

Religious and Missionary Intelligence.

OPENING OF THE WESLEYAN CONFERENCE.

(From the London Watchman) WEDNESDAY, JULY 27.

Last week, we reported the opening of the Conference, and its preliminary proceedings, in filling up the vacancies in the "Logg" hundred, choosing the Rev. John Hannah, D. D., as President, and the Rev. Robert Newton, as Secretary. From twelve to one o'clock, a Public Prayer-meeting was held in the Conference Chapel, (City-road,) which was very numerously attended; after which, the business of the Conference proceeded in the usual manner.

On the motion of the Ex-President, the Rev. James Dixon, seconded by the Rev. Robert Newton, a dutiful and loyal Address was voted to her Majesty the Queen, on her recent escape from assassination. Addresses on the same subject were also voted to Prince Albert, and the Duchess of Kent.

The Rev. William Burton was re-appointed Journal-Secretary, and the Rev. Isaac Keeling, Sub-secretary. The Rev. John Bowers not being able to attend at the beginning of the Conference through indisposition, the Rev. John Farrar was chosen to be Sub-secretary in his place. The Rev. Richard Waddy, and Rev. Samuel Jackson, were re-appointed Official-Letter-writers, and the Rev. Abraham E. Farrar was appointed to the same office in the place of the Rev. John Farrar.

On the motion of the Rev. George Marsden, seconded by the Rev. Richard Reece, the thanks of the Conference were voted to the Rev. James Dixon, the Ex-President, for the able and judicious manner in which he had discharged the duties of his office. The thanks of the Conference were likewise given to the late Secretary, the Sub-secretaries, and the Journal Secretary, and to the official-letter-writers.

The Rev. Messrs. William Stewart, Thomas Waugh, and Fossey Packeberry, were introduced to the Conference by the Rev. Robert Newton, as the representatives of the Irish Conference. He also stated that they were accompanied by "their old and valued friend, the Rev. William Ferguson." They were affectionately welcomed, in the name of the Conference, by the President, to whom the Rev. Thomas Waugh replied, on behalf of himself and brethren. . . . The Address of the Irish to the British Conference was then read. As this interesting document will be published, as usual, in the Annual Minutes of the Conference, we offer no remarks upon it at present. In our account of the Irish Conference we have already stated that the Wesleyan Societies in Ireland have during the year lost no fewer than Eight Hundred and Sixty-nine members by Emigration; though these, it is hoped, will be found to the general cause of Wesleyan Methodism, or at least, to that of a sound Protestant Christianity, in other parts of the world.

The Rev. John Scott and the Rev. Peter McOwan were appointed as the Committee to prepare an answer to this Address, to be laid before the Conference. The Conference then proceeded to the usual business, according to the order observed in the Questions and Answers of the printed Minutes; the first question being—"What Preachers are this year admitted into full connexion with the Conference?" The different districts were called over, and the names taken down. The same method was observed in relation to the question immediately succeeding, namely—"What Preachers remain on trial?"—as having travelled respectively, Three years.—Two,—and One.—For each year, the districts were called over, and the names taken down. The third question was, "What Preachers are now received on trial?"—in reference to which the same method was observed. These inquiries—with what may be termed one or two intervening casualties—occupied the Conference from Wednesday afternoon till the close of the Saturday's sitting.

In the course of Thursday, the Rev. Richard Reece introduced to the Conference the Rev. Joshua Soule, D. D., one of the Bishops of the Wesleyan Episcopal Church in the United States, as Representative of the General Wesleyan Conference in America, together with his travel-

ling Companion, the Rev. Thomas Sargent. After Dr. Hannah had bid the Bishop and his esteemed companion welcome on behalf of the Conference, as well as for himself, Bishop Soule spoke at some length, thanking the Conference for the affectionate welcome which he had received, and giving a general statistical account of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, and also of their domestic and missionary operation. The Conference was likewise briefly addressed by the Rev. Thomas Sargent.

MONDAY.

The Conference did not sit on Monday, in consequence of the public religious service held on the forenoon of that day, in the City Road Chapel,—the preachers sitting in their usual places, and the remaining portion of that Chapel being occupied by the very large congregation which attended. The Ex-President, (according to the regulation of a former Conference,) preached on the occasion. The Public Examination of the Young Men, of which we shall give some account next week, commenced in the evening.

TUESDAY.

On Tuesday morning, before the business of the day was commenced, the President was requested, by an unanimous vote, to publish the sermon which he preached at City Road Chapel on Sunday forenoon; the Ex-President was likewise, by a similar vote, requested to publish the one which he delivered on Monday.

The Conference then entered upon the business which came next before it in point of order, and which is always felt by the assembled ministers to be one of a very melancholy interest. The question was,— "What Preachers have died since the last Conference?" The names of the several districts being called over, it appeared that Twenty-three have died in Great Britain and Eight upon Foreign Missionary Stations. The names of the twenty-three in Great Britain are these:—

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| John Callaway. | William Jones. |
| Donald M. R. Coghill. | Edward Milward. |
| Joseph Collier. | Charles Rawlins. |
| Jonathan Edmondson, sen. | Samuel Sewell. |
| Nathaniel Elliott. | John Straw. |
| Joseph Entwistle, sen. | John Taylor. |
| Thomas Furze. | Elias Thomas. |
| William Gilpin. | John Walmsley. |
| Edmund Geindrod. | George Warren. |
| Lilla Hall. | John Wheelhouse. |
| John Henley. | Edward Wilson. |
| William Howarth. | |

Those of the eight on the foreign stations:—

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| Charles Bates. | William Redfern. |
| Wilson Lathhouse. | Henry J. Wyatt. |
| William Walden. | James Goodricke. |
| John Cameron. | William Thackeray. |

Of these ministers, the usual obituary memorials were furnished by their respective District Committees for insertion in the Conference Journal. They will be found, also, in the "Annual Minutes" published immediately after Conference.

This record of mortality being completed, the Conference entered on the regular and annually-made inquiry touching the character of the ministers in connexion with it, or on trial for such connexion. For this purpose the name of every minister is read by the Secretary, in relation to the Question, found annually in the published Minutes,— "Are there any objections to any of our Preachers?"—This examination was not concluded when the hour of adjournment arrived.

WEDNESDAY, AUG. 3.

The earlier part of the session was devoted to the continuation of the usual annual inquiry concerning the character of the Wesleyan Ministers. Soon after this was concluded, a Prussian clergyman, (from Potsdam,) the Rev. Mr. SYDOW, together with the Rev. Dr. STEINKOPF, were introduced to the Conference by the Rev. Dr. BRISTOL. The President received and welcomed them in the name of the Conference.

Dr. STEINKOPF then addressed the Conference for a short time. He said that he had, of course, been long acquainted with the labours and operations of the Wesleyan Societies in various parts of the world, and that he had often rejoiced in spirit on noticing, or hearing of, the benefits which those operations had been made instrumental in producing, through the blessing of their common Lord and Saviour. The Doctor then adverted to the change that had taken place in this country, within the last century, in regard to religion, and to the fact, that in effecting that change, it had pleased God to raise up and employ that great and

good man, John Wesley, with his excellent brother. The Doctor likewise remarked that, though the Continent had long lingered behind, yet that a movement had at length taken place, and that true religion, though it had many opponents, and great hindrances, was nevertheless advancing. The Doctor trusted that it would advance yet more and more; and that Christians would increase in love towards each other, and to all men, so that brotherly love might abound in the church, healing all its divisions, and true religion spread in the world, remedying all its evils. The Doctor's address was characterised by genuine Christian simplicity and feeling, and great spirituality. He concluded by adopting the solemn prayer of St. Paul, (Ephes. iii. 14-19,) applying it to his auditors—"I pray the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man: that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God."

On the conclusion of Dr. Steinkopf's address,—which evidently produced a deep and pleasing impression on all who heard it,—the President, turning to Mr. Sydow, said that he was sure the Conference would be glad to listen to him, as they had listened to the venerable, and much esteemed minister who had just sat down. He added, that both himself and his brethren would be the more gratified to receive accounts of the state and progress of religion, on the Continent generally, but especially in Germany, because they could not forget that it had pleased Almighty God to make certain Germans the instruments of spiritual good to Mr. Wesley on his voyage to Georgia; and likewise that after his return to England, a German minister,—Peter Bohler,—greatly instructed him as to the true nature and results of justifying faith; that, indeed, it was while "one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans," at a religious meeting in Aldersgate-street, London, that Mr. Wesley was made, personally, a partaker of the pardoning mercy of God, being enabled to "trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation." What Mr. Wesley had thus learned and experienced, he preached to others; and by means of this preaching, the Wesleyan Societies had been gathered and united. He repeated that they therefore naturally looked towards Germany with great interest, and that they would thankfully receive any information concerning its religious condition and prospects which Mr. Sydow might be able to communicate to them.

Mr. Sydow then addressed the Conference. He said that he should be more willing to speak, if his knowledge of the English language were more accurate and extensive. He feared that he might not be able to make himself understood, and that he might feel at a loss sometimes, in regard to the words which he ought to use for the purpose of conveying to them exactly what he wanted to say. He would, however, do his best, and he was sure they would excuse the unavoidable deficiencies of his address. Mr. Sydow then adverted to what had been the condition of Germany, in regard to religion and morals, especially during the past century. Error, under almost every form, had generally prevailed, and through many of them, men lived without God in the world. There were the Naturalists, who saw nothing but that which was obvious to their senses, or, as they considered, directly to be inferred from it. Others talked indeed of a God, but were not less atheistical than the others. The Pantheists proposed a sort of universal life, as composed of the countless multitudes of individual lives; but they acknowledged no living, personal God, distinct from his creatures, preserving and governing them. Then they had the Rationalists, who strangely connected themselves with the religion whose foundations they undermined. From the Bible they took away all inspiration, and from its recorded facts, everything supernatural and miraculous. And in this way had infidelity spread most widely, while very little was known of spiritual religion, even where all belief in Christianity had not been cast away. But, (proceeded Mr.

Sydow,) within the last twenty or thirty years particularly, a very different, and a much happier, state of things, had been revived. Religious belief was more common. The seats of learning were not abandoned to Rationalism. Men of learning were not ashamed of Christianity, and of Christianity as a supernatural religion. Nor was this all. He was happy to say, that the change of which he had spoken not only included religious belief, but what was truly and properly spiritual religion. And it was a remarkable circumstance, that this had taken place very decidedly among the more educated classes. Infidelity was sinking very low. He did not mean that there was merely a profession of Christianity; there was the true fear of God. The late King of Prussia, he said, had been very desirous of erecting a barrier against Infidelity, Neology, and popery. And so was their present Sovereign, who was himself very anxious to witness the prosperity of true religion,—the religion, he meant, of faith and hope. And he did witness it,—he saw it spreading among single persons,—and among the younger ministers, a great change was perceptible. Mr. Sydow said that he could, with great truth, use the expression—our pious King; that the present monarch of Prussia wished to see the spread of personal religion as having himself experienced its influence. He trusted that the churches on the Continent would become increasingly spiritual. He said that the President had kindly referred to the beneficial influence of a German clergyman on the mind of Mr. Wesley in an early stage of his religious proceedings. He could assure the Conference that both in Germany and in Prussia their proceedings were in their turn exerting a beneficial influence. They, too, he said, had their religious institutions and societies. Their eyes were fixed on the excellent pattern furnished them by English Christians, and he hoped that they, too, were labouring to promote the kingdom of Christ, and the glory of God among men. He might add that they were neither ignorant of the proceedings of the Wesleyans, nor unmindful of them; that they had translations of some of Mr. Wesley's works, and likewise of the volume which had been published on the occasion of their Centenary, and that these had not been in vain. He had heard the piety of some called Methodistical piety, because they had laid stress on Justification and Regeneration, and asserted the necessity of the work of the Holy Spirit. For this he desired to thank God;—he likewise thanked those to whom he was speaking. He trusted that religion would prosper more and more. He again thanked the Conference for their kind attention to him, and said that could he have addressed them more readily, he should have been glad to have entered upon many particulars for the purpose of showing them that the work of God had revived, and was still going on.

Mr. Sydow's address was listened to with marked attention, and evidently occasioned much pleasure.

Afterwards, a few Committees were appointed, and at the usual hour, the Conference adjourned.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 4.

The Conference received the reports of some Committees, and entered upon the inquiries respecting "Alterations in Circuits," and "the Appointment of additional Ministers." . . . After the various cases had been decided which these inquiries brought out, in consequence of the change rendered necessary in the editorial department, by the removal of the Rev. Thomas Jackson, who had so long and ably discharged the duties of the office, to the Theological Tutorship in one branch of the Theological Institution, the Conference inquired whether the Editorship at present required the appointment of an Assistant, (as well as a principal Editor. The hour of adjournment arrived before the examination was concluded.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 5.

After the session had been opened in the usual way, the Reports of several Committees were presented, and the business arising out of them respectively was discussed and decided, the question relating to the editorial department was resumed, and after various explanations and remarks, it was unanimously agreed that it was necessary that there should be an Assistant Editor. Subsequently, the Committee which had been named for the purpose of considering what Minister should be appointed