

LONDON CONFERENCE.

Mr. ELLIOT.—Again we write to you by special appointment of our own, "the London Conference," which in this way has annually desired to express its oneness with the brethren in the Eastern provinces, and its true sympathy with them in their work and labors of love. If we can but be the means of cementing into still closer affection the widely separated portions of our body ecclesiastical, we shall feel amply repaid. The seat of our annual gathering as a Conference was this year the city of St. Catherine's. It is beautifully situated in the garden of the West, thirty-two miles east of Hamilton, and almost if not altogether within the sound of the roar of the famous cataract of Niagara. The two Welland Canals—old and new—flow by it, not only bringing all the inter-lake commerce past its doors but affording unrivalled opportunities for the employment of water power. This must be economically increased by the new canal which is dug down to the level of Lake Erie, and therefore will have an unlimited and uninterrupted supply of water, which the old canal, being twelve feet above the lake level and drawing its water from the Grand River, did not possess. The city itself does not show those signs of prosperity which we would suppose it would as the consequence of the expenditure of the eight millions of money in the section of country of which it is the great centre. A great inflation has been followed by a reaction, but steady progress is sure to be its future history.

The review of seven years, since we last assembled here is suggestive. Then we had two hundred circuits, in ten districts, with three hundred and eleven ministers, and a membership of thirty-five thousand two hundred and seventy-eight. We have now two hundred and thirty-three circuits, thirteen districts, three hundred and thirty ministers, and a membership of about 49,000. Then we contributed \$47,101 to all the Connexion Funds, last year \$55,580, an amount which will be seen to be considerably increased when this year's minutes are in hand.

At the opening of the Conference on Wednesday, June 6th, at 9 a.m., fully two hundred brethren were present, a number which was considerably increased by every incoming train for several days until there must have been nearly three hundred present, the largest number since the old Canada Conference was divided. The vote which put Rev. William R. Parker, M.A., into the presidential chair, was an exceedingly large one, in fact practically unanimous. As his views upon the subject of the Basis of Union were very well known, it was a pleasing tribute of confidence in him. Mr. Parker hardly ranks as yet among the senior of our Conference. Less than thirty years in the ranks of the ministry, he has all the vigor of youth in his appearance and the experience of manhood's zenith in his years. A gentleman of cultured mind, and suavity of manner, who knows how to combine the *suaviter in modo* with the *quiescit in ore*, his skill and impartiality in the chair contrived greatly to the harmony of the Conference during the excitement of the great discussion. (Rev. Donald Sutherland, M.A., D.D., was elected Secretary. He is in no way related to the illustrious Secretary of Missions, Dr. A. Sutherland, but is certainly one of our most rapidly rising men. The son of Captain Sutherland who for so many years was master of the steamship *Monnet*, the most popular boat between Montreal and Hamilton, he was educated for the bar, but when he had completed his course and taken his degree, he was constrained to devote himself to the work of the ministry. It was a pleasing fact that no case of serious delinquency had occurred. Over only three names did Conference pause in its investigation of character. One had not gone according to the letter and spirit of discipline in excluding from membership a troublesome brother. Another had fled from his work and the country under a threat of some charge against him. And a third, which was a case of every day, was of one who had entered very largely into commercial speculation, to the injury of his usefulness and success.

The ordination class, consisting of eleven young men, gave peculiar satisfaction to the Conference. Any church has a right if not to be proud at least to be deeply grateful for such a class. There were the evidences of deep piety, ripened scholarship and a distinctive call to the ministry. Nothing gives greater promise to the future or recommends our theological and classical halls more effectually and sympathizingly than these young men did in their examination and relation of expertise on the occasion of their reception. It is a pleasing circumstance that not only does not interfering liquor trouble us, but even the using of tobacco is getting to be a thing almost unknown among us. The Conference paused long over the question, "Who has died?" There was Lewis Warner, the pioneer bishop, who has called out more young men than any other chairman, who had passed on of the Huron a week or thirty years ago and mapped it out for the church and furnished it with men and planted it with churches, who, when superannuated, travelled on his knees, no home lecturing on temperance, preaching, until he ceased at once to work and live; and Hamilton Biggar, entering the ministry in the year in which your correspondent entered upon his, a connecting link between the historic past and the present. When he entered the ranks there were only thirty-six ministers and three districts in "Upper

Canada," and eight thousand six hundred and forty-five members, he was Secretary of Conference in 1845, and Treasurer of Victoria College in 46 and 47 and Joseph Shepley, beloved by all, and Edwin Sibley, full of youth and manly vigor, cut down in the midst of his days by being thrown from his buggy, and two or three others less known. Immediately following the former question came up the subject of the Basis of Union, already had there been some exhibitions of feeling upon the subject, but divided state of feeling upon the subject. A memorial from the Hamilton and London districts, addressed to the Basis and a petition from forty-one ministers' widows asking the Conference to guard their interests, excited much comment, some wanting to know whether the memorials came from the first or second day of the district meetings. An editorial in the *Canadian* pointing out the statements in a convention held at the residence of Episcopal Methodist adherents to Union, produced much alarm. It was remarkable, however, that almost immediately afterwards Dr. Stone, a leading advocate of Union among the M.E.'s, was introduced and spent a day or two among us. The Memorial committee reported, and recommended the Conference seriously to consider the Basis involved. The *Globe* says the reading was followed by peals of laughter; if so we did not hear it; we did hear a sneering remark and observed a slight ripple. The recommendation being moved and seconded, the mover and seconder declining to speak, Dr. Ryckman moved the acceptance of the Basis, as formulated by the Union Committee. He supported his motion by an earnest and eloquent speech of two hours. Everything that could be said in favor of its adoption seem to have been advanced by him, while objection to its adoption from a legal point of view was anticipated by a proviso in his resolution "that, if it be found after consulting the best legal authority, that there are legal impediments in the way, action shall be delayed until such impediments are removed." Mr. Gray (ex-President) seconded the motion but deferred his speech. Dr. Williams then delivered a speech of great earnestness. He dwelt on the present great prosperity of the church, the impossibility of blending the discordant views of the different churches proposing to unite. The fact that Dr. Ryckman had had to tack on a rider to his resolution he humorously spoke of. He pointed to the fact that the restrictive rules were not incorporated in the Basis, which would make the general Conference absolute over our doctrine and discipline. He said that Conferees might sweep away by a two-thirds vote our class meetings, and there would be no appeal. The ministers had no remedy, if this basis was accepted, they must receive all the General Conference was pleased to make law. The basis would destroy our Annual Pastoral Conferences we could have no more gatherings like the present. He urged that before such changes be made, every member of the church above 16 years of age, vote upon it. His declaration of opinion and stated that a great level sent word that they would not receive their minister for the third term because he was opposed to the Basis of Union. There was great excitement during his address; he saw nothing in the basis but elements of discord.

He concluded by moving the following amendment: "Whereas the sympathy of this Conference is hearty accord with the movement for organic union of the different Methodist bodies of this country, provided a basis can be arrived at that will carry the cordials and sentiment of the ministers and members of the Churches proposing to unite. Whereas the General Conference of 1882 did declare itself favorable, for the sake of union, to the principle of general superintendence, provided the power and duties of the office be so defined as to prevent interference with the duties and powers of the Annual Conference officers and of the Church Courts. Whereas the basis contemplates the formation of a General Conference with unrestricted powers of legislation, and Annual Conferences demarcation of the rights and privileges now enjoyed by the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Church of Canada, and further contemplates and recommends the creation of officers, general superintendents, with powers and functions at variance with the principle laid down by the General Conference; that the uncertainty and looseness of the financial arrangements and the exposure of the right to our church property to expensive and vexatious litigation, and the want of completion in the points necessary to the peace and well-doing of the Church, are such as to require a more careful adjustment than the basis presented. Therefore, Resolved, That this Conference cannot accept the basis presented by the Union Committee, but loyally expresses its willingness to accept a basis in harmony with the special resolution of the General Conference.

Rev. W. Williams seconded the amendment. The debate which followed, and which was continued till after one o'clock on Friday morning, was the most animated and earnest one we have ever listened to—through our memory dates back to thirty years experience in the Conference. I think we were all disappointed by the speech of Dr. Ryckman's seconder.

Yours truly,
H. R. R. S.

A BRUTAL DEED.

Cells in the New York penitentiary probably await the young Medoces who so brutally, criminally, and perhaps fatally mutilated, wounded, and outraged two theological students in Hamilton Theological seminary last week. The students who were to be "hazed" had their rooms broken open at midnight, were compelled to dress and be gagged, taken in a close carriage to a little country village, where a hall had already been hired for the orgies. Two large barrels were prepared with nails driven into them from the outside, the nails protruding into the interior about an inch. Into these the young men were placed, and the barrels headed up. The barrels were then rolled over the floor from one end of the hall to the other, and over a fire which was burning. At last the barrels were rolled down stairs into the street, the young men inside calling loudly for help. The ladders fired pistols, yelled, and behaved much like the James railroad-traders and bandits, frightening off everyone who, hearing the cries of the imprisoned victims, made efforts to rescue them. Their efforts were finally successful. The young men were taken on bleeding and their wounds nearly healed. The collegiate bandits, scoundrels, and savages then retreated, and in retaliation for the rescue of their victims broke every street lamp and destroyed other valuable property. The civil and criminal law should be invoked against such villains to send them where they may be secured from the repetition of another crime of the kind.—*Chicago Advocate.*

PRAYING MACHINES.

The Rev. J. G. Gour, an English missionary to India, has just returned to London, and relates some interesting facts about the Indian praying-machines. Printed prayers are put into a wheel, and the person who wishes to pray then simply has to turn a handle attached to the wheel and the prayers are considered to be duly offered. The Mongols have patent praying-machines; and oftentimes the aged grandfather, who is unfit for any other work, is set to grinding out the prayers for the whole family. But a better device even than this is now commonly adopted. The praying-machine, fitted with the requisite prayers, is connected with a wind-mill, which turns them safely and expeditiously, thus saving all hand labor. Clock-work has also recently been utilized to drive a cylinder filled with prayers covering all possible human needs. These facts show that the dreamy Oriental has in his nature a larger strain of the practical than he is generally credited with.

MEMORIAL NOTICES.

Wm. RHEBERG, CHARLOTTETOWN. While perusing I have heard of the death of William Shepherd, Esq., of Charlottetown, P. E. Island. It was my privilege to be connected, for some length of time, with both his Bible and Society Class. He was an excellent and efficient teacher and leader—well qualified in every particular. I shall never forget his able expositions of Scripture and the burning earnestness with which he would exhort his class, and particularly the young men, to immediate decision for Christ and a life of holiness, through faith in His Son. I always felt when coming into contact with him that I was in the presence of a man of mighty faith and ripe Christian experience. He had a warm Christian heart, and took a deep interest in all who attended his classes, and these I am sure left with a profound respect, if not a real love, for their leader.

I am informed that his death was gloriously triumphant. How could it be otherwise after such a truly godly life? A favorite hymn in his class meetings was, "I'll praise my Maker while I've breath." And so he did, even in the midst of most severely suffering. And now beyond the veil, which weak eyes of flesh are not able to pierce, he praises his Maker in a nobler, sweeter song, for with angels, archangels, and all the heavenly host, he unites in that everlasting song which rolls up before the throne: "Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might be unto our God forever and ever."

Last July, when visiting friends on P. E. Island, in conversation with Mr. Shepherd, he said, "Well, brother, you are going a long distance; we shall not likely meet again, but if not we shall meet 'beyond the river.' May God enable us to be faithful and we shall surely meet again."
S. E. COLWILL, Archibald, Man. June 15th, 1883.

ST. STEPHEN DISTRICT.

The annual meeting of the St. Stephen District opened on Tuesday, June 19th, at St. Andrews, Rev. R. Duncan in the chair. All the preachers of the District were present, and several of the Recording Stewards at the time appointed for them. A. Lucas was elected Secretary, and C. H. Manston was chosen Ass't Secretary. The work of the year was shown to have been one of a considerable degree of encouragement.

There have been many conversions during the year; and although on account of removals, etc., the District reports no increase of full members, there is a number reported on trial. Reports of our various Connexion funds show an increase in most of them. In the evening a public educational meeting was held, presided over by the chairman, and addressed by some of the other members of the District.

The District closed at nine on the

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