human race, and be fatal to the planet and all the works therein. It cannot but be a startling fact for us that in yonder doomed distant world we have, probably, seen in our day a realization of the fearful picture sketched by Peter, 'when the heavens (or atmosphere) being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements will melt with fervent heat.' And if we regard it as the centre of a system, it is impossible to think without horror, of the fate of numerous globes around it when overwhelmed with a sudden deluge of light and caloric.—*British Quarterly Review.*

Provincial Wesleyan.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTM'R. 1, 1869.

The Hull Conference.

We have studied the various reports of the proceedings of the British Wesleyan Conference of this year assembling at Hull, which have fallen into our hands with great interest and satisfaction. The general tone of the discussions both in the Preparatory Committees and in Conference has been of an exceedingly free, frank and manly character. There seems to have been an honest, honorable and fearless interchange of sentiment on all the subjects that came up for consideration. The reading of these ecclesiastical debates has been a healthful bracing mental exercise to us.

We have been particularly gratified with the reported debates in the Preparatory Committees. These Committees our readers are probably aware, are composed of ministers and laymen. The ministers on the Committees always comprise in their number some of the ablest men in the Conference. The lay members are selected from the elite of the Methodist laity. Some of these gentlemen are not only men of high character and wealth, they are also men of education and marked ability. Occupying very different positions, identified with very different interests, coming from widely separated parts of the kingdom, and surveying the subjects successively brought up for consideration from different standpoints, they bring to the discussions in which they take part much freshness and variety of thought. We do not think by any means that the clerical element appears to disadvantage in those Committees. The fact is otherwise. Nor is that matter of surprise. For the ablest men of the British Conference are to be classed among the ablest men in the Empire, they would have forced their way by right to the front rank in any body of men among whom their lot might have been cast. Nevertheless, the part the laymen sustain in those mixed Committees is a most important one, and the suggestions they frequently make are of great practical value. Unless we greatly mistake the tendency of the times, these mixed Preparatory Committees are destined to assume still greater importance in the future working of British Methodism than even at present. The prospect is to be regarded with unmingled hopefulness.

The various interests of British Methodism seem to be, upon the whole, in a highly prosperous condition. There has been a gratifying increase during the year of more than 3,000 in the membership. The Home Mission movement is proving to be a glorious success, that movement is predestined, we believe, most favorably to affect the whole spirit of British Methodism. In this connection we may mention that that most princely man, Sir Francis Lycett, to whom London Methodism especially is already so deeply indebted, and who is always devising liberal things for the extension of Christ's cause, pledged himself to pay £300 a year in support of another new Home Mission enterprise to be undertaken forthwith in a spiritually destitute part of the great metropolis.

From the reports submitted we should infer that the several Theological Colleges are in a most efficient condition—well manned, well pupilled and free from pecuniary embarrassment. The energy, zeal, and evangelical spirit of the students in these Colleges are warmly commended. All this is gratifying in a high degree.

The Childrens' Fund was found to be in a condition of almost unexampled prosperity. After paying all claims, there was found to be a balance on hand of more than £1200, we think. The Day and Sabbath School enterprises were ascertained to be making healthful progress. At the moment of writing, we have not seen the reports of other departments of Connexional work.

But what has thus far pleased us most in the report of the proceedings of Conference that has met our eye is the multiplied evidence afforded of the animating presence of the old Methodist spirit—the manful, courageous, earnest, hearty spirit of work for God. We have not caught in the report the echoes of any lisping utterances of sentimental namby pambyism. No sign of embroidered clerical millinery. No scented cambric-handkerchief oratory. But life in earnest throbbing strong in the manly anglo-saxon bosom, and rolling out in words of intensely earnest common sense.

The tides of feeling have risen very high in the Conference heart at times during the session. That was a touching scene when Frederick James Jobson, having been elected by the free suffrage of his brethren to the highest position in Methodism, and being summoned to take the Chair, humbly knelt in silent invocation for the anointing of the Divine Spirit to fit him for the faithful discharge of the functions of his great office. As might be expected from such a beginning, Dr. Jobson's inaugural address from the chair was a noble toned production.

The Conference Love-feast was a season of unusual power. What a sight that was, to see under the portico and on the broad steps leading to the threshold of the great chapel, the departing congregation pausing in the open air to chaunt in unison with irrepressible feelings the doxology to the Triune God!

Then the two great sermons of the first Conference Sabbath—in the morning by the Ex-President, Mr. Hall,—in the evening, by the President, Dr. Jobson,—sermons that were better than oratory a thousand-fold, clothed with power, melting with divine unction. How good it must have been to hear them! And what a blessed thing it was that after the evening sermon there was held a glorious prayer-meeting of the primitive Methodist order, marked by the subduing influences of the Holy Spirit, with many penitent souls seeking reconciliation at the foot of the cross, and souls stepping into the liberty of the sons of God. Would that our Conference Sabbaths were characterized by a like outburst of power, and closed with a similar ingathering of ransomed souls to the Redeemer's fold! The ordination of eighty-five young men to the work of the ministry at this Conference is a memorable and encouraging event.—They who heard the Ex-President's charge delivered to a part of the young men ordained will never forget it. Even as imperfectly reported, it stirs the blood like the blast of a bugle sounding the charge. Full of manfline vigour and directness, its blows strike the nail fair upon the head with tremendous force. Delivered with intense earnestness, and accompanied with an overpowering influence, we can well believe the *Recorder* that long before the charge was completed there was scarcely a dry eye in the immense congregation that hung breathless upon the words of the speaker. Some exception was taken, we observe, to the manner in which Mr. Hall presented a few of his points; and perhaps they were somewhat strongly put. But such a manly, whole one, searching, faithful and fearless address cannot but be productive of very great good to Methodism at large in the United Kingdom. It was a most timely and practical deliverance.

We were struck with the solemnity and unusual deliberation with which the death-roll of the year was called at the appointed time at this Conference. How reverently the Conference touched the ashes of the dead! How tenderly they lingered around the memories of departed excellence!

But indeed, as we have already said, the tone, the spirit of the Conference was remarkably fine. We have never felt more confident concerning the glorious future in reserve for English Methodism than since reading the reports of the proceedings of this Conference. On the importance of earnest pastoral visitation; the necessity of direct, soul-saving effort in the pulpit and out of it; the duty of the Church in attempting the evangelization of the masses; the essential value of Christian fellowship, as sustained and fostered by the Class-meeting, and the desirability of bringing into complete exercise the full power of work lying latent in British Methodism—the tone seemed to be all that one could wish for.

Year by year they are by death losing some eminent men. But the succession is kept up.—True, they have no minstrel like Charles Wesley; no one great many-sided man like John; no intellect precisely equal to that of Richard Watson; no voice perhaps like that of Robert Newton. But they have a long list of most admirable men. They have George Osborne, William Arthur, Charles Prest, Samuel Romilly Hall, John Bedford, William Shaw, J. H Rigg, Dr. Waddy, Dr. Jobson, and many others,—men fit to stand before Kings. The venerable Dr. Hoole survives. Morley Punshon is not lost to Methodism because he is in Canada: and Morley Punshon would have stood as high in the days of Watson and Clarke as now. Methodism never had a more unique and beautiful talker than Samuel Coley; and Vasey, and Nightingale, and Alexander Macauley are not unworthy to be mentioned in the same breath with Bramwell, Stoner, and John Smith. To us it seems manifest that English Methodism is renewing its strength, and getting a new baptism and a fresh consecration for the work assigned to it in the providence of God. J. R. N.

Charles Wesley's Hymns.

2.—METRICAL EXCELLENCE.

Variety of metre in the hymns of Charles Wesley constitutes a distinctive feature. A comparison with any other author of church song will make this clear at a glance. The critical and practical value of this variety is in the harmony subsisting between thought and metrical expression. They exemplify fully the acknowledged canon of lyrical literature; "each stanza should be a poetical tune played down to the last note;' and they have preeminently the excellence which Isaac Taylor deems essential to good hymns; "rhythm, rhime and music."

It would be impossible, without irreparable injury to alter the metrical structure of Toplady's "Rock of Ages," or Oliver's fine hymn "The God of Abraham praise." In all such compositions there is an exquisite adaptation of cadence to thought. Charles Wesley had an ear for melody, as well as poetic fire, and his musical genius was consecrated to the cause of sacred song. "The sweetest of all the sweet singers of our whole Christian Israel," was the glorious eulogy of Montgomery in his critique on his hymn *Catholic Love.* Thought of the most elevated kind and language of terseness and strength are poured forth in strains of choicest harmony and in sounds of sweetest melody. In measures solemn and subdued—

'O thou to whose all searching sight,
The darkness shineth as the light.'

Or buoyant and exhilerating,

'How happy are we who in Jesus agree
To expect his return from above.'

Or in measures that stir the soul as the march of battle song,—

'Come on my partners in distress,
My comrades through the wilderness
Who still your bodies feel;'

How perfect the correspondence, and how clear the chime, between sound and sense—between music and theme.

In the section "describing heaven," we have hymns, of almost unrivalled excellence, which furnish a good illustration of the adaptation of cadence and harmony to theme and thought. Such is the exquisite hymn,—

'Away with our sorrow and fear
We soon shall recover our home.'

How beautiful the transition from sorrow and fear with which the first stanza commences to the vision of golden splendour on which the eye rests at its close—

'From earth we shall quickly remove
And mount to our native abode;
The house of our Father above,
The palace of angels and God.'

In almost all these hymns the last line of each stanza forms a climax and, as in the line just given, sweetly lingers upon the ear as if some musical voice still softly murmured, "*The palace of angels and God.*"

The correspondence of metrical expression with the subject—the chime and cadence with the thought and mental impression—is exhibited in that magnificent lyric, said by a writer in Blackwood to be the finest in the English language—

'Stand the omnipotent decree,
Jehovah's will be done.'

This noble hymn was written in a time of great agitation. London had been shaken by an earthquake, and many feared that nature's end was fast approaching; but, as expressive of the security of the righteous man, Wesley wrote in a strain of exulting confidence, lofty and solemn as the trump of God—

Lo! the heavenly Spirit towers,
Like flame, o'er nature's funeral pyre,
Triumph's in immortal powers,
And claps his wings of fire!

Comparison has been instituted, with but little of critical acumen, between Charles Wesley, as "the poet of sensuous feeling," taking the place in the sanctuary "that Byron takes amongst those who are not of the Christian church," and John Keble, who, as representing the highest culture, is to the church, "what Tennyson is to all of this age, whether of Christ or not—the poet of lofty spirituality." They have however little in common. We read the poems of the "Christian Year" as meditations of great sweetness and beauty—with all the charm of consecrated genius and classic purity of expression; but not as the language of worship. We do not and we cannot use them as litanies or hymns of praise. They are for the closet rather than the sanctuary.

The only hymn of Charles Wesley which, from its structure, would fairly admit of comparison with the "Christian Year," is that hymn designated "Wrestling Jacob." Unlike Keble, who often bases his lines upon some solitary expression, and weaves his poems from some mere suggestion, of the sacred writer, Wesley grasps all the fullness, and gathers up all the details of the inspired narrative, dramatizes and spiritualizes the whole, and through alternate transitions of the subject, makes the application to the common experience of christian life; until in that mysterious struggle by the brook Jobbok we find the type of spiritual conflict of all ages of the church—

'Wrestling I will not let Thee go,
Till I thy name and nature know.'

But while the compositions of Charles Wesley are suitable for private mediation, and constitute for devotional purposes a treasured possession, they are also in style and *metrical structure* nobly fitted for sanctuary worship.

J. L.

St. John, Aug. 20th, 1869.

Correspondence.

English Correspondence

MR. EDITOR,—The open session of Conference is very popular and secures an immense audience. The newly elected President conducts the Conference Prayer meeting, but at this meeting he for the first time appears before the expectant public in his official capacity, presiding over the meeting and introducing the speakers His appearance is warmly greeted, and it is throughout, a meeting of a deeply interesting character. The speakers are listened to with unflagging attention, providing that they do not go too deep into dry statistics; and are cheered by heartiest applause. On this occasion, representatives from the Conferences of France, Ireland and Australia were present, and the successes granted to sanctified toil, together with the claims of the work, were forcibly presented by the respective speakers. It was, to your Correspondent, a subject for regret, that no voices were heard on that platform, representative of the work of Methodism in Canada and Eastern British America, and that the claims of those affiliated churches obtained no distant recognition. The address of the Irish Representative, called up other speakers, various topics were introduced, and a greater freedom of remark was observable than in any previous gathering of this kind.

The Conference Love-feast was a season of hallowed joy. Testimonies were delivered which touched hundreds of hearts and were warmly responded to by the large audience. The power of God was manifest and to many a toil-worn minister that hour was signally blessed, the Divine baptism realized, and they went forth from the sanctuary, giving themselves afresh to the work and blessed service of the Lord Christ.

The first Sabbath of Conference, will long be remembered by the Methodists of Hull. It was truly a day of blessing to the assembled thousands.

Reports speak of the sermons as characterized not only by marked ability, but by direct appeal—plain Gospel truths, and soul-converting power. Among the preachers who occupied the pulpits on that memorable day, conspicuous not only by office, but by great ability we name the President, and the Rev. S. R. Hall—the honored and beloved Ex-President, who is retiring into the comparative quiet of his circuit duty, after a year of great success in the varied and trying duties of his office.

The first week of Conference was mainly occupied in the routine connected with the discipline of the body. The strict investigation of character, which embraces both doctrines and morals, the reception of Candidates for the work of the ministry, the determination of who remain on trial, together with the private and conferential examination of the candidates for Ordination, furnishe occupation for many sessions. Upon the day set apart for the Ordination, no other work is performed by the Conference, a few Committees may possibly meet in the evening, but the great event is the solemn and most impressive ceremony of setting apart some eighty tried and approved young men to the office of the Christian ministry. They were divided into two companies, and two of the largest chapels were filled at an early hour. The charge in one chapel was delivered by the Ex-President, and was truly original, full of weighty counsel and setting before the newly ordained brethren the example of the noble men into whose labors they were entering.

The other address was delivered by Rev. John Bedford, who preceded Mr. Hall in the President's office. This address is reported to have been of great power, but was delivered with difficulty, as Mr. Bedford's health has failed, and Conference has provided him an assistant in his duties as Chapel secretary.

Two other public meetings have been held in connection with this Conference, and were largely attended.

During the year several men have returned from Foreign fields of labor. In some instances the appointed term of residence abroad has expired but in the majority of cases; the health of those devoted men has broken down under the strain of arduous labours, prosecuted in climates deadly or dangerous; and now returning home, a public recognition is only fitting, and affords an opportunity of recounting some of the holy triumphs of the Cross in the regions beyond. This service is of painful interest, as one and another enfeebled missionary arises at the call of the Chairman, and speaks of the work so dear to his heart, and of the years spent in the privileged employment of preaching in the other tongues and to other people the universal grace of God.

The public Temperance meeting was a noble gathering, and on the platform were seen many ministers, distinguished for pulpit power and for large hearted philanthropy. The addresses were worthy of the occasion, recognized the gratifying signs of progress observable on every hand, and enforcing the claims of this Reform on all who desired the speedy turning of the masses of the people into the paths of sobriety and Christian privilege. Your readers will rejoice to learn that the number of the pledged ministers of the Conference is steadily increasing, and that Mr. Hall in his high position as President, adhered to his principles and publicly acknowledged to the Conference, when returning thanks for their approving vote, his indebtedness to entire abstinence from stimulants, for the uniform strength and endurance, of a year of incessant and exhaustive toil.

After the Conference has legislated upon the applications for additional preachers, and the divisions of Circuits as recommended by District meetings, the way is clear for the re-assembling of the stationing Committee, and the issuing of the second Draft of stations. This document is sought for as eagerly as the first draft, as many most important changes are made, and the result of the various applications from Circuits, or ministers seeking alterations is at once apparent. There yet remains the opportunity of one more application to the Committee, and if they do not acquiesce, an appeal can be made to the Conference, and its decision, as expressed by open voting, is of course final. The present year is not marked by as many important changes in the stations, or by as many appointments to offices as the two preceding.

Many reports have been presented to Conference upon questions of great importance to us Connexionally, but so great has been the pressure of business that very little time could be afforded for their discussion. Some are reserved for future consideration, and others come up at so late a period of the sittings of Conference, when numbers have left for their distant home that it is deemed inexpedient to press them. The great requisition is more time for this important part of Conferential duty, yet such is the amount of work to be got through before the stations are settled, that for years past this difficulty has been experienced, and never more so than during this session.

It is expected that the present Conference will be a lengthy one, and at the time of closing this letter, your Correspondent has not heard when the breaking up is to take place.

Parliament was prorogued last Wednesday, and a great quiet has settled down upon politicians of all shades of opinion. The Holiday season has arrived, and every train from the great centres of life and business, bears it precious freight towards the country or the sea. Health, rest and amusement are being eagerly sought, but the weather is very unpropitious Frequent and heavy showers of rain are falling, and the temperature is cold and chilly.

The Harvest is delayed, and in the opinion of many is not likely to prove as good a yield as that of last year. In consequence of the unsettled prospects, the price of corn is higher, and bread is dearer. B.

August 13, 1869

Letter from the United States.

VACATION OF THE CHURCHES.

This is our vacation season. The schools have a vacation, and why not the churches? So some reason, but it strikes us there is a vast difference, in more respects than one, between Schools and Churches. To see churches closed Sunday-schools discontinued, and ministers drifting about, some on fishing excursions, some at our fashionable watering-places, and some hunting in the Adirondacks seems to indicate to me, I must confess, that something is wrong. And this I am sorry to say is the state of things at present with many of our churches and ministers. And where the churches are not entirely closed on the Sabbath, the attendance is often very small, and the Sunday-school has dwindled down to nothing. It being the season of our school vacation, the children are on visits to uncles and aunts and the parents in many instances are with them. The fact is our people do not intend to do much in the Church during the months of July and August, but devote that time mostly to recreation, visiting &c. I need not say that this is the devil's working season, and that he reaps an abundant harvest during the time is too apparent. When the Church withdraws its forces from the field, the devil rallies his, he does a large business during the summer vacation of the churches.—What would the old pilgrim fathers have thought of the churches suspending their exercises two months in a year? If such a thing had been named, they would have thundered tremendously against it.

LAY DELEGATION.

The vote on the question ordered by the last General Conference, has been taken and proves to be very small. A large majority of our people, for some reason (some for want of interest, and some from an unwillingness to vote against the movement,) neglected to vote at all. A large majority voting favored the movement. The result of the vote is anything but satisfactory. Those favoring lay-delegation feel that their cause is feebly sustained, and those opposed regard the vote as in their favor. A sharp controversy is going on in our church papers on the subject, and it looks now like assuming a regular news paper fight. The result must be anything but beneficial to the spiritual prosperity of the Church. We regret the form the question is taking, and think we see in its present aspects a storm that may not be easily allayed, and one that may prove destructive to the best interests of Methodism.—May the Lord direct in the matter, and peace and harmony prevail!

CAMP MEETINGS

Our Camp-meeting season has commenced, which is a season of special interest. Our people are becoming more and more attached to these meetings. It has become fashionable to go somewhere during the warm season, and these meetings in the grove furnish a certain class with a good opportunity of spending a week away from their ordinary cares, and surrounded by influences favorable to health and spiritual life. The National Camp meeting just closed in Western New York was a great affair, and no doubt did much to advance the object for which it was held. This was the third of the series of the National meeting, which has doubtless become a permanent thing, and will be held annually in different parts of the country. The special object of this meeting is to promote the work of holiness. Some doubt the propriety of holding such a meeting—they say all such meetings should be held to promote spiritual religion, and that includes holiness. We believe, thus far, the meeting has been attended with good, and we see no reason why it may not in future if properly conducted. The "State Camp meeting of Delaware," has just closed, and it was a season of unusual interest and power.—Delaware is classic ground to the Methodist Church. Here that wonderful meeting took place between Dr. Coke and Bishop Asbury. Here Asbury found a quiet resting place during the Revolutionary war; here several of our early Conferences was held, which were attended with great power in saving sinners, and here the ashes of the sainted Whatcoat sleep. Most of our Camp meetings will be held during the present month, several each week, amounting to more than a hundred during the month.

METHODISM.

In the Methodistic world things are looking well; advancement in the right direction is the order of the day. The Book Concern at New York and the Missionary Society are about to take possession of the new building recently purchased at the cost of about one million dollars, for their use. Strange that these institutions should purchase and occupy one of the best—if not the best—building in the city of New York. Who would have thought of such a thing a few years since? What would Asbury and the Methodist fathers say, if they could enter the city where they labored under the most discouraging circumstances, and amid great opposition, and see such a building owned by the Church, and occupied as the head-quarters of Methodism? Would they not exclaim "What has God wrought?" New England Methodism is erecting a building in Boston, as its head-quarters, every way worthy its object. In it, the New England Methodist Book Depository will transact its business, and in it "Zion's Herald" will be issued. Efforts are making to raise two hundred thousand dollars to complete the endowment of the Boston Theological Seminary, and we doubt not they will be successful. A new literary institution has just been incorporated by the Massachusetts Legislature, called the "Boston University." This is to be a first-class University, that will stand up beside Harvard without blushing, and will be strictly a Methodist institution. The corporators consist of some of our most wealthy laymen, such as Isaac Rich, Jacob Sleeper, Wm. Claflin,—now Governor of the State,—Lee Claflin, Pliny Nickerson, &c. The institution may not go into operation for some time to come, but when it does, it will be a thing of strength and power. The *St. Paul's Monthly*, the new magazine to be issued by the "Boston Wesleyan Association," will soon make its appearance. So you may look for the best Magazine in America and in Methodism.

LITERARY.

Messrs. C. & E. Merriam have issued a beautiful edition of Webster's Dictionary, called "Webster's National Pictorial Dictionary," and is so condensed as to occupy about one-half of the space of the *Unabridged Dictionary*, with a corresponding diminution in price. Those who cannot avail themselves of the larger work, will find this of great value. It is prepared on the same principles as the unabridged, with the full use of all its materials, and is in fact a comprehensive and complete Dictionary. Some of its features are exceedingly valuable, and some would regard them as a decided improvement on the large work. A list of synonyms is appended to the definition of many of the words, which is very convenient in furnishing the writer with a wider range of words from which to make the best selection in expressing his thoughts. Synonyms are carefully discriminated, and their different shades of thought described There is also added an appendix, containing a "vocabulary of perfect and allowable rhymes," based on the index of Walker's Rhyming Dictionary, but far more correct and extended; and a valuable "Glossary of Scottish words and phrases," with preliminary remarks on some of the striking peculiarities of Scottish orthography and pronunciation. The work contains 1040 octavo pp., and over 600 pictorial illustrations. It is not designed to supersede, or take the place of the unabridged,—which contains 1840 pp. Royal Quarto, and 3,000 illustrations,—but to meet the wishes of many who, for convenience or economy, desire a more condensed and less expensive work.

The *Messrs. D. Appleton & Co.* have issued their *Annual Cyclopedia* for 1868. This is a very important and valuable work, and is regarded by the people generally a necessity.—It is a registry of all the important events of the year, embracing political, civil, military, and social affairs; finance; literature; science; agriculture and mechanical industry. It contains also a full history of the religious denominations, and an account of their various branches, meetings, conventions, members, &c. Its information on political affairs, and on the progress of political opinions is very full. As a work of reference it is indispensable.

Miss Catharine E. Beecher and Mrs. Harriet B. Stowe have written a work of great utility, entitled "The American Woman's Home; or principles of domestic science; being a guide to the formation and maintenance of economical, healthful, beautiful, and Christian homes." Its title indicates clearly its character. It would be a great blessing to every family, for it contains much that every family ought to know and practice. It is largely illustrated by very well executed and appropriate engravings, and its getting up externally is of the highest order. It is sold only by subscription. Messrs. H A. Brown & Co. are the New England publishers.

The American Sunday School Union is issuing works admirably adapted to Sunday School and youth's libraries. One just from its press and of unusual interest, is entitled "The Story of a Diamond, Illustrative of Egyptian Manners and Customs." Every youth should read it.—Among their late issues are "The Twin Roses, and How they were Trained;" "Grandma Merritt's Stories;" "Children's Hearts and Hands;" "Dr. Kendall's Children and their Cousin," and "Ben Bonald's Garden, or Home Life." The Union is doing immense good in largely supplying the youth and children with an entertaining, instructive, and profitable literature. It is strictly moral and religious in its tone, and written in a style peculiarly adapted to all classes of young persons.

Messrs. A. Roman & Co have issued a volume of Sermons by the Rev. Charles Wadsworth.—These sermons by this distinguished pulpit orator, are received with delight and read with interest. The author formerly resided in Philadelphia, where his talents drew around him multitudes of people. He now resides in San Francisco, Cal., where he is equally popular and successful. The vol. contains twenty sermons, on the most important subjects, and is a most valuable contribution to biblical and Christian literature. CECIL.

Aug. 12, 1869.

Circuit Intelligence.

St. John Financial District Meeting.

The Ministers of the St. John District met for business in the Church at Carleton on Wednesday last, the 25th inst. Our laity was represented on the occasion by the presence of Messrs A. Gilmore, Mr. Wm. Clawson, and R. Salter, the Circuit Stewards of the Germain St., Exmouth St., and Carleton Circuits. The estimates for the year were prepared as usual, with much care and not a little discussion in reference to new arrangements, but on the whole with considerable disinterestedness and Christian enterprise. Two things struck us in the distribution of the grant for deficiencies for the present year—first the difference between the "unprovided for deficiency" of the Home Mission Circuit, and that of the other dependent Circuits of the District, amounting to more than double in the former case that of each of the latter; and the agreeably reduced sum which the minister on our depend-Circuits have reason to anticipate as actually "unprovided for." This is due in part to the determination of the Brethren present to 'work up' their Circuit receipts, and due also in part, doubtless to the new arrangement of our Home Mission and Contingent Fund, and to the success which has attended the efforts made to augment the resources of that Fund. If the new method of distribution has conduced to anything like an equality of position among the differnht Districts, we shall most heartily congratulate the Secretary of the Contingent Fund for securing a much needed improvement in the finances of many of his Brethren.

The most of a forenoon Session was devoted, on Thursday, to conversation on the state of the work of God among us. In this, after the reading of the "Liverpool Minutes" Bro. Salter and the Ministers present very generally took part. All felt the importance of the occasion, and solemnly resolved at once more carefully to watch over their own hearts, and to labour with increased diligence for the success of the Gospel in the extension of the cause of Christ. If in this matter we can but secure the intelligent and faithful co-operation of our people generally, the result cannot be otherwise than encouraging. May God grant unto his servants the largest desires of their hearts.

C. S.

Annapolis District.

Our Financial meeting was held at Lawrencetown, in the Wilmot Circuit.

The unanimity of sentiment and cordiality of feeling which charaterized the meetings of our District made it good to be there; but I regret that the Circuit Stewards were not present to participate in this spirit of brotherly love, and contribute by their presence and counsels to the interest of the meeting, and the promotion of the important subjects of our conversations.

Bro Ward Nichols, of Wilmot, was the only Steward at the board.

The financial matters were disposed of in the forenoon. The Missionary meetings arrangements; the reading of the Liverpool minutes, and conversations on the promotion of the work of God occupied the afternoon. During the consideration of the last named important subject, we had earnest, soul stirring addresses from Fathers Davies and Pickles; aye, from the chairman.

The minute arising from the consideration, is substantially as follows:

The brethren deeply feeling the necessity of a high tone of personal piety for the effective work of the Christian ministry, would devoutly renew the personal consecration of themselves to God. They resolve to give great prominence to the grand fundamental doctrines of the Gospel—to preach CHRIST. To give more careful attention to Pastoral visitation; cultivate a deeper interest in the welfare of the young people of the families on their Circuits; make earnest personal efforts for their salvation, by conversing with them upon the subject at fitting opportunities, and by the formation of Bible classes wherever they can be organized and regularly met. They will also unite their prayers for each other, and for the revival of the work of God, especially on every Friday morning, at about 10 o'clk.

The substance of the conclusions concerning *Finance* was to this effect. The Superintendents shall take occasion to lay before their congregations the necessity for an enlarged liberality towards the support of the Gospel among themselves; and suggest that the Sabbath collections might be much larger than at present, and the Circuit income in most circuits be increased considerably thereby. That each minister shall consult his quarterly board as to any change in the mode of raising the Preacher's allowances, and see that the adoption of any measures relating thereto be made known to the societies and congregation.

A Home Missionary meeting was held in the evening. Rev. M. Pickles in the chair; addresses by the brethren Taylor, Crane, Harrison and Allen from Newfoundland. J. T.

English Conference.

EX-PRESIDENT'S AND PRESIDENTS'S SPEECHES.

The EX-PRESIDENT thus addressed Dr. Jobson: In the name of the Wesleyan Conference I give you a hearty and notwihtstanding the circumstance of the attachment of some members to those who have virtually appeared to compete with you, I may yet say a very cordial welcome. It belongs, I believe, to the duty of the retiring President to put into your hands what we sometimes recognize as the seals of office. I feel the inconvenience of passing through a formal act which to you is so well understood, and placing in your hands records and symbols of which you have yourself been for so long a time almost the custodian. I place first and foremost in your hands the Standard of Truth. This is John Wesley's copy, I believe, of God's Holy Word, which he was accustomed to handle when he preached the Word of Life to multitudes in our native land. I have no doubt that the truths contained in this book, and as interpreted in our standards of religious opinion, you will abide by faithfully, and I trust very usefully, during your year of office. I likewise entrust to you, in the name of the Conference this symbol of office. I don't know whether this instrument is ever brought into use or no, but I presume there may be occasions when the affixing of the seal to some important Connexional document will be of great interest, and will much depend, it may be, upon your official faithfulness. I entrust that in the name of the Conference to your care and keeping. I have nothing to add except to say that I doubt not that that which has been to me a strength and solace now for twelve months will be as generously awarded to you; you will have the prayers—your richest joy and inheritance—as well as the confidence of your brethern. I wish you great joy, and I earnestly trust that you may have God's blessing.

The PRESIDENT, in reply spoke as follows:—Beloved brethern, I am at this moment overwhelmed by a sense of the goodness and mercy of God, and of your fraternal kindness and goodwill towards me, in placing me in this chair. Indeed, a crowd of affecting associations now rush upon me so as well nigh to choke my utterance, and thus prevent me addressing a few words to you such as will be looked for. Immediately on my right is old Lincolnshire, the place where I was brought up. Immediately on my left is Beverley, the place of my ancestry and of my dearest earthly relationships. Immediately before me is Holderness, the scene of my first ministerial labours; while with Hull itself I have many tender and powerful recollections relating to such men as Henwood, Cookman, Welch, Hardy, and others devoted servants of God who have passed to their eternal reward. My first declaration from this position in the midst of you ought to be that God is the hearer and the answerer of prayer; for it is in answer to prayer that I am here. After my conversion to God I had a hard struggle with deep inward conviction that I was to go forth to preach the Gospel of Christ, and that through enthusiastic attachment to my professional calling. I had a Methodist mother who besought me to be faithful to my convictions, and who prayed with me and for me that I might be so. After I had gone forth to preach the Gospel, I received her visit in London, now more than thirty years ago; and she bade me adieu sitting in the old mail coach, by the Angel Inn, at Islington, she beckoned me nearer the side of the coach, and with tears of gratitude glistening in her blessed eyes, she said to me emphatically: 'Frederick, I prayed earnestly that you might become a minister of the Gospel. God has fulfilled my heart's desire, and and on leaving you I exclaim, 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.'' She departed from me with those words, went home, soon afterwards died triumphantly in the faith of Jesus Christ; and I saw her face no more until I saw it calm and lovely in death, when I bowed down heavily by the side of her coffin to renew the dedication of my life to the service of God. And, now, with this strong in remembrance, and tracing as I do the connection of my position today with the prayers of the departed, I feel bound to declare before you and all our Israel, that we need not despondingly inquire, 'Where is the Lord God of Elijah?' He is still, as of old, the hearer and answerer of prayer; and I am a living proof and witness that He is so. My next acknowledgments are due to you for your election of me this day to the Presidency of the Conference. I have received many favours from you. I have had much of your confidence and much of your forbearance in the several offices I have held by your appointment from time to time. I am now, by your suffrages in the highest office you can give, and thus receive the highest expression of your confidence and esteem. I have never sought office among you; and I have not sought this office. But appointed to it, I gratefully acknowledge your undeserved kindness to me; and I unreservedly pledge myself, with this seal of office and this New Testament in my hands, that I will, by the help and strength of God, maintain, preserve, and as far as may be, extend the essential principles of Methodism, which I now officially am called to represent. I say nothing of representation on subjects beyond our circle, and which divide us in our private opinions and views. I hold it to be healthy and honourable in the working of Methodism that it has no fixed political creed or partisanship; and that it takes its adherents, not from one class only, but from all classes of the of the community. With us a man is no less a Methodist because of his political opinions. And, neither I, nor anyone else, can with justice or propriety represent you, or Methodists at large, on mere political questions, whatever may his professions, or rather pretensions, to do so Indeed, the man who attempts, or professes to do this is more than presumptuous; he is false and unjust to his brethern. I know that some taunt us with difference of opinions, as if it were weak and dishonourable. But herein is our safety and our strength. We think and let think in relation to what lies beyond ourselves as Methodists. I shall not, therefore, brethern, now, or at any future time attempt to represent you on political or external matters; but on the essential principles of Methodism I may speak plainly and confidently, and say that we shall hold them fast, and maintain them, whatever may be the temptations offered to separate us from them. For instance we shall not, to swell our numbers and even double them, as we might in a year, hazard the spiritual purity of Methodism, or weaken the bonds of our fellowship in Christ. We have very serious obligations in relation to those who immediately surround us in our congregations, but who are not within the inner circle of our societies and churches—obligations that we must more earnestly fulfil.—But our first and most immediate duty is to keep, as far as we can do so under God, the churches unspotted from the world, and that by mutual oversight of the members, as well as by pastoral attention and care. No advance of the times that may be spoken of can require essential changes here. It is true that with Methodism and its fellowship that which is to be sought is to secure the permanence of its essential principles, adapting them in their application and working to times and circumstances. But this scriptural principle of communion of saints must be preserved at all hazards; and come what will, we are resolved to preserve it. Another principle to be firmly held by us of this Conference and ministry is, that we shall continue to be plain earnest, evangelical preachers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I say expressly preachers of the Gospel. I do not say readers of the Gospel or reciters of it, but publishers, proclaimers, and faithful enforcers of it. I do not condemn all read sermons. I remember how many readers of sermons there are in the world, and that in evangelical churches; and I shall not now, or at any time, pass sweeping condemnatory judgment upon large numbers of sincere and good men not of our community. And among ourselves it may be that on stated and special occasions a sermon may be read to advantage. But if in our ordinary and every-day preaching reading of sermons prevail—or if the use of extended notes, confining the preacher's attention to what is written, prevail, the strength and glory of Methodist preaching will have departed, and Methodist preachers will have become weak as other men. I believe we are fully qualified and authorised ministers of the Gospel of Christ, performing all that Christ and the Scriptures require of us. But we shall not be ashamed of the old title borne by our fathers in this ministry—that of Methodist preachers. That pulpit is higher than this chair, and no man deserves to occupy this chair who does not think so. God grant that those of us who may be spared to advanced years in this ministry may be able to say in death with good Dr. Newton, "Glory to God, I am an old Methodist preacher." Another principle to which we shall firmly and unwaveringly adhere is that of scriptural Protestantism. With all evangelical churches of every name, whether Episcopalian, Presbyterian, or Congregational one in Christ Jesus. But we can have no alliance with the Man of Sin, or afford to it any personal or national countenance or support. Men may "level up," or "level down,"—they may shroud their designs under concurrent or any other endowment.—Yea, men set for the defence of the Gospel may, Judas-like, betray the truth for pieces of silver. We have no alternative. We shall, in all—and in all circumstances—and however reproached for bigotry and narrow-mindedness—cry "No Popery,' and shall continue to be loyal to Christ, loyal to an open Bible, loyal to the House of Brunswick, loyal to Queen Victoria, and loyal to the memory of martyrs and confessors, who not only renounced glebes and houses, but life and all things rather than betray the truth as it is in Jesus. I fear that I am detaining you from important business of the Conference—(go on!)—also I would say for you and for us all, that we shall continue to extend saving truth among the masses of the people.—We shall not be forgetful of great cities, where large numbers of human beings congregate and multiply. Christ and his apostles were not unmindful of such. But while attending to these, we shall not be neglectful of villages and hamlets. We shall still go to them and associate with our people there, whatever changes may be in their habits and circumstances. We shall still have our abode with them, and still sleep and abide in their homes, whatever may be our facilities of visitation and departure. We shall still be found in the homes of our people—still praying with them, and singing hymns of praise to God with them and their families. And we shall still break up new ground by preaching in barns, by the wayside, and in the fields. And young men—candidates for the ministry—whether they come from the endearments of home, or from the severer associations of our theological institutions, must still be taught to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, and to be labourers in the vineyard of our Lord. Methodism is now acknowledged as a power in the world. It is so in our country.—It is so in the United States, whither in 1769, just one hundred years ago, Boardman and Pilmoor went, at the appeal of Wesley in a Yorkshire Conference, to help their brethren in America, and all where at the present time one-sixth of the people at least are under the teaching and influence of Methodism. It is so in Canada, in Eastern British America, in Ceylon, and Australasia, as I can testify by personal knowledge and visitation. Let, us then, thank God, and take courage. Holding fast our principles, let us still proceed; for the best of all is, God is with us. I have only now to ask your prayers and support while conducting the business of the Conference. Without God I can do nothing, and without your co-operation I shall make a poor President. I say nothing of im-