

any of the errors here enumerated, and to enable them rightly to employ whatsoever of this world's goods they may possess, to the glory of God, and the happiness, temporal and spiritual, of their fellow men, and especially those of them who belong to "the household of faith."

From the Wesleyan.

THE WESLEYAN CONFERENCE.

We are at length enabled to present our readers with a brief outline of the proceedings of the British Conference at its ninety-ninth annual session. From the returns of members under its care throughout the world, it will be perceived that there has been a decrease the past year in the Home Department of 2,065—an uncommon occurrence—while on the Mission Stations, 4,801 have been added, making the net increase 2,738. As an offset, however, to the numerical diminution in the full membership at Home, chiefly caused, no doubt, by emigration, we are authorized to state, that in England alone, there were TWENTY THOUSAND on trial at the time of the sitting of the Conference. The state of the Connection at large is eminently tranquil, hearty and prosperous; and from present appearances, we may reasonably augur as the result of the operations of the current year, through the blessed influence of the Lord the Spirit, an accession, more than usually large, to the ranks of our "sacramental host."

The introduction of the truly venerable Dr. Steinkopf, and the Rev. Mr. Sydow, a Prussian Clergyman, at an early period of the session of Conference—the tone of their addresses, and the spirit in which their friendly sentiments and congratulations were reciprocated, presented an exemplification of the expansive, yet uncompromising communion of truly Christian sympathy, peculiarly refreshing in these days of ecclesiastical assumption and exclusiveness. The name of the former of these Ministers is familiar to all who are acquainted with the history of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Mr. Sydow's address, exhibiting a rapid survey of the state of religion in Germany during the last century, is replete with interest. Truth is mighty and must ultimately triumph. It is indeed animating to learn that *Naturalism* and *Pantheism*, which are nothing more than different modifications of *Atheism*; and *Rationalism* or *Necology*, which by empoisoning the very source of celestial truth, have done immeasurably more mischief on the Continent, than open and avowed infidelity, are evidently on their wane. To this salutary and auspicious change, the present King of Prussia and his father, of pious memory, have greatly contributed. And it is a problem not unworthy the consideration of the philosopher and the statesman, whether the sudden elevation of the Prussian empire to a position so influential among the nations of Europe, is not chiefly attributable, among kindred causes, to the very fact to which Mr. Sydow bears testimony. From the formation of the first body politic, history has been accumulating, and it will continue to the end to accumulate, illustrative of the Scripture axiom, "Righteousness exalseth a nation."

In reviewing the transactions of the Conference, no part of the proceedings exercises so deep and commanding an influence over our own mind, as the services connected with the ordination of the fifty-three young men, who, after a probation of at least four years, were received into full connexion, and solemnly set apart to exercise all the functions of the Christian Ministry. The impressive scene occupies the first pages of our present number, affording the strongest practical evidence that in no section of the Christian Church is greater precaution employed to prevent the admission of any to the sacred office, but men who have given full proof of their piety, and of competent abilities for the work. Here, in fact, lies the secret of the success of Methodism. Relaxation here would speedily be followed, as all ecclesiastical history mournfully attests, by general imbecility and decay. But while on all the glory of the pulpits of Methodism, proclaiming a *free, present and full salvation* through the blood of the Cross, there is placed such a defence, it will continue to be owned of God, as most signally it has been, as one of the ordained and most potent agencies of His redeeming providence.

We learn from a private source, that towards the close of its session, the Conference was addressed at considerable length and with great clearness and power by Dr. Bunting and the Ex-President on the present position and responsibilities of Methodism. "The great principles of our Connexion"—remarks our correspondent—"are becoming better understood, and are being maintained with increasing vigour, and fidelity. We shall not in future,—as has sometimes been the case in times past—permit our ministerial authority to be neutralized by antagonistic influences, but shall take and endeavour to keep our proper ground as Ministers of Christ."

It affords us much pleasure to record the following instance of Christian friendship on the part of the Church of Scotland, towards the Ministers of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, in Conference assembled:—

A letter was received from the moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, in pursuance of a Resolution of the last General Assembly, that they would open, and keep up, a friendly intercourse and correspondence with other branches of the Christian Church; thus seeking both to manifest and strengthen that true scriptural affection which rejects not from Christian brotherhood those who "hold the head, which is Christ." The Conference received this Communication with much pleasure, as well as with thankfulness to "the God of peace," who, in this day of eager controversy, when they who profess and call themselves Christians, seem almost to have fallen into the habit of distance and reserve, had brought about such an example of brotherly affection. A Committee was appointed to whom was entrusted the preparation of a reply to this interesting and valuable document.

INTERESTING FROM ITALY.

Accounts from some friends who have recently been in Italy assure us that at the present moment there is a remarkable waking up of the Italian mind. They tell us that our ideas of the Italian character are incorrect in many points. We have, indeed, been in the habit of supposing them so sunk in ignorance and superstition as to have no desires for knowledge or true religion. We have thought that the debasing system of ecclesiastical government under which they exist and which also controls the political state of the country has so well succeeded in extinguishing even the desire of knowledge, that it would be useless to attempt to enlighten the people of Italy. But popery and despotism in its strong and natural alliance have not extinguished and cannot extinguish that native thirst for knowledge, that ardor, that taste, that imagination which characterize the Italian mind. Aspirations do break forth for the light which they see shines for all but them. They feel that they are degraded in the eyes of the world by their ignorance, in a great degree unwilling ignorance, but still an ignorance which they believe might be dispelled if their exertions at home were but seconded by the sympathy and assistance of the friends of humanity abroad. They desire education, and, it may appear strange to some, religious education.

Among all the Protestant nations there are none to be found more hostile to the Papacy than Italian Christians. The Pope has no enemies more inveterate than in Rome itself. And with good reason too, for there the people see and feel its abominable character; its usurpations, its gross hypocrisy, its grasping selfishness. They see the blight it produces on all around it, on character moral and intellectual, on industry, and the useful arts and sciences, on social intercourse, on international communion, in short on all that constitutes the prosperity of a State. No, we need not read lectures to prove to them that the Pope is a Usurper and a Despot; this is a truth ground into the very constitution of an Italian, by daily and hourly oppressions; none are so ignorant there but know this truth.

This cheering information in regard to the waking up of the Italian mind comes not alone, it is accompanied by the encouraging fact that Italy is accessible. Italy can be assisted. The Italians are ready to take an active part in disseminating useful knowledge among their own countrymen. Means only are wanted to purchase the materials, books, especially the Bible, tracts and newspapers.—N. Y. Observer.

ANECDOTES OF FELIX NEFF.

Mr. Bost has collected several instructive anecdotes respecting Felix Neff: I can quote but a few.

A person said to him one day: "Do not expose yourself on the road; the weather is rainy; the rocks on the mountains are loose and ready to fall. I fear for your life." "Do not fear," said Neff; "the apostle made no account of his life, if he might win Christ: I would do the same. The God whom we serve is Lord of the rocks and of the rain; I place myself under his protection." Then, having prayed, he said to his friend; "Let us go, dear friend, we have nothing to fear: the Lord protects us."

Some persons intend to beat you in such a place, said a person to him one day. He smiled and replied: "They have plotted to beat me, without knowing if God wills it; I pity them: let us pray for them." After having prayed for his enemies, he added: "Fear not for them who can kill the body; but fear him who can cast both soul and body into hell."

One day as he was exhorting a woman to turn to the Lord, she replied: "I have, no doubt, committed many little sins to which I paid no attention." "Ah!" he exclaimed, "do you talk of little sins? All sins are offensive in the sight of God! He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. Search in the Bible if you find any sin more small apparently than the sin of Adam and Eve; they had only eat some fruit; they had not injured their neighbour, because they were alone; and yet this little sin ruined the human race; a mighty victim was needed for its expiation."

"You have often confessed your faults to a priest," said he to a Catholic woman; "do you believe that this priest has taken away your sins?" "No," said the woman; "I have always been afraid of death, because I feel that I have sinned against the God of heaven, and I dare not appear before him, fearing to be cast into the dreadful abyss, as I justly deserve." "Well you see, my dear, that a man cannot pardon your sins. But the Lord Jesus can and will, because he is Almighty and all merciful. Go then to him; just as you are, as the penitent Mary Magdalene; and, like her, you shall find a Saviour full of compassion, who will tell you: *Go in peace: thy sins are forgiven thee.* And, like her, you will love much, because you have been forgiven much."

One day, being in a house, after begging those present to receive the word of reconciliation, and seeing that they attached no importance to his words, he became sad and dejected. "Do you feel sick?" said the people to him.—"Yes, I am sick when I consider your obstinacy in remaining estranged from God, without hope in the world."—"Ah! I often read my Bible," said one to him, "and I cannot remember it."—"Oh! if you loved this word, you would retain it in your memory. If you had an intimate friend, who was absent, surely you would often think of him. If he wrote you that soon he would return to reside constantly with you, you would read and read again his letter; you would remember it; you would speak of it to your friends: you would hasten by your sighs the moment of his coming. So it will be if you truly love the Lord Jesus."

Felix Neff was often heard singing praises to God, when alone in his room. Wordly men said of him: "What a singular being! he seems unhappy, and yet when he is alone he is always singing!" It was because Neff rejoiced in the Lord. Yet his friends relate that he had also great spiritual trials. He said that he was sometimes so assailed by the adversary of souls, that he seemed to himself to be surrounded with ruins, and he lost for a moment even the hope of being saved. But soon he resumed courage. "He who has taken me into fellowship with himself is faithful," said he; and if on account of my many unfaithfulness, he hides for a moment his face, I hope ever in him: I know in whom I have believed!"

His health was seriously affected by his preaching and missionary labours. He struggled a long time against his disease, but about the middle of the year 1827, his strength being absolutely exhausted, he was obliged to quit the upper Alps to go to breathe his native air. Mr. Bost publishes the manuscript journal which Neff prepared, at leaving. The tone is serious; the sentiments are not those of resignation but of sorrow. Felix Neff seems to have foreseen that he should not return to these brethren, these sisters so dear to his