

bers of the district meetings, during the transaction of the financial business. Another that the laymen as well as the ministers attending those meetings should vote by ballot in the election of the ministerial representatives to the Stationing Committee. Both these important changes were agreed to.

The motions of which notice had been given had nearly all of them reference to the more convenient and satisfactory despatch of Conference business. Mr. Bedford's motion on the general question, Mr. W. Shaw's as to the mode in which ministers should be selected for Connexional offices, and a motion relating to election of lay members to the members to the various Connexional Committees, were referred to a Committee. A motion by Mr. Bond, that the reports of the different departments should, as far as possible, be printed for the use of the Committees of Review, was agreed to. Other motions were also considered, of which notice will be found elsewhere. Though the consideration of some of these subjects was brief, perhaps the proposals would have desired, yet time was secured for the Conference to come to deliberate conclusion as to what course it was best to adopt on each question. As the President pointed out, in reply to an observation by Mr. Arthur, there has been this year, strictly speaking, no "slaughter of the innocents." At length came the close. The Secretary read over the Minutes, and whilst he was doing so the doors of the chapel were opened, and a number of ladies and gentlemen who had been waiting outside were admitted to the gallery. The proceedings of the British Conference, of the sister Conference of Ireland, and of the affiliated Conferences in France and the Colonies, were solemnly confirmed by the votes of the Hundred, and all the ministers present stood up to witness the official signature of the Minutes by the President and Secretary.

Well-deserved thanks were given to the friends and ministers of Burslem and the neighbourhood for their generous and thoughtful hospitality.

A peculiar solemnity often attaches to the devotion with which the Conference closes. The assembled ministers feel that they cannot all meet again, and the question inevitably suggests itself, "Where place will be empty next year?" The President addressed to his brethren touching words of farewell, of gratitude, of exhortation, and of hope. Part of the 537th Hymn was sung:

Through those we now together came,  
In singleness of heart;  
We met, O Jesus, in thy name,  
And in thy name we part.

Fervent prayer was offered by Mr. Arthur and Dr. Johnson; and then, with many a hearty shake of the hand and earnest benediction, the preachers separated, resolved to work with increased diligence and zeal for the Lord Jesus, and with good hope of his blessing.

## Provincial Wesleyan.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 14, 1870.

### PROTESTANT RACES ADVANCING TO THE FIRST PLACE AMONG THE NATIONS.

The great Franco-German war, fast coming to a close, is certainly not a contest between the rival champions of Protestantism and Roman Catholicism. Neither religious dogmas nor denominational jealousies have had anything whatever to do with bringing on the quarrel which is terminating so disastrously for France, though there are vastly more Protestants than Catholics in the German armies, and greatly more Catholics than Protestants engaged on the side of the French.

Nevertheless, the result of the terrible struggle between France and Prussia will unquestionably tend to widen and strengthen the general influence of Protestantism in the world. The unity of Germany will be assured by the issue of the present war; and, Germany united and consolidated, will very decidedly be the strongest power in Continental Europe. Of such a Germany, Prussia and the other Protestant States associated with her in the great Teutonic Confederation, will be the heart, the brain, and the right hand. The consolidation of Germany around Protestant Prussia would greatly further the work of elevating the chief Protestant races to the highest political position both in the old world and the new. The first power in the old world, say, in the whole world, at present, is the British Empire. Next to the British Empire in the old world till the breaking out of the Franco-German war, stood the French Empire. But it now appears certain that however favourable to France may be the conditions on which peace shall be granted to her by her victorious enemy, and however influential the position of France may be among the family of nations in the future, united Germany will henceforth be generally superior to France. But if the first place in the old world must in the immediate future be awarded to the British and German Empires, the predominant spirit of which is, and will be, Protestant, not less surely must the first position in the new world be conceded to the United States, in which Protestantism is, and forever will be, the prevalent form of religious belief. And if the first position in America is justly claimed by the United States, the second place in the political scale in the new world will speedily belong to British North America. British America is already far in advance of all the Spanish American States, in real power, and the time is not far distant when it will have outstripped Brazil. A highly respectable and influential portion of the British American people is composed of Roman Catholics; but the larger section of the British American population is made up of Protestants. Yearly the Protestant majority, from one cause or another, is sure to become greater and greater. Then, if we look to the Antipodes, we see in Australasia a new power growing up in the ends of the earth, endowed with all the elements of the most advanced degree of Anglo-Saxon civilization, and Protestant to the core.

These are remarkable facts. They have been brought about by a series of surprising occurrences running through many generations. There was a time in the history of Protestantism when it seemed impossible that that form of Christianity should ever attain possession of the highest political places in the world. There was a time when German Protestantism, having en-

dured unpeopled misery and suffered in many localities irreparable losses by the ravages and cruelties of the Thirty Years' War, was exceedingly feeble, and likely to continue so; when French Protestantism, almost destroyed by the dragonnades, and other devices, of that greatest Charlatan of his time, Louis XIV., seemed ready to die; when Britain had given no indication of the pre-eminent position she was destined to reach; when France had the possession of the Mississippi and the St. Lawrence, and seemingly had it in her power by stimulating from among her peasant millions a large immigration to the basins of both rivers to confine the English speaking people of America to the narrow Atlantic slope; when France had an advantageous foothold in Hindoostan with a far better chance of becoming its mistress than anybody could have supposed England to have; when Portugal and Spain ruled supreme over almost all South America, and Spain possessed territory both vast and valuable in North America; and when, in fact, the mastery or at least the first positions in the world seemed in perpetual reserve for the Roman Catholic race.

By what a wonderful series of events the present state of things, so favorable to Protestantism, has been brought about, thoughtful students of history very well know. The hand of Providence in the order and sequence of those events can be most distinctly traced. It is manifestly the will of God that Protestantism should lead the van of modern civilization, and wield the chief political influence among the nations. But high as is the position already achieved by Protestantism, it is our belief that far nobler destinies are in store for it; and although it may not be given to us to witness anything again quite so remarkable in its way as the sudden elevation of Protestant Prussia at the head of a compacted Germany, it is yet quite possible that even in our day other events may occur having for their result the further relative or absolute advancement of the influence of Protestantism in a degree not now deemed practicable by the most hopeful.

J. R. N.

### ENGLISH CORRESPONDENCE.

Conference Gleanings—Public Business—England's Armed Neutrality—Progress of the War.

DEAR MR. EDITOR.—A few items of information concerning the doings of Conference remain, and in the form of "gleanings" are now forwarded.

1. "Rev. Wm. Arthur, M. A."

The Conference would not grant the request made by the Irish Conference for the continuance of Mr. Arthur as Principal of the Belfast College. It is generally understood that Mr. Arthur does not desire to remain longer than to the close of the stipulated period, which will expire at the close of the present Conference year. His presence and distinguished talent cannot well be dispensed with in England, and his return to his old post at the Mission House will be most eagerly welcomed.

2. "Rev. S. D. Waddy, D. D."

The retirement of Dr. Waddy from active Ministerial work received special recognition. He has fulfilled a long and honorable career, and for many years has been one of the foremost men in Methodism. As an Educatorist he achieved at Wesley College, a high renown. As a preacher and pastor he has travelled in the very best Circuits of the Connexion. In Conference he has long been known as an able and fearless debater. His unflinching and powerful use of the English language, and his power of keen repartee, form part of the anecdotes of modern Methodism. Beloved and honored by the aged, as well as by the more youthful part of the Conference, he retires amidst the regret of all, for we have not many such men upon the Conference roll, and 'tis hard to part with them.

3. "The Temperance question."

Not the strictly total abstinence question, but that of the Permissive Bill, and the system of Licensing, has this year received special attention and the finding of Conference upon these important measures will be placed on record in the Minutes. This year in advance is a cause of much satisfaction to the brave and outspoken men who have year by year mentioned these things; and to the Associations which are fighting against the gigantic evils of intemperance.

4. "Lay Representation."

The recommendations of the Irish and French Conferences bearing upon this question were duly considered, and the judgment of the Conference appeared to be, that in the present system of mixed Committees assembling before Conference to review the operations of the past year, and to recommend plans for the future, we had in effect the best form of Lay delegation.

One step was taken in advance in authorizing the election in the Annual District meetings, of the Representative to the Stationing Committee: by the Laymen and ministers, instead of as heretofore by the ministers exclusively. This will not amount to much as in general, the Chairman of Districts is elected, unless he has a place in the Stationing Committee ex officio, when some senior minister receives the honor and the District secures two of its men in this important convocation.

5. The Conference returns to its usual day of meeting, and the Committee days will be again brought down to three, which are adjudged, after the experience of this session, to be ample for the discharge of their work. The extension of time was found to be burdensome, and no real benefit was derived. Hence the return in 1871 to the old periods.

Since the prorogation of Parliament there has been quite a lull in public business. Her Majesty's Ministers have not been able to give any distance for holiday or rest, but are evidently on the alert and night at hand to deliberate upon any contingency that may suddenly arise. It is accounted to be an unwise step upon the part of the Queen to depart so far from the seat of Government and compel her responsible advisers to resort to the extremity of the kingdom and wait upon her in her Balmoral home to obtain her signature to the most ordinary state document.

The times are exceedingly critical, and although England is at present happily free from any embarrassing complications, yet there is a feeling in the air that the material of war, and strenuous efforts are being made to enlist men into Her Majesty's service. There is no immediate or apparent danger, yet such is the lamentable state of affairs on the Continent, that a position of "armed neutrality" is demanded by all parties, and millions of pounds are now being spent in those terrible preparations for possible menace or danger.

In furnishing a brief summary of the events of the Continental war, it must be a narrative of French defeat and disaster. Driven from place to place, beaten in every encounter and retreating towards Paris; the proud Imperial army is terribly shattered. The Emperor has abandoned Metz, and has sought safety by removing nearer to Paris. Marshal Bazaine in attempting to retreat from Metz, has been intercepted by the Prussians, and after terrific encounters extending over three days has been driven back to Metz, and the defeated hosts of France are severed, and their communications cut off. Further south the army of the Crown Prince of Prussia is steadily advancing in a direct line for Paris, and do not intend to try the fortunes of war at Chalons, but press on to strike a blow at the beautiful Capital of France, enthroned on the Seine.

This morning's papers report a further retreat of the French army and the abandonment of Chalons. The Prussian victories are part of the deep and profound gratitude, on Mr. Welton's part, because he had as an antagonist, a "scholar of no mean attainments" is a strained attempt to display confidence, and hide fear. We are sorry, but we cannot help its reminding us, of the straits in keeping up appearances, to which the Parisians are driven, when they announce that the Prussian victories are part of the deep and profound gratitude, on Mr. Welton's part, because he had as an antagonist, a "scholar of no mean attainments" is a strained attempt to display confidence, and hide fear. 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