

THE WESLEYAN.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 8, 1879.

UNPAID STIPENDS.

The highest ecclesiastical court in the Methodist Church of Canada, namely, the General Conference, has indicated what the minimum amount of stipend of its ministers should be. The amount necessarily varies somewhat. A minister having a family should receive a larger amount than an unmarried man. Ministers stationed in towns and cities need a larger income than those who reside in the rural circuits. The experience of many years shows that the "allowance" even when paid in full, is quite limited enough. In many of the circuits the stipend of the minister is paid in full, and with commendable regularity and promptness. In many of the circuits, however, the salary of the minister is never, or but rarely, paid in full, and the amount that does come into the treasury of the circuit creeps its slow length slowly along. The amount due the minister, and remaining unpaid, on the circuits, is sometimes, however, not very large; in numerous instances, however, it exceeds a hundred dollars, and occasionally it is more than twice that sum.

An examination of the list of those delinquent circuits shows that some of them have had a place in the minutes during only a few years, and others for many years. Some of these circuits, as regards their financial doings, indicate a healthy growth; others apparently have but little financial vitality; and others again, whose history includes many years, appear to have lost a great deal of the financial vigor of former times. That some of our circuits should cease to grow, and that others should run into decline, are not pleasant facts for contemplation, and yet they are facts which demand investigation. It is well to inquire: Why are these things so? Is it not fair to infer that where such defects exist there must be a cause? Can we discover the cause, or causes, of this deplorable wrong? And can we find a remedy?

Before searching for probable causes of these deficiencies, and for needed remedies, we may urge a few inquiries. Are not our circuits under heaven-appointed obligations to pay the legitimate financial claims of their ministers? Ought the Christian ministry to be financially hampered, as it is in many instances confessedly? Ought the pastor of an intelligent congregation thus to suffer in the house of his friends? Must these things continue? Should we sit by and let this wrong go on? Is not the policy of the short-coming circuits a short-sighted policy? Is there no remedy?

It may be very easy to assume that these financial deficiencies on so many circuits may probably be attributed to the present depressed state of trade and commerce, or what is sometimes called the "hardness of the times." We might accept such an assumption were it not that facts do not indicate its correctness. Many circuits always have been deficient, even when trade has been prosperous, and commerce has been flourishing. Other circuits, that inevitably feel the same stringency of monetary affairs, have been trying year by year to do better things, and have been succeeding. They have tried earnestly and determinedly to pay the stipend of their minister, and they have done it, notwithstanding that the financial heavens have been dark with threatening clouds. We must admit, of course, that the scarcity of the circulating medium has an effect, and a very considerable effect, upon the exchequer of a circuit. But this is far from being the chief difficulty. Let us, first of all, in another article, see how THE QUARTERLY OFFICIAL MEETING stands in relation to this question.

THE QUARTERLY OFFICIAL MEETING.

Quarterly Official Meetings are an indispensable part of the Methodist economy. They are meetings for business to be transacted, and completed, on one certain day in the quarter. They are, therefore, chiefly, though not exclusively, financial. They are composed of, (1) the minister on the circuit; (2) the probationers; (3) the local preachers; (4) the exhorters; (5) the stewards; (6) the class leaders; (7) the superintendents of Sabbath Schools; (8) the representatives of trustees; and (9) the representatives of societies. All the various interests of a circuit are represented in a properly organized Quarterly Official Meeting.

This institution exists chiefly for the purpose of providing for the financial necessities of the ministers on the circuits. It is a somewhat delicate piece of machinery, and needs to be circumspectly manipulated. It has been doing a good work for Methodism for nearly a century and a half. It has been readjusted and improved upon, from time to time. It is admirably adapted to the work of to-day.

Give it a fair chance, and it will accomplish its purposes now, as well as in any former period.

We think the two following propositions may be safely affirmed, without the fear of successful contradiction, namely: Firstly: On those circuits where there is, (1) a thoroughly organized, (2) well attended, and (3) properly conducted, Quarterly Official Meeting, the stipend of the minister is, in most cases, regularly paid.

Secondly: On those circuits where there is not, (1) a thoroughly organized, (2) well attended, and (3) properly conducted Quarterly Official Meeting, the stipend of the minister is not paid as it ought to be.

It is probable that a complete compliance with the requirements of the Discipline, in all its details, so far as The Quarterly Meeting is concerned, will, in almost all cases, secure a removal of present deplorable financial deficiencies. Business men do not ordinarily succeed without diligent and painstaking attention to well conceived business principles. Why should we expect financial success in circuit affairs, without that loyalty to our Discipline which involves a diligent and painstaking attention to the details of Quarterly Meeting work?

Of course, on all our short-coming circuits, Quarterly Official Meetings are held. But how often do these meetings fail to do all the work which the Discipline requires? If some of our Quarterly Meetings meet all the connexional claims upon them, it may be advisable to "let well enough alone," even though there may be some irregularities in their proceedings. To those we do not now purpose to speak. But it may be well to indicate, in part, at least, how we think some of our Quarterly Meetings may be conducted, to the advantage of all concerned.

1. Let the first meeting of the year be held not later than the last week in August in each year.

2. It is absolutely essential, if the first Quarterly Meeting of the year shall be successful, that every member thereof shall be in attendance. To secure such an attendance will, in some instances, be a difficult accomplishment. Some of the members live, perhaps, twenty or thirty miles, or more, away from the place of meeting. Whether they live far away, or near, they must, without fail, if possible, attend the first Quarterly Official Meeting of the year. They may be excused, perhaps, at other times, if they find it difficult to attend, but not then. Of what value are they, if they are not at the post of duty, when there has been the rallying cry for every officer? What will the rank and file do, if the officers respond not? A person worthy of an official position in a church ought to be able to recognize the importance of this duty. Officials, who have not intelligent views upon this point must be taught. We should "reason together" with them, through the press, at their homes, and from the pulpit, on this vital point. They should be led to see that the heavens may fall, or the minister's stipend will fail, if they do not respond to the call to take their place in the first Quarterly Official Meeting of the year. There will, no doubt, be serious difficulties in the way. But we are never successful, in any really good thing, without we overcome difficulties. It is he that goeth forth, weeping under his burden, bearing precious seed, that returns rejoicing and successful. To fail in securing a general attendance at the first Quarterly Meeting of the year, means failure at the end of the year. What the husbandman shall gather into his garner in the autumn, depends upon how he has planned, and what he has done, in the beginning of the year.

3. The business of a Quarterly Meeting should be thoroughly conducted. If the circuit includes different preaching appointments, the financial value of each should be ascertained, and each locality should, according to its ability, be assessed for the amount needed therefrom, and that amount it should be expected to pay. With every part and interest of the circuit represented, there may be a very close approximation to accuracy, in the financial findings of the meeting. At such a meeting there should be a list prepared of all the supporters of the work on the circuit, and this list should show the amount it is desired each adherent of the cause, in every part of the circuit, shall pay.

4. The connexion, as a whole, has a right to claim that the business of each Quarterly Meeting shall be, in all its details, properly performed. If many of the circuits do this work thoroughly, why should it not be thoroughly done by all? Let the assembled officials of a circuit recognize, in their representative capacity, that The Quarterly Official Meeting is responsible, before God, and man, for the payment in full of the minister's allowances; and let each member of the Board recognize his personal responsibility for the amount required from that portion of the circuit which he represents. Let the officials feel that, in doing their work for Christ's ambassador, they are doing it for

Christ Himself. If they assume from the beginning that they can not succeed, they will surely fail; but if they solemnly determine to win, they will overcome.

5. If a superintendent carries with him, in his work, the officials of his church, he will carry his people. As goes The Quarterly Official Meeting, so will go the circuit. How immensely important, then, that the superintendent of every dependent circuit shall employ his tact, his push, his energy, his solicitude, and his prayers, to make his first Quarterly Official Meeting precisely what the Discipline requires it should be.

THE BRITISH CONFERENCE.

The sessions of the one hundred and thirty-sixth Wesleyan Methodist Annual Conference, commenced in the Islington Church, Birmingham, England, on Tuesday, the twenty-second day of July. Upwards of five hundred ministers were present. Dr. Riggs, the President of the past year, occupied the chair.

The roll of the Legal Hundred was called. It was ascertained that there was only one vacancy, caused by superannuation, which was filled by the election of the Rev. R. W. Wilcox. The past year is the only one, since the death of Wesley, during which there has been no death in the ranks of the Legal Hundred.

For two successive years the Rev. Samuel Coley had stood second on the list of involuntary candidates for the Presidency. The general expectancy, for some time, had been that Mr. Coley would this year be elected to that office. But he was, at the time of the opening of the Conference, too ill to be present. A letter from him to the Conference, expressing his regret at being unable to be present, was read.

The balloting for the Presidential chair resulted in the following vote:

Table with 2 columns: Name and Votes. M. C. Osborn, 3; Richard Roberts, 8; Dr. Osborn, 36; E. L. Jenkins, 75; B. Gregory, 301.

The Rev. Benjamin Gregory was, accordingly, declared to be the President of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference.

Rev. M. C. Osborn was elected Secretary, having received 359 votes.

The Conference has adopted a report in favor of an Ecumenical Conference, as proposed by the American Methodists and appointed a committee to make arrangements for the meeting.

An open session of the Conference was held on the evening of day of its opening. The President was in the chair. Rev. W. Price, J. Wilson, and R. C. Johnson were present as representatives of the Irish Conference of 1879. Rev. Dr. Panshon was one of the principal speakers of the evening, representing the Conference in France. The Rev. Dr. Campbell, Bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, addressed the meeting. He stated that the African Church that he represented had now in the United States 2,000 preachers, upwards of 314,000 communicants, 100,000 children at school, and 3,000 local preachers, "as busy as bees."

The London "Methodist" says: "The speech of the Rev. Dr. Campbell, representative of the African Methodist Church, was the most effective of the evening. Dr. Campbell is a negro, very clever and eloquent. His address made many glorify God for his work among the coloured people of the United States of America." We have no report in our English papers of the proceedings of the Conference after the close of its first day.

RELIEF AND EXTENSION.—We give in another column this week the Report of the Relief and Extension Fund Committee. The general subject which is presented in this Report is of vital importance, at this juncture. The interests of our church, in every part of the territory over which its jurisdiction extends, will be more or less affected, now and in the future, by the way in which our people respond to the appeal which is contained in this Report. It is of paramount importance that we, everywhere, should give earnest heed to the pressing calls that come from the Manitoba and Saskatchewan country. Is there not for us now the opportunity, and have we not the ability, to go up and possess a goodly portion of that great and promising field?

We would call attention also to the Report of the Nova Scotia Conference Relief and Extension Fund Committee, in this issue. A meeting of the Committee was held on Wednesday of this week.

RELIEF AND EXTENSION FUND. NOVA SCOTIA CONFERENCE.

A Meeting of the Missionary "Relief and Extension Fund" Committee for the Nova Scotia Conference was held in Brunswick St. Church—Wednesday, August 6th, 1879.

Present—Rev. S. F. Huestis, President of the Conference, Revs. R. Alder Temple,

A. W. Nicolson, and Messrs. G. H. Starr and J. B. Morrow.

The Resolutions adopted by the Central Committee at Toronto were read—after which the following resolutions, outlining the course of procedure for the Conference of N. S. were adopted.

I. WITH REFERENCE TO SUPERINTENDENTS.—That special attention be requested on the part of Superintendents of Circuits to the resolutions passed at the Central Committee in relation to hastening this movement to our people on the first Sabbath in September. Also that superintendents be requested to lay the subjects of this Scheme before their next Quarterly Official Meetings and any suggestions they may consider advisable should be forwarded to the Financial District Meetings.

II. WITH REFERENCE TO DISTRICTS.—That the Financial District Meetings be requested to consider the Resolutions passed by the Central Committee at Toronto, and are hereby adopted by this committee, and that measures be adopted by the Districts to carry out the object of this scheme.

2. That a day or portion of a day should be set apart by the Financial District Meetings for special prayer on behalf of this very important movement.

3. That special meetings should be held on all our Circuits in September on the subject mentioned, and that they should be, as far as possible, both means of grace and of benevolence.

4. That deputation be appointed by the Financial District Meetings to attend public meetings held within their several boundaries, taking the care to secure, at the Central places especially, efficient deputations from among the members of the Districts or churches, as they may be best.

The Board of Examiners for the University of Halifax have just given to the public the result of the First B. A. Examination of the present year. Eight out of ten candidates who had registered their names presented themselves for examination. Of these the following passed in the first Division, their relative proficiency being indicated by the order in which their names are given: 1—Samuel C. Murray, Mount Allison College. 2—Sam. Dunn Scott, Mount Allison College. 3—John McKeicher, Private Study. 4—William Fenwick Vroom, King's College.

We are glad to see that men from our own College take the highest rank in this list. At the last year's examination a similar honor was won by Mount Allison College, two of her students having then taken the first and second prizes. It must be a matter of profound satisfaction to the friends of our Educational Institutions that Mount Allison students, in competition with the students of other Colleges, are able to obtain such an honorable record—a record all the more valuable from the fact that all the Colleges in Nova Scotia are represented on the Board of Examiners.

ONE of the passengers from England, by steamer, to this port, about a fortnight ago, reported that Rev. Dr. Jobson, Book Steward of the British Conference, had died in England just previous to the sailing of the steamer. The rumour found a place in some of the Halifax dailies, and was referred to in our issue of a fortnight ago. We are glad to be able to say that the report was not correct. Dr. Jobson had been ill, but was not, at last accounts, considered dangerously so.

The Nova Scotia Provincial Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition will be opened in Halifax, on Monday, September 29. The building and grounds will be open for visitors each day thereafter until Friday evening, October 3.

LANDRY'S MEDICAL JOURNAL for August has come to hand. It is published by Landry & Co., King Street, St. John, N.B., and contains several pieces of music for the piano.

PERSONALS.—Rev. W. H. Heartz, was at the opening of the British Conference in Birmingham, England, on the 22nd July. Revs. Dr. Stewart, J. McMurray, and A. W. Nicolson, were in town this week, attending a meeting of the Eastern Section of the Hymn Book Committee. Revs. R. Alder Temple, R. Smith, R. Brecken, Henry Ward Beecher and C. H. Paisley, were in town this week.

METHODIST CHURCH OF CANADA. PROPOSED RELIEF AND EXTENSION FUND.

PRELIMINARY STATEMENTS. Insufficient Income.—Reduced Grants.—Debt.

1. During the past five years it has become painfully apparent that the income of our Missionary Society is insufficient to meet the necessary expenditures. Grants have been cut down to a figure entailing serious embarrassment, not to say positive suffering, upon many of the missionaries; the most rigid economy has been practiced in every department; and yet a debt has accumulated amounting at the present time to some \$70,000.

2. From many parts of our widely-extended work—from British Columbia and the North-west Territories, as well as from many of the new settlements in the older Provinces of the Dominion—the Missionary Committee is constantly receiving most earnest and touching appeals for more missionaries and teachers,—appeals to which, owing to the scarcity of funds, they are unable to respond.

The "12 1/2 per cent." Scheme.

3. During the year 1878-9, an effort was made to increase the ordinary income by at least 12 1/2 per cent., in the hope of reducing thereby the debt of the Society; but this effort was successful in only a limited number of circuits, while the large decrease in the income in other parts of the Connexion, augmented instead of diminished the Society's indebtedness.

Special Effort Demanded—Action of the Committee of Finance.

4. In view of these facts the connexion became general that a prompt and vigorous effort must be made to grapple with the whole difficulty. This conviction took definite shape at a meeting of the Committee of Consultation and Finance on the 2nd of June, when resolutions were adopted recommending a special effort to raise a special fund of at least \$150,000 for the relief of the Missionary Society and the extension of its work.

Action of the Annual Conferences.

5. These resolutions were laid before the several Annual Conferences, and after careful consideration, were endorsed with perfect unanimity and the greatest enthusiasm. In four of the Conferences immediate steps were taken to give practical effect to the resolutions by voluntary offerings for the object named. In some instances only a small number of the ministers were present; but it is most cheering to know that less than 250 members of the Annual Conferences have subscribed over \$130,000, and it is confidently expected that when all the ministers have reported (or not one of them will willingly be left out of this legion of honor), the aggregate of ministerial subscriptions will not be far short of \$200,000.

Meeting of the Joint Committee.

6. In furtherance of the project, Committees of ministers and laymen were appointed by the Annual Conferences to confer with the Missionary Committee of Consultation and Finance, in preparing a plan of operations to raise this special fund. These Committees met at the Mission Rooms, Toronto, on Wednesday, July 23rd, 1879, and were constituted as follows, nearly all the members being present:

Committee of Consultation and Finance.—Revs. George Douglas, L. D., Enoch Wood, D. D., A. Sutherland, D. D., George Young, D. D., E. B. Harper, D. D., E. B. Ryckman, D. D., James Gray, D. D., James Elliott, D. D., S. Rose, D. D., John Shaw, John McDonald, Esq., Hon. J. G. Atkins, A. J. Dunlop, Esq., W. H. Gibbs, Esq., James Patterson, Esq., and Joseph Lister, Esq.

Toronto Conference.—Revs. John Potts, D. D., N. R. Willoughby, M. A., E. Clement, G. Cochran, J. G. Laird, Thomas Holby, Esq., S. Leelan, Esq., G. A. Cox, Esq., and W. T. Atkins, M. D.

London Conference.—Revs. W. S. Griffin, S. D. Rice, D. D., G. R. Sanders, D. D., Thomas McCornick, Esq., Alexander Johnson, Esq., D. Moore, Esq., Judge Jones, and B. C. Fairfield, Esq.

Montreal Conference.—Revs. Geo. McRitchie, Wm. Hanford, Sheriff Patrick, and H. Skinner, M. D.

Nova Scotia Conference.—Rev. S. F. Huestis.

New Brunswick and P. E. I. Conference.—Rev. Joseph Hart, W. E. Dawson, Esq.

In addition to the above, a number of brethren were present as visitors, and manifested a deep interest in the proceedings of the Committee. The utmost unanimity prevailed, and after careful consideration the Committee, with great heartiness, adopted the following:

RESOLUTIONS.

Satisfaction with the Movement. 1. That this Committee hail with the deepest satisfaction the inauguration of a movement for the relief of the Missionary Society and the consolidation and extension of its work.

Liberality of the Annual Conferences. 2. That the heartiness and unanimity with which the movement has been endorsed by the several Annual Conferences affords cheering evidence that the hand of God is in this matter; while the spontaneous liberality with which the ministers of those Conferences have offered their free-will contributions to the fund, give good ground for hope that the project will be carried to a triumphant issue.

\$150,000 to be raised.—Name of the Fund. 3. That in harmony with the recommendations of the various Annual Conferences, and for the carrying out of the important object to which they have pledged themselves, it is hereby Resolved,—That an immediate effort be made through out the Connexion, to raise a SPECIAL FUND OF AT LEAST \$150,000, to be called "THE RELIEF AND EXTENSION FUND" of the Methodist Church of Canada, to be applied as hereinafter stated.

Not to Interfere with other Connexional Funds. 4. It is to be distinctly understood that this is a Special Fund, intended to meet a Connexional emergency, and therefore must not be allowed to interfere in any degree with the ordinary contributions to the Missionary and other Connexional Funds.

To be completed by November 15. 5. That the special effort to raise this fund be completed by the 15th of November of the present year, so as to avoid any interference with the usual Missionary Meetings.

Time of Payments. 6. That all subscriptions of less than ten dollars be payable on or before the 25th of December, 1879. Subscriptions of ten dollars and upwards may be divided, if desired, into two instalments, the first payable on or before the 25th of December, 1879, and the second on or before the 15th of November, 1880.

Treasurers.

7. The Chairmen of Districts shall be Local Treasurers for this Fund; and John Macdonald, Esq., and the Rev. A.

Sutherland, the Treasurers of the Society.

8. Careful subscriptions should be made, as a special effort, to pay the debt of the Society.

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