MEMORABLE CONFERENCES IN CANADA

BY JOHN CARROLL.

THE CHURCH-FOUNDING CONFERENCE.

At the general Conference of the M. E Church of the United States, held at Pittsburgh, May, 1828, permission was given to the ministers and members of that Church in Upper Canada to organize themselves into a separate and independent Methodist Church in this Province. There was no provision in the Constitution of that body for dismembering their Church and organizing a new one; all they could do was to decide on withdrawing their jurisdiction over the Canada Methodists; and leave them to organize themselves into an independent Church. Although we are safe in saying that no pledge as to the form of church polity to be adopted was given, but it was expected by both parties that the Episcopal form would be continued, that is, the presterial episcopacy of the mother Church; and it was understood that whenever the Canadians elected an episcopos one of the American Bishops would be sent to ordain him.

Accordingly, the next meeting of the Canada annual Conference, passed beyond its mere administrative functions, and assumed legislative powers. It had been appointed to meet so late in the season as October 2, 1828, and the place of meeting was Switzer's Charel, Earnestown, in the Bay Quinte Circuit. It seemed a pleasing coincidence that the Formative Conference met among many of the descendants of the German Irish Methodists, who composed such an important element in the early American Societies. Here were the Carskalons, and Detlors, and Nevilles, and Millers, and Switzens, and others of this honored race

Bishop Hedding came over and presided during the routine business of the annual Conference, and then surrendered Canadian matters for the future into the hands of the Canadian brethren. We are quite sure that some took an active part in framing the Constitution of the future Church who had not as yet attained the status required by the Constitution, after adopted, to sit in the Legislative Conference That Legislative, or General Conference, like the first in the United States, was to "be composed of all the travelling Elders, who had travelled four full calendar years last past, and had been received into full connexion.

A good deal had been said in Methodist circles on both sides of the dividing line between this and the United States, for some years before the period of which we write about a laydelegation in the Conferences. The founders of the new Church did not wish to appear as breaking away from the traditional ideas and immemorial practice of the two oldest branches of the Methodist family—that in Britain and the one in the United States; and yet they seemed anxious to extend all reasonable rights to the laity. They saw, or thought they saw, that the laity had an efficient voice in the management of all administrative matters that concerned themselves, in their classes (for in those days a class was often called on to try a member; a person proposed as an exhorter had to be recommended by his class; and the Constitution now adopted gave the class power of objecting to an obnoxious appointment Every description of Je- RUSSELL WATCHES. to the leadership); leaders and quarterly meet | wellry Clocks, Watches, tings, and district or local preachers, Confer- Fancy Goods and ences. But these Canadian Church-founders Electro Plated Ware devised a plan of giving the assembled layofficials of the church, in their Quarterly Cona discount of 15 # cent.

RUSSELL WATCHES. ferences, which comprised all the leaders, stewards, exhorters and local preachers in a circuit, a co-ordinate legislative voice, by way of veto, with the ministerial legislators in all matters that related to money, the privileges and rights of members, and things vital to the Church; and these two restrictions, the 6th and 7th, could not be done away without the consent of (Late from G. Armstrong's Undertaking Establish the quarterly meetings themselves. Since then enactments have been made which have required an appeal to the quarterly meetings, and their right has been exercised in either approving or disapproving such legislation. I will not say whether the time may not come when it will be well that this co-ordinate right should be exercised more simply and directly. We have a scheme of our own in which this lay cooperation might be far less cumbrously brought in play, but we suspect our quarterly meetings would be, perhaps, unwilling to barter their present rights for that. But enough of theor-

The annual Conference elected James Richardson as its Secretary; and, in the absence of a Bishop, the Rev. Wm. Case with elected President, pro tem., to exercise all purisdiction THE S. S. BANNER FOR 1870 ! of a bishop, without the right of ordaining, for one year. Archdeacon Stewart, of Kingston, a shrewd man and one who knew the country well, was heard to say, "The Methodists ought to have elected and consecrated Elder Case to be their Bishop, and gone on their independent out it." Influenced by these representations, and way." Instead of that, however, they elected the Rev. Wilbur Fisk, of New England, who, it was hoped, would accept the nomination, but he refused. After the lapse of years, some octave, instead of 8 pages quarto. Notwithstanding have thought that Dr. Stewart's idea would have been the true one, while many others think "BANNER" IS NOT CHANGED. that, in view of our after union with the British Conference, it was providential that Case invariably in advance. Volume begins with January. was not elected, and that neither Fisk, Bangs,

ising.

nor Stratton accepted the office. The next, or perhaps we should say the first, general Conference was appointed to meet in 1830, in the tewn of Belleville, on the last Wednesday in August. The men who had the prospect of sitting in that important assembly were Case, Richardson, the three Ryersons, Stony, Green, Black, McMullen, Mesmore, Wilson, Griffis, Prindel, Gatchel, Belton, Fer-Corson, Youmans, Madden, Peter Jones 1st, Brown, Whitehead, Chamberlayne and P. Smith—29 in all. All these notables it was the writer's privilege to see assembled at that their writer's privilege to see assembled at the privilege to see assembled at that their writer's privilege to see assembled at the privilege to see assembl writer's privilege to see assembled at that their Address Rev. S. ROSE, Wesleyan Book Room prospective meeting. Toronto.

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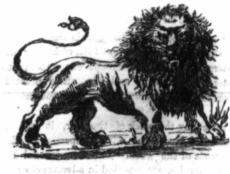
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