

THE WESLEYAN FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 1883.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

THE UNITED GENERAL CONFERENCE.

The week now approaching its close has been a busy and eventful one. To harmonize several books of discipline into one for the guidance of three-fourths of a million of Methodists, and to reach such conclusions as shall satisfy prepossessions and abate prejudices, is no light task. Yet so far, thanks to the numerous indefatigable committees, the work is being done readily and thoroughly—so much so, indeed, that few changes have been made by the two hundred delegates who have been sitting in judgment upon the committees' conclusions.

All the occupants of the platform have had full share of work. The numerous and sometimes exciting sessions must have tried severely the mental and physical vigor of the excellent presiding officer, Dr. Williams, whose name is ready for all that his brethren can present for his sanction or decision. The Vice-President, the Rev. E. Roberts, of the B. C. Church, was the evening General Superintendent. Dr. D. A. Rice and Carman, have taken an important part in committee work. What tool falls to the lot of a General Superintendent few know save those who have been on the platform or in the hall below. The burden of this work is being borne at this Conference by Revs. F. B. Stratton, and J. C. Antill, B. D., assisted by Dr. Allison; while the somewhat heavy duties of Journal Secretary are being performed by Rev. H. Brodin. In the officials all the contracting sections of Methodism are honorably represented.

It is presumed that all the points of order to the consummation of erection in Alma, Albert Co. N. B., and the congregation expect to occupy it the coming winter.

A layman at Kingston Ont., has intimated his intention to bequeath \$10,000 to the superannuation fund of the Methodist Church.

The Methodist Sunday School picnic last Saturday, on the ground of Nathaniel Strang, Emigrant Road, Botsford, N. B., was a very enjoyable affair and well patronized. Through a new man, the Rev. Mr. Penna is very well liked by his people.

Some of the papers in referring to the liberal offer of Mr. William Gooderham to give a site for Victoria University near Toronto, equal in value to \$50,000, seem to think any movement in this direction implies the surrender of his University powers. There is no ground for this supposition.—Chr. Guardian.

The Methodist Sabbath School at Cole Harbour held their annual picnic Tuesday, Sept. 11th. The juveniles consisted of the event of the season and it certainly was a most joyous occasion to all. There were present visitors from Savannah, Boston and from Colchester, N. S. Much credit is due to brother James Turner who has laboured faithfully in this school.

The annual picnic of the teachers and scholars of the Methodist Sabbath School of Campbellton was held on the Restigouche Club ground at Metapedia on Wednesday the 5th. Excursion tickets were issued from Campbellton at one fare, and two hundred persons availed themselves of the opportunity of having a day's outing on the beautiful grounds, kindly provided by the Club for the occasion.

The Manitoba Conference has met transacted business, and adjourned. Over forty ministers were in attendance. Under Dr. Young's presidency, things ran smoothly, and the brethren separated in good heart, cheered and stimulated by mutual association. The formation of this Conference is an epoch in the religious history of the great North-West. We look for an advance all along the line.—Outlook.

ABROAD.

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with commendable diligence and loyalty. Some of them would, however, have limited the number of Superintendents to one, but this effort was vain. Dr. Rice acknowledged the honor conferred upon him on his birthday in a thoughtful address, in which he briefly traced his personal connection with Methodist Union in Canada in past years, and made honorable reference to the influence of the Hon. Jas. Ferrier, of Montreal, in the promotion of the present movement. Dr. Carman is a younger man. The members of the Union Committee speak of him as possessing rare tact as a presiding officer. His address was received with much satisfaction. Experience in various Connexion departments and in the Episcopal office will be found a good preparation for his new duties. An election for Secretary of the General Conference resulted in the choice of the Rev. J. C. Antill, B. D., of Toronto, whose father is a prominent minister in the English Primitive Methodist Church. The Book Stewards and Editors at Toronto and Halifax were returned to their positions by acclamation. Dr. Stone of the M. E. Book-room, Hamilton, was elected Associate Editor of the *Christian Guardian*. The organs of the three other churches, the *Canada Christian Advocate*, the *Christian Journal* and the *Observer*, will soon cease to appear. The Methodist Hymn book now used by us will be gradually adopted by all the congregations. I should have noted the re-appointment, by unanimous vote, of Dr. Sutherland as Secretary Treasurer of Missions, and of Dr. Wood as Honorary Treasurer. T. W. S.

METHODIST NOTES.

The Methodists of Bear River are greatly improving the beauty of their church.

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dismiss altogether, now it finds it necessary to devote an editorial to the proceedings of the Conference.—*Irish Christian Advocate*.

William Taylor is "at the front" in South America, and wherever he goes life and converting power attended him. From a private letter to the Editor we infer that he finds openings which enlarge as he enters them. Quite a number of private and several officers on one of our U. S. war-ships now in Chile have been converted, and are testifying with great clearness and force.—*Chr. Adv.*

The affairs of the Missionary Society were brought before the Wesleyan Conference by the Rev. J. Kilner, who reported that by rigid economy and severe retrenchment the expenditure of the year had been practically brought within the income. On the nomination of the General Committee, Sir William McArthur, K.C.M.G., M.P., was appointed to succeed Mr. James S. Budgett as lay treasurer of the society. The week beginning Nov. 11th, is to be set apart for intercession on behalf of foreign missions, specially for the increase of liberality at home, as well as for the increase of success abroad. In this connection, strenuous efforts are to be made to secure an increase to the ordinary annual income of the society of at least £20,000.—*Chr. Guardian*.

UNITED GENERAL CONFERENCE.

(Continued from 1st page).

for the election of laymen as members of the first Annual Conference. The motion was adopted. The Committee on Rules of Order reported. Conference then adjourned until to-morrow morning at 9 o'clock.

THIRD DAY.

FRIDAY, SEPT. 7.

The Union Conference of the Methodist bodies resumed its session in Bridge street Church this morning at 9 o'clock, Rev. Dr. Williams presiding. After devotional exercises Mr. J. J. Pearson presented memorials from Innisfield, Bradford, and Thornbury respecting Children's Fund and the General Superintendency. They were referred to the Committee on Discipline.

Rev. Dr. Sutherland read to the Conference the resolution adopted by the Conference of the Methodist Church of Canada respecting the restrictive rules.

Rev. S. Griffin moved a resolution respecting the insertion of the restrictive rules in the discipline to be constructed, which, after some debate, was withdrawn on the ground that such a proposition should be laid before the delegations of the other bodies before being introduced into the Conference.

The Committee on Discipline presented their report. They recommended, 1st. That the basis of union be published in the book of discipline.

2nd. That the doctrines, articles of religion, general rules, ordinances, reception of members, and means of grace as contained in the book of discipline of the Methodist Church of Canada, edition 1879, from page 13 to page 28, be incorporated in the new book of discipline.

In regard to church government the General Conference shall be composed of an equal number of ministerial and lay delegates. Each Annual Conference at its first session shall elect a committee on the part of the General Conference, shall divide into ministerial and lay electoral colleges for the purpose of electing delegates to the General Conference, each body electing its own representatives to the General Conference, and the vote shall be by ballot. The ministerial delegates shall consist of one member in every ten ministerial members of each Annual Conference. The President of each Annual Conference shall be one of that number, provided, nevertheless, that a fraction of one-half shall entitle the Conference to an additional representative. Each delegate to the General Conference shall be entitled to vote of the members of the Electoral College who may be present and vote in order to an election. No layman shall be chosen a delegate who shall be under 25 years of age, and must have been a member of the church continuously during the 5 years next preceding his election. Each Electoral College, after election of the number of delegates as provided in paragraph 1st, shall elect a reserve delegate for ten members, in addition to the reserve delegate so elected, shall elect one reserve delegate for ten members. It is entitled to send such reserve to take the place of a delegate when by reason of death or other cause there is a vacancy in the delegation, provided always that the vacancy occur before the meeting of the General Conference.

The report being considered, amendments were moved to the proportion of representation; 1 in 20, 1 in 15, 1 in 14, and 1 in 12 being respectively proposed, as against 1 in 10 as recommended by the Committee. The amendments were all negatived.

Rev. E. B. Edgley moved an amendment to strike out the provision as to the age of the delegates. He said that ministers might be received as probationers at 19, and be eligible to membership in the General Conference. There might be just as brilliant intellects among the laity as the ministry. Laymen who had been members of the church for five years should be eligible without restriction as to age. Such legislation was now proposed would have kept Pitt out of the Premiership of England for years.

Rev. W. H. Graham favored the amendment. Judge Jones said the basis provided that the members of the Annual Conference must be 25 years of age, and it was thought only by the members of the General Conference should be at least of equal age.

The amendment was negatived, and the Committee's report was adopted. Rev. Dr. Carroll was introduced, and in a few earnest words urged the Conference to take part in the union camp meeting to be held at Ellersmore on the 14th inst.

The Conference took recess.

EVENING SITTING.

Conference resumed at 7.30 o'clock, Rev. Dr. Williams presiding.

The Committee on Boundaries presented their report containing the following recommendations:— That no change be made in the boundaries of Manitoba and Newfoundland; that the remaining portion of the work be formed into the following Conferences:—

London Conference,—embracing the districts of London, St. Thomas, Chatham, and Sarnia. In these districts the Methodist Church of Canada has many adherents, 84 circuits, 111 effective ministers, 16 superannuated ministers, and 13,996 members; the Methodist Episcopal Church, 34 circuits, 44 effective ministers, 7 superannuated ministers, 4,129 members; the Primitive Methodist Church, 12 circuits, 12 effective ministers, 5 superannuated ministers, and 1,151 members; Bible Christian, 10 circuits, 10 effective ministers, 2 superannuated ministers, and 1,018 members; a total of 140 circuits, 177 effective ministers, 30 superannuated ministers, and 20,294 members.

Guelph Conference,—embracing Guelph, Stratford, Wellington, Goderich, Walkerton, and Owen Sound districts. The Methodist Church of Canada has here 97 circuits, 117 effective ministers, 13 superannuated ministers, 15,481 members; the Methodist Episcopal Church, 15 circuits, 18 effective ministers, 3 superannuated ministers, 2,034 members; the Primitive Methodist Church, 12 circuits, 13 effective ministers, 2 superannuated ministers, 1,038 members; Bible Christian Church, 8 circuits, 8 effective ministers, 1 superannuated minister, 1,210 members; total 132 circuits, 136 effective ministers, 19 superannuated ministers, and 19,763 members.

Hamilton Conference,—embracing Hamilton, Niagara, Brantford, Woodstock, and Simcoe districts. Methodist Church of Canada, 83 circuits, 98 effective ministers, 26 superannuated ministers, and 14,630 members; Methodist Episcopal Church, 29 circuits, 43 effective ministers, 7 superannuated ministers, and 4,913 members; Primitive Methodist Church, 8 circuits, 8 effective ministers, 1 superannuated minister, and 807 members; Bible Christians, 3 circuits, 3 effective ministers, and 233 members.

Toronto Conference,—embracing Toronto, Brampton, Whitby, Bradford, Barrie, Algoma, Victoria, New Westminster, Port Simpson, and Japan districts. Methodist Church of Canada, 154 circuits, 168 effective ministers, 38 superannuated ministers, and 1,529 members; Methodist Episcopal Church, 25 circuits, 21 effective ministers, 4 superannuated ministers, and 3,023 members; Primitive Methodist Church, 35 circuits, 35 effective ministers, 8 superannuated ministers, and 4,663 members; Bible Christians, 10 circuits, 17 effective ministers, 2 superannuated ministers, and 2,324 members; total, 224 circuits, 244 effective ministers, 52 superannuated ministers, and 29,201 members, or, omitting Victoria and New Westminster, Fort Simpson and Japan, a total membership of about 27,000 members.

Belleville Conference,—embracing Belleville, Cobourg, Lindsay, Peterborough, Napance, and Picton districts. Methodist Church of Canada, 87 circuits, 104 effective ministers, 13 superannuated ministers, and 14,638 members; Methodist Episcopal, 34 circuits, 48 effective ministers, 10 superannuated ministers, and 6,256 members; Bible Christians, 14 circuits, 15 effective ministers, 5 superannuated ministers, and 1,300 members; total, 135 circuits, 167 effective ministers, 28 superannuated ministers, and 22,203 members.

Montreal Conference,—embracing Montreal, Kingston, Brockville, Perth, Pembroke, Ottawa, Quebec, Stanstead, Waterloo, and the French districts. Methodist Church of Canada, 165 circuits, 175 effective ministers, 27 superannuated ministers, and 19,996 members; Methodist Episcopal, 31 circuits, 23 effective ministers, 6 superannuated ministers, and 4,726 members; Primitive Methodist, 2 circuits, 1 effective minister, and 67 members; total, 198 circuits, 199 effective ministers, 33 superannuated ministers, and 24,789 members.

Rev. Dr. Sutherland urged that the disparity was too great between Montreal and Belleville Conferences, the former being too strong.

Rev. Mr. Langford said that the recommendation had been carefully considered by the committee.

Rev. Dr. Douglas said the object of having Montreal Conference rather larger than some of the western Conferences arose from the peculiarity of the ground. The largest part of Montreal Conference was in Quebec Province. Throughout the eastern townships and the Ottawa Valley there was a constant decrease of the Protestant and increase of Roman Catholic population that placed their ministers in a painful position. Small settlements of Protestants were located between masses of Roman Catholics, and the discouragement to Protestants was beyond conception. If the Montreal Conference had a part of the lower limb of Ontario, where Protestantism was strong, they would be able to change round the discouraged ministers. Protestantism must decline in Quebec and must increase in Ontario. He could show that in Quebec city, where the population was 60,000, the Protestant population had declined to 7,000. A Protestant minister had told him he must close up the galleries of his church. Mr. Colby, M. P., had told him there was an alarming increase of Catholics in his constituency, and that the hierarchy was buying up land.

In view of the 24,000 in Toronto, if any change were required a portion might be taken from it and added to Belleville Conference. He hoped the recommendation of the Committee would be adopted. Rev. Dr. Sutherland said that Toronto District was not selfish, and was prepared to hand over Algoma and Bracebridge Districts. The remedy for the grievance referred to by Dr. Douglas was securing a perfectly free system of transfer, not in having a large conference like that of Montreal.

Rev. Dr. Ryekman urged that Toronto Conference was too large, and Brampton District should be taken from it and added to Guelph Conference.

Rev. O. G. Colmore was surprised there were not two more conferences. Conferences were too large rather than too small, but the report of the Committee was on the whole excellent. He suggested that the old names of Conferences—Niagara and Bay of Quinte—should be retained and used instead of Belleville and Hamilton.

Mr. Eyles suggested that Whitby District be added to Belleville Conference.

Rev. A. Stafford supported the suggestion that the names of the Conferences should be those of the districts rather than of cities, as was often the case.

Rev. A. Langford said Belleville Conference was called such in memory of the union of the Methodist bodies having taken place there.

Rev. Dr. Gardiner proposed that the number of Conferences should be increased.

Rev. W. Ball pointed out an error in the statement respecting the Primitive Methodists. There should be added to Montreal Conference four circuits and about 500 members.

On motion, the names Belleville and Hamilton were changed to Bay of Quinte and Niagara.

Conference adjourned to 9 o'clock to-morrow morning.

FOURTH DAY.

FRIDAY, SEPT. 8.

The Union Methodist Conference was continued this morning in Bridge St. Church, Rev. Dr. Williams presiding.

Rev. F. Chisholm presented the report of the Committee on Discipline. It contained the following recommendations:—

The next General Conference shall meet on the first Wednesday of September, 1886, and thereafter once in four years, and in such places as the next General Conference may determine. When the General Conference is in session fifty of its members shall form a quorum for the transaction of business. The General Conference shall elect from the ministers of the Church by ballot, without debate, one or more itinerant General Superintendents, in accordance with the Basis of Union. A General Superintendent shall preside over all sessions of the General Conference, and over all sittings of the committees of the same; but in case no General Superintendent be present, the General Conference or committees shall elect by ballot, without debate, a President pro tempore.

The General Conference, only shall have full power to make rules and regulations for the Church, under the following limitations and restrictions, viz:— (1) It shall not revoke, alter, or change any rule of religion, nor establish any new standards or rules of doctrine contrary to our existing and established standards of doctrine. (2) It shall not destroy the plan of itinerant system. (3) It shall not make any change in the general rules of society. (4) It shall not do away with the privilege of our ministers or probationers for the ministry of trial by a Committee and of an appeal, neither shall it do away with the privilege of our members of trial before the Society or by a Committee, and of an appeal.

No change shall be made in the Basis of Union affecting constitutional questions or rights and privileges of the ministry or the laity, except by a three-fourths majority of the General Conference, and if requested by either order of ministry or laity, and two-thirds majority of each order voting separately. The General Conference by a vote of two-thirds of its members shall have power to increase or diminish, change or alter the boundaries of the several Annual Conferences. The General Conference shall appoint a special Committee on the nomination of the General Superintendent, of twelve members who shall in association with the General Superintendent and Superintendents, from one General Conference to another watch over and guard all the rights and privileges of the church through the connection, carry out as far as possible the recommendations of General Conference and decide on any measures which may seem necessary for the general interests of the church and could not have been foreseen at the meeting of the General Conference, and adopt such measures for their accomplishment as it may deem expedient, said Committee to report to the General Conference.

Some discussion here arose on the adoption of the restrictive rules.

Rev. F. Chisholm explained that the Committee had unanimously decided to adopt the restrictive rules. He suggested the insertion of a proviso in the second rule that Conference shall not do away with the itinerant general superintendency.

Judge Jones said the question involved in this rule was not one of change or one of distinction. They could not give up their itinerant system. Methodism would not be Methodism without itinerancy, and when they reached the conclusion to do away with it they might as well join some other church. Bishop Carman did not think it would be straining matters to say that an itinerant general superintendent was an itinerant minister. He would change round the insertion in the restrictive rules of a clause respecting the itinerant general superintendency, except for the fact that he felt they would also have to incorporate the other provision of the basis which united them as churches, namely, lay delegation, and the latter was set new to the Methodist Episcopal Church as it was to other uniting churches.

The second rule was adopted without amendment.

On the third rule, Rev. W. R. Parker moved in amendment.

That inasmuch as there may be a change made in certain irrelevant phraseology and ambiguous formula of our general rules without all impairing their scriptural character or modifying their meaning, therefore be it resolved that section three of the restrictive rules be amended so as to read "it shall not make any change in the general rules of the Church, except by three-fourths majority of the General Conference, who may be present and vote thereon."

He pointed out several particulars in which the general rules of the society might be amended. They spoke against the use of "spirituous liquors," whereas the church favored abstinence from all intoxicating liquors. The rules set forth that no amusement should be indulged in unless it set forth the glory of God; thus dancing was not specified. The prohibition respecting the use of gold ornaments was inapplicable in these days. The rules also set forth that they must not lay up treasure on earth. He did not urge that ministers should become connected with temperance colonization societies, but every man should provide against a rainy day. The true meaning of the scripture passage was that they should not lay up their treasure only on earth. He objected to being called, as in the general rules, the minister of a society when he was a minister of the greatest church in this country. By the adoption of the restrictive rule proposed the General Conference would be shut out from amending the general rules at some future day.

Judge Jones, Rev. A. Stafford, and Rev. Dr. Ryekman addressed the Conference, and the amendment by Mr. Parker was carried by 87 to 59.

Judge Jones desired it to be understood that the supporters of the amendment had not voted against the adoption of the rules, but simply that the General Conference should have power subsequently to change their phraseology.

Rev. Dr. Stone moved in amendment that the following words be added to the clauses amended:—

"The same to be subsequently approved by a three-fourths majority of members of the Annual Conference, present and voting."

Rev. Dr. Sutherland raised a point of order. The rules were adopted as part of the basis of union, and could not therefore be changed.

The President decided that the point of order was well taken, and ruled Mr. Parker's and Dr. Stone's amendments out of order.

After some further discussion, without action being taken, the Conference adjourned until Monday.

FIFTH DAY.

MONDAY, SEPT. 10.

The fifth day's sitting of the united Methodist Conference opened this morning with the usual exercises. The second report of the Committee on Memorials recommended that the Memorial from Bradford district and Schomberg circuit be not entertained.

On the report of the Committee on Discipline, the third and fourth restrictive rules were adopted. A motion by Rev. F. Chisholm, that a fifth restrictive rule shall be added, to the effect that the General Conference shall not destroy the plan of an efficient general superintendency, was withdrawn.

It was moved by Rev. Mr. Parker, seconded by Judge Jones, "Provided that the General Conference may, by a constitutional vote, vary or change any of the rules of our society embraced the third restrictive rule."

It was moved in amendment by Dr. Inoh, "That in case three-fourths of the Annual Conference, by a three-fourths majority, request it, the General Conference may by its constitutional majority change the restrictive rules."

Moved in amendment to the amendment by Rev. J. S. Williamson.

That on the recommendation of all the Annual Conferences, the motion having been carried by a three-fourths vote of such Annual Conference, the General Conference shall have power to change any of the above restrictive rules by a constitutional three-fourths vote provided on the basis of constitutional Conference to another watch over and guard all the rights and privileges of the church through the connection, carry out as far as possible the recommendations of General Conference and decide on any measures which may seem necessary for the general interests of the church and could not have been foreseen at the meeting of the General Conference, and adopt such measures for their accomplishment as it may deem expedient, said Committee to report to the General Conference.

The second report of the Committee on General Superintendency was presented by Dr. Douglas, Chairman, recommending that the itinerant General Superintendent shall preside over all sessions of the General Conference. He shall not be stationed, but shall travel at large throughout the Church, and render such service as the General Conference may direct. He shall, when present, in association with the President, conduct the ordination services. He shall sign all ordination parchments. He shall be elected to hold office for eight years, but if he be elected to hold office for only four years, so that there may be a recurring election or re-election every four years. The salary of each General Superintendent shall be \$2,500 per annum, and that actual travelling expenses of fare and public conveyance were adopted. The fourth paragraph was amended by the insertion of the words "jointly with the President of the Annual Conference."

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