

NOTE!!

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THE WESLEYAN FRIDAY, MAY 26, 1882.

THE COMING ELECTIONS.

It has at length been decided that a General Election of representatives to the Dominion House of Commons is to take place this season. Apart from reasons of state, of which we profess to know little, this is scarcely a matter to be regretted. Since elections for the Local House in two of the three Lower Provinces must come off at an early day, one may be glad that the excitement and strife attendant upon such occasions should be crowded into a single year rather than extended over a longer period.

With all the wise provisions of recent legislation, the election of representatives to our Legislatures must yet be regarded from a Christian standpoint as a necessary evil. The immediate effect of political strife upon the Churches of our country has never been salutary in influence. However leaders in the conflict may have laughed in their sleeve at the impetuous zeal of many of their canvassers, it cannot be denied that many of the latter, belonging to the ranks of church-membership, have been betrayed in the heat of strife into words and deeds which tripped them in their Christian career, if they did not leave them prostrate. "What is the state of your mind, brother?" called out a seeming old reprobate one day in a crowded court-house, as he addressed a question often used by certain fossilized class-leaders to a church member whose heels had apparently taken the place of his head during the excitement of a Provincial election. The same or a similar question has no doubt often been about to go forth from lips happily governed by a wiser judgment than that of the poor old backslider.

The brief period into which the elections of the present season are to be crowded will lead to a vast expenditure of effort. The pastor who will watch a wide-awake candidate and his agents need never be at a loss hereafter to repel any charge of enthusiasm which may be levelled at him in his Master's work. It will be well for him if his own service shall have been so earnest that he will not be reminded of Sheridan's remark to a minister, "We speak what is fiction as if it were fact; you too often utter fact as if it were fiction." Under such pressure cards must be taken lest morals and manliness—which are inseparable—do not suffer in a time of political strife. Will the day ever come that the best men only will be selected to represent their fellows among law-makers, and be expected to do nothing more than make a public statement of their views and intentions. That day has certainly not yet dawned upon us. Too often the candidate is proffered help which can scarcely be accepted without making him, in Indian phrase, "all one brother," with men whose career is not worthy of his own, and very often he is obliged to accept from his party such help as a Christian can scarcely use with unblinking brow. Sometimes, to carry out the views of those whose nominee he is, he must act in a manner repugnant to his own feelings. The story of the candidate who found his way into the farmyard, where he offered his assistance, and learned that the opposing candidate had just milked another cow, may be quite overdrawn, but it probably has its revised editions. It is through such training that men may gradually move toward the point where they can adopt the political formula of a former representative of a Provincial constituency, as given to a colleague: "Hang—we substitute a weak word for a naughty one—"Hang—and stick to your party," or the scarcely less unfortunate conclusion—subversive of all good government and public justice—"to the victors belong the spoils."

Do we then say that no Christian man shall take his place among our lawgivers? No, a thousand times, no. If any Christian man, with no personal purpose to serve, offer first-class abilities as well as time and strength to the service of his country, we bid him "god-speed. In Bible classes we

have looked to such a possible future as one of the highest order for young men, and have sought to stiffen their backbone for the honor and temptations of such a sphere. May heaven hasten the day when the noblest and holiest shall feel that they serve God and man to blessed purpose in our Legislative halls.

Equally far be it from us to advise our readers as to any political course now to be adopted. In such matters the Methodist ministry has never presumed to dictate to the people, though they have not been slow to warn them when any moral or religious principle has been at stake. On a point of universal interest, affecting the welfare of the whole Dominion to a larger extent than any mere question of governmental policy, we suggest some close questioning of the candidates. Few will propose to add a Prohibition party to the parties already in existence; but the purpose to be gained by every lover of his race and country—the abolition of the traffic in drink; its more complete degradation, if that were possible—should not be forgotten by our citizens. Nor should they be indifferent to the way in which our legislators treat the Sabbath. It was said the other day that one finds more complete obedience to the law of God in newly Christianized countries than in Christian Britain. In such a comparison we too should suffer. Fijian chiefs, once cannibals, would set our rulers, in some cases, singular examples of regard for divine authority rather than for the exigencies of mere business.

Men that sell their citizen's birthright for a mess of pottage—larger or smaller—do not read religious papers. Neither do those whose wrong is much greater—the men who offer to purchase that birthright. Strange things have reached our ears in the past. Paltry disguises are used to hide the offensive sound of what old-fashioned folks call "bribery." But since this does not apply, as we sincerely hope it cannot, to any of our readers, we can only ask them to pass the hint along. Doubtless it will be needed somewhere. Meanwhile let all good citizens calmly do their duty, use to the best of their judgment the right of citizenship, and remember that in the proper exercise of this they also "serve the Lord Christ."

HOW A GIFT GROWS.

On Thanksgiving day, last November, some unknown friend in Truro placed on the collection plate an envelope containing five dollars towards the purchase of a mission boat for British Columbia. Mr. Dunn forwarded the amount to Mr. Huestis, and Mr. Huestis, who had not heard any such project mentioned, sent the money to Dr. Sutherland. To this day it is a mystery where the idea originated. This contribution started others, which have now reached the sum of \$1000.—\$3,000 more being needed. Last year Mr. Crosby travelled four thousand miles, sometimes 600 miles on a trip, in an open boat hewn out of a single log, the trunk of some immense British Columbia pine. From ten to fourteen Indians were required to paddle this boat. Mr. Crosby, who used to run an engine in Canada before going out on his own account as a missionary to the Indians, believes that with a large sailboat, fitted with a steam engine and screw to be used in case of head winds, he could travel with the aid of but two men, and thus in the saving of wages and the conveyance of stores and building materials, very expensive in that region, save the Missionary Society some expense, to say nothing of the greater amount of work to be performed. If our friends will get and read Pleasant Hours, the paper "for our young folk" published at our Book Room in Toronto, they will learn more about this and other topics connected with our work. By the way, Pleasant Hours, 100 copies of which were ordered the other day to be sent to New South Wales, ought to be found in every Methodist Sunday-school in the Maritime Provinces.

The statements from Dr. Pickard's pen in relation to the circuit contributions towards the Supernumerary Ministers and Ministers' Widows' Fund, as found in another column, establish the fact that our people are not giving as much for this important object as the Methodists of the Upper Provinces, nor are they maintaining their own standard of former years. There is here a subject for thought and inquiry.

Expression has occasionally been given to a fear lest the operations of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society should conflict with those of the "General" Missionary Society of the Church. That such apprehensions can have no foundation may be inferred from the history of a similar movement at the South. A correspondent of a Northern Methodist paper, writing from the General Conference of the M. E. Church, South, in session at Nashville, reports:

The Woman's Missionary Society, authorized by the General Conference four years ago, and bearing a close relation to the regular Mission work in foreign lands, has, beyond the expectations of all, not only not caused a falling off in the general collections, but has rather stimulated the Church to more persistent effort in the cause. The Society has already missionaries and teachers in all our foreign fields, and is proposing to establish schools along our Mexican borders, as well as in other destitute places. As you have no doubt seen, the Bishops, in their address, gave this Society a hearty Godspeed. Over \$60,000 was raised by the ladies, besides an increase during the quadrennium of over \$110,000 for Foreign Missions by the regular collections.

General satisfaction is expressed at the notice of the *Parson* and her vast living freight. Fears respecting the supply of food have been groundless. The Messrs. Allan deserve credit for having so well provided for the wants of their passengers in case of accident. A commissariat department, where nearly a thousand persons are wholly cut off from communication with the shore, is no small affair. A gentleman who came out to this city a few weeks ago in one of the steamers of the same line states that a plum pudding provided one day for the steerage passengers and crew required two barrels of flour and a good sized cask of raisins. Of the judgment of the Messrs. Allan in sending their steamers into the ice of the north when our harbor, accessible at all seasons, is before them, less can be said. But they, we presume, like other mortals can learn by experience. They have had a lesson. Let us thank Providence that it has not been a more serious one to the thousand souls on board.

Descendants of the Loyalists everywhere should be interested in the preparations being made in St. John, N. B., for the proper celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of the landing of the Loyalists at that place. A proposition to erect a Memorial Hall has been brought before the citizens. The Mayor and a large number of prominent residents were present at a gathering held last week to consider the desirability of such a memorial. Addresses were given by Senator Boyd, Rev. D. D. Currie, W. Elder, M. E. P., Judge Weldon, Isaac Burpee, M. E. P., and Mayor Jones; and a number of resolutions in support of the scheme were passed. Senator Boyd recommended that the compliment paid to the British flag by the Americans at the Yorktown celebration should be returned in a similar way at the proposed Loyalist celebration in 1883. J. W. Lawrence, Esq., who is doing all in his power to make the Centennial a success, should receive all possible support.

No more heroic character appears in Methodist history than Francis Asbury. Even Wesley's superhuman exertions sometimes pale before the labors of his colleague in the care of that vast parish—the world. The *New York Advocate*, in reply to the question, "Was Francis Asbury a married man?" says: "He was not. He left a curious letter stating that he had not remained single out of any disrespect to the female sex, but he had had his father and mother in England to support for many years, and had had but very little to do it with; and, further-more, he said, as he had to be away nine tenths of the time, he considered it would be an injustice to marry a woman and leave her alone. Bishop Asbury had many offers of marriage—one from a wealthy widow, to whom he replied in a most respectful manner, declining her proposal; but when she addressed him a second letter, he is said to have laconically responded, "Good woman, let me alone."

An American paper very truly remarks, and its remarks are borne out by observation: "A non-missionary Church nullifies the plain command of Christ, renounces its function as a Church, and has no right to live. All such Churches are dead or dying."

The Horton circuit leads off in circuit Centennial services: Strike a high key-note, brethren! The Rev. Thomas Rogers writes:

According to Smith's History of Methodism in these Lower Provinces, the first Methodist sermon was preached at Horton by Rev. William Black on May 30th, 1782. The friends here have resolved to commemorate that event. There will be special references made to the past history of the circuit on Sunday morning, May 28th, at Lower Horton and in the evening of the same day at Wolfville. On Tuesday evening May 30th, a social will be held in the basement of the church at Lower Horton. Addresses are expected from ministers and laymen from the surrounding circuits.

The land purchased for the first Methodist church in Horton was deeded on Sept 18th, 1789. The trustees were Jeremiah Calkin, Elisha Fuller, Joseph Johnson, James Noble Shannon and Benjamin Hilton. The original building is still standing. On the half acre thus deeded lie buried many of the earliest residents of Kings County.

Here is a thought worthy of the notice of young converts who are deeply anxious to serve the Master: "We sometimes hear people reprove because they have not the opportunity to do some great thing for God and humanity. They wonder why their lot is not cast in some of the high places, and because they do not attain to these they remain in ignoble inaction. Such have failed to learn the great lesson that, in order to promotion, one must fill well and worthily the place he is in, while waiting for the call to come higher."

We rejoice with our English brethren over their recent enthusiastic anniversary, and the removal of the debt of £40,000 by which they had been so sorely hampered. Of the severity of the pressure upon their funds some idea may be formed from the statement in the *Watchman* that, "unfortunately retrenchment had to be applied, and during the year a sum of £6000 has been 'saved' by being withheld from stations where it was sorely needed."

OUR SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

The Secretary of the Sabbath School Board of the Methodist Church of Canada forwards for publication the following report for the year ending October, 1881, which ought to engage the attention of our whole membership. The delay in the publication of the report has been caused by the time and trouble taken in the preparation of the Descriptive Catalogue of Wilmow Books. Copies of this catalogue will, if possible, be forwarded to each Conference, and placed in the hands of the ministers:

It is with much gratitude to Almighty God that we find, on an examination of the reports from the Annual Conferences, that there is a decided advancement in our Church in Canada, in every important item of Sabbath-school information.

1.—CONVERSIONS.

There are 6,824 cases reported, being an increase of 20 per cent. over last year; and the increase in attendance at class is 2,396 greater.

2.—CATECHISMS.

Attention has again been directed to the urgency of this study in all the Conferences. This is being felt in the schools, and an advance of 10 per cent. is noted. There is now nearly one-fifth of all the scholars studying the Catechisms, which is decidedly the best return ever presented. In Newfoundland nearly one-half of the scholars are so employed, which is our highest average, and shows what may be done.

3.—CHILDREN'S MEETINGS.

As provided by the Discipline, are strongly recommended by the Toronto and Nova Scotia Conferences. In the latter many children are gathered into Catechumen classes.

4.—COLLECTIONS.

For the General Sabbath-school Fund are larger than any previous year (for full financial statement see Treasurer's report below.) Still, some circuits give nothing, which is neither according to Discipline, nor fair to others who do give. From the funds placed in our hands we have been enabled thus far to make grants to every school that has applied. The balance reported has, since the year closed, been all appropriated.

5.—OUR PUBLICATIONS.

The periodicals from our Book-Room have given increased satisfaction. Owing to the change of name from *Sunday-School Guardian* to *Pleasant Hours*, and having our blank forms for statistics printed beforehand, we cannot give the number of *Pleasant Hours* and *Subscribers* taken by our own schools; but the total increase in all papers taken is 20 per cent. over last year.

6.—WINKOWED BOOKS.

Our selected lists have been enlarged,

and the Descriptive Catalogue now published will enable our Sabbath-school Committees to see something of the nature of the books before ordering them. These books have been selected, read, and reported with great care, by ministers of our own Church—East and West—not one of whom has any personal interest in their sale. The books recommended by the Board are all under the title of "Winkowed Books." This is our trade-mark. Other books may be excellent, but must stand on their own merits.

7.—TEMPERANCE.

The Toronto and London Conferences call attention to the necessity of temperance effort in the Sunday-schools, and recommend that a pledge book be kept and used in all our schools.

8.—SCHEDULES.

Again our superintendents and ministers are respectfully urged to greater care in filling up the returns, especially in adding up the columns, showing the total number of teachers and scholars.

9.—SCHOOLS.

It is greatly regretted that we have 1,721 congregations which report no Sabbath-school. This is nearly half the entire number of our congregations.

In every Conference there was held the usual Sabbath-school anniversary meeting, and man, Districts have held Conventions and Institutes, at which the prospects and needs of our Sabbath-schools have been discussed. Many of these gatherings have been seasons of great interest and profit.

Again we commit our work to God, and earnestly beseech our friends everywhere to pray and labor for our children, that they may be built up in Him, for they are the hope of the world and of the Church.

On behalf of the Board,
ALFRED ANDREWS,
Secretary.

Kincardine, Jan. 26, 1882.

Table with columns: NAME OF CONFERENCE, No. of Schools, Officers & Teachers, Scholars, No. of Conversions during year, Meeting in Class, Learning Catechisms, Money Raised for Missions, For School purposes, No. of Schools using Uniform Les., Do having regular Teachers meeting for study of Lesson, No. of schools open whole year.

THE SOUTH—LETTER FROM REV. H. SPRAGUE, A. M.

To the Editor of the Wesleyan.

DEAR BROTHER, Having just returned from a visit to Nashville, Tennessee, where I have been in fulfillment of a duty assigned me by our General Conference, it may not be amiss if I send you a few notes. The journey to the South was pleasantly broken by a short halt in New York and Washington. During a very brief stay in these two cities, I was able to see what was most worth seeing, in the shortest time and to the greatest advantage, through the good fortune of having for "guide, philosopher and friend," my genial neighbor, the Rev. C. G. McCully, of Calais, Maine.

Among the many pleasant incidents of those three days was a visit to the Capitol, Congress being in session. We were very fortunate in the time of our entering the gallery of the Senate Chamber; for soon after a lively debate began, which called out some of the strong men on both sides of the House. The subject of discussion was a proposition, made on a former day, to repeal a certain section of a Disabilities Bill which excludes Confederate soldiers and sailors, who had been in the Federal service before the war, from being again appointed to the army or navy of the United States. Several generals who had served in the war took part in the debate.—Hawley of Connecticut, and Butler and Hampton of South Carolina. Beside these, the chief speakers were Senators Ingalls of Kansas and Voorhees of Indiana, the latter said to be the orator of the House. Twenty years after the war these statesmen and soldiers were trying the question, "What the war was about and what issues it decided." They fought the war over again with something of the fury and fire, if not the fatality, of the field.

In the evening of the same day I attended the regular prayer meeting in the Metropolitan Methodist Church. Comparing it with things at home, I found that the attendance was relatively not so large, and that the difficulty of getting volunteers to participate was quite as great. Of the three persons who, beside the pastor, "said

a few words," I judged two to be ministers, for both looked like it, and one was called Doctor, and the other, Professor. The Sabbath School lesson for the next Sunday was read, and spoken upon by all who said anything. Christian experience formed no element of the service.

Parting with my friend next morning, I started on a thirty-four hours ride to Nashville, by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. After the crossing of the Potomac at Harper's Ferry, where John Brown's fort still stands, the ride through the winding valley, and then up the Cumberland Mountains, the northern extremities of the Alleghenies, was grand indeed. Traveling much of the way along the side of the mountains, with a deep valley on one side of the train, and the towering heights upon the other, the view continually changing, and a bright sun making striking contrast of light and shadow, it was a day long panorama to be forever remembered. But what made the glory of the day made the discomfort of the night. Being behind time we rattled down the western slopes of the Alleghenies at what seemed to be a tremendous pace. The constant succession of sharp curves, the violent swaying of the car, the knowledge that on one side of the several hundred feet, made sleep impossible. A minister—the reader may feel like suggesting—should have trusted Providence and not slept in peace. I thought of that, but at once remembered that Providence had permitted many an accident by rail and flood, when better men were aboard. Next morning I found that the experience of my fellow-passengers had been like my own. At last we touched land on the banks of the Ohio, and thenceforward it was a constant ride further and further into summer, until Nashville was reached at eight o'clock in the evening. Before these lines appear in print, if the weather is favorable, hay-making will have begun in the neighborhood of Nashville. The barley and wheat were already in full head on the tenth of May, and the grain harvest will be over by the middle of June.

Entering the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, on the evening after my arrival, I found the house in tears, while Dr. Kelley, whom members of our last General Conference will remember, was describing a death-bed from which he had just come. Dr. T. O. Summers—a name well known throughout the Methodist world and beyond—was elected Secretary of the Conference on Wednesday; was at his post on Thursday; was that day carried from the church to his carriage; and on Saturday morning was dead. He had been in feeble health for some time, but his death came upon the Conference as a terrible blow. He was one of the greatest men in Southern Methodism. Of great intellect, wide attainments, fitness for many kinds of work, and astonishing power of application and endurance, he will be greatly missed in the councils of the Church and in the Faculty of Vanderbilt University.

For four days I had the pleasure of going in and out among the Southern brethren in their daily session, and from all I saw and heard, have brought home a very high idea of their work and very warm love toward them. A nobler company of men, in the indications of physical and intellectual vigor, it has never been my privilege to see: They are doing a great work throughout the Southern States, and are thoroughly earnest in it. If any one thinks that the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, is not the friend of the colored race, let him go South and he will know better. Their own congregations are almost entirely white. But they have organized a church for the colored people, and their own leaders recognize as the wisest thing that could have been done; and they are now proposing to appoint one of their own chief ministers as "Commissioner of Education for the Colored People," whose chief duty shall be to aid them in devising ways and means for the education of their own ministry.

The evening of Wednesday, May 10th, was appointed for the reception of fraternal representatives. Only Dr. Ridgway, of the M. E. Church, and myself had arrived. There was a great gathering in the beautiful McKendree church, spirited music, and a most cordial reception of the visitors. The address of Dr. Ridgway was one of the grandest and most telling I ever heard.

But if I go on to speak of everything, your space and patience will fail, and I must close. During the first half of my stay in Nashville I was the guest of Dr. N. T. Lupton on the beautiful campus of Vanderbilt University, outside the city; and afterward of T. F. Fite, Esq., in his princely residence near McKendree church. Here for fellow guests, were the Venerable Bishop Payne, now trembling under the weight of four score years, but in his day "the noblest Roman of them all," Dr. Evans of Georgia, and Lt. Governor Shands of Mississippi. To all the friends here named, and also to Dr. Kelley and Dr. R. A. Young, I am under great obligation for the kindness shown a stranger, and I can never cease to think of them with love, or to feel the warmest sympathy with the great Church which they all serve and all adorn.

Yours sincerely,
HOWARD SPRAGUE,
St. Stephen, N. B., May 17, 1882.

The heavy debt against the Metropolitan Church, Washington, has been extinguished. It amounted to more than \$40,000.