

THE ŒCUMENICAL CONFERENCE.

This second Methodist Œcumenical at Washington was a season never to be forgotten by those who were privileged to be present. Ten years ago the first Œcumenical was held in City Road Chapel, London, and many were afraid lest the second would fall below the first in interest. There was no ground to entertain such a fear. The Metropolitan church was crowded to its utmost capacity at all the sessions. On the Sabbath the pulpits of all the churches in the city were occupied by representatives from all parts of the world where the banner of Methodism has been unfurled. The opening sermon was by the Rev. W. Arthur, M.A., author of the "Tongue of Fire," though it was delivered by the Rev. Dr. Stephenson. It was pronounced to be a discourse worthy of the gifted author and the occasion on which it was delivered.

The address of welcome was delivered by Bishop Hurst, who spoke in English, French and German, and responses were made by representatives of Methodism both at home and abroad, among whom was our own beloved Dr. Douglas, who is thus described by Dr. Hoss, in the *Nashville Christian Advocate*: "He is now an old man, badly crippled with rheumatism and nearly or quite blind. But his tongue has not lost its power to charm. He is a magician in the use of words, the perfect master of that rhetorical eloquence which was more common than it is to-day. From beginning to end his address was pitched on a high key, and was listened to with the closest attention."

The representatives from Canada acquitted themselves nobly. Rev. S. F. Huestis took part in the opening exercises. Dr. E. B. Ryckman was one of the Assistant Secretaries. Dr. Briggs and Dr. Dewart delivered addresses on assigned topics. Dr. Carman and Dr. Griffin were members of the Committee of arrangements, and were prominent members throughout. Dr. Carman occupied two pulpits on the Sabbath. Dr. T. G. Williams occupied the

chair at one session, when President Harrison addressed the Conference. The brethren from the Maritime Provinces and from Newfoundland were more than silent spectators.

Rev. Hugh Price Hughes of the "Forward Movement," "Fiji Wilson," Prof. Davison, W. J. Dawson, J. Bond, Dr. Waller, J. C. Clapham and others are men of prominence in the mother country, have now made numerous friends on this side the Atlantic.

The spirit that prevailed at all the sessions was such as might be anticipated from a body of Christian men, "only love inspired the whole." Occasionally it seemed as though the Conference was turned into an immense love-feast. This was especially the case when the question of Union was discussed. "Bishop Foster spoke as though he was inspired." He sighed for the union of the two branches of the Methodist Episcopal Church which separated in 1844. Representatives of all branches of Methodism in the old world hoped that the day of amalgamation was nigh at hand. Who can tell what the outcome may be? God grant that Methodism may more than ever be one throughout the world. The week of prayer before mentioned may be a precursor of closer relationship than now exists.

The chair occupied by the presiding officers of the Council was constructed from two beams of the original City Road Chapel, and a Bible which 150 years ago was in the possession of the Epworth church, and was in use during the pastorate of the Rev. Samuel Wesley, father of John and Charles Wesley, was used from day to day in the opening services.

During the sittings of the Conference the reporters' table was crowded. More than seventy papers were represented, including some of the great dailies. Even "the Thunderer," the *London Times*, which has seldom noticed Methodism, received lengthened reports daily by cable.

The President of the United States attended one session, and gave a grand reception at the White House to the members of the Conference.