

The Wesleyan Conference of 1851.

We were favoured with a late number of the Boston Christian Times, from which we copy the following excellent letter, from the pen of the Rev. Dr. RICHEY:

WINDSOR, Nova Scotia, Sept. 20, 1851.

REV. DR. CHOULES:—My Dear and Reverend Sir:—On Saturday the 16th of August, the most important Wesleyan Conference, ever held since the memorable and anxious one that immediately followed the death of the Founder of Methodism, concluded its deliberations.

I resume my rapid review of its more prominent proceedings,—those to which, at the present crisis, we attach most importance ourselves; and which, from their bearing on the character and prospects of an influential section of the Christian Commonwealth, cannot fail to awaken the interest of all who, like you, whilst honestly exemplifying their denominational preferences, feel that, on higher and holier principles than any minor peculiarities, whether of doctrine or discipline, they are ONE with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

On a minute retrospect, at the recent Conference, of the state of the Connexion, during a year of unprecedented trial, the gratifying fact was elicited, that not a single circuit in the Kingdom had been given up; but that, on the contrary, earnest applications were made by several, for accessions to their Ministerial agency, accompanied with a guarantee for a proportional increase in their contributions towards the sustentation of the work. And though it is deeply afflictive to witness the success that has attended the efforts of the Agitators in severing from us so many of our unwary people; yet one salutary effect of this internecine war, has been, to bind the Preachers more closely together in the bonds of confiding and co-operative affection. Certainly, of the entire body of our Ministers, not one in a hundred, has the slightest sympathy with either the men or the measures of the paralytic Confederacy. As to our Missions; into none of them, in any portion of the globe, has the insidious attempt to infuse the taint of disaffection, proved effective.

One of the most impressive and cheering spectacles presented at the late Conference, was the array of youthful candidates for admission on trial into our ministry. The rising Ministry is the hope of the Church. A religious community can possess no surer indication of spiritual vitality—no happier omen of expanding progress, than a converted and intellectually qualified ministry, in uninterrupted and enlarging succession. It is, therefore, most consoling to observe, that amid the fiery trial, with which God has permitted us to be tried, this high mark of His favour is, in no degree, withdrawn. The hallowed flame that glowed in the bosoms of the first heralds of the Cross, still burns bright, as at the beginning, on the altar of Methodism. There is no want of suitable agents, proportioned to the exigencies of our work, either domestic or foreign. The habit of giving is well known to be inseparable from our peculiar economy; and there has been I am happy to say, of late years, a gratifying approximation in the improved liberality of our more opulent friends, to the Bible standard; but we, nevertheless, feel the inadequacy of our resources to a more rapid extension of our work, or the higher cultivation of the ground we already occupy. The proof of this is found in the fact, that, from year to year, dozens of young men, of fervid zeal and intellectual promise, strongly recommended by their respective Quarterly Meetings, and Superintendent Ministers, as fit candidates for the sacred office, are for the most part kept in abeyance a considerable time, and, not seldom, indeed, precluded from our ranks, altogether. In this way, valuable men, who have become not only ornaments of other communions, but, by their literary labours, a great blessing to all the churches,—the celebrated Author of the Critical Introduction to the Knowledge and Study of the Scriptures, I have understood, among the number,—have been unavoidably and irrevocably lost to our own denomination. It was painful to me to witness the number of respectable candidates, whom the Conference after meeting all the calls which it felt itself warranted in responding to, was this year obliged, purely through the want of more adequate means of support, to dismiss to their homes.

A large and superior class of young Ministers, who had honourably fulfilled their four years' probation, were, with the accustomed solemnities, received, as we technically speak, into full connexion, and ordained to the discharge of all the Ministerial functions. The charge officially addressed to them by the Ex-President, the Rev. Dr. Beecham, was distinguished by simplicity and practicalness, and a judicious appreciation of the duties and responsibilities of the sacred office.

A public meeting is annually held, in connexion with the Conference, for the Recognition of such returned Missionaries, as happened to be engaged in the foreign work, at the period of their reception into full Connexion. The Missionaries on those occasions, which usually excite a large amount of interest, give a brief history of their Missionary life; and are then, on the pro-

posal of a Member of the Conference, formally recognized by the President of the Meeting, on behalf of the Conference. Continental India,—Tonga—Antigua and The Bahamas, were, the present year, represented in the persons of the Missionaries who received this public recognition.

In my previous communication I referred to a letter addressed to the Conference, by the Delegates of the Agitation, and to the rejection of the strange proposal which it contained. Not satisfied, however, with a reply which they ought to have regarded as final; or, more probably, not finding, in the dignity and meekness of wisdom by which it was characterised, desiderated elements to minister to the invigoration of the flagging spirit of strife, a corresponding Committee of the same concern, forwarded, without loss of time, another document to the Conference; professing—most veraciously, of course, to deplore the distractions which they had originated, and were, by every means in their power, labouring still to foment and extend; and proposing to refer the whole case to a third party; that is, in plain language, calling upon the Conference to transfer to others, both its moral and legal responsibilities. The palpable folly and unconscionable casuistry of such a proposal, is manifest to all men. The Conference could not, of course, entertain it for a moment, yet, instead of responding in such terms of indignation as the character of the document justly deserved, the reply, as in the former case, was as calm and dispassionate as it was clear and conclusive. It is no frigid indifference to the wide-spread ruin which the demon of discord and slander has achieved; still less is it any want of paternal solicitude, to heal the wounds inflicted by the hand of a brother on the daughter of our people; least of all, is it a resentful sense of outraged rights and insulted dignity, that has caused the Conference to take and maintain this position. It feels most poignantly the magnitude of the calamity; and is quite prepared to make any sacrifice but that of principle, to alleviate or counteract it. This it has evinced by the appointment of a large Committee of Ministers to whom is referred the consideration of all the questions involved; and by giving the President power to associate with them a proportionate number of lay gentlemen, that the result of their united counsels and deliberations may be laid before the next Conference, as a guide to its further action in the case. The wisdom of this precautionary course, in contemplating the introduction of any important changes into a system which has worked so well for more than a century, must be palpable; since precipitate innovation might, not improbably, produce, even worse evils than those which it would be its object to repress.

I have now, I think, glanced at nearly all those topics, connected with the late British Wesleyan Conference, in which your readers are likely to feel much interest. At least, I can at present think of no other, unless it be the fact, which was suitably acknowledged by the Conference, that our Committee of Privileges, for the past year, had well and faithfully discharged its various duties, and eminently so in constitutionally resisting to the utmost, the Papal aggression. To the judicious and energetic action of that Committee, it is, I believe, universally admitted, that Sir F. Thesiger was in no small degree indebted for his power to carry his amendments of the Ecclesiastical Titles' Bill.

My imperfect review of the Wesleyan Conference of 1851, than which, in the words of an anonymous writer—none was ever "more distinguished by mutual forbearance, by christian temper, by administrative wisdom, or by general unanimity of judgement," must here close. Imperfect as it is, it is obviously suggestive of the consolatory reflection, that the cloud which at present overhangs our persecuted Zion, has a luminous as well as a dark side; and that though, in appearance, portentous, it may, in reality, prove protective. High and lo'y anticipations of coming, and not distant, prosperity, are enkindled in the hearts of many of our best and wisest Ministers. With almost the confidence of prophetic inspiration, they rebuke despondency, and in undaunted faith, announce, "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down: not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be to us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our King; He will save us!"

I am, my dear Doctor Choules, With sentiments of christian affection and respect, Yours faithfully, MATTHEW RICHEY.

A gentleman named Alfred Clarke, a resident of Taunton, Eng., and for many years a stanch adherent of the Roman Catholic Church, has publicly renounced that communion, and been openly received into the fellowship of the Church of England.

Petite-dieu Circuit.

The Rev. Wm. ALLEN, under date of Oct. 8th, says:—"The revival of religion which commenced in Coverdale some weeks since, is progressing delightfully. The members of the Church are alive to God, and the Leaders active in endeavours to do good, and fervent in prayer. Several persons have obtained a consciousness of the divine favour. Multitudes are earnestly seeking redemption in the blood of Christ. During the last three days, eight persons have received the knowledge of salvation by the remission of their sins. Last evening, thirty individuals presented themselves as penitents, soliciting the intercession of God's people on their behalf. At Little River Settlement, the work commenced in power, about ten days since, and there are encouraging prospects in that part of the Circuit of a plenteous harvest to reward our labours."

We unite with our correspondent in ascribing "glory to God" for these abundant effusions of His Spirit, and hope the good work of conversion will extend throughout the Circuit at large.

Electric Telegraph.

Mr. Hyde is progressing rapidly with the erection of the line of Telegraph hence to Sydney, C. B. The whole of the posts are now erected, and on Saturday last they had finished putting on the wire from Sydney as far as the Strait of Canso. In about ten days the whole of the wire will be up and connected with the Pictou line at the West River. We are happy to learn that, notwithstanding the reports circulated of Mr. Thompson's inability to complete his undertaking, of building the mast or tower, on the Cape Breton side of the Strait, that gentleman is proceeding rapidly and successfully with the work, and will have it completed in two, or at the furthest, three weeks from the present time. He had it erected to the height of 130 feet before the late terrific storm, and we learn from James Murdoch, Esq., who was on the spot at the time, that during the severest of the gale, it could not be observed to shake or swerve in the least, being braced and strengthened in so peculiar a manner, that no matter on what side the wind blows, the pressure is equal from all sides towards the centre. The mast stands on a triangular base of 25 feet side, and its height and proportions are to be as follows:

Table with 2 columns: Description and Height. Four stories now erected, in all 130 feet. One yet to erect, 45. One, 50. One Spar, 75. One, 78. Total 378 feet.

In addition to which the ground elevation above the water is 50 feet, making the total height from the water to the top of the mast 428 feet.—Eastern Chronicle.

E. H. Harrington, Esq., of Antigonishe, has been appointed American Consular Agent for that place and adjacencies.—Jb.

For New Advertisements, see last page. From a recent statement of Lord Glengall, it appears that, at the present time, the Roman Catholics outnumber the Protestants in Ireland by barely half a million. The conversions to Protestantism have been numerous. Popery is on the decrease in Ireland.

The fury of the Sovereign of Madagascar continues to rage against the Christians. Amongst other instances of cruelty, it is stated, that four nobles have been burned to death for the testimony of Christ; that fourteen were killed by being thrown over a precipice; and that four have been imprisoned for life.

Among the passengers in the Euzine, recently arrived at Southampton was his Excellency Skeyfah Khan, an ambassador from Persia to the Court of St. James. He rigorously abstains from wines and spirituous liquors.

A meeting of Protestant gentlemen, consisting of clergymen of the Church of England, and of other ministers, but chiefly of laymen, has been held at Newcastle, at which it was unanimously agreed to form an Alliance on the basis of that now existing in London, for the defence of the national laws and institutions. The grand object of the Alliance will be, to spread correct information on the subject of Popery, showing its nature, its principles, its history and tendencies—to support the judges and rulers in the faithful execution of existing laws—and to maintain civil and religious liberties against every power, foreign or domestic, that would endanger them. Hope was expressed that active and efficient branches would soon be formed in Sunderland, Shields, and all the neighbouring towns.

The formation of a railway from Santander, on the Bay of Biscay, to Valladolid, has been taken in hand by Mr. Mould, of Coldale Hall, near Carlisle. The length is about 140 miles.—The line will be ultimately carried forward to Madrid.

A Proselyting Roman Catholic said to a Protestant acquaintance, who had been at the London Exhibition. "Did you see the beautiful dresses of the Cardinal?" "Yes," replied the Protestant, "and I'll tell you what I saw besides: I saw the Bible translated into 120 languages."

Summary of News.

BY THE R. M. STEAMER.

By the arrival of the R. M. S. America at this port, yesterday afternoon, we have received Liverpool dates to the 4th inst. The commercial and monetary affairs are prejudicially affected by what is designated a "produce crisis;" but on the other hand the people were never better fed or paid than at present. The prices of Colonial produce ruled low, but holders were confident of a reaction. The price of English wheat has not further declined. Owing to a reluctance to speculate in British manufactured goods, cottons and yarns had slightly receded. Iron and tin have given way. Provisions are plenty, and butter and bacon have receded. Kossuth and his companions have arrived in England. Simultaneously with their arrival on British soil they were hung in effigy at Perth, by the Austrian authorities, a fate from which they were saved by English sympathy and Turkish good faith.

The condition of the Australian Colonies is claiming a good deal of attention in Britain. The claim set up by the government to all the precious metals found in New South Wales does not appear to be at all relished by the colonists. The Arctic expedition, under the command of Capt. Austin, C. B., has returned to England. Sir John Ross has arrived in London; he thinks Sir John Franklin's ships were lost at the top of Baffin's bay, in the autumn of 1846, and that a portion of the crew had been murdered by a hostile tribe said to be resident in those parts.

Louis Napoleon, it is said, meditates a similar coup d'etat by which his uncle purged the Tribunal of his personal enemies and sent them to perish in the marshes of Cayenne. On the present occasion the President has formed the idea of getting rid of some forty or fifty Red Republicans, in order to clear the ground for the accomplishment of his traitorous designs against the Republic. There continues to be very angry feelings in the departments. The National Guards have been disbanded in several districts. The Marquis of Londonderry has made another unsuccessful attempt to induce Louis Napoleon to release Abd-el Kader from du-rance, and it is probable the poor old captive will end his days in du-rance.

The inhabitants of a whole town have been massacred in the central Sahara of Africa, by a band of Arabs.

Prince Frederick William Charles of Prussia died on the night of the 28th of September, at the Royal Palace of Berlin. He was brother of the late Monarch, and uncle to the reigning Sovereign. This Prince has always taken an active part in political and military affairs, and by his death the present vacillating Monarch of Prussia loses an able councillor.

We learn from Spain, that a gentleman from Cuba is on his way to England, to induce Lord Palmerston to guarantee Cuba to Spain, and at least to protect the colony from future foreign unbecoming attempts. The temptation offered for this guarantee is said to be the suppression of the slave trade, by a complete emancipation, at a future and not very distant period; the payment of a million annually to Spain, exclusively of maintaining an adequate military and naval force on the island, and a fair participation, to native Cubans, of places of trust and honour under Government. The British Minister is trying to prevent the suppression of the Furero de Estrangero, the tribunal in Madrid before which all disputes, in which foreigners are parties, have been adjudicated heretofore.