of him so quickly that he himself is astonished at the change.