The Provincial Wesleyan.

Correspondence.

"The Modern Crusade."

To the Editor of the Provincial Wesleyan.

SIR,—From the evasive and disingenuous manner in which Mr. Wilson has replied to my communication, published in the *Wesleyan* of the 7th June, it requires but little penetration to discover, that he has determined to close his eyes against every argument calculated to convince him of the many palpable errors under which he labours. I have, therefore, little hope that *he* will see the erroneousness of his exposition of the 38th and 39th chapters of Ezekiel, until the course of events prove him to be altogether astray in applying the prophecy concerning Gog's *yet future* invasion of the land of Israel, to Russia's recent descent upon Turkey.

When reflecting upon some of the extraordinary conclusions to which Mr. Wilson's reasonings bring him,—so completely subversive of the obvious meaning of the prophecy, as every body who reads it attentively may see for themselves,—I have thought that he could not have been quite *compos mentis* on the occasion to which he refers in his Preface, when his attention was first directed to the prophecy he subsequently expounded, and obtained such unheard-of results.

In order that those who have not read "The Modern Crusade" may form their own opinion upon this point, I will briefly recount the circumstances under which it was written. It seems, that in view of a lecture on the Russian War which the learned author had engaged to deliver, he took up his Bible for the purpose of finding some portion of Scripture that seemed to bear upon his subject. "For some time," he tells us, "he was at a loss to determine upon any portion of holy Scripture," and "*he feared his lecture would prove a failure.*"—The reader may imagine the "anxiety" with which Mr. Wilson read prophecy after prophecy, but all in vain;—he could pitch upon no passage that even "seemed to bear upon the present portentous events in the East," and for some time he was quite at a loss, and apprehensive that his lecture would prove a failure.

At length, "in his *anxiety*, his attention was directed to the prophecy concerning Gog"; and (fancying) "he saw so many striking coincidents between the prophecy and the events of the day that he was *often overpowered* with astonishment"!

It was while in this state of mental bewilderment that he prepared "the notes for his lecture," from which, his extraordinary production, "The Modern Crusade," was subsequently compiled.

This brief sketch of the origin of Mr. Wilson's "exposition" of the 38th and 39th chapters of Ezekiel, accounts in a great measure, to my mind, for the two principal errors under which he has since been labouring:—

1. In imagining that Russia's recent invasion of Turkey, and the War to which it has given rise, are the fulfilment of the two chapters of Ezekiel just mentioned.

2. In assuming,—in the face of the clearest evidence to the contrary, as I shall prove,—that the prophecy concerning Gog's invasion of the land, and people of Israel, is "perfectly *isolated*."

In regard to the first of these grand mistakes, I do not believe that Mr. W. can name one person among all who have ever written on the prophecies of Ezekiel, who gave it as his opinion, that Turkey in Europe is "the land of Israel," Ezekiel testifies, Gog shall invade in the latter days.—The wonderful discovery that "the land of Israel," spoken of in the 38th chapter, is *not* Palestine, but Turkey in Europe;—must, by universal consent, be attributed to Mr. Wilson, of Yarmouth; and in connexion with many other quite original interpretations, fairly entitle him to the appellation of "the wise man of the West."

Now, seeing Mr. W. himself admits that I shall "effectually expose the errors of the Modern Crusade," *if I prove* that the land of ancient Israel is the invaded country of which Ezekiel speaks, I shall now do so, and I trust to the satisfaction of all my readers, Mr. W., perhaps, excepted. In the 16th and 18th verses of the 38th chapter of Ezekiel, it is thus written: "And thou (Gog) shall come up *against my people of Israel as a cloud to cover the land*—it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against *my land*, that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes."..... "And it shall come to pass at the same time when *Gog shall come against the land of Israel*, saith the Lord God, that my fury shall come up in my face."

These two verses prove that "*the land of Israel*," called, also, in the 16th verse "*my land*," is *the country* which Gog shall invade. It now remains to be proved that the land of ancient Israel,—promised by Jehovah to *Abraham* and *his seed* for an *everlasting* possesion,—extending from the Nile to the Euphrates, and containing, according to a survey made by order of the British Government, 300,000 square miles, or more than three times the area of Great Britain,—is "*the land of Israel*" of which Ezekiel speaks, not only in the 38th chapter, but *throughout his prophecies*.

The first testimony I shall adduce for this purpose is Ezekiel xi, 14-17: "Again the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, thy brethren, even thy brethren, the men of thy kindred, and *all the house of Israel wholly*, are *they* unto whom *the inhabitants of Jerusalem* have said, Get you far from the Lord: unto *us is this land* (the land of Israel) given in possession. Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord God, although I have *cast them far off* among the heathen, and although I have *scattered* them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come. Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord God, I will even gather you from the people, and *assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered*, and I will give you THE LAND OF ISRAEL."? Mr. W. admits that this passage refers to "New Testament times," but says that it "is absurd" to restrict it to the Jews; for it makes Jevovah say *to Israel*, I will give you "the land of Israel." "Apply it to the spread of Christianity, he adds, and it is beautiful." At the time Ezekiel spake the above words, "all the house of Israel" to whom Jehovah here promises to give "the land of Israel," were in captivity or scattered among the nations, as they are at this day. Why, then, Mr. Wilson should think it absurd to restrict the promise to them, I cannot imagine. Jehovah will certainly "give the land of Israel" to his outcast and scattered people. "He that *scattered* Israel will *gather* him." And, although as a nation, Israel has been long politically dead and buried among the nations of the earth;—although they may say, "Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost," yet, "thus saith the Lord God, Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into THE LAND OF ISRAEL." Ezek. xxxvii, 12. "Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into *their own land*: and I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel;.... And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, *wherein your fathers have dwelt*, &c.,—21st, 22nd, and 25th verses.

To apply these passages to the spread of Christianity is not only "absurd," but a virtual denial of the truth they contain: understand them as spoken of ancient Israel and their land, and look forward with full assurance of faith to their fulfilment, and they are beautiful indeed.

Another most striking passage, proving that "the land of ancient Israel" is, under "New Testament times," called "the land of Israel," is to be found in Ezekiel's 22nd chapter, 41st and 42nd verses. "I will accept you with your sweet savour, when I bring you out from the people, and *gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered*: and I will be sanctified in you before the heathen. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, *when* I shall bring you into THE LAND OF ISRAEL, into *the country for which I lifted up my hand to give it to your fathers.*"

I trust sufficient has been quoted from Ezekiel to satisfy every ingenuous mind that "the land of Israel," of which he prophesies, is the "land of ancient Israel," and *not* Turkey in Europe, as Mr. W. unwarrantably supposes.

Mr. Wilson, in common with an unbelieving world, may think that no nation has any better right to the land of Israel than the Turks; and even assert, as he does, that "there is *now* no such land on earth!" but their unbelief of what the Scriptures testify concerning the "glorious," and "holy" land of Israel,—now "desolate," but yet to "become like the garden of Eden," and "blessed of the Lord" in all things,—will not make void the faithful promises of Jehovah.

Away, then, with the idea that Turkey in Europe is "the land of Israel,"—it is both unscriptural and absurd. The phrase, "the land of Israel," occurs in the prophecies of Ezekiel alone, at least fifteen times; and, in every instance, the context affords irrefragable evidence, that the land of ancient Israel, and no other country, is referred to. These fifteen texts I shall now quote, that the reader may satisfy himself of the correctness of my assertion; and, at the same time, learn how much dependance can be placed upon Mr. Wilson's statements, of which the following is a specimen:—"as it respects the oft repeated phrase, 'the land of Israel,' I again say, that properly speaking there *now* is no such land on earth, and while found in the Bible, and *once only*, meant the land of Palestine."

"The land of Israel, while found in the Bible, and *once only*, meant the land of Palestine," says Mr. W. This statement betrays such gross ignorance of the contents of the Bible, and especially of Ezekiel, that I am perfectly amazed. Palestine, or "Palestina," is a Scripture name of the ancient land of Israel: see Exod. xv, 14; Isa. xiv, 29, 31. When, therefore, Mr. W. affirms that "the land of Israel," in the Bible, *once only* meant Palestine, he, of course, affirms that it *once only* meant the ancient land of Israel. Of the truthfulness of Mr. W's. statement the following fifteen texts from Ezekiel will convince the reader. The first is chapter vii, 2. "Thus saith the Lord God unto *the land of Israel*, An end, the end is come upon the four corners of the land." The whole chapter is a prophecy concerning ancient Israel. The next text is chapter xi, 17, already quoted in full.—The third is chapter xii, 22: "Son of man, what is that proverb that ye have in *the land of Israel*, saying, The days are prolonged, and every vision faileth?" See also the 19th verse: "Thus saith the Lord God of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and of *the land of Israel*." The fifth is xx, 38: where,—after describing the manner in which Israel shall be brought out from the nations, among whom they are now scattered,—Jehovah says, "I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me: I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they (the rebels) shall *not* enter into *the land of Israel*." Like the generation brought out of Egypt, "whose carcases fell in the wilderness," so will be the generation of Israel with which Jehovah shall have to do, when he "shall set his hand again *the second time* to recover the remnant of his people," "from the four corners of the earth." (Isa. xi, 11.) They will require to be tried, purged, and purified, ere they enter into the "glorious rest" which shall await them in the land of Israel. The sixth text proving that "the land of Israel" means Palestine, and not Turkey in Europe, as Mr. Wilson argues, is the 42nd verse of the same chapter: "And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall bring you into *the land of Israel*," (Turkey in Europe, or the land of ancient Israel?) "into *the country* for the which I lifted up mine hand to *give it to your fathers*." If the reader peruse the whole of the chapter from which I have made this quotation, he will see that the events spoken of are still in the future; and he may depend that when the "set time" arrives, in which God will "remember his land," and have mercy upon his long "outcast" people, it will be seen that He, at least, does not regard "the land of Israel" as an "obsolete" phrase.

The 7th and 8th time the phrase, "the land of Israel," is found in Ezekiel, is in the 2nd and 3rd verses of the xxi. chap.—"Son of man, set thy face toward Jerusalem, and drop thy word toward the holy places, and prophecy against the land of Israel, and say to the land of Israel," &c. The mere mention of Jerusalem, and "the holy places," in connexion with "the land of Israel," as in the present instance, is ample proof that Palestine is "the land of Israel" here twice named.

The 9th and 10th texts are chap. xxv. 3, 6,—"Say unto the Ammonites, Hear the word of the Lord God; Thus saith the Lord God; Because thou saidst, Aha, against my sanctuary, when it was profaned; and against the land of Israel, when it was desolate; and against the house of Judah, when they went into captivity. . . Because thou hast clapped thine hands, and stamped with the feet, and rejoiced in heart with all thy despite against the land of Israel."—"The land of Israel" in both these places evidently means Palestine; I would merely remark, therefore, that persons in this day who say "there is *now* no such land on earth," virtually say Aha, against "the land of Israel"; seeing it is *temporarily* in the possession of the Turks, who have made it waste and desolate;—one reason why the wrath of God is kindled against them. See Ezek. xxxvi. 1-7. The land which God "espied" for Israel (Ezek. xx. 6) at the time when He, "the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, and *set the bounds of the people* according to the number of the children of Israel": Deut. xxxii. 8—this land, "the glory of all lands," which God thus "espied" and reserved for his "chosen" and still "beloved" people, Israel;—this land, dear to God's heart as being the birthplace of Jesus, the scene of his sufferings, and of his future glory upon earth;—this hallowed spot, for which, says Moses, "the Lord thy God careth: *the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it*, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year"; (Deut. xi. 12)—this Holy land, "sacred to the memory" of Abraham, "the friend of God," of Isaac and Jacob, and of all the holy prophets and apostles, who "sleep in the dust" thereof;—whether, in the palmy days of Solomon, yielding her increase to the joyous millions who "dwelt safely" within her ample borders;—or, as at present, possessed and desolated by the heathen—was, is, and ever shall be, "the land of Israel." In God's purposes it yet fills a most conspicuous place, as all may see who read the prophecies concerning it. It was *once* the territory of His kingdom; and it shall be so again, when the kingdom is restored again to Israel. There, in Jerusalem, Solomon reigned, sitting upon "the throne of the Lord;" (1 Chron. xxix. 23)—and there sha'l "the King of Israel"—the greater than Solomon—reign gloriously, upon the throne of his father David, in "the city of the great King." Isa. xxiv. 23; ix. 7; Luke i. 32; Ps. xl. 2. The land of Israel is, in God's sight, as distinct from all other lands, as the nation of Israel is from all other nations.—God will make a full end of all other nations, but Israel shall never cease to be a nation before Him. "Fear not thou, O my servant Jacob, and be not dismayed, O Israel; for behold, I will save thee from afar off, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and be in rest and at ease, and none shall make him afraid.—Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith the Lord: for I am with thee; for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee; *but I will not make a full end of thee*, but correct thee in measure; yet will I not utterly cut thee off." Jer. xlvi. 27, 28. See also chap. xxxi. 35-37.

Having shewn the peculiar and inseparable connexion which exists between the purposes of Jehovah and His land, I shall now proceed to quote the remaining passages in Ezekiel in which the phrase, "the land of Israel," occurs.

The 11th text is chap. xxxiii. 24. "Son of man, they that inhabit those wastes of the land of Israel speak, saying, Abraham was one, and he inherited the land; but we are many; the land is given us for inheritance." The "land of Israel" is here identified with the land which "they" said Abraham inherited; but of which Stephen testifies, Abraham, so far, has inherited "not so much as to set his foot on." Acts vii. 5. It is clearly Palestine that is meant.

The 12th text is chap. xxxvii. 12. This has been already quoted; but the reader should turn it up in his Bible, and read the context; particularly the 36th chapter, the whole of which is a most beautiful prophecy concerning the land of Israel; minutely describing its present waste and desolate condition, and also its future glory and blessedness; when the cities now forsoken and uninhabited, "shall be filled with flocks of men," as of old Jerusalem was, in the time of "her solemn feasts. xxxvi. 38.

The 13th text is in the chapter containing the prophecy against Gog; I cannot, of course, quote it as a proof that the phrase, "the land of Israel," in the 18th verse, means Palestine; because Mr. Wilson denies that such is its meaning in this "perfectly isolated" (?) prophecy. If we are to believe him, "the land of Israel" *here* means Turkey in Europe!

The 14th text is chap. xl. 2. "*In the visions of God* brought be me into the land of Israel, and set me upon a very high mountain, by which was as the frame of a city on the south." Ezekiel was at this time a "captive" in the land of the Chaldeans, as we read in the first part of his prophecies; but "in the visions of God" he was brought into the land of Israel; and there saw *in vision* "things which shall be hereafter," pertaining to the land and nation of ancient Israel; as recorded in this and the eight following chapters. He saw, and minutely described, the Temple that shall be built to the Lord when Israel shall be restored; he beheld "the glory of Jehovah coming from the way of the east," causing the earth to shine; he saw it enter into, and fill the house; and heard the voice of Him who shewed him these things, saying, "Son of Man, *the place of my throne*, and *the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever*, and my holy name shall the house of Israel no more defile," &c. Having also beheld and particularly described the dedication of the Temple, the ordinances of the altar, and the service thereof; he was next instructed concerning the future disposal of *the land*. "An holy portion" of it, in extent upwards of 100 square miles, is to be offered as an oblation unto the Lord; and in "the midst thereof" is to be the city, the sanctuary, and the most holy place; also the houses of the priests, and the ministers, who shall come near to minister unto the Lord. The rest of the land is to be divided among the twelve tribes of Israel, according to the plan laid down in his two last chapters. "The city" shall "be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord" *hath named*: "the name of the city from that day shall be," JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH, signifying, "THE LORD IS THERE."

The 15th and last passage in which the phrase, "the land of Israel," occurs in Ezekiel, is the 18th verse of the 47th chapter: "And the east side ye shall measure from Hanrem, and from Damascus, and from Gilead, and from the land of Israel, by Jordan, from the border unto the east sea. And this is the east side." The north, south, and west boundaries of the land are also given in the same chapter; and at the 21st verse it is written, "So shall ye divide this land unto you according to the tribes of Israel." And at the 14th verse it is said, "Ye shall inherit it, one as well as another: *concerning the which I lifted up mine hand to give it unto your fathers.*"

Thus is the "land of Israel," in every instance, proved to be "Palestina," the land of ancient Israel.

When, therefore, Jehovah says concerning "Gog," "Thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover *the land*; it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against *my land*."..... "And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against *the land of Israel*,"—when, I say, the reader has such plain declarations as these to teach him that it is "the land of Israel" against which Gog shall come,—that *same country* named, at least, fifteen times by the same prophet, I trust that he will see the first great mistake under which Mr. Wilson labours, in supposing that Russia's recent invasion of Turkey in Europe, is that great and terrible event—the *yet future* invasion of Jehovah's land and people of Israel, by "Gog and all his multitude."

But, as I before stated, there is a second gross mistake under which Mr. W. is still labouring; he assumes and maintains, in the face of the clearest testimony to the contrary, that the prophecy concerning Gog is "*perfectly isolated*." In the concluding paragraph of his last letter, he says: "I have taken *no notice* of the different texts quoted from other prophecies by Mr. Lithgow, because they are irrelevant and refer to other matters. While *I have assumed*, and *still maintain*, that the prophecy concerning Gog, as found in the 38th and 39th chapters of Ezekiel, is *perfectly isolated*: upon *this ground* 'The Modern Crusade' was given to the world," &c.

I shall now, by simply quoting a verse or two from the very prophecy of which Mr. W. professes to have given "a plain exposition," prove that "The Modern Crusade" is based upon a groundless assumption.—That so far from the prophecy concerning Gog being "perfectly isolated," the prophets of Israel prophesied in old time, "many years," concerning the identical event of which Ezekiel speaks. The reader will please refer to the 16th and 17th verses of the 38th chapter—"Thou (Gog) shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land, that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes. Thus saith the Lord God: Art thou he of whom I have spoken in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, *which prophesied in those days many years that I would bring thee against them.*" I know not what Mr. Wilson thinks of the testimony in verse 17, for he seems to have carefully avoided even quoting it; in all his "exposition" there is not the slightest reference to this most important and striking declaration.—What reason does the reader suppose Mr. Wilson had for taking "no notice" of the 17th verse, seeing it so effectually exposes the falsity of his assumption that the prophecy concerning Gog is an "isolated" one. Again, why does he persist in "maintaining" his assumption, and still take no notice of the verse in question, after I had particularly called attention to it in my first communication, as follows?—"And are we not taught that the prophets of Israel here spoken of Gog's attack upon God's nation? Undoubtedly. See Ezek. 38, 17: "Thus saith the Lord God, Art thou he of whom I have spoken in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel which prophesied in those days, many years, that I would bring thee against them? Against God's people of Israel, as the preceding verse shows. Of Gog's invasion of the land of Israel, then, the prophets of Israel prophesied "in old time," "many years." Isaiah, Micah, Joel, and Zechariah, all speak of it; and, invariably, as a confederacy of *all nations* against Jerusalem, Judah, or Israel.

"Here, I think, I might pause and leave it to the good sense of the reader to say, whether the fallacy of "The Modern Crusade" has not been sufficiently exposed?—Whether it is possible that Russia's invasion of Turkey, without a single nation, or people, being *with* her, can be that formidable attack upon Israel, by all nations, of which the prophets of Israel have prophesied."

I rather think Mr. Wilson sees that the 17th verse, testifying, as it does, that the ancient prophets prophesied many years that Jehovah would in the latter days bring Gog and "all nations" (see Joel, iii. 2, 9-16; Zech. xiv. 2, 3; Zeph. iii. 8; Isa. xiv. 25, xvii. 12, 13; xxix. 7, 8, xxx. 27-33, xxxiv. 1-8, lxiii. 1-6; Dan. xi. 15; Mic. iv. 11-13, v. 5, 6,) against "His land," and the Israelites who shall *then* be *dwelling safely in the midst of it*; and there pour out upon them His terrible but righteous judgments;—I rather think that Mr. W., seeing this, thought it advisable to treat it as he did the other texts I referred him to, that is, take no notice of it. I hope, however, the reader will notice and consult all these texts: he will be amply repaid for his trouble, if he understand them as they are written, and do not "stumble at the word" of God "through unbelief;" but, like Abraham of old, be "strong in faith, giving glory to God; fully persuaded that what He hath promised, He is able also to perform." And "the Lord of Hosts *hath* sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand: That *I* will break the Assyrian (Gog, compare Micah v. 5, 6) in *my land*, and upon *my mountain* (the land and mountains of Israel, compare with Ezek. xxxix. 4, xxxviii. 16) tread him under foot: then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders. This is the purpose that is purposed upon the *whole earth*: and this is the hand that is stretched out upon *all the nations*." Isa xvi. 24, 25.

But the 17th verse referred to, by proving that the prophecy concerning Gog is *not* "perfectly isolated," also proves that the "Modern Crusade" was "given to the world" upon a groundless assumption; for, says its author,—"I have assumed and still maintain, that the prophecy concerning Gog as found in the 38 and 39 chapters of Ezekiel is perfectly isolated: *upon this ground* "the Modern Crusade" was given to the world; and no argument has yet met the eye of the writer, calculated to convince him that his position is untenable." No! nor will any such arguments *ever* meet his eye, so long as he persists in taking "no notice" of explanatory and parallel passages of Scripture, except to scoff at them as "a mere flourish of trumpets," or dogmatically pronounce them "irrelevant."

[To be Continued.]

The Sabbath in Germany.

The evil of the half reformation of Germany has been nowhere more conspicuous than in the little respect shown to the Sabbath. The old Popish habit of making it, for the greater part, a mere carnal holiday, not having been effectually counteracted in the beginning, because of the laxity of some of the reformers on the subject, has been transmitted from generation to generation, affecting with its malign influence even the Protestant population. It is no wonder that, amid such a state of things sound doctrine and evangelical religion has been so lamentably under a cloud. Where there is no Sabbath there is no love for the truth, nor genuine piety. A correspondent of one of our foreign exchanges, writing from Germany, thus speaks of the present prevailing state of things:—

"Sunday performances in theatres and operas seem to be an absolute want in German courts and capitals; and, to our knowledge, not one of them have made a sacrifice of these diversons in behalf of public Christianity. Moreover, drinking houses are everywhere opened to all visitors, except young people, during Sunday; in Bavaria even the shops of lottery-ticket sellers must be shut on Sunday only during the two or three hours of public service. But the grossest abuse, happily unexampled in the other German States, is in that same Bavaria an abuse which has hitherto steadily kept up in spite of numerous remonstrances and petitions of clergymen and Christian societies. I hint at the fairs and cattle-markets, which are, in a great many Bavarian places, held on the Sundays. Agricultural festivals also, connected with fruit and cattle-shows, and, what is still worse, an enormous consumption of beef, often occur on that day set apart by God for things so infinitely better. It would lie within the government's power to abolish the said abuses by a mere order; what is wanting is but the will to remove them.

"In other countries of Germany, however, as in Prussia, Wurtemburg, Baden, Sabbath observance has undoubtedly improved in the course of the last year. Not only stricter laws of former times have been enjoined, but, what is of greater importance, public opinion, as also the manners and customs of the people, have been ameliorated. The institutions of elders and kirk-sessions, introduced in some of the states but a few years ago, has given a most desirable support to the clergy's exertions for a better observance of the holy day. The frivolous customs, however, are much more easily to be mastered in districts of pure Protestant populations, than where the latter are mixed up with Roman Catholics. The laxity of the latter in the Sabbath cause is indisputable; Roman Catholic priests sitting down after the Sunday services with parties of their penitents in ale-houses, and playing at cards with them, or haunting public 'beer gardens,' and playing at nine-pins, are, in Wurtemburg for instance, no rarity. But just that levity of theirs exercises a prejudicial influence on the manners of their Protestant neighbours also. A proof of it is exhibited even in the said kingdom, in whose southern part, the so-called Upperland, where Protestants are mixed with Roman Catholics, Sabbath observance stand far below that of the southern part, the Lowland, which is, if not purely, yet predominantly Protestant."—*Presbyterian.*

Provincial Wesleyan

THURSDAY, AUGUST 23, 1855.

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The Conference at Leeds.

Our first page will be found to be fully occupied this week with interesting information respecting the Conference of Wesleyan Ministers in England lately assembled at Leeds. We have selected the succinct but comprehensive letters of the correspondent of our London Wesleyan cotemporary as best adapted to convey to our readers as complete a view of the Conference proceedings as consists with the limits of this paper. The detailed reports of its session and of the discussions in the preparatory Committees, which crowd the ample columns of the Watchman, are of course too voluminous for reproduction here. We have, however, in the course of a careful perusal, striven to bear away, impressed upon our mind whatever appeared of special interest, and now attempt a concise review.

The Rev. ISAAC KEELING, on whom has been devolved by the votes of a flattering majority of his brethren, the high honour, (the highest to which a Wesleyan minister may aspire) of, filling the Presidential chair, has long occupied the subordinate but honourable and responsible office of an assistant Secretary. The conspicuous ability and unwearying assiduity, with which he has been wont to discharge the various duties of that less prominent post, have secured for him so large a place in the estimation of his fellow ministers, that they have now by this overwhelming vote, elevated him to his present position among them. The address of the Ex-PRESIDENT, (Rev. John Farrar,) of whom we may here parenthetically introduce the estimate of the Watchman,—"As President, he has, we learn from every quarter, more than realized the expectations which had been formed of his success; his perfect acquaintance with the details of every business, his almost unexampled assiduity, his untailing promptitude, his personal kindness, have won him a very high and honorable position in the gallery of Ex-Presidents"—and the speech in reply of the President elect are reprinted in another column.

The Rev. DR. HANNAH is again appointed Secretary. "His highly gifted and accomplished mind," said the Rev. John Scott in moving the thanks of the Conference for his efficient services during the past year "had enabled him to do everything in a way which few could equal and none surpass."

THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEES have been marked by a pleasing unanimity of sentiment, and their plans are conspicuous for the energy of purpose displayed. Methodism in England, now that she is becoming relieved in great measure of the care of her Colonial work, seems bent upon fuller and more pervasive labours at home. She will not lessen her activities abroad but will aim more steadily at the enlargement of her sphere of evangelical operation among the neglected classes of Britain. The importance of such a movement and the necessity of some immediate measure to secure the more comfortable sustentation of the home ministry formed prominent topics of the report read at the meeting of the *Contingent Fund* Committee.

It adverted at length "to the painfully insufficient provision made for the Ministers in the dependant Circuits of the Connexion,—from all of which Circuit Schedules had been received and carefully examined by the Committee, and it recommended that some well considered and carefully-organised measures should be adopted at as early a period as possible, to bring this primary duty of adequately supporting their own Ministers before our Societies and congregations. It expressed the opinion, that this deficiency did not exist because of the pecuniary inability of these Circuits, as certain other claims of the Connexion were met by them with ready and well-sustained liberality. The Report also adverted to the religious destitution of the large towns, and many rural Districts, and the important duty devolving on the Methodists to emulate the example of their fathers, by not merely sustaining the work of God in its present extent, but by spreading holiness throughout the land."

It is gratifying to learn that the Contingent Fund is better sustained, and that the committee have been able by the aid of the Relief and Extension Fund to do much in the way of furnishing residences for the ministers, so that instead of 130 married ministers being left without houses, as was the case two or three years ago, the number is now reduced to 43.

The *Chapel Committee* present an admirable report, one which inspired a "universal feeling of devout gratitude and lively hope. So gratifying and satisfactory a Report on Financial matters has never, we are convinced, been presented to a Wesleyan Committee. Great things have been accomplished during the past year, the good effects of which, direct and more remote, it is scarcely possible to exaggerate." This "Wesleyan Chapel Committee," is an amalgamation into one united Committee of the various committees to whom the oversight and arrangement of Chapel affairs had been previously entrusted. On it also, an entirely new class of duties has been devolved, in the disposal on the principle of loan of the money received from the Connexional Relief and Extension Fund.

"The great fact announced by the Report is that during the year, through the operation of the new Loan principle and of the old Relief principle together, effectual provision has been made for the speedy liquidation of £64,000 of chapel debts, and that of this amount nearly 43,000 have been actually paid. A few months will, we expect, witness the extinction of nearly the whole of the remainder. The sum of £35,000 having been paid over by the Treasurers of the Relief and Extension Fund to the Treasurers of the Chapel Fund, the Chapel Committee have consented to *loan*, as the word goes, £23,875 of this, without interest, towards the relief of a number of chapels, on condition that the respective Trust-estates of those chapels raise, to meet the sums lent to them severally, amounts which, in the aggregate, make £29,418; thus providing, by this new method of loans, for the extinction of £52,093. Of their proportion, £18,149 have actually been raised by the Trust Estates, and £12,570 have been paid by the Chapel Committee, so as to effect the extinction of £30,719 of debt. *All this has been done since January last*, as it was not until that month that the Committee entertained any applications for loans; wishing that ample time should be given to all Trusts to avail themselves of the opportunity presented to them, before considering the case of any. It is, of course, understood that, in every case relieved, a sum is raised by the applicant Trust, at least equal to that lent by the Committee, and that the sum lent is to be repaid by half yearly instalments in two years or less."

Thus are the Wesleyans of England now cheered by the prospect of a speedy extinction of their Chapel-debts. Meanwhile the spirit of enterprise is not dormant.

"Leave has been given to undertake 77 erections or enlargements. Of these, 32 are new Chapels, 17 enlargements, 18 School-houses, and 10 organs. The estimated cost of these undertakings is £37,186, showing an increase of £23,260 upon the corresponding item of last year. The debt allowed on all the erections is £4,400, and the expected income is £1,030, or 21 per cent, on the debt. Engagements have been entered into to pay off the whole by annual instalments within 5 or 10 years at the farthest. A register of these engagements will be kept, and enquiries made every year as to their fulfilment."

The *Relief and Extension Fund* is stated at eighty-two thousand pounds, nearly £40,000 have been already appropriated towards the payment of connexional liabilities, and £35,000 have been paid over to the Chapel Committee to be employed on the loan principle.

The report of the *Education Committee* points to a diminution in the number of Sunday scholars while the number of Day scholars has increased. The *Watchman* observes:—

"We can only account for the fact on two grounds. Our congregations have increased: but comparatively few of them have, as yet, connected themselves with us by the closer ties of membership, and many of them belong to a class of population superior in station to that from which our Sunday-schools generally are taken. This is one ground And another is that to which reference was made by the Rev. John Scott, in the Educational Committee on Monday, as it had been, on similar occasions, in former years. We refer to the operations of Church Day-schools in the neighbourhood where there is no Wesleyan Day-school. The rule in nearly all these cases, it is notorious, is that only those children shall be admitted to the advantage of the Day-school, who are also sent to the Sunday-school and to the Church. Church Day-schools are being multiplied, without intermission, and the advantages of Day-school education are becoming more and more appreciated by the population at large; it is therefore, no wonder if the number of children attending Church Day-schools and Sunday-schools continually increases. If the Wesleyans had but as many Day-schools as would suffice for the education of all the children of the poorer classes attending their Ministry, such a result as regards ourselves could not be. But this is unfortunately far from being the case."

The increase during the year in the number of the Connexional Schools of Methodism has been from 357 to 387 and in the number of children from 42,985 to 45,168.

The total cost of all these schools is reported, for the year just ended, at £25,077, being a decrease on the former year of £78. The salaries paid have amounted in all to £19,774, being an increase of £546. The income of the year has been £23,723, including subscriptions, collections and children's pence; and the children have paid £15,724, being an increase in their payments of £626. The average number in attendance has been 33,156, being 3,686 fewer than last year. The decrease in the average attendance, like the general diminution of the number of our Sabbath-scholars who attend at any Day-schools, points to the pressure of hard times upon the poor, compelling them to detain their children at home or to earn a little by their labour. The general result, however, that notstanding the hardness of the times, the number of Day-scholars has increased by 3,000, and the amount of children's pence by £626, is very satisfactory.

"The Model School during the past year has received considerable enlargement, this being found to be absolutely necessary. The consequence is that there is still a debt—the final debt—upon the Institution of £1,600. A trifle this, indeed, compared to the £40,000 which this noble and extensive Institution has cost; but still a sum much too large to be left as a debt. There are still, it appears, 250 Circuits in which no meeting has been held towards detraying the expenses connected with establishing the Normal College. These 250 Circuits must do their part along with the 200 in which meetings have been held; and they will find no difficulty in raising the £1,600 among them.

"The Normal Institution has now, for a year or more, been fully occupied. One hundred students are receiving instruction and training; and 900 children are taught in the practising schools. And the testimony of Her Majesty's Inspectors, particularly that of J. D. Morill, Esq., just published, as well as the evidence of the annual examinations, proves that there is no Normal Institution in the country so comprehensive and complete in its arrangements, no staff officers connected with any such Institution more efficient and devoted, and no Normal training anywhere bestowed which effects so uniform and decisive an advance and improvment in the students who receive it. The only matter for regret is that the College was not built for two hundred students instead of one hundred."

The *Sabbath Committee* has been diligent in the discharge of its duties. Its report was to the following effect:—

"From the Conference to the present day the Committee and friends of the Sabbath have been kept incessantly watching to guard against successive attempts to desecrate that sacred day. Proposals to open the Crystal Palace and the British Museum, and the question of Public-houses, have successively called for the energetic opposition of the Christian public throughout the year. One of the earliest efforts made to desecrate the Sabbath during the year was by Mr. Oliveira, M. P., by the proposed admission of shareholders to the Crystal Palace at such times as the general public were not admitted, in other words, on the Lord's Day. However, the Attorney and Solicitor-General were of opinion, that such a thing would invalidate the Company's Charter. Mr. Hume then gave notice of a motion that it was desirable that the British Museum, National Gallery, &c., should be open to the public on Sundays after morning service, at such times as the Public-houses are open. This was finally withdrawn. Sir Joshua Walmsley then took it up, and it was defeated in the House of Commons by about 6 to 1. As to Public-houses, public meetings had been held in large towns, and in Leeds the largest ever held, to petition in favour of closing Public-houses on the Lord's-day entirely. The result of various efforts had been that, up to the 12th of June, 1,785 petitions were presented to the House of Commons, signed by 317,165 persons. An address was also presented to her Majesty by Earl Harrowby, signed by more than 40,000 females of the labouring classes, on the same occasion. The enlargement of the Sabbath Committee, and the appointment of a Sabbath Committee to meet in London, and to watch the question constantly, were found, on these various occasions to work well. The railways continue too generally to outrage the feelings of the Christian public by wantonly invading the sanctities of the Sabbath with Sunday Excursion Trains, spreading demoralization throughout the land. The Bill, before Parliament, avowedly for the prevention of Sunday trading, has excited strong opposition by its exceptions in favour of the sale of many things. The Committee strongly recommends that the subject of the Sabbath, attacked as it is on all hands, be made a matter of constant prayer, both in public and private, to the Lord of the Sabbath; and think it highly desirable that Ministers should every where preach on the subject, and, both by precept and example, incessantly enforce the devout observance of an Institution which is bound up in the well being of this country to all generations."

The Book Committee report an increase in sales.

"Of hymn-books six thousand more were sold than in the previous year. The circulation of the periodicals has been kept up, except that of the large Wesleyan Magazine which has declined. The sale of Newton's Life has exceeded expectations. Of tracts twelve hundred thousand have been circulated, and a new "Biographical Series" has been commenced, which is to contain sketches of the life and experience of old Methodist worthies. There will be original tracts from the pens of some of the ablest ministers in the connexion. Sketches of John Haime and Sampson Staniforth have been issued, and will be followed by John Nelson, James Berndy, and others. A new series of Sunday-School Manuals, for the use of scholars and teachers, is to be prepared as early as possible; and a new educational periodical is projected, which may be the organ of information in all matters relating to the Wesleyan day and Sunday-schools and the Normal institution."

Altogether the past year has been one of encouragement, calling for devout gratitude to God, and the prospect of the future are bright with promise.

Official Transfer of the Seals of Conference.

The EX-PRESIDENT, (the Rev. John Farrar,) addressing himself to the newly-elected President said—Mr. President: You have been, by a very honourable election, placed in the highest position which a Methodist Minister can occupy; a position of great care, anxiety, and responsibility and one which will tax all your mental and physical powers. But you bring to this position very high qualifications. You have been accustomed to the business of the Conference for many years, and have filled a position on the platform in a manner which has been highly honourable to yourself and bene