

trouble themselves about the sun-spots. What they extol and love are its light-giving rays and health-imparting heat. The fruit on the trees is what the agriculturist is anxious about, not an imperfect leaf here and there. The builder cares not for "the insignificant flaw in a stone" that may occasionally appear, when he knows that the building rests upon a solid foundation, and is enduring and complete from top to bottom. If the Bible is so faultless that scarcely a speck of imperfection is discernable under the most microscopic criticism, why not stop talking about the insignificant defects and direct attention to its perfection of doctrine and life? Or, if thought and study must be given to the supposed errors, why not seek to show that even they are capable of due explanation, and are rather the result of our ignorance than of divine permission, and that had we all the knowledge at our command that the inspired authors possessed, even our microscopic critics would be satisfied with every biblical statement.

Methodist Conference.

The Quadrennial Conference of the Methodist Church in Canada whose sittings are expected to close at London, Ont., this week has had an important programme of business before it. The questions affecting the vital welfare of the Church were many and received thoughtful attention. The reports dealing with life and work were very satisfactory; those containing statistics bore evidence of the rapid growth of Methodism in this country. The increase in membership is most gratifying, being very substantial and gradual, but, indeed, a healthy tone prevades all the organizations and agencies reported upon. There is no doubt of the great advance made by the Church and it is but natural that there should be great rejoicings. In these we must heartily join with them. We rejoice at their prosperity and wish them the highest success in all the branches of their work. Canadian Methodism has produced some grand men and there are grand men to-day upholding that system worthy successors of the Taylors, Douglasses, Punshons and Nelles whose imprint will long stamp the Church of their love and life.

A Reasonable View.

In the current number of the *Contemporary Review*, there appears an article by Mr. Goldwin Smith, on Mr. Stead's book, "If Christ Came to Chicago." The writer is moderate in tone and with his conclusions most people will be inclined to agree. He thinks that it is possible to form an exaggerated notion of the political corruption in America. The public service of the Federal Government he believes to be pure, but he admits that corrupt voting is inseparable from the system of Government. Mr. Smith, who has recently been in England, and has used his eyes and ears, does not differ from Mr. Stead on the great question of Gambling. He says, "England has been converted by the turf into a vast gambling table, as any one who takes up a local newspaper may see. Many bet who know nothing of a horse, and perhaps did not see the race. A greater moral curse has seldom fallen upon the nation. The infection spreads to the United States, to the British Colonies, and every country over which British society has influence. Mr. Stead would be a real benefactor if he could get up a crusade against the turf." He advises those who really wish to know America to spend a few years in a country town, and in intercourse with its

inhabitants and the farmers of its neighborhood. They will no longer regard Chicago and New York as an adequate measure of the habits of American people, or of the sinews and safeguards of the American commonwealth. On the question underlying Mr. Stead's book, Mr. Smith says, "Is revealed Christianity true or is it not? If it is, the functions of a Church are Christian communion, teaching and worship. If it is false, let not the Churches be kept in existence as relief associations of an equivocal kind, as donkey engines to the Trade Union, or as targets for the moral satirist. Let them be abolished, and let the City Council be recognised in accordance with Mr. Stead's theory as the true Church."

Prof. Veitch's Death.

The death is announced of Prof. Veitch of Glasgow University. A favorite pupil of Sir William Hamilton, a loyal Borderer who loved Tweedside with the ardour of a past age, a metaphysician of note, a devoted Free Church office-bearer, Dr. Veitch's personality bulked largely in Scottish life, and his departure at the comparatively early age of 65 is deeply regretted by his countrymen. He will be long remembered as one of the Edinburgh group which gave so much promise in Scottish scholarship about the middle of the century and who were dominated by Hamilton's personality and view. The British weekly on recording his death gives the following dainty and true picture. "He died where he was born sixty-five years ago, a fact which yields the main characteristic of his life. He was distinguished in an extraordinary degree by tenacity of local attachment, and in him has passed away the chief lover of the Borderland, one whose nature was full of the lingering grace of Tweedside. The best of his books is his 'History and Poetry of the Scottish Border,' and it will not soon be superseded. But to those who knew him, however slightly, it will never replace the vanished figure, the silver hair, the warm and pensive enthusiasm. Nearly all Hamilton's medallists have left their mark. On the other hand, it is perhaps equally true that they have, on the whole, done very little for philosophy. Even of Veitch and Baynes, who obtained philosophic chairs, and had abundant opportunity, this is true. For many years Veitch has taken no part in the great philosophic controversy, and he will be remembered, not as a philosopher, but as a Borderer. His biography of Sir William Hamilton is a faithful and loving bit of work, though it is nothing so good as the admirable portrait drawn by Spencer Baynes in the 'Edinburgh Essays.'"

Comfort from Books. Thinking the other day of the afflicted ones in so many households, we began to wonder what books gave them the most comfort as read and reflected upon. Of course, the Bible stands first with the rightly disposed; but of the many hundreds of volumes prepared for the tried, bereaved and ailing, what one or ones have been found especially helpful? Information upon this point might be the means of bringing others into the possession of the very consolation that they so much crave and need. It is true that all conditions are not alike, and what would answer in one case might not in another; but where a book has special adaptations to a given situation, it is likely to suit in all cases where there is a similarity of experience and character. One often renders a public service by commending to the afflicted whom he meets, or to a wider circle through the press, a work of decided merit which has been known to be helpful to himself and others in seasons of affliction and bereavement.