

CINCINNATI CONFERENCE.

THURSDAY, May 6.

RECEPTION OF FRATERNAL DELEGATES FROM THE BRITISH AND IRISH CONFERENCES.

At the time appointed the exercises were opened by Bishop Simpson. The opening hymn commenced—

The glorious universe around, The heavens with all their train, Sun, moon, and stars are firmly bound In one mysterious chain.

The secretary read as follows:

THE ANSWER OF THE BRITISH CONFERENCE OF 1879 TO THE ADDRESS OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE UNITED STATES, 1876.

Reverend and Dear Brethren.—We have received your fraternal address with sincere satisfaction, and assure you that all its expressions of attachment and of affectionate interest are heartily appreciated and reciprocated by us. The distinguished and beloved brethren, Bishops Bowman and Haven, whom you deputed to visit us at our Conference of 1878, at once won our high esteem by their gifts and graces, manifested in their official addresses, their public ministrations and in social intercourse. We admired and revered their eminent ministerial abilities, and even more, the graciousness and devoutness of their spirit, the sanctity of their character, and the beautiful simplicity and humility of their deportment.

We have appointed two of our most esteemed and honored ministers to be present at your next General Conference, the Rev. William Arthur, M. A., and the Rev. Frederick W. MacDonald, who will be able more perfectly to convey to you our sentiments of brotherly affection, and acquaint you with our affairs and prospects. Mr. Arthur needs no introduction to you. He has previously had the opportunity of visiting your country, and is well known, not only among us and you, but beyond the limits of our denomination, for the catholicity of his spirit, the extent of his attainments, and the fervor of his zeal. His companion, Mr. MacDonald, we cordially commend to you as eminently worthy of your confidence and regard.

We rejoice with you, with unfeigned gratitude, in the extension and success with which, since last we exchanged congratulations, God has been pleased to crown your labors, both in your own vast continent, and in the missionary field. In which we thankfully recognize the abundant blessing of our common Lord.

In view of this solemn stewardship committed to us and to you, we share in your deep feeling that no chapel or school extension, no additions to our congregations and institutions, nor increase of ministerial or educational agency, no material enlargement whatever, must satisfy us without the abundant outpourings of the Holy Spirit. The presence of the Spirit in the church it has been the glory of Methodism from the beginning prominently to proclaim, as the one condition of all true spiritual progress, the one source of all life, and saving of facts, the only power to which the enmity of the human heart will yield. This cardinal doctrine let us ever jealously hold fast, and hold both in our ministrations, our pastoral visitations, and our theological literature. In the social and political movements of the world there may be a wide range of resources, and for the extension of a merely nominal and external Christianity other appliances may be sufficient. But for victory over the power of darkness and over the unbelief of man, the church is shut up to the power of the Divine Spirit. We are profoundly and abidingly conscious that without continued demonstrations of saving power we can not carry out the purposes for which, as a religious community, whether in the Old World or the New, we have been called into existence, we can not maintain in the midst of a growing secularism and an ever advancing outward prosperity and respectability, an uncompromising non-conformity to the world and a high-toned spirituality. We can not even uphold our position amongst the sister churches that surround us.

These convictions have pressed upon us of late with deepening impressiveness, since, currently with the rapid growth of our congregations, we have had to record for the past two years a numerical declension (though small) in our societies. We do not forget that the number of our class members is not the only index of the progress of the work of God amongst us, or of our religious influence in the country. We know that in all Christian service much of our success can not be ascertained or proximately estimated, much less embodied in tables of statistics; but so has it always been more or less. The essential conditions of our work in this regard have not changed. We therefore, have considered the record of our even slightly diminished numbers as having a serious significance. And we have urged sincere and searching self-questionings, whether with an extension of Methodist organization, with an enlarged appreciation of Methodist

doctrine and worship, and an extended liberality in the support of its manifold institutions, there should be a decline in the strength of experimental and practical godliness. A growing distaste for the ordinance of Christian communion which God has committed to our keeping as a special trust, and which he has so greatly honoured and blessed in the past for the conservation of the purity and intensity of the spiritual life, awakens within us jealous solicitude. Our dependence as a people is upon the depth and earnestness of our piety. If we lose this we lose everything. We live in perilous times. We are in the midst of fierce controversies, of hostile movements of thought and life that threaten the foundations of divine truth. On the one side sacerdotalism and superstition, and on the other rationalistic speculation, scientific skepticism and latitudinarian vagueness.

If we are to be true to our providential calling, and to the noble examples of the past, Methodism must take a foremost place in the great struggle, and anti-evangelical, anti-Protestant influence, has, during recent years, to an alarming extent, infected the people of the united kingdom, and fascinated them with ceremonial.

In your own land the same elements are active. And we are persuaded that the battle is to be fought not only by argument and scholarship, but by the faithful witness of the truth, the simple, earnest preaching of the Gospel, by the power of prayer, by the force of an intense spiritual life, by the energy of the Holy Ghost. We want more life, so best will God give it to us to rebuke the pretensions of sacerdotalism and to combat the hard materialism, the fleshly philosophy, and sensuous worship of our time. The existence of godliness, devotion, spirituality, holy character in our Churches, in the midst of luxurious modern society will be our strongest argument against skepticism, our best defence of evangelical truth, our mightiest protest against the unspiritual tendencies of thought and life.

We have, since we last addressed you, matured with much thought and discussion a comprehensive plan for a more direct and adequate representation of the laity in the financial and economical business of our conference in consistency with the principles of our economy and the provisions of the Deed-poll. No attempt has been made by any section of our people to encroach on the spiritual responsibilities of the ministry, and the changes which have been made in the structure of our constitution are not calculated, however remotely, to impair the integrity of the pastoral office, or the inviolability of the connective principle. And with unspeakable gratitude do we record that this broader basis for the counsels and administration of our Church has been obtained with a consensus approaching to unanimity, that not one single minister, nor so far as we know, a solitary member has been thereby separated from us. We have remembered throughout that all Church reforms go for little unless they minister to the maintenance and increase of the inner life, or its freer and more fruitful action; that a widened foundation of government should be regarded but as the preparation for enlarged spiritual operations; that an ample franchise, to be a real blessing, must be accepted as a call to a most vigorous and efficient service; the first meeting of the mixed conference, when your honored representatives were present, was marked in so memorable a manner by the spirit of love and power and harmony as to fill us with gratitude for the past, and with confidence and courage for the future. We anticipate a brighter era in the annals of British Methodism, and hope to find a new point of departure for more earnest and united labors, and nobler evangelistic enterprises. May you and we have in happy combination the outward goodly form and the inward living power.

The Methodist Thanksgiving Fund, which is now in progress, has been, perhaps, the most remarkable movement, financially and spiritually, which has occurred in our history. In consideration of the signal prosperity which during many years Almighty God has graciously blessed the work of the Methodist connection, and also of the harmony of feeling and counsel attending the important measure of consolidation, which was consummated at the conference of 1878, it was resolved that there should be a commemoration by such a great and united movement as might present a becoming acknowledgment of the divine goodness. At the same time, the financial burdens which had accumulated during, and in consequence of the recent progress of the connection, and also the present marvelous openings for Christian enterprise, render it expedient, and, indeed, imperative, to establish a Comprehensive Fund for the relief of all the connexional departments from debt, and for the initiation and furtherance of those enterprises, both at home and abroad, which urged so strong a claim upon our sympathy and zeal. This connexional offering has, therefore, many aspects. It may be regarded as a redemption fund, to extricate us from pressing embarrassment; and extension

fund, to enlarge our work in every direction; a memorial fund, to celebrate a crisis in our history; and a thanksgiving fund, to record our individual and united sense of great obligations. At first it was proposed to raise for these manifold objects £200,000; this was soon advanced to £240,000. The amount already promised is more than £250,000, and the total contributions when completed will probably considerably exceed this. And this unparalleled outburst of Christian liberality, in the midst of severe and protracted commercial depression, has been accompanied by the effusion of rich spiritual influence, which has everywhere been felt to be a strength an inspiration. In this movement we have realized and indicated the position and duties of our church. Not in pride, but with a glow of joy, we mark a point in our history.

The proposals which we have received from your committee that an Ecumenical Conference of the various Methodist bodies in Great Britain, the United States, the Dominion of Canada, and other countries, be held for the purpose of considering the position and work of the people called Methodists, have been favorably reported upon by the committee appointed to consider them, and communications are now proceeding which will, we trust, issue in the realization of this important project. Much wisdom will be needed to mature and guide so great an undertaking.

In conclusion, dear brethren, we renew to you the sincerest assurances of our Christian esteem and affection. We rejoice in every indication of growing unity in the universal Church of Christ, but with the most abundant welcome do we hail any movement that tends to bring close together the kindred churches that had their origin in the large-hearted charity and world-embracing zeal of John Wesley. The substantial unity of Methodism the world over is a providential fact of the profoundest significance.

We would cherish whatever promotes the recognized oneness of all the Methodist Churches; not in visible organic union, that need not be, but in fraternal alliance and the bonds of common service and sympathy. Grace, mercy and peace be multiplied unto you from God our Father, and from Jesus Christ our Lord.

Signed on behalf and by order of the Conference.

BENJ. M. GREGORY, President. MAHMADUKE CLARK OSBORN, Secy. [Remainder of May sixth continued on page first.]

CINCINNATI, Friday, May 7.

RECEPTION OF FRATERNAL DELEGATES.

Gen. Clinton B. Fisk then presented Rev. Frederick W. MacDonald in the following words:

Bishop Simpson, members of the General Conference, friends and brethren.—To me has been assigned the honour and the most grateful duty of presenting the Rev. Frederick William MacDonald, the accredited companion of William Arthur. It is endorsement enough for brother MacDonald that he comes to you as the *fides Achates* of William Arthur. He needs no further words of introduction than have been read in the letters credential and the wonderful address to which we have listened. It seems to me more like giving a reception to one of ourselves, as William Arthur stands forth an acknowledged American with us to-night, and all the triumphs of Wesleyan Methodism are ours as well as his, and the triumphs of Methodism in this country are his as well as our. For we brethren claim ourselves to be Englishmen with you and you to be Americans with us.

Thicker than water, through centuries' story, Our Saxon blood has flowed; And still we share with you the good and ill, The shadow and the glory.

The most remarkable sentence in that remarkable address was this, that the substantial unity of Methodism the world over is a providential fact of the greatest significance. We cannot express any better wish for Methodism in England and America, than that they shall stand shoulder to shoulder, with arms interlocked around the cross, and push that banner around the world, that between us there shall be no rivalry, except which shall do the most to spread scriptural holiness over all lands.

I have the honor to present Frederick William MacDonald, the associate of Wm. Arthur.

Mr. MacDonald then addressed the Conference and said:

Bishop Simpson, my honored fathers and brethren, I have to thank you for your most kindly reception of me. You have not cared to scrutinize too closely my personal fitness for the office which I have the honor of sustaining. It has been enough for you that I am a son of the British Conference, and the colleague of Wm. Arthur.

During the few days I have spent in the country, I have been studying resemblances and differences between men and things as I see them here and as I am better acquainted with them at home. It would hardly be otherwise, it would at least be premature if I should venture any report of the results of such studies at this very early date. But I may at least refer to one resemblance

by which I have been very deeply impressed—the resemblance which this Conference bears to another Conference with which I am better acquainted. And it does not arise from mere similarity of procedure, that could be obtained by imitation. It is that deeper resemblance, that family likeness which is the sign and seal of veritable spiritual kinship.

I have realized, sir, as never before, the magnitude of the commission to which John Wesley was called of God. If that commission had had no other results than are to be found in the direct and indirect influence of Methodism in the British Isles it would still have been one of the greatest and most beneficent commissions intrusted to man. For in England, more than any other country, they who would estimate the influence of Methodism must take into account the remoter results as well as the direct ones. Just as hidden streams are traced by the verdure to which they give birth, so the more indirect influence of Methodism may be traced in the quickened life of all the churches on British soil.

But, if we pass from our own isle, the work of Methodism is surely one of the marvels of the world's history.

But, it is not the actual achievements of Methodism in America, as great as it is, that impresses and almost awes a visitor; it is the promise, the pretensions promise which every thing in this land bears with reference to your future.

You have had the inestimable advantage of beginning your church life with the birth of the nation. We had to commence in an old nation—a young church in an old country. You are a young church in a young nation. When we were born, the institutions of our land were fixed and tenacious. You were born in time to help draw the plans, and lay the foundation of your national existence.

And, when these great Territories, whose strange, musical names charm my ear, Arizona, Montana, and all the rest, when they are filled with people, when they possess all the wealth that labor gives rise to, what will be your reward? An enlarged sense of citizenship? Something better than that. You reward will be that your thousands will be tens of thousands, and your tens of thousands will be hundreds of thousands, and your churches, your schools, your parsonages, your colleges will cover the whole continent, and you will by God's blessing infuse power into the whole life of a great people, and the strongest elements of Christian character and worth which ever a church has been allowed to impart to a great and vigorous people.

When I look upon American civilization, its literature, its politics, I need not prove to you your debt of obligation to the old world. Your literature joins you to England, your jurisprudence joins you to Rome, and your religion is God's gift to you from Jerusalem, where God's Son consummated his sacrifice. How shall you pay that to the Old World? Not only as you are doing now with the produce of your fields, and your countless factories, but with such a band of missionary labor and holy beneficent toil, as shall hasten in the regeneration of the heathen world, the downfall of the last stronghold of sin, and the fulfillment of our highest hopes. God has ten such a time.

I sat but a short time ago upon the broad embankment which guards our small but ancient river, the Thames, and I sat and looked upon the venerable but last visitor, the obelisk, the pillar of Cleopatra. It had been brought from the banks of the Nile and set up on the banks of the Thames. There it stands to keep watch over the city, making nothing of 2,000 years' sleep in the sand, waking up like a sentinel that has dozed for a minute or two, and waking up to watch over the nation's life. What has it seen since it was carried with those strange characters? It has seen the Pharaohs, Alexander, the Cæsars, the Mohammedans; it has seen Greece, Rome, and Arabia, pass like visions before it. Why, why do they pass? The Pharaohs were rich and the Greeks had genius, and the Romans knew how to govern, and the Arabs had fiery valor, but they have followed one after another into the sepulchre where nations are buried, where moral corruption lays them low. They died for want of righteousness.

There are in addition some things and signs, to which I may be permitted to briefly refer.

For instance, we see that philosophy, the higher intellectual life in the world, is drawing back from the land of frost-bitten atheism, toward which it seemed to be travelling. This is partly reaction, and partly the result of the manly toil of Christian scholars among us, who have not been afraid to speak with the enemy at the gate; and partly the result of the lives of thousands of believers, who know nothing about philosophy, and possibly care less, but who contribute every day by their lives some of the strongest arguments against such philosophy. And under these influences, it seems that philosophy, feeling the preliminary ill of that bourne to which she was travelling, has shaken herself together,

and has sought the path again along which we think her honoured in travelling.

Then, again, there is our Board of National Education. We Englishmen are obliged to speak penitently upon that. It is lamentable to think how slowly our scheme of education followed our political scheme, so that, as one of our statesmen said, we must educate our masters now.

Yes, there are healthy signs in the Church of Christ, which it is a pleasure to record. There is the activity in Christian beneficence and the vigor in the production of Biblical literature which I more than set off against the dainty, dilettanti agnosticism of some of the writers of the day.

There is one exceedingly hopeful sign which my brethren here will join me in rejoicing over. There has been a wonderful diminution in the amount of fine preaching among us for some time past. Eloquence has been decaying and dying out at a rate that does not even alarm us, so willing are we to let it go. It is not so necessary as youthful orators are in the habit of thinking. I believe there is more sincerity and more meaning business in the preachers of England at the present day.

It is as you have seen it in some mountainous country. The streams from the hills may meet in the bosom of the lake below. You saw the streams as they descended, some leaping, some gliding gently down. But when once they have gathered into the lake, you can not select out your streams and portion them out to their respective mountains. So from our Zion's streams are gathered that go into the bosom of the nation below, cleaning it and cleansing it, and we do not care to ask in what exact proportion our hill-tops condensed and drew down the waters of life.

One of our wants—may I say it, being four thousand miles from some of the active functionaries of the British Conference, may I say it?—is, economy and simplicity would be welcome to us. About every other year another column has been added to our schedules. You know what that means. Another column of statistics, another series of returns, another series of checks is devised, to be waded through by the hard, over-worked brethren. The genius of our best men has been employed, wisely and well employed, in complicating Methodism.

I believe that Methodism will follow the linguistic law, as many of you understand so well. As language has passed from the crude condition of mere roots into the highly inflected condition, and then finally has shaken off all useless terminations, so perhaps it may be with Methodism.

At first it was simply noble; then came the time of complication, and, if the analogy is good for any thing, there shall come a time of more simplicity. Then shall we young men be thankful that our lot was cast in with Methodism.

Serious, brethren, you know what our want is, and perhaps yours too, the gift of the Holy Ghost. We have a widespread agency, we have good and honest men, a wide and noble field. If our field is not large, we think something of it in other respects, and we need but the supreme, pentecostal gift to fill up the measure of our joy, and the perfection of our prosperity.

Do not accuse me of observing days and weeks unduly, when I remind you that this day is the day in the calendar of our Lord's ascension. I could not but think to-day, that after he had gone up into heaven, his disciples returned to Jerusalem with great joy. With joy because they had lost him, and their communion with him was over? No, but with joy that now, at least, they had found him, and their communion was to be free from all check of time and earthly economy, and he was to be with them for evermore. So they returned with exceeding joy, the Lord working with them.

And what is as true for us as for them, and gives a wider life and meaning to our founder's maxim. "The best of all is God is with us."

R. M. Hatfield, of the Rock Conference, then introduced Rev. Wallace McMullen, fraternal delegate from the Irish Wesleyan Conference in the following words:

Mr. President, I am sure that there is but one feeling here to-night, and that is that this is a most enjoyable session of the General Conference. I am afraid we have made one mistake in the arrangement of this evening. It ought to have been a watch-night. That is an institution of ours that we are all familiar with, and which we all enjoy. I must not detain you a minute. Our hearts have been thrilled as we have heard of the Methodism of England, and we have been drawn nearer to the old mother church than ever before. A member comes to us from another field, perhaps a harder field, where hard, stalwart work has been done. But, perhaps, to no part of the world is American Methodism more indebted than to Ireland in many directions and for many reasons.

(Continued on sixth page.)

CORRESPONDENCE.

HALIFAX, N. S., May 18.

MR. EDITOR.—With regret I have to acknowledge the receipt of your issue of the 13th inst. containing the report of the Halifax Conference. It is a pleasure to find that you have not only been able to hold your own, but that you have also been able to do so with credit. It is quite evident that you are willing to leave the appointment of the sole editor, and as to any other part of the Conference to be in their late action in reference to the element and in fact to what is now positively acquiesced in without the advantage of action as the laymen voted at the time, claim a vote outside the Committee, and one which rises from cognition of an indispensable law or enforced without repugnance.

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MONCTON, N. B., May 18.

MR. EDITOR.—Knowing interested in all matters temporal as well as the spiritual of the people of Moncton, you of a social we had heretofore in connection with our church gotton up, as is customary here, for the purpose of members of the church and together in order that they a season of social converse reason and a flow of soul. This was the prime object of that the wants of the "inn" abundantly provided for.

Tea was served at 6.30, persons from fourteen years upwards, sat down to the table. Of the fragments the not 12 baskets only were taken sufficient supply to warrant in undertaking to give a ment to the children of schools connected with our evening.

You know the liberality especially in cases of picnics meetings is proverbial. After superintendent of the circuit Duncan, in a few words, pleasure in view of the occasion furnished to be introduced the Hon. James file the chair and can programme submitted by the ment committee—

- 1. Music by the choir. 2. Address by Rev. Mr. T. 3. Reading by Mr. George. 4. Solo by Miss Alice Hunt. 5. Recitation by Miss Hunt. 6. Reading by Mrs. Albert. 7. Music by the choir. 8. Address by Mr. G. K. S. 9. Reading by Miss Alice. 10. Recitation by Miss B. 11. Solo by Miss Lydia Hunt. 12. Reading by Mrs. W. B. Dology.

The programme was admirably executed, and the whole affair successful—as is invariably the thing undertaken by the evening pleasantly spent and remembered by many—especially the young people of our church. "Sweet eyes looked love to eyes that And all went merry as a marriage."

We have only to regret that you were not there by your presence to see the enjoyment of our Lord's ascension. Was taken up in aid of the S. and a nice sun realized.

NEWCASTLE, N. B., May 18.

DEAR SIR.—The following news respecting English Methodism from a letter which I had from an English minister to the readers of the WESLEYAN.

PERSONAL.—Rev. S. Coley lay aside. He is suffering from laryngitis, but has recovered, but has a seizure. Before he came on a Conference in Montreal suffering from brain affected much worse after his return only 56 years of age and out his prime.

The cause of his trouble and want of physical exercise was his boat that he afterwards, or evenings justings. So he has gone on steadily, noon and night and in his present lamentable condition early in his ministry position in the ministry and hard to maintain it. Rev. M. A., Missionary Secretary, valiant service in India, is expected to be elected President for the Conference to be held in Australia.

THANKSGIVING FUND.—It is gratifying to find that the ast-nishing sum of £10,000 has been raised. Good has followed many of the giving meetings. Either this or this Special Fund is working with the regular income funds. The Missionary £10,000 below last year's funds are behind in a proportion.

CANDIDATES FOR THE SEVERAL CIRCUITS will have to be their preachers at next cause of their inability to