## THE WESLEYAN.

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## ELECTIONS OF EDITORS AND BOOK STEWARDS.

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Rev. Mr. Huestis moved that the editors, book stewards, missionary secretaries, and other de-partmental officers be elected by open nomination and ballot .- Carried.

FOR BOOK STEWARD .- Mr. Nixon minated Rev. W. Briggs; Dr. S. D. Rice nominated Dr. S. Rose; Rev. W. Williams nominated Rev. Jas. Gray; Mr. Wilson nominated Rev. John N. Lake. While the ballot was proceeding, Rev. Mr. Willoughby introduced Rev. Dr. Jaques and Rev.

Mr. Brown as honored representatives of the Me-thodist Episcopal Church of Canada. The President briefly welcomed them in the name of the Conference, the members all rising.

It was agreed to hear those gentlemen on Mon-day morning next at 11 o'clock. extending the time to five years, could be brought The first ballot for book steward resulted as in favor of six years, or ten years, or an indefinite follows :-- Whole number of votes cast 162; necesperiod.

sary to a choice 82; for Rev. Mr. Gray, 11; for Rev. Mr. Sutherland was satisfied for the timea change had not come yet. There was no evidence Rev. Mr. Briggs, 73; Dr. Rose, 70. of a general desire to extend the time. Such a The second ballot resulted as follows :-- Whole number of votes cast, 170; necessary to a choice, 86; Dr. Rose received 76, and Rev. Mr. Briggs, change should not be made until the whole Church was permeated with the idea, and that

96. The latter was declared elected. Rev. Mr. Briggs, being called upon for a speech

thanked the Conference for the honor and for the confidence reposed in him. He promised to bring when the time was extended from two to three lishment of his work, neither geniu to the accomp nor talents, but plodding industry and fidelity. He hoped four years hence to be able to show another successful exhibit of the operations of the Book Room : if not he should seize hold of the great naking any request for an extension. itinerant wheel of the Church and once more enshould not the Stationing Committee have power to leave a minister a fourth year among his peo-ple, when both minister and people desire it? He o leave a minister a fourth year among his ter the ranks of the active ministry.

For Editor of the "Christian Guardian"-Rev Mr. Leroy and Judge Jones nominated Rev. Mr Dewart, and Dr. Sanderson nominated Pev. Mr. Sutherland. Result of the ballot-for Mr. Dewart, 132 votes, for Mr. Sutherland, 33 votes. Rev. Mr. Dewart thanked the Conference and

pect to the young people the present system was very objectionable. The Methodist Church was promised to do his work in the future as he had in the past, faithfully, impartially and earnestly. He being out-distanced by other churches in the powasked a continuance of the sympathy and co-perer of interesting the young people and draw them ation of the delegates. into the Church.

For Book Steward of the Eastern section-The nominations were Rev. W. H. Heartz, Rev. J. G. Angwin, Rev. A. W. Nicolson. The first bal-lot resulted as follows:—Whole number of votes cast 149; necessary to a choice 75; Angwin, 36; Nicolson' 42; Heartz, 71; no election. The second ballot resulted as follows :- Whole number of votes cast 165; necessary to a choice 83; Angwin, 3; Nicolson, 23; Heartz, 139. The latter was declared elected.

eloquent than those of other churches, but the Rev. Mr. Heartz thanked the Conference for tinerant system gave their preaching a perennial electing him to the position. He had been nomifreshness and attractiveness that no church could nated against his earnest remonstrance, and whilst boast of. nitherto he had been disposed to yield to the wish-Mr. Kenny said there were some cases which es of his brethren, he must now request permission demanded some little freedom, which the present to consider the matter until Monday morning. system would not admit of.

For Editor of the WESLEYAN-The nominations were : Rev. T. Watson Smith, historian of "Meth odism in Eastern British America," Rev. D. D. Currie, and Rev. A. W. Nicolson. The first ballot resulted as follows;-Whole number of votes cast 158; necessary to a choice,80; Smith 30; Curry, 50; Nicolson, 78.

A second ballot was taken with this result :-Whole number of votes cast, 155; necessary to a pealing the old law and extending the time. choice, 80; Smith, 10; Currie, 50; Nicolson, 95. The latter was declared elected.

liarly one affecting the laity. There were over three thousand congregations in the Church, and Rev. Mr. Nicolson thanked his brethrem for their kindness and confidence in him. He never from all that number only six memorials had had sought the position, and if he had consulted his wishes would never have accepted either the position of book steward or editor, as he was far happier in the sphere of a Methodist minister. When he took charge of the paper five years ago, it had a circulation of 2,400, but at no time since had it had a circulation of less than 3000.

Rev. Mr. Harper said that it was advisable to REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ITINextend the time; some ministers had been preven-ted coming into the church on account of this The Committee on Class Meetings beg to recast-iron rule. He was in favor of extending the

time was certainly not yet.

therefrom. The longer a minister remained in

one place the better acquainted he would become

with the circumstances of individuals and know

how to acquire an influence over them In res-

Mr. Kennedy said that as far as the people were

concerned they were not in favor of a change. The success of Methodism under the present sys-

tem was a guarantee of its excellency, and justifi-ed them in retaining it still longer. Every depar-ture from the present system tended to weaken

the connexional bonds. The extension of time

would weaken those bonds. He did not claim

that Methodist preachers were any better or more

Mr. Norris supported the finding of the Com-

port that the following papers have been referred ime to a fourth or fifth year when desired. Rev. Mr. Wakefield opposed this change, as to them, viz :likely to prove the entering wedge which would

1. A memorial from the Halifax District, Nova Scotia Conference, desiring the General Confer-ence to declare definitely the basis of membership destroy the itinerant system. Dr. Williams favoured the finding of the Committee. The present system worked very well. If there was some man of remarkable talent who in our church. 2. A resolution of the Rev. L. Hooker, of the thought he should stay in a city let him go off to some town, or village, where other people could get the benefit of his preaching part of the time.

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Montreal Conference, referring to ministers who consider it detrimental to the interests of the church to enforce the discipline concerning atten-Dr Fowler said the proposed opening in the itinerant system was large enough to allow a dance at class meetings, and requesting the General Conference to declare what course should be horse and wagon to be drives through it. All the arguments that could be brought in favor of pursued in the case.

Your Committee having carefully considered these papers, and have given their most earnest and prayerful attention to the general subject to which they refer, do not find any sufficient reason to warrant them in recommending any legislation, either on the subject of class meetings, or class meeting attendance.

From the evidence which has been brought be-fore them, they cannot resist the conviction that in some localities, at least, the spiritual interests of individual souls, and the efficiency of the Rev, Mr. Hart said the entering wedge, which which had been spoken of, was entered long ago church, as a soul-saving institution, have suffered much from the irregular attendance of some upon this means of grace, and its habitual neglect by cars. He admitted that not many requests had others; but they are of opinion that these evils cen made for an extension of time, but that was cannot be removed by mending our rules, but by keeping them. What we want is not new machbecause of the attitude of the last Conference on his question, and the hopelessness of success in inery but a more faithful and conscientious use of that which we already possess. What is needed to make the class meeting even a more powerful instrument of usefulness than it has ever yet been, is not, in the opinion of your Committee, the could see no possible harm as likely to result adoption of any new rules, or the alteration of any rule now existing, but greater fidelity on the part of pastors and leaders, and a deeper spirit of consecration on the part of the members of the church.

It was moved in amendment by Rev. W. R. Parker, M. A., and seconded by A. McRoberts, Esq., that inasmuch as the "class meeting" is not specifically named in section 6, page 12, of the discipline in the summary of ordinances, attendance upon which " is expected " of all who desire to continue in our church; and, moreover, inasmuch as it is found impracticable to proceed to the extreme act of excluding from membership for non-attendance upon "class meeting," as enjoin-ed upon page 22, answers 1 and 2, in the discipline, without severing from their chosen and cherished spiritual home, and sacrificing to the Methodist Church many whose constitutional and conscientious difficulties prelude such attendance, but whose Christian character, as evidenced by a

godly conversation and conduct, and by the use of the other means of grace, is such as to establish beyond question their eligibility for membership in the Church of Christ by the test significantly pronounced by our Lord Himself, "By their fruits ve shall know them :

nittee. Look at the subject from whatever point they would, this was class legislation. No one Be it therefore enacted, That question 3, and answers 1 and 2, pages 21 and 22, be left out of the revised editions of the discipline, and thus atwas asking for this change except a few ministers in cities. [Hear, hear.] If the people were asked for their opinion, the President's table would the revised entries of the discipline, and this at tendance upon the "class meeting" be regarded as it is with the prayer-meeting, the expression of a desire "to flee from the wrach to come,' and to "perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord," rather groan with petitions against the change. It was a city church that had been the most active in re-Mr. E. Coatsworth said this matter was pecuthan the evidence of meetness for connection and communion with the Church of God.

In amendment to this amendment it was moved by Rev. H. F. Bland and seconded by Hon. Judge come up asking for a change. The lay element Jones.

of the church were loyal to the itinerancy as well as to the doctrines or the Methodist Church, and 1. That the class-meeting shall be retained as an institution of the church, and recommended as a Christian privilege, but not enforced as a test of they believed fully in the present system. He did not admit the statement that Methodists were as membership. 2. That conformity to our General Rules shall system gave to every Methodist Church its minis be the condition of church membership, and that questions 3 and 4, in pages 21 and 22, relating to the class meeting whall be expunged. 2. That correspondence of the church, whether he meet in class or not, shall be connected with some leader, who shall be responsible for his mor-al and spiritual oversight.

But it should be remembered that we are living in times when the influence of Methodism ship. s being felt by other denominations. When Methodism arose where were the doctrines of sancti-fication and justification by faith? The classmeetings and other fellowship meetings had tend-ed to draw the other churches towards us. It might be answerd, What have we to do with other churches? We have to adopt all means of saving souls which other churches have found successful.

We were also influenced by other churches. For instance, the grand old institution of camp-meetings, where were they now? They were lost, they were with the old backwoods, and now we go to the sea-side and to other places where men do congregate to hold camp-meetings. And that is the great need of the day, to get ahead of the devil, so to speak, and set up the standard where he is likely to be found. The spirit of Methodism was to adapt the methods to the changing necessities of the times, and that is what we are doing in respect to class-meetings. If we were to adopt a cast-iron rule and attempt to bind people to the meetings they would rebel, and would not come to them at all. From his experience he had found that it was utterly impracticable to apply this rule rigidly without eliminating some of our very best men and women who, from conscientious scruples or constitutional difficulties, cannot he got to atend these meetings. He would suggest that the leaders of the class meetings see their members once a week, whether they meet in class or not, and by that means be able to have some oversight of them.

Mr. McRoberts thought we should not keep on our statute book rules that could not be enforced. Those who expressed so great a veneration for the class-meeting test, did so probably because of the traditions and associations connected with it. Last evening when he heard eminent and aged Last evening when he heard eminent and aged brethren express their love for the hymn-book, he was reminded strongly of the truth of the old aged, that "love is blind." (Laughter.) It was dishonor to Methodism to have laws that such dishonor to Methodism to have laws that such yet not be able to enforce those laws. If this rule was rigorously enforced everywhere, how many churches would we have now As a matter of justice, it was wrong to compel him to conform to a condition which his conscience did not approve of, and for which, moreover, there was no Scriptural authority. It was claimed that this was a Scriptural institution, but he had never seen Since the class-meeting was not a diit proved. Since the class-meeting was not a di-vine institution, it should not be imposed upon Christian people. He maintained that men could live a Christian life and love their church and their Saviour as well if they did not attend class-meetings as when they did. He did dot de-sire to see class-meetings abolished, but only to

see attendance upon them rendered optional.

Rev. Mr. Bland said his convictions had been deepening for some years that the class-meeting attendance ought not to be enforced as a test of membership. In point of fact it could not be en-forced consistently with the membership of the Church. He was speaking some time ago to a min-ister whose Church contained about 100 members, of whom only 40 attended class-meeting. "Can't you induce the others to meet also?" he asked, "No," replied the other, " if I insist upon their attendance I shall drive them from the Church." In the English Wesleyan body not more than one half or one-third of the members attended the classes. An eminent minister of that Church, the Rev. Charles Garrett, had stated distinctly that the attendance upon class-meetings in England was no criterion of the Church's prosperity. Dr. Pope, the ex-President of that Conference, had stated similar views. When the rule cannot be enforced it rests very much upon the Superintendent to say who shall be considered as members, and one Superindent might be very strict and another very loose, and one have a rule just the reverse of his predecessor's, which necessarily leads to confusion To many consciencious minds it was painful to be put under the alternative either of breaking a rule of the Church or of suffering painful emb or the church of or suffering painted empartances ment. Where laws are systematically and know-ingly broken it has a tendency to demoralize and weaken the sense of moral obligation, besides placing the whole discipline of the Church within the doubtful region of expediency. Christian fellowship, to be valuable, ought to be spontaneous. Were an attempt made to enforce tho meetings it would probably induce a feeling of repugnance many minds. It had been assumed by some that if the test were abolished the institution would die, but he had no apprehension of that kind. It would be placed upon a new basis, invigorated and re-juvenated. An institution that needed to be buttressed up to stand deserved to go down. But he had no fear of the result to the class meetings. They were not interded to drive but to attract. They derive their inspiration not from Sinai but from Pentecost. In England, where the classmeeting test of membership was retained, the num-bers had decreased 1,600 during the last year; but in the United States, where the test had been abolished, the increase of membership during the year was at the rate of 1,900 per week. He believed if Wesley were living now he would not insist upon class meetings. When some one had objected to them Wesley had stated that they were mere helps to a Christian life, and not a divine institution. Again, the class meeting as a test of membership, operated unjustly upon the young; the opinion was general that young people had no place in the class-meeting, unless they talked well and engaged in prayer, and that is where the difficulty lay. He had a painful impression that thousands of our young people were by this thing driven away from our altar into the world or into other churches. A little boy in this city who regulary meets in class omitted on one occasion to at-Upon being questioned by his father he replied, " No, father I did not go because I did not know what to say different from the weeks before.' God bless the boy ! Let the lambs follow their own instincts in worshipping God. He knew that many true Christian men had been lost to Methodism, because the class-meeting had been to them an impediment. The spirit of the age was opposed to ence adjourned. the class-meeting test, and the spirit of the age, or of any age, was something which no religious leader could ignore. We see that in this country and in this city. If we cannot adapt our institutions to the want of the time we cannot retain our young people; what we would propose was this,--hat every member of the Church should be iden resumedtified with some leader as sub-pastor, who should be responsible for his moral and spiritual oversight, and the leader should see his pupil at least once a week. Rev. Mr. Richardson said that in Wesley's time if a man did not attend the class-meeting he was not excluded from church membership, but to-day, according to our rules, we unchurch him, and he is obliged to go somewhere else. He was in favor of Mr. Bland's amendment. Mr. Washington said the action of this Conference would be watched with intense tnterest by the Methodist people. He believed that all that was wanted was for the ministers to take more interest in the class-meetings and make them more interesting and attractive. If the alternative was squarely placed before the people of attending these meetings or of leaving the Church, he be-lieved they would all attend the meetings. If we relaxed the rule in this respect the consequence would be to lower the type of spirituality in the Church. He hoped the report of the Committee would be adopted, and that no change would be made materially affecting the Church. Mr. Kenny said ne had been a member of the Methodist Church for fifty years. He loved the class-meeting very much, but he would not exalt whenever there was a revival there was a rushing to it above the other means of grace—the prayer meeting and the preaching of the Word. He was glad the Scriptures did not impose any particular form, and that we were left free to choose and to serve God under almost any flag. In the country parts it was impossible to enforce the class meeting law, the people had got shead of it, and in that respect they were more consistent than the law it-self As a means of self-examination the class-

tendance through the year was fourteen. The other class numbered thirty-two, and had an average attendance of twenty-eight. If he were to drop out of his whole membership of one hundred and eighty those who did not attend classes he would have to drop only fifteen. His whole experience went to prove that wherever piety was feeble in the church the attendance upon classmeeting diminished. He would present his views in the following motion :---

"That admission to the Methodist Church of Canada shall be a public acknowledgment of our ford and Saviour Jesus Christ as the only Saviour from all sin, and the expression of a desire to be thus saved, and an intention to strive earnestly to live up to this belief; and that the test of membershall be the regular attendance upon the Lord's Supper, which membership shall not be questioned so long as the life and conduct shall e in harmony with the general rules of our Church

Hon. Mr. Ferrier said his connection with the Methodist Church dated from 1824, and his earliest recollections of that connection was his experience in the class meetings. He fully approved the remarks of the Rev. Mr. Bland. He had been a class-leader for forty two years and had never been able to find that there was a divine warrant for class-meetings. Nor could he find any divine warrant for depriving men of church membership because they had not met in class. It was nothing more than a rule which Wesley had instituted, and which was of great advantage to those who continued in it. If the rule making it a test of membership were expunged, and it was made voluntary, we should have a larger attendance in Montreal than we have at this moment. As it was not a divine institution, it was not right to make it a compulsory test of membership.

rule with reference to attendance at class may, in not a few instances, prove a hindrance rather than a help by imposing on weak consciences a burden which they are not able to bear, and leading to neglect of the ordinance; therefore,

Resolved, That superintendents of churches, in onjunction with the leaders, shall have a discretionary power to admit to the ordinances and privieges, persons who give evidence of a desire to flee from wrath and to be saved from sin, although from conscientious scruples they may not attend classes.'

He said he had been startled by one of the expressions of the mover of the resolution (Mr. Kennedy), to the effect that many persons were already looking out for a loophole of escape from the Church. Had the Methodist Church already come to this, that it was a prison where, from grated windows, pining captives were looking for means of escape. He could not assent to Mr. Kennedy's position that under the head of classmeetings were to be resumed all the conditions of membership to the Church. It had been asked what would Methodism be without class-meetings That was not a fair way of stating the question under discussion. The question should be, What would Methodism be without compulsory attendance upon class-meetings ? He believed it would be very much more prosperous than it is to-day. It had been assumed that this ordinance was a aivine one. Then all the other Christian churches who had not this ordinance were neglecting an essential means of grace. It was an assumption that members of other churches failed to bear one another's burdens, and to have fellowship one with another. He would hesitate very much before bringing so serious a charge against the members of any evangelical church. It may be true that one ground of our success had been our classmeeting system, but here again the groun success was not compulsory attendance upon the elass-meeting, but the class-meeting as it had been in the past, with the rule generally ignored. A brother had said he had no difficulty with his classmeetings; well, that was probably because he had faithfully watched over the members of his church and hunted them up, and not by flaunting in their eyes the threat that, unless they attended the class meeting they would be expelled from the Church. Suppose a family in which once a week, a child is required, under threat of punishment, to tell how much he loves father and mother, and in all probability he would lose altogether the spontane impulse to manifest his love for his parents. For the Church of Christ the terms of membership were happily established by a higher authority than that of man, and it was assuming an awful responsibility to tamper with or tinker those terms of membership. It was a serious thing to take it upon ourselves to exclude from the Church brethren for causes other than those laid down in the Divine Word. If you put upon men restrictions that ought not to be put upon them you at once kindle in their hearts a desire to break away from them. If this imperative clause were removed the influence of the class meetings would be strength-ened for good, and be made a greater power for Methodism than it has ever been before. Rev. Mr. Blackstock explained the grounds upon which the Committee had decided to recommend the change. For himself he thought it was not within the power of this Conference so to alter a fundamental rule of the Chnrch, and we were bound to preserve the class meeting in its integrity. All that could be done to secure the attendance of peeple at class-meetings had been done already. According to the relations borne in the beginning by the class meeting to the church, it was impossible to recognise a person a member of the church who did not also belong to the classmeeting. He deprecated any change, or any agitation for a change. The people had nowhere asked for it, and he believed no general desire existed for a change. He was willing to leave the whole matter to the discretion of the minis-

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## **OCTOBER 5**

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CLASS MEETINGS.

The Conference took up the report of the Com mittee on Itinerancy.

Dr. Sanderson moved, seconded by Kev. Jos. Hart, that any member of Conference transferred shall continue a member of the Conference from which he was transferred until the close of the Conference Session; nevertheless, the Stationing Committee of the Conference to which he is transferred shall have authority to station him at the same time when the ministers and preachers of that Conference are stationed by such Committee.

Rev. Mr. Ryckman moved in amendment that the Transfer Committee itself shall have authori ty to take into consideration the different circumtances of the brethren, and with them fix the date on which the transfer shall take place. Rev. Mr. Ryckman's amendment was carried by a vote of 63 to 44.

Rev. Mr. Keogh moved that the Secretary of the Transfer Committee shall, immediately after as follows: the rising of the Committee, report to the secre-taries of each Conference affecting all transfers to 1855

and from such Conferences, and the date at which such transfers take place-Carried. The Secretary moved that the Committee may transfer ministers for a definite term of six out nine years, such ministers to have the right of returning at the end of the period to the Confer-

ence from which they were transferred, should they so desire. Dr. Williams asked who had a right to originate transfers. There was no provision to prevent a man being transfered with nt his knowing any-

thing about it. Every brother whom it is proposed to transfer should be notified thereof. that he may have an opportunity to state any objections he may have. Upon motion of Rev. Mr. Lathern this matter

was recommitted to the Committee to draw up the desired provisions.

The Committee had received three memorials on the composition and work of the Stationing Committee, aud in reply thereto recommended that no change be made

Rev. Dr. Fowler moved that the Stationing Committee be composed of one representative from each district, elected by the joint vote of the lay and ministerial members of the annual district meetings. He stated that he made this motion in obedience to a general desire on the part of the laity to be represented on those committees. It was better for the Conference to anticipate a request of the laymen by making this change than to wait until they demanded it themselves."

Mr. Kenny failed to see what additional privilege Dr. Fowler was going to give to the laymen that they had not already. The discipline at present allowed laymen to vote for the members of the Stationing Committee.

Mr. Kenny remarked that the ministers took more interest in this matter thanthe laymen themselves. The latter did not desire any more privileges than they already had.

Mr. Junkin moved that there shall be only one member of the Stationing Committee for each District, who shall be the chairman thereof.

Both amendments were lost, and the finding of the Committee was sustained

In respect to the time of ministerial service the Committee had received several memorials in favor of the extension of ministerial service, but after giving careful consideration thereto, and in view of all the interests of the work, the Committee deem it inexpedient to make any change.

Rev. Mr. Stafford moved that each Conforence shall station all the ministers and preachers within its limits according to existing rules, but in exceptional cases any Annual Conference shall have the power, by the majority of two-thirds of those pre-sent, to direct the Stationing Committee to extend the ministers term of service beyond three years. He explained that the existing rules were too vig. orous and frequently caused much inconvenience. ters were held as in a vice in this matter The m and the Church's regulations in this respect were of a cast iron character.

Rev. Mr. Pitcher agreed with the amendment, as the power would then be left in the hands of each Annual Conference, who could judge of the circumstances of each case. The proposition in-fringed no constitutional rule of the church, nor did it interfere with the itineracy,

Rev. Mr. Richardson moved that the Stationing Committee shall have power to extend the term to a fourth year when the official board shall request

successful in gaining the hearts of the young as ministers of other denominations. The itineran

ter, but the same could not be said of the Congre-gationalists, the Presbyterians, or the Baptists, all of whom had vacant congregations that could not be provided for.

Rev. Mr. Bland supported the recommendation of the Committee. He had observed that other denominations, who had a settled pastorate, were ooking towards the itinerancy.

The vote was taken, and both amendments were ost, the recommendation of the Committee being adopted.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON SUPERNA-NUATION FUND. Rev. Dr. Sanderson read the report of the Com-mittee on the Superannuation Fund, from which

these facts are gleaned : The invested capital of the Fund at the present

time is \$54,790,91. During the last four years the annual income from each Conference has been

1876. 1877. 1878. \$7493 \$7862 London \$7146 \$8839 oronto 7738 7970 8206 8417 5453 5819 5526 Montreal 5730 During the past four years 96 ministers and 51 widows received aid from the Fund, divided by Conferences as follows : London, 47 ministers and 19 widows; Toronto, 39 ministers and 22 widows; Montreal. 10 ministers and 10 widows; being an aggregate of 147 recipients. It has been a cause

of deep regret that during each of the past four years superannuated ministers and widows had not been paid the full amount of their legitimate claims, the reduction being so large in some cases as to cause a painful embarassment to the claim-

ants. The following is a list of the principal investments of the Fund : Metropolitan Church, Toron-to, \$1000; John Macdonald, Toronto, \$5000; Toronto Debentures, \$2190; Elm Street Church, Toronto, \$2300; Victoria College, \$7000; Barrie Church, \$2000; Woodgreen Church, Toronto, \$2000; Book-room Ioan, \$9167; Dominion Bank

Deposit, \$1324; commutation account, \$2000. The \$5000 in the hands of Mr. John Macdonald was a sum subscribed by that gentleman, who found it more convenient to pay interest on it until it should be needed. The loans to the Victoria College and to the Barrie Church were drawing eight per cent. interest.

The report was received. The Committee recommend that five per cent of the income be retained, as at present, to be applied to the capital, and that the annual subscriptions of

ministers in the future be \$12 instead of \$10. Rev. T. G. Williams moved, seconded by Rev. Mr. Hansford, that the annual subscription of the ministers and preachers in the active work shall not be less than \$10, and that five per cent of the regular income of the fund shall be added annually to the invested capital only when ten-twelfths of the claims of each claimant have been paid.

Mr. McRoberts said they were at the present time giving two-thirds of the Endowment Fund to claimants, and were only keeping one-third for future claimants. He thought the ministers were not prudent in desiring to decrease their annual contributions to the General Fund.

Rev. Mr. Keogh moved in amendment that five per cent. for investment be taken from that part only of the income which comes from minist subscriptions.

Rev. Mr. Bond was opposed to an increase in the annual payments of ministers. There were many young ministers now in the work who received not more than \$300 or \$400 a year, and with three or four children, who, in some cases, he was sorry to say, had not blead enough to eat. The claimants on the Fund might suffer embar-ressment from not receiving all their claims, but

they did not suffer so much as missionaries and others who had to contribute to that Fund. He moved that the matter remain as at present.

Mr. Keogh's amendment was put and lest, and Mr. Bond's amendment was carried. Rev. Dr. Pickard thought it was hardly fair to apply missionary money to the payment of super-annuated ministers. That money was contributed by the eastern Churches as well as the western, and should not be applied to meet engagements contracted previous to the union, and with which

the castern people had nothing to do. An animated debate took place on this subject n which Prof. Burwash and Rev. Messrs. Sprague Heustis, Po:ts and Sutherland took part. The Conference adjourned at 10.20.

Mr. Waring Kennedv, Toronto, moved the adoption of the Report of the Committee. He said he regretted that the matter had been brought up for discussion in this Conference. It would create an unsettled feeling throughout the whole connexion. Many just now who were kept under the watchful eye of their leader were looking for-ward for a loophole of escape, and even discussion upon this subject would have an injurious effect upon their mind. He considered the class meet-ings as a state of fellowship between the members of the church. Suppose a man gave evidence of a desire to be saved; if he voluntarily withheld himself from the church's fellowship he could not be considered a member thereof. He regarded the class-meeting in its collective capacity as being the Methodist Church. If this system were abolished it would result in the paralysis or death of the church. The class-meeting would become desert-cd and the church would collapse. Laxity in class meeting attendance had led to many things which we deplore, and we need to enforce the rules tenderly yet vigorously. If this were done. rules, tenderly yet vigorously. If this were done, some who were irregular in their attendance in class, if they found they were to be cut off, would improve in this direction. Let us bring our people up to the standard, and not lower the standard to their level and legalize a state of things which we now deplore. No doubt there were many excellent people who would not come into the church because of the class-meetings, but he believed i would be found that they were people who desired to hold the church in one hand and the world in the other. They might go to church on a Sunday evening, but they would go to the opera on a week-day evening. If attendance on class-meet-ings was not insisted on there would be danger of opening the door to admit people who should not be taken in. In most instances where classes were abandoned prayer and family devotion also gave way. There was a numerous class who profess great love for Methodism, who have been baptized and was attend church services, but they were not villing to show their attachment by accepting this ordinance of the church. It was said we should make some concession to these people in order to get them into the church. But why should the

concession be all on our side and none on their side ? We must be careful and not relax the bonds of our discipline. Indeed, our Presbyterian brethren require greater care in preparation for com-munion than we would do if we should abandon the class-meeting test. If we threw open our church offices to those who refused to submit to our discipline and come into our fellowship, that would be a dark and serious day for Methodism. He became a member of a class-meeting at seven years of age and still had in his possession his first class-meeting ticket. He had ever since followed these meetings assidiously, and words could not express how dear to his heart they were and how greatly he had been strengthened spiritually and built up in grace by them. He earnestly hoped

this Conference would not lay its hand upon this precious means of grace, and he would say to them -Woodman, spare that tree,

Touch not a single bough, In youth it sheltered me, And I'll protect it now.

(Applause.) Mr. Lathern seconded Mr. Kennedy's motion to adopt the Report of the Committee.

Rev. Mr. Parker endorsed most of the utterances of Mr. Kennedy. At the same time he thought the present system could be much im-proved to the great benefit of the church. He only sought in his amendment to rende the class-meet ing institution more useful, but not to abolish i ing was to keep together, not the Methodist Church, but a society established in connection with the Methodist Church. At first it existed as a kind of guild within the church and not as the courch itself. When the society became the church then the eircumstances altered, and the provision of the discipling should have been altered too. He regarded it as utterly impracticable for us to enforce the rule without excluding from membership some of our very best men. The condition which our Lord himself laid down was simply this: "By their fruits ye shall know them." It had been said that we were taking down the fence and making the tests for member-

meeting was incomparable, and came the nearest to the institution of the family of anything we have. If the arguments which had been made in favor of revising the hymn-book were made on the class-meeting question they would be decisive. It had been said that there were certainly hymns in that book the people had outgrown, and so it was with this law, the people had outgrown it.

Rev. Mr. Jeffry's experience had been this, that where he infilled the laws of the church he had no difficulty with class meetings. In his own church he conducted two classes of young people. One class had fourteen members, and the average at-

It being now half-past five o'clock the Confer-

## AFTERNOON.

The Conterence met at three o'clock. Rev. Mr. Parker conducted devotional exercises. After the reading of the minutes, the dis-cussion of the question of Class Meetings was

Rev. Mr. Robinson, chairman of the committee on Class Meetings, addressed the Conference. He said they had been invited to have some regard for the spirit of the age? What was the spirit of the age? It was an infidel spirit, a sceptical spirit, and an irreligious spirit, and was not one for us to follow. We have two classes of laws, the common and the statute laws. The first had been created by usage and custom, and many great questions were decided by that law and not by the statute, so with the class meeting question. Because the Discipline did not exact attendance upon class-meetings, that was not a reason for saying that the long established usage in the church, was not to regulate our practice with regard to it. He took it for granted that the New Testament required spiritual fellowship, although it did not literally enjoin classmeetings. How could spiritual fellowship be obtained without class-meetings ? When he was a young man he asked an aged Christian if it was not possible for him to be saved without attending the class-meetings, No, was the answer, and that ans-wer was, under God, the means of his salvation, for it led him into the class-meeting, where he found the Lord. Thirty years ago no one ever objected to whenever there was a revival there was a rushing to the class-meetings. Now he regarded this as a very significant fact. The Secretary of this Conference himself had made an important statement, which was this. So long as there is spiritual life in the Church, the class-meetings will be prized. This was a great concession. Now, if class meet-

ings were so useful spiritually, why should we not render the attendance upon them obligatory? We should tell them that the Gospel requires spiritual fellowship which can only be attained through class-meetings. He would, however, consider all circumstances, and the conscientions convictions of persons, in the administration of his discipline. If the relaxations proposed by some of the amendments before the Conference were adopted, the class meetings would perish. Therefore he supported the report of the committee, and would support the class-meetings to the day of his death.

