Provincial Wesleyan.

WEDNESDAY JUNE 18, 1873.

THE time for holding the Nineteenth Annual Conference of our Church is drawing near. Next Tuesday is the day appointed for the meeting at Fredericton of several Conference committees. The Stationing Committee is to meet in the morning, and the Book Committee and the Candidate's Examination Committee in the afternoon. On the following day, the Contingent Fund, the Conference Statistics, the Home Mission Fund, and the Foreign Missionary Committees will hold their sessions. On the succeeding day, Thursday, the 26th, the Conference proper will commence work.

The approach of Conference is always regarded among us with interest, especially by ministers. For even where it is not anticipated that Conference will be followed by an immediate change of pastoral relations, attendance at its sessions involves in most cases an interruption of pastoral routine, a period of rest from pastoral toil, the agreeable excitement of travel, refreshing changes of scene, gladdening intercourse with fellow laborers, participation in scenes fitted to cheer the heart and revive the spirits weary with work and care, and the bringing of the mind into close contact with subjects of general importance to the cause of the common Master. Of course, ministers expecting to remove after Conference to a new sphere of labor, and not by any means sure of its whereabouts, have additional reasons for regarding the approach of Conference with lively interest.

This year's Conference, however, must be looked forward to by its members with an interest, not to say an anxiety quite unusual. For it is likely to prove the most memorable one of our history, save perhaps the first one of the series of which it may prove the last. For it will have to deal not only with matters of the kind heretofore submitted for Conferential deliberation, but also with the question of a Federal Union of the Wesleyan Methodism of British N. America. That is an exceedingly weighty question, demanding for its satisfactory solution the most dispassionate and thoughtful consideration. Such consideration, without doubt, the Conference will bestow on that subject at the proper time. It is not for us to anticipate the decision of the Conference on the union plan or plans that will be submitted to it. But we trust that the conclusions arrived at by the Conference will be reached under the influence of light and guidance from on high, vouchsafed to earnest, believing prayer.

FATHER HYACINTHE is, it seems having a fine time at Geneva. The celebrated orator has created quite a sensation among his co-religionists in the city of Calvin. He draws immense crowds to hear him, and some weeks ago no less than 1,400 of the Roman Catholics of that place had given in a written adhesion to the New Catholic Association of which the eloquent Father has taken charge. As many of these must be heads of families, it may be concluded that his Genevan congregation numbers in all, young and old, several thousand persons. The prospect of the further enlargement and consolidation of the cause championed now in Switzerland by Father Hyachinthe seems promising, though it does not yet appear what dimensions it will finally assume, nor precisely into what form it at last will be moulded.

THE New York *Christian Advocate* speaks in terms of approval of the main features of the plan for a new church organization framed to promote the unification of Canadian Methodism. It prefers that plan to the one embodied in the constitution of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States. It especially likes the provision for the *quadrennial* election of the general superintendents, as fitted to secure "a general superintendency without the prelatical pretensions inseparable from a life long episcopacy." It is also pleased with the provision for the election of a President by each Annual Conference, thinks his authority should be co-ordinate with that of the general superintendent. It presumes there will under this plan be no episcopal ordination and no distinct ordination of deacons. Finally, the Advocate expresses itself warmly in favour of the complete unification and consolidation of Dominion Methodism.

IRISH Methodism is looking up. Its prospects are said to be brighter than they have been for a long time past. An increasing number of persons not as yet identified with it, dissatisfied with their own immediate Protestant surroundings, are believed to regard it with special favour for its devotion to Protestant truth and for spiritual energy. The probability is that many of these will ere long cast in their lot with it, and thereby considerably increase its power for good.

The net increase of full members reported for the year in the parent body in England is not as great as we supposed it would be. It amounts only to about two thousand instead of three thousand. But the number of persons returned on trial is nearly twenty thousand as we inferred it would be. This is not as good a shewing as ought to be made on the work of the year, still it furnishes cause for thankfulness and rejoicing; and is regarded in the light of greater things to come.

WE have referred to the handsome testimonial amounting to $4000 presented to Dr. Punshon in Toronto on the eve of his return to England. Dr. Punshon, it appears, accepts only the yearly interest of this sum. The principal is placed at the disposal of the Canadian Conference to be appropriated by that body after Dr. Punshon's death as it may think proper, though he would prefer that it should be given to the Superannuation fund of the Canadian Methodist Church. Dr. Punshon's sympathies are as genial as his oratorical abilities are brilliant.

J. R. N.

ONTARIO CORRESPONDENCE.

ONTARIO, MAY 24, 1873.

Dear Mr. Editor,—Our trees donned their foliage on Thursday last, and fragrance and beauty welcome the return of our noble Queen's birthday. Though many complaints were heard of the winter continuing till very late, yet our farmers have been as early as usual in getting in their spring crops, and the scattered grain is awaiting the needed showers. The promise at present is not very good. Fall wheat was much injured by the winter, and the spring season has been dry, but a few days' rain would wonderfully alter the entire aspect of things.

The clip of wool will probably this year be quite large. Our farmers are paying much attention to their flocks and to the improvement of their breeds, and they realize very remunerative prices per head for their sheep, as well as for the clip of wool. A neighbor of mine sold a flock of Leicesters of nineteen, to an American buyer, on which he obtained an average of $30 ahead, nor was this an exceptional case. One lesson our farmers have been slow to learn, but which they now act upon pretty extensively, is not to depend wholly upon the grain crop, but to a very much greater extent than formerly on grazing, &c.

There is a surprising evidence throughout our whole country of growth and progress; buildings are going up in all our towns and villages at a very rapid rate. London will add hundreds of houses this year to her present number. In St. Thomas, 18 miles South of London, one thousand new dwellings have been contracted for In Ingersole, I noticed this week scores of new and beautiful buildings under process of erection. In Hamilton and Dundas, it is almost impossible to find a vacant house—the price of building material has also greatly advanced, and so also mechanics' wages.

London has lately experienced two serious boiler explosions, both attended with lamentable loss of life, and both occasioned by the employment of incompetent persons as engineers.

The terrible and lamentable accident to your own Coal Mines has produced a profound feeling of sympathy with the bereaved amongst you who have lost husbands and children by the explosions, our calamities in the West are trifling compared with those you in the East have lately been called to to experience or witness.

This is both a very busy and a very anxious season to our churches and their pastors. The May Quarterly Meeting is looked forward to with much interest by *all*. Then our Circuits take stock, recount their membership, balance their losses by their gains, count their finances, compare results with former years, and proclaim their joy or, silent mourn their retrogression. Then, too, our pastors ascertain whether they are to be paid up in full or to bear the pressure of a heavy deficiency. These meetings are hardly over when our May District Meeting *came on*, with all their *anxieties* and the questions," Who go to Conference? Who represent us on the Stationing, and other Committees? Who will retire for want of health? And who if any have violated the discipline of the Church, &c. &c.; then comes the review of the membership and of all the funds, and finally the private speculations as to who is going to this Circuit and who to that?

Well our District meetings are now all over, but their results are not yet *published* Toronto, under its new, and comparatively youthful chairman, has enjoyed a good *year*, has paid up in full all its ministers, has fully sustained all its funds, has added 668 members to its roll, and is prepared to divide some of its heavier Circuits. Hamilton, under the experienced chairmanship of Dr. Rice, reports similar prosperity; "all the preachers paid up, funds in advance, and general progress." London District is not behind its sisters, though *all* its ministers are not fully paid up, the deficiencies are few and small, an addition of 305 members is reported, and a general increase of all her Connexional funds. We wait till Conference to gather statistics from all parts, but if the three districts named are a fair index to the rest, Canadian Methodism has experienced a year of great prosperity. The presence of the venerable Dr. Evans and of Dr. Jeffers in the London District Meeting, imparted to it a special character for instruction and interest. It was preceded by a Ministerial Association Meeting, at which essays on important topics were read and conversations held on them, in which these two "doctors of divinity" were specially drawn out, in giving sagacious instruction and valuable light upon important points. A resolution expressive of deep sympathy with Dr. Evans, in the great bereavement he has sustained during the year by the death of her who had been his most faithful and devoted companion for more than forty years, was unanimously passed by the meeting. Most affecting and pleasing testimonies were given to the noble Christian character of the departed, by the brethren who had any acquaintance with the late Mrs. E., and the doctor in reply touchingly referred to the grace which had sustained him under the trial.

So our great man has left us—Dr. Punshon—and is at this hour steaming down the grand old St Lawrence, on his way to his native England. We shall slowly realize our loss, more and more. We have not appreciated him to the full while he was with us, though we have all honoured and loved him. To say that his administration among us for five years has been faultless would be to say that he was more than human. To say that we do not remember any one complaining of a fault in his administration is only to express the truth. To wish him back among us were at present a vain wish. His absence may be a necessity for our own good, as well as for that of English Methodism. Among us there is talent to be developed, and zealous service to be honoured; *but* it will be for the future historian to trace the effects of that one master mind upon the destinies of Canadian Methodism, and endeavour to form an estimate of the worth of the five years of his presidency. No one even now can compare the relative position of Methodism with what it was five years ago, without being convinced of a vast change for the better. I am tempted to dwell upon details, but I must forbear. Our prayers will follow him, and our expectations place him in the first position a Wesleyan Minister can occupy on earth, the presidency of the British Conference. I think then his "Wesley-like" spirit will urge him to visit Australian Methodism, so that with a literalness no man ever before could use the words, he will be able to say, "The world has been my parish."

Our Japan missionaries, too, have started on their Christian embassy. With what interest shall we await their arrival at Yeddo. Beloved Bro. George Young is home from Manitoba, and will be present at our Conference. What memories cluster around his name, since his appointment to that distant mission. Bro. Russ too is home, from the yet more distant British Columbia. These brethren will be hailed with joy by us in our approaching Conference.

Dr. Taylor, our indefatigable Missionary Secretary has gone to Manitoba, on a tour of visitation to the men and their missions.

Yours,
H. R. R. S.

THE CANADA CONFERENCE.

ONTARIO CORRESPONDENCE.

DEAR EDITOR,—At last we are once more in Conference assembled. It is the third time that we have met in this city The first was eighteen years ago, and was remarkable for the presence among us of the late Dr. Beecham, and also of your own venerable Dr. Richey, whose Sunday afternoon sermon still lingers in our memory as one of rare beauty and excellence. The session was also remarkable for the discussion which took place upon the limit of a minister's residence upon one circuit The five years' rule was accepted, but the legislation was considered as hasty, and only continued in force for two years, when we came back again to the three years limit. It was on that occasion that the venerable Elder Case preached his Jubilee sermon.

The Church and the Conference have made marvellous progress since that time. At that time we had only one church and one minister in the city. We have now—three city charges and five ministers, and four churches. Other cities could report equally great progress. At the same time the other Methodist bodies seem to be in about the same position they were in eighteen years ago. I make this remark not invidiously, but from a conviction that the time has come that they must either unite with us, or be numbered with the things which once were.

The last London Conference was held eight years ago, when the Rev. R. Jones, was our President. The present Conference promises to be one of the most important ever held among us. It has been a pleasing feature in it, that the question of character occupied less time than ever before in our history. In fact I think the roll was not detained by a single arrest on moral grounds. A nobler class of young men never came before us for reception into full connexion and ordination than the 38 who stood before us on Friday evening last. The meeting was one of very great interest. The testimonies of the six or eight young men who spoke of their conversion and call to the ministry, for clearness and satisfactoriness of statement was never surpassed. The address of the Rev. John A. Williams, was one of great eloquence and earnestness. Rev. Mr. Borland followed in a noble defence of the apostolic character of our call to the ministry, and the Rev. Geo Young, stirred up our minds to sympathy with the toilers in our distant missionary fields. Dr. Rice's address was very brief, but eloquent.

NOTES ON THE DISCUSSION ON DIVISION, &C.

On the evening of the first day, the report of the united Committee was read, and laid over for future discussion. The discussion was made to be the order of business for Monday.

MONDAY, JUNE 9.—After routine business, the discussion of the Report of the Committee on the Division of Conference was introduced by the President; there was a general conversation as to how the Conference should take up the the subject. Some thought that we were already committed by the vote of last Conference to the scheme, and that we had only now to consider the details. The latter was ruled as the order. The first resolution was then moved by R. Jones, and seconded by Dr. Evans,—"That the Wesleyan Conferences in British North America shall be so altered in the form of their general government, &c." A conversation took place upon the Financial aspect of the question of confederation with the Eastern British Conference. An explanation was made by Dr. Green concerning the Superannuation and Supernumerary Funds, that the fund in the E. B. Conference was on a better footing than with us, for whereas we had only some $25,000 invested you had $50,000. A lengthened conversation took place on the question of the Contingent and Missionary funds, as to the amount received from the Parent Society, &c. Drs. Wood and Evans threw much light upon this subject, and so also did the President from their experience, but the want of a representative, able fully and satisfactorily to explain some of the points raised has already been felt.

TUESDAY, JUNE 10.—This is *the great day* of our Conference, and perhaps none greater has ever preceded it. The Conference room is full both of ministers and spectators. I suppose fully 400 ministers are in attendance. After routine business, the debate on Section I. was resumed, and about 11 a. m., the Conference came to a vote, and carried the section by a very large majority. The discussion was quite a warm one. Yet the whole spirit of it was Christian and urbane. A vote to lay it over for one year, was earnestly discussed and voted down. It was felt that to do so, was to be untrue to our past action as well as to our professions of desire for union with other Methodist bodies.

There was but a short debate on the next section—the name of the Churches. Yet there were one or two amendments proposed. Many seemed to prefer simply the name, "The Methodist Church of Canada," leaving out the word 'Wesleyan.' Another amendment to omit altogether the 2nd clause, but by a large majority the Conference declared its will, and carried the whole resolution.

There was a very earnest but not a tedious debate upon the first part of the next resolution. The principal speakers were Mr. Dewart and Dr. Jeffers on the side of lay delegation.

The principal objections which these brethren refuted, was that our laymen had not asked for lay delegation. It was felt, however, that it was more in harmony with the spirit of the times, and wiser to concede lay delegation, than to wait till the membership agitated for it. Another objection strongly urged was, that according to our constitution, our laymen having a veto power already upon our legislation, are giving up more than they will receive. The Conference, however, took a different view, and by a unanimous vote, carried the resolution. Intense interest was manifested during the discussion of this very important measure.

On section 4 (I) an amendment providing for the election of the lay delegates by ballot was introduced, and with it the article passed.

Section 6 passed after considerable conversation.

On section 8 two amendments were voted down, viz: 1st, That the proviso be omitted. 2nd, Instead of the time being fixed, it should read, "in such time and place as may be fixed on by the Conference." It was clearly argued, however, by Dr. Evans that it was necessary to fix the time.

A telegram just read (7.15 p.m.) by President, saying that after a 3 days' debate, Union has been carried in the Conference of the New Connexion Church by a large majority. It has been received with very great and continued applause. The more so when it is known that a tremendous effort has been made by the English authorities to override the action of that Conference.

All the other articles, except one or two laid over, have passed to 14.

H. R. R. S.

London, June 10, 1873.

[We have received two telegrams from the Conference, one dated the 10th, to this effect: "All the clauses of the Union Committee Report adopted down to those relating to General Superintendents, these to be taken up in the morning. NEW CONNEXION CONFERENCE voted to-day in favor of Union." The other dated the 12th inst, to this effect: "General Superintendence negatived. Other clauses passed down to those relating to transfers—these now under discussion."—ED P.W.]

(*From the Montreal Witness*)

LONDON, June 9.—Most of the Protestant pulpits of the city were filled yesterday by the members of the Conference. The Rev. Samuel D. Rice, D. D., President, conducted the services at North street After the sermon thirty-six young ministers, received into full connection with the Conference on Friday night, were solemnly set apart to the work of the ministry by the imposition of hands, in which ceremony a large number of the senior ministers took part.

To-day the proceedings of the Conference throughout have been of more than ordinary interest. Mr. Horner, Honorary Secretary of the Children's Home, Lambeth, London, England, a branch of which has been established at Hamilton, Ontario, was introduced and addressed the Conference, giving a bigoly interesting account of the origin, design and prospects of that charity. At the conclusion of his address on motion of Dr. Ryerson, a resolution was adopted expressive of the hearty sympathy of the members of the Conference with this benevolent project.

On motion of Dr. Wood, Dr. Rice was reappointed to the Presidency of the Wesleyan Female College, and the Rev. W H Withrow, M A., was appointed his assistant.

The Rev. E B Rickman, M. A., was appointed principal of the new college recently organized at Dundas, Ontario.

The Rev. the President then called the attention of the Conference to the report of the Committee which had been referred at the last Conference, in the matter of the division of the Conference and confederation with the Eastern British American Conference. The reading of that part of the journals referring to the appointment of the committee, and which defined the work given it to do, was called for and read, after which the discussion commenced. The caution with which the subject was approached by the several speakers showed how thoroughly they appreciated the gravity of the work which was before them There appeared to be no disposition upon the part of any one to indulge in speech-making; and the whole of the morning session was taken up in a conversation, in which a large number of ministers took part; the object of which was to elicit information, and to feel their way to a right understanding of the subject.

LONDON, June 10.—The Conference assembled in North street Church this morning at 9 o'clock. The committee entrusted with the French Mission work in the Province of Quebec, the Theological department, Victoria College, and Committee having charge of the German Mission work presented reports which were of a highly satisfactory character, indicating a pleasing state of prosperity in the particular department of church work to which they referred.

The order of the day, the matter of the division of Conference, and federation with the Eastern British American Conference, was then taken up. The debate on the first paragraph of the report of the Committee, affirming the principal both of division and federation, was resumed.

Rev. John Hunt moved that the whole scheme be laid on the table for one year; the motion was seconded by Dr. Ryerson. This motion was lost after it had been fully discussed.

Rev. Jos. E. Sanderson moved an amendment to the original motion, affirming the principal of division, but dropping that of confederation for the time being, to be taken up at a future time, and discussed by itself; but the motion did not prevail. The original motion was then put and carried.

The second paragraph, to the effect that the name of the church in its reconstructed form should be "The Wesleyan Methodist Church of Canada," was taken, and, after some discussion, carried.

In the afternoon the consideration of the matter of the division and confederation was resumed.

The third paragraph, referring to the introduction of lay representation in the General Conference was moved by the Rev. D. B. Maddan, seconded by Rev. A. Hurlburt, Mr. Hurlburt spoke strongely in favor of the admission of the layman to the legislative body as did Dr. Aylesworth.

At the close of a long and earnest debate the vote was taken, and the motion was carried by so large a vote as to make it practically unanimous.

The subsequent paragraphs, which referred to matters of detail, were carried with but little discussion, until part of the scheme referring to the appointment of a General Superintendent—a Bishop in fact, if not in name—when on motion, the debate was adjourned till to morrow.

JUNE 11th.—Discussion was resumed on the appointment of general superintendents by the General Conference, who should preside at the Annual Conferences, travel at large, and take general oversight of the entire work of the Church. The paragraphs of the report referring to this matter were moved in an elaborate and carefully prepared speech by the Rev. G. R. Sanderson of Kingston. He combated the idea that the proposed change involved the introduction of a new principle into Methodism and argued that it was but a new application of a principle which had pervaded the entire organization from the beginning. He contended that the appointment of these officers was essential to the maintenance of the unity of the Church; others felt the necessity of the same thing. The duties of the reformed church which had dispensed with this general superintendency had, he affirmed, restored it, and Dr. John Hall, of New York, deprecated the absence of something of the kind in the Presbyterian Church, holding that the absence of it was the weak point in their organization.

The Rev. Dr. Douglas, of Montreal, moved an amendment to the effect that the part of the report referring to the appointment of General Superintendents be struck out; and that the duties of these officers be performed by a governing body composed of the Presidents of the annual conferences. In moving this amendment he delivered a magnificent oration, ornate, majestic and powerful, weighing mightily against prelacy, and contending eloquently for the essential equality of the Christian ministry. He opposed the proposed arrangement because he believed it to be an invasion of that equality, and as the entering wedge which would prepare the way for the creation of a hierarchy in the church

Dr. Jeffers, of London, as seconder of the amendment proposed by Mr. Douglas, eloquently and forcibly addressed the Conference combatting the position taken by Sanderson in moving the resolution.

The Rev. John Carroll contended that Methodism had been essentially Episcopal from the beginning Mr. Wesley held that he was a true Scriptural bishop, and when he organized a church it was an Episcopal church. The Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States, and all branches of the Methodist family, had adopted the essential features of Episcopacy. He held, too that it would be prudent and politic at this time to adopt this form; it would be grateful to their brethren in the United States, and it would remove some difficulties out of the way of union, with at least one of the Methodist bodies of this country. He held further that they were in a sense committed to it as it had been incorporated in the scheme of union both with their brethren in the Maritime Province and with the New Connexion Methodists of this part of the Dominion adopted by the joint committee.

Rev. R. Fowler, M. D., forcibly and eloquently contended for Presbyterian as opposed to Episcopal rule in the Church.

Rev. Alex. Sutherland spoke in opposition to the amendment.

The Rev. Geo. H. Davis followed on the other side.

The Rev. Dr. Ryerson also spoke in favor of the amendment, though he did not approve of everything in it, he paid a high compliment to the eloquent address of the Rev. Dr. Douglas, though he felt it to be his duty to dissent from a part of the amendment, which he averred, though it was designed to prevent the establishing of a hierarchy, would have the effect of establishing a far worse kind of hierarchy than that which it was intended to prevent. After some further conversation and consultation, Dr. Douglas consented to withdraw his amendment in favor of one which had been prepared by Dr. Ryerson, but as the time for adjournment had come, the vote upon it was deferred till to-morrow.

Circuit Intelligence.

GUYSBORO CIRCUIT.—We have read with much interest and heartfelt joy, any soul-saving intelligence which has reached us in the columns of our paper from time to time. We have praised God as we have thought of his power being manifested in the salvation of souls, and of the honour which he has conferred on our brethren who have been toiling in the same vineyard with ourselves.

When we came to our present field of labour we found that there was need for some one to be "A repairer of the breaches, a restorer of paths to dwell in." We thought it wise to cut off fruitless breaches, and to remove many who had a name to live but were dead.

We have also gone to the rude quarry of nature and have tried to hew and polish some stones so that they may be laid on the sure foundation laid in Zion, that they may be living stones built up into a spiritual house unto the praise and glory of God; and not boasting of another man's line of things made ready to our hand. In some half-dozen places we have put forth special effort for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom with more or less results. Three classes have been formed, viz, one at Torbay, another at Gammon's settlement, and another at Canada settlement, with some additions to others which had well-nigh become extinct.

We remember a backslider saying to us that I could listen to instructive sermons without being much affected, but your sermon on the sufferings of Christ burnt me right up, melted me right down. Bless God there is power in the old, old story of Jesus and His love. We remember another speaking to us (a head of a family) of the change God had wrought in his soul, how a week ago he had no desire to meet with Christian ministers or people, how he made light of things sacred and would run from the messengers of Christ but now he runs to them. We remember hearing another head of family, to whom the spirit had revealed his sin and helplessness speaking of himself so depreciatingly that it pained him to look in his own face or he could not bear to do so. We give God thanks for another who has erected his family altar, has taken charge of a small flock in a perilous situation and is about to commence a Sabbath School. While another child of many prayers who resisted the Holy Ghost when he has been privileged with a minister on each side of him praying for his salvation, by the grace of God he has yielded and not content with a partial salvation he wants to have all that God is waiting to give him.

While we have been honestly and scripturally building against our own door, without taking our neighbours material we have had to use the sword as well as the trowel, to guard our own work and we sincerely pray that no fox may tear down our stone wall.

Some of the time we have been alone. A part of the time also we have laboured harmoniously with a good Baptist brother.

Financially our circuit is in just the same condition as last year. In some places there has been a falling off in subscriptions, in other places they have done better.

A few of our benevolent friends of Cape Canso have done nobly in ministering unto us in carnal things. And we pray that they may be made partakers of our spiritual things.

Feeling thankful for past mercies, and mourning over past mistakes, we rejoice that the great Head of the Church has put any honour upon the treasure in such earthen vessels. We are willing for more talented and more faithful labourers to take our place.

T H. JAMES.

Guysborough, June 10th.

GEORGETOWN AND MONTAGUE CIRCUIT, P. E. I., JUNE 6th.—*Dear Mr. Editor*.—Thinking that a brief account of the state of this Circuit, may be interesting to your readers, I undertake to pen a few lines. Though I have nothing very special to note, yet there are several items in connection with my work encouraging to those who delight in the welfare of Zion. On the whole our congregations have been very good, especially in Georgetown; where I am happy to state that we have a prospect of building a church before long, which is very much needed. We have opened a Sabbath school there, which, though small at present, promises soon to grow into a nice school. We have also an interesting school at Union Road, which bids fair to prove a blessing to the Society there. There are Sabbath schools at Lower Montague, and Montague Bridge, but they are not wholly in our hands.

I have met Society classes in three of these places, and some of our meetings have been times of refreshing; and while believers have been quickened, and strengthened to pursue their upward course, I have reason to believe that one or two, have sought and found the Lord, and others have been deeply convinced, moved to desire, but at present remain undecided: my one desire is that God would glorify himself in their conversion. We had our last Quarterly meeting on May 26th, and the result of the meeting was much better than we expected; all that was required being brought to hand without any effort, and the Circuit, though a new one, has proved itself self-sustaining. Last week through the kind liberality of one of our Charlottetown friends—the Hon. Judge Young, we were presented with a handsomely bound Bible, for use in the Georgetown service. Our worthy friend, to whom our sincere thanks are due, has given us the word of life to preach, and I trust that other wealthy friends will be ready to help us with means to procure a church in which to deliver the message of salvation to dying men. I am very busily engaged with services, Sabbath schools, and visiting, find much sympathy and kindness as I move among the people, and great respect is manifested by them, to one with whom only of late, they have become thoroughly acquainted.

JOHN ASTBURY.

Miscellaneous.

THE ENGLISH DISTRICT MEETINGS.

The reports of the several District Meetings which we publish will be read, we are sure, with great interest. These committees of the Conference are virtually district synods, and as such exercise important functions and do important work. Their powers are largely executive and judicial, and, if not legislative, they at least suggest and prepare matters and measures of legislation for the Conference. What can be more important then the investigation of ministerial character, the examination of candidates for the ministry and of probationers for ordination, the transaction of business in connection with chapel building and school extension, and the review of the several departments of the work of God? With such affairs as these more than thirty distinct assemblies, comprising the whole of British Methodism, have just been busy.

No doubt the numerical return relating to membership will attract most attention, as these are supposed to indicate, with more or less of correctness, the spiritual state of the Connexion. The mere accession of numbers, it must be admitted, is no certain criterion of spiritual progress and purity. At the same time, it may well be feared that when the additions to the Church are few, and when old members tire of Christian communion, there must be a declension in spiritual life and power. It was in connection with the first and greatest Christian Pentecost that about three thousand souls were added to the Church. We are quite aware that in times of Connexional decrease, whilst not a few are greatly alarmed and discouraged, others comfort themselves with the thought that diminished numbers in the class-rooms do not mean diminished numbers in the chapels, and that the removal of a few hundred names from the muster roll of members is more than compensated for by a probable increase of hearers in our chapels and a certain augmentation of scholars in our schools. Perhaps, upon the whole, it is the safest to avoid undue elation in years of increase, and undue depression in those years of decrease which come far less frequently. When God has blessed us with the accession of thousands we could fall, as a Connexion, into no greater snare than to sacrifice to our own net and burn incense to our own drag. Nor it is less a device of Satan to drive us to discouragement and hopelessness because now and then we toil all night and catch nothing. As to the bad use which those who misunderstand us make of our statistics, we cannot help that. The number meeting in class is counted every quarter and published every year for certain financial purposes connected with our Church economies, and not for Connexional self-glorification. If we wished to impress the public with our numerical greatness, we should "number the people", man, woman, child, babe, and suckling, of all our adherents, as some other Churches do.

Then, no doubt, as a denomination, the Wesleyan Methodists would appear again, as in the census of religious worship of 1851, second only to the Church of England. Whether the Conference will ever publish the fuller statistics which some desire is doubtful. At present the "Minutes" give to the public merely the "number of members in Society." From the District Returns which we have given it is plain that an increase of about a couple of thousand will be reported to next Conference. The result, although falling short of our expectations, yet, considering the potent agencies of evil that are at work and the rivalries and competition of other churches, is matter of thankfulness. Methodism has no longer a monopoly of earnestness and zeal. In villages where our fathers found the Church of England asleep, where the old clergyman used never an effort to keep his parishioners from the Methodist chapel, their sons find the Church quickened, if not with spiritual, certainly with ecclesiastical life, and the new vicar wakeful, active, and pastoral, and constant in his warnings against Methodism and Dissent. In these same villages, too, the interest is divided by other forms of Methodism, "Primitive," "New," and "Free," in addition to the "Old Body," to the weakening of all.

It is pleasing to note that prosperity appears in many of the great centres of population in the northern counties After leaving Birmingham and Shrewsbury District, in which there is a decrease, and travelling northwards, increases are found in the flourishing districts of Macclesfield, Liverpool, Manchester, Bolton, Halifax and Bradford, Leeds, Sheffield, and Nottingham and Derby. Crossing the Humber it is remarkable that with the exception of the Carlisle District, where there is a small increase, decreases are encountered all the way through the Hull, York, Whitby and Darlington, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and Edinburgh and Aberdeen Districts to the Ultima Thule of the Shetland Isles. Not that there are no circuits in all these districts which have increases, but then they are all swallowed up by the decreases in others.

Whether the diminished numbers in the iron and coal producing districts of North Yorkshire, Durham, and Northumberland have any connection with the abnormal prosperity of the trade of these regions is what, in the absence of full information, we can pronounce no opinion upon. Our readers will regret that one of the metropolitan districts shows a decrease in the number of members, while the increase in the other is hardly worth mentioning. It should not be forgotten, however, that the London Districts have shown an increase for many successive years, and that even now we believe the diminution belongs largely to the country circuits of those two important districts. Still, there is abundant reason for humiliation before God, and loud calls for more vigorous efforts in soul-saving work.—*Methodist Recorder*.

THE WAY THEY DO IT IN ENGLAND.

Our Wesleyan brethren in England have a singular way of doing business. Toward the close of the Conference-year, "the quarterly meeting"—they do not call it a conference—in many instances, passes resolutions complimentary to the ministers, thanking them, and sometimes giving them things more substantial than thanks—regretting that those who have served out their triennial term cannot remain longer with them—asking those who have not of return—and, in short, doing a good deal business which we leave undone or [illegible] to the Bishop and Annual Conference. The quarterly meeting also considers the question of how many ministers shall be employed on the circuit the ensuing year—suggests where they should reside—and receives special contributions for circuit purposes. Here is a case in point, just before us in the *Methodist Recorder*. The Wednesbury Circuit—a name famous in the annals of Methodism, the early Methodists being greatly persecuted there—reports an increase of fourteen in the year, with forty-five on trial. "The Rev. J. Stubbridge was unanimously invited to succeed the Rev. J. Pollitt at Bradley, and the proposal to erect two new class-rooms at Darlaston, to cost about £210, was approved and recommended. But the most interesting business of the day was the consideration of a noble and generous proposal made by H. Mills, Esq., one of the circuit stewards, to give £1,040 to the circuit funds on the condition that an additional minister be called out to reside at Pleck. It was stated that there is a beautiful chapel and commodious school, and a growing population. The proposal was thankfully accepted, and a resolution unanimously passed requesting the Conference to appoint an additional minister to the circuit." We do not allude to these things either to commend or to condemn, but to show how they do such things in England—of course, we commend the high-toned liberality of those princely laymen who do so much for the cause they love.—*Nashville Christian Advocate*.

A Baltimore layman tells the *Methodist Home Journal* that Bishop Foster's address to the Baltimore Conference did not make the same impression when delivered that it makes when read in print. He says that one presiding elder was sick, and that therefore the laymen deserved a hearing for their interests. Furthermore—

There were several reasons why the preachers should not trouble the bishop, as also why the laity should. It is a well-known fact that months before the sitting of conference, some of our preachers in connection with others higher up in the official scale, were working up the appointments, and by the time conference met had arrived to such a state of completion in their labors, that the most of the preachers who were in the habit of giving trouble in reference to their appointments, knew where they were expected to go, and this in some instances without regard to the wants or wishes of the charges; therefore it was necessary for the laity to present their case to the Bishop notwithstanding it was very annoying to him. I think it is time for the ministers to learn that the people have some claims, that the churches were not erected for their accommodation, where they may sit at ease; but that they should do as men in other professions, go to work, and prepare themselves for their high calling, and become master workmen, leaving the appointments to the untrammeled judgment of the bishops and presiding elders, after careful inquiry, and influenced by the Holy Spirit. In such an event, the laity would be happy to believe their charges are provided for by the untrammeled judgment of the bishops and presiding elders, after careful inquiry, and influenced by the Holy Spirit. In such an event, the laity would be happy to believe their charges are provided for by the providence of God.

A STARTLING BUT TRUE STORY.—The Rev. J. W. Brooke, Rector of Great Ponton, and late Vicar of St. Mary's, Nottingham, in a long letter to the *Record* on "Rome's Tactics," vouches for the accuracy of the following startling story:—

"A certain clergyman died in a certain diocese towards the end of the year 1871. (I do not deem it expedient to mention names at present.) This clergyman had appointed as his executors a brother, who is an admiral in the British Navy, together with a friend of this brother, also an admiral, well known at this time, and of high standing. The executors were prevented from meeting together to wind-up the affairs of the deceased until the middle of last year, when, upon examining his papers, they found a parcel as it were hermetically closed, and endorsed, "Inviolably Sacred: To be destroyed." A question arose about opening it, but they soon decided that it was their duty as executors so to do; when the parcel was found to contain two documents—one a Dispensation from the Pope, permitting the deceased to retain his position as a clergyman of the Church of England, through actually a priest of the Church of Rome; the other a list of such of the clergy in his diocese or near him, who are likewise possessed of dispensations, and upon whom he might therefore rely for friendly co-operation and sympathy."

IRELAND.

At the recent meeting of the Dublin District, —The Rev. Gibson M'Millen proposed a new form of paying the ministers, which met much approval. It was to the effect that the present system of allowances for the children of ministers should be abolished, and that all ministers whether married or single, should receive a definite stipend for the first ten years after ordination (say £100 per annum), for the next ten years it should be increased 50 per cent., and for the remainder of life by about 33 per cent. For probationers the sum named was a little less than that paid for the first term. Mr. M'Millen, in placing the matter before the committee, which he did with his usual clearness, said the particular sum that might be named was somewhat a matter of detail, and to be modified by circumstances, but he thought the principal upon which the proposal rested would on investigation be ascertained to be sound. The sum necessary to carry out the scheme, he thought, could be found if the matter were heartily entered on A resolution requesting Conference to appoint a committee of ministers and lay gentlemen to examine and report on the whole question was unanimously adopted.

DEATH OF THE REV. THOMAS WAUGH.—On Tuesday, the 6th May, this venerable servant of the Lord Jesus breathed his last, within three days of having completed his 88th year. He was born in Coleraine, in the year 1785.