

The Wesleyan,

81

Rev. A. W. NICOLSON,
Editor and Publisher.

Published under the direction of the General Conference of the Methodist Church of Canada.

\$2 PER ANNUM IN ADVANCE
Postage Prepaid.

VOL. XXIX

HALIFAX N.S., MARCH 17, 1877.

NO. 11

WESLEYAN BOOK ROOM,
125 GRANVILLE STREET,
HALIFAX, N.S.

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A SPECIAL DISCOUNT

THAT PRESBYTERIAN COM-
PLAINT.

DEAR MR. EDITOR.—That our Presby-
terian brethren should find reasonable
cause for complaint against either the
ministry or membership of the Methodist
Church of Canada within the bounds of
the N. B. and P. E. I. Conference, would
be matter of regret to all its members.
No "young men" however have been
authorized during the present ecclesiastical
year by myself or any other person, so far
as my knowledge extends, to administer
the Sacraments within the aforesaid
bounds except the four ministers who re-
ceived ordination at our last Conference.
Moreover as the "young men," or minis-
ters on trial in the Methodist Church, are
as careful generally to observe Metho-
distical discipline as a "Presbyterian min-
ister" can be to regard the discipline of
the body to which he belongs, I must re-
gard our Presbyterian brother as the sub-
ject of misapprehension until names and
dates are specified over his own signature.

Yours truly,

ROBERT DUNCAN,
President of the
N. B. and P. E. I. Conference,
Marysville, York Co., March 5, 1877.

OUR NEW HYMN BOOK.

A POEA FOR "PECULIAR" METRES.
The Committee appointed by the Gen-
eral Conference, to prepare a new Hymn
Book for the use of our denomination, is,
do doubt, proceeding with the work as-
signed to it. In this undertaking, every
Methodist is deeply concerned; and many
are correspondingly anxious, as to the
character of the Book that shall be. The
influence which our unrivalled Hymnology
has exerted, to stir our hearts, and to
mould our doctrinal belief, has been very
great; while the passion for music, which
is so absorbing and universal, shows the
supreme importance of utilizing so
mighty a power, in the interests of reli-
gion. There are few questions pertain-
ing to church polity, at the present time,
which are of greater moment than this—
"What shall we sing?" It is to be
feared that we are giving a greater license
in this direction, than is consistent, either
with poetic taste, or doctrinal purity.
The Christian public seems to be running
almost wild over these "Melodies." "Of
making many books," of this nature,
"there is no end," but the contents of
some of them, do not indicate that much
"weariness of the flesh" attended the
labors of the composers. The sentiment
of many of these rhymes, is frothy in the
extreme; as regards their literary merit,
they are beneath notice; while the doctrine
which some of them inculcate, is most
pernicious. The subtle and mighty
power which music and poetry have, to
mould the mind and heart, is a weighty
reason for the exercise of a keener super-
vision over this department of our reli-
gious exercises than is sometimes ac-
cording to it.

The duty of compiling a new book, for
the use of our church, has been devolved
upon gentlemen of the first rank in cul-
ture, taste, and piety. We are satisfied,
therefore, that the literary and doctrinal
character of that which shall come from
their hands, will be all that the most
critical Methodist can desire.

It is very evident, however, that there
is a strong aversion in some quarters, to
some of the hymns in our honored old
book, because of the peculiar metres in
which they are written. Without paus-
ing here, to refer to any particular class
of worshippers, by whom this antipathy is
manifested and fostered, or the particular
reasons for such repugnance, I will only
say, that it will be a sad day for Metho-

dism, when the "service of song" in her
religious gatherings, shall be moulded by
any other than a devout desire to promote
merely the spiritual profit of the people.

This is, undoubtedly, the only just cri-
terion by which to judge any music or
hymn, which it is sought to introduce into
our worship. And assuming that our
congregations, and especially the singing
portions of them, are guided by this
principle, I cannot understand why there
should be so strong an aversion to these
"peculiar" metres, when so many of the
hymns written in them are preeminent
for all that is beautiful and pure in
literary merit, and in Bible truth.
Amongst the most common of such
hymns, are those known as "S's." They
are not often declined, although on three
occasions, in one of our large cities, I have
been requested by choirs to substitute
some other metre in their stead. But we
cannot afford to be deprived of those
sweet and tender hymns—in this metre—
on *Heaven*; while I am sure that few
sincere souls have failed to experience the
wondrous power which lies concealed in
hymns 165 and 174. As for No. 228, it is
one against which I trust no hand will
ever be raised. It is a battery which is
ever charged; if any disbelieve this, let
them take hold of it and try!

But there is no class of "P. M.'s"
which are so rudely assailed, as is that
known as "2-6's & 4-7's." Surely those
who treat this metre so uncivilly, have
never read, carefully, some of the hymns
under the above mark. Let the penitent
soul, mourning because of sin, study
Hymn 151; or let the happy believer in
Jesus, turn to 191; and then on to 194
with its *two parts*, and read them devo-
tently to the end, and then let him ask
his heart if these hymns shall be driven
away from our closets, our families, and
our sanctuaries, simply because a few
persons do not like the metre? I might
specify other hymns of the same class,
particularly No's 626—"The Living
Way," and 657—"The Promised Com-
forter." Then again there is that triumphant
and sublime strain—No. 669—"The
God of Abraham praise, &c." Let the
"Committee" deal reverently with that
hymn! Let every tongue that shall rise
in judgement against that hymn, be con-
demned!

There is no valid reason why these
beautiful hymns should not be used in all
our congregations. There is a sufficient
number of appropriate and good tunes,
for them all. These tunes can be easily
learned by any one of ordinary musical
ability. All our choirs ought to be pre-
pared to sing them. All our people
should learn them.

I am glad to know, that there are
choirs and congregations, who are thus
qualified. No doubt my brethren have
found them—as have I—who could, at a
few minutes notice, render tastefully any
hymn in our Book. And these are to be
found, not only in our more pretentious
communities, but in some of our quiet
obscure country circuits. All honor to
them, wherever they are! We thank
them for their painstaking attention to
their duty. They have undertaken to lead
in the praises of God, and they are not
found, year after year, under the humiliat-
ing necessity of sending a messenger to
the pulpit, to ask that this or that hymn
be changed. May they never become
weary in well doing!

There are many of our ministers and
people, who are inclined to protest most
vigorously against the exclusion of these
peculiar metres from our Psalmody. We
appeal to the "Committee," in behalf of
hymns which are sung with delight and
profit, by hundreds and thousands of our
people. We beg that Committee not to
exclude these hymns from their forth-
coming collection. Women, spare these
trees! They have sheltered, and refreshed
us! They are to us "as the apple tree
among the trees of the wood." We have
sat under their "shadows with great de-
light, and" their "fruit has been sweet to
our taste." Touch them not! If already
the axe is laid at the root of any of them,
we beseech you to spare! If our beauti-
ful grove must be thinned out at all, let
the stroke fall upon the more common
growth. Spare these, for which we plead,
and we will bless you!

Jos. S. COFFIN.

HAMILTON, BERMUDA.

EDUCATIONAL MEETINGS.

We held our annual Educational Meet-
ings during February. Our first of the
series was at St. George's. The attendance
was good, and the addresses interesting
and instructive. The speakers on this
occasion were T. T. Davis, A.M., Revs. J.
M. Fisher, S. F. Huestis, and the writer;
the Superintendent of the circuit occupy-
ing the chair. The choir added to the in-
terest of the meeting with excellent
music.

Bailey's Bay came next in order. The
meeting here was considered a success,
although the attendance was small, owing
to the dampness of the evening.

The speakers gathered fresh power, and
were in excellent trim for their work at
the meeting in Hamilton. The addresses
on this occasion were certainly of a high
order. This was an intensely interesting
service. Philosophy, history, poetry,
music and the holy oracles were all laid
under contribution to render this one of
the most interesting educational meetings
we have ever attended.

Somerset closed the series, and was in
some respects ahead of the others. Our
church here was crowded, quite a number
of the military from Boaz being in atten-
dance. The collection here was almost up
to Hamilton, and ahead of the others. In
these meetings we had a disadvantage to
contend against, viz.,—we had no report
of the society's operations. This we felt
deeply, for we could not furnish the in-
formation which our people wanted to
know. Can any one tell why we do not
receive the Report of the Educational So-
ciety in Bermuda? Perhaps we may have
this explained.

THE CROPS.

At present the prospects of Bermuda
farmers are not by any means flattering.
Heavy rains and severe gales during Feb-
ruary have had injurious effect on the
growing crops; but what is more alarm-
ing, the blight has made its appearance in
the potato fields. If this should spread,
and become general, the consequences will
be felt very deeply—for many are de-
pending upon this branch of husbandry
for their support. The onion crop looks
tolerably well, but our impression of the
tomato is that the yield will not be nearly
equal to last year.

OUR NEW CHURCH.

Up to this date we have said compara-
tively nothing through the Press about
the new and important interest of our
work here. Now we feel constrained to
say a word about it. Our first word is
gratitude—thanksgiving. We present our
unfeigned thanks to the elect lady of the
church in Nova Scotia, her name we have
not heard, who sent us, by the last mail
steamer, "Beta," \$5 towards this work.
We greatly appreciate this unsolicited
donation. We would mention also in this
connection a fact which gives us much
pleasure and encouragement in our work,
viz. An American gentleman, who is
spending the winter here, a few days ago
donated to this self-same object \$150 in
gold. Thus our good Lord is saying to
us—Go on and build. For these and
similar gifts we thank God and feel much
encouraged.

The Methodists in Canada want to
know about this enterprise. We are only
too glad to tell them. Well, we have un-
dertaken to build a church that will meet
the need of the present and also that of
coming generations. A detailed account
of the church at this stage of its progress
cannot be furnished. The following state-
ment will suffice:—The building is 106 x 52
feet with basement and spire. Those who
have carefully figured on the whole work
calculate it will cost from \$20,000 to \$25-
000. Looking at these calculations, we
confess to a feeling not far from bewil-
derment when we consider our circum-
stances. We have begun to build in hard
times, but the majority of our people are
willing to do everything in their power to
push this work ahead. We are resolved
not to go heavily into debt if at all, and
to forward the work just as fast as we can
raise means with which to build. We
have felt the necessity of this great under-
taking. In no town or city in Canada, or
within the bounds of our work with which
we are familiar, is a new Methodist
Church more necessary than in Hamilton,
Bermuda. How our heart yearns to see

this work accomplished. Are we able to
build? If we were compelled to do all
this work from our own resources it would
require a good many years to bring it to
a completion; but we do not expect to do
it alone of ourselves. The Lord is sending
us help. We expect help from Nova
Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward
Island, the Upper Provinces, the United
States of America, and from England.
We verily believe that our God, in whom
we perfectly trust, will send us help from
many if not all of the above places. Will
not our brethren help us to build this
house for God in Bermuda? We believe
they will. If our brethren in Canada and
other places knew our circumstances they
would, I am sure, quickly come to our
aid. Will not our Yarmouth ship-owners
help us, whose vessels in distress often
come into our harbour, and whose crews
may wish to find a Methodist welcome in
this Isle of the Sea? Surely they will.
We expect it. The work is going forward,
and as the means are forthcoming so we
trust will the work advance.

Religiously all we can say at present is
that we are enabled to proclaim the glori-
ous Gospel of the blessed God full and
free to perishing men, and we believe in
due time our God will give the increase.

It will afford the many friends of the
Rev. S. F. Huestis in Canada much plea-
sure to know that since he came to Ber-
muda his health is decidedly improv-
ing.

R. W.

Hamilton, Bermuda, March 6, 77.

ST. GEORGE'S, BERMUDA.

DEAR MR. EDITOR.—Your readers,
have not, certainly, been allowed to forget
that there is such a place as Bermuda—a
sunny spot, where the smiles of a per-
petual summer gladden; and where na-
ture is always arrayed in queenly attire;
where white cottages nestle in valleys of
perpetual green; and where, though never
a brook meanders through its meadows,
delighting the ear with the sweet ripple of
its waves, yet the sounding sea makes
ample amends by the murmurs of its
ceaseless intonations—still, at the risk of
surfeiting your readers with news from
this much praised land, we must crave a
few inches of space to keep our country
and our circuits fresh in your memory.

The winter with us, if that season may
be called winter in which the mercury
never falls below 50° of Fahrenheit, has
been one of unusual severity. Storm after
storm has swept our coasts and the sur-
rounding waters. The rainfalls have been
far above the average. And the number
of raw and disagreeable days has been
greatly in excess of what is usual. The
first winter I spent here seemed all sun-
shine, this one seems all storm. The crops
throughout the country have suffered very
much from the high winds, and in conse-
quence the tomatoes and the second crop
of potatoes will be much later than usual.

The "ill wind," however, has brought a
large number of vessels into the port of
St. George's in a more or less disabled
condition, the necessary repairs upon
which gives employment to a large num-
ber of mechanics and labourers. Many
thousands of pounds have thus been put
in circulation during the past few months,
and as a considerable proportion of this
community are quite dependent upon this
business for support, times have been
much better, here, than usual. It is not
perhaps a pleasant consciousness that one
is living by the misfortunes of others, and
Bermudians are sometimes rallied upon
the fact that disabled ships and impaired
constitutions are amongst the sources of
their wealth. Let the outer world, how-
ever, remember that this is by no means
an uncommon thing in Society. Whole
professions are dependent upon the suf-
ferings and misfortunes of mankind.
What would become of the medical pro-
fession if people were never sick; or that
of dentistry, if our teeth would but last
a lifetime? How would lawyers live if peo-
ple were wise and godly enough never to
quarrel? What would become of police-
men if our citizens were all decent and
sober? and even the minister would find
his "occupation gone" if sin did not blight
mankind with its cruel curse; and so it
has fallen to the lot of Bermuda to repair
what the tempest has shattered in our
navies, and, if possible, what the severities
of climate, overwork, and perchance, vice,

may have shattered in the constitution.
It is well that the mighty hand of the
Divine Creator has thrown up in mid
ocean this delectable spot, a refuge for the
distressed in all coming time.

Our religious services have been accom-
panied with some measure of the divine
blessing. The watch night service was
one of special interest. Our sanctuary
was crowded with an attentive and serious
congregation, and as we spoke of the
flight of time, the nearness of eternity,
and the preciousness of Christ, the spirit
of solemnity appeared to pervade all
hearts. On the following Sabbath I re-
ceived into church fellowship, three per-
sons who had passed the usual probation,
and have since taken into the classes sev-
eral who are seeking the Saviour, or have
already found him. The usual week of
prayer observed by all evangelical church-
es, was one of great spiritual enjoyment
and was followed by a week of prayer-
meetings in our own church during which
our members received much quickening
influence. This was followed by the An-
niversary exercises of our Mission Sab-
bath School. The chief feature of these
exercises is the public examination of the
scholars in the lessons studied by them
during the past year. These are the Cate-
chism and the International Series of
Scriptural Lessons. In both of these the
proficiency showed would have done credit
to any school in the Dominion of Canada.

The first part, conducted by myself,
were the lessons in the lives of David and
Solomon. All books were laid aside, the
lessons were entirely impromptu, and yet
were answered promptly and without
hesitation. After singing, the Rev. S. F.
Huestis examined them in the New Testa-
ment lessons in the same manner. The
answers were prompt and accurate, and
Bro. Huestis expressed himself as ex-
tremely gratified at their familiarity with
the incidents and lessons in the early
history of the Church, as recorded in the
Acts of the Apostles, and paid a high and
merited compliment to Mr. Edward
Wolfe, the superintendent, to the teachers
and to all.

One noticeable thing came out during
the distribution of prizes. Two prizes had
been offered for punctuality. The first of
these was taken by a little boy named
Giles, the second by his sister;
and the Secretary's report showed
that, during the past four years, this
boy had never been absent from school
once, for any cause, and had never been a
single minute late. During the same time
his sister had lost but one day and that
through sickness. The report also showed
the school to be in a healthy and prosper-
ous condition.

Our Educational meetings came off the
week before last. In St. George's the at-
tendance was very good. Clear, weighty,
and earnest addresses, were delivered by
Bro. Davis, of Hamilton, (Teacher), and
the Rev. Messrs. Fisher, Huestis, and
Wasson. Considerable interest was mani-
fested in the subject of Education, and in
the special objects of this Fund. The
collection was considerably in advance of
last years. The fact is that, last year,
business in St. George's, and through the
whole colony, was in a bad state. In con-
sequence, our collections for all the Con-
ference funds fell below the average of
what they ought to be. This year as times
are much better, we expect the contribu-
tion from St. George's and Bailey's Bay
will be nearly double that of last year.
Remoteness from the great centres of
Methodistic influence does not impair the
loyalty of our people here, or lessen their
interest in our connexion enterprises, and
though the stringency of the times may
occasionally cause a falling off in our
financial returns, yet Bermuda will not,
in general, be found behind any other
circuits of equal resources.

Yours, &c.,

W. C. B.

THE late Signor Blitz, the magician,
once said to Daniel Webster in Wash-
ington, "Give me 100,000 Treasury
notes to count, and watch closely, and
you will find only 75,000 when I return
them." "Signor," responded Web-
ster, "there is no chance; there are
here better magicians than you; they
would not leave 50,000 after their
counting."