

THE WESLEYAN.

SATURDAY, MAY 25, 1878.

GENERAL SUPERINTENDENCY.

If one may judge by the correspondence in the last number of the *Guardian* which has reached us, there are expectations in the West that the question of a General Superintendency—the appointment of one or more chief officers to travel throughout the Methodist Church of Canada, with certain supreme prerogatives—is to be brought forward at this General Conference. One correspondent of that paper surmises that an article favorable to such a scheme appeared in the *Wesleyan* some time not far back. We have no knowledge of anything of the kind. Our friend, Dr. John Carrol, in a lengthened notice of Smith's History—our Smith—seems to infer that our historian attributes to the absence of a general superintendency amongst us the cause of our present limited hold upon the country, as compared with Ontario. If we understand Mr. Smith, however, he rather takes the ground that, at a certain period in the early history of our Church in the Eastern Provinces, a link was broken by the removal of the general superintendent, or presiding elder, to the United States, and hence an injury which subsequent years have failed to repair. The infant Church was tender and needed care—that is the argument as we see it.

We would hesitate to write emphatically on this subject, were it not that we know the minds of Eastern brethren as regards this matter of a general superintendency. At the Committee on Union, which met in Montreal under Dr. Punshon's direction, the Eastern representatives were a unit against this form of government. They, with a few others, felt so strongly in opposition that a dead lock ensued in negotiations until a resolution was offered by which the Conferences might decide effectually.

The scheme was rejected by the Western Conference, thus superseding all necessity for expression by the Conference of E. B. America. What its decision would have been, it is not difficult to conjecture.

Friend Carrol imagines that prejudice against a general superintendency can only spring from a Scottish Presbyterianism; that Episcopal education must engender rather an admiration for this office. But really our prejudices in the East are caused by the fact that we are overwhelmingly British in our types of Methodist thought and ambition, rather than American. Mr. Carrol further inclines to the opinion that one serious objection to the office is removed by the intention of electing general superintendents only for a term of years, and not for life. But there are two questions in reply to the scheme in any shape. Firstly, Is it safe to create an office in Canadian Methodism which has been tolerated in American Methodism only after it has been fenced about with safeguards, until the Bishop has not the privilege of an ordinary member of Conference? Secondly, If British Methodism can be presided over by a minister in full circuit work, why should it be necessary to have one or four men in Canadian Methodism who shall have but to travel and superintend, which really means, be supreme wherever he goes, and have the exclusive right of ordination?

DEATH OF HON. JUDGE WILMOT.

Rarely are we called to record an event so impressive as that which is implied in the heading of this paragraph. The illustrious lawyer, orator statesman, has passed away suddenly, from earth. Two weeks ago he spent a pleasant hour in our office, as was his wont when he visited this city. We conversed among other things upon the delegation to Atlanta General Conference. He expressed a regret that alternates had not been appointed, as he felt it due to that large and important branch of our Church that we should stand before them in the persons of our representatives. With emphasis which lingered on our memory for some days, as ominous of a result which the Judge felt to be pending, he said, "Brother Nicolson, I fear the excitement and other contingencies of a dis-

tant journey. I am now in my seventieth year. Quiet and rest is all that remains to me while here." Yet he seemed well and buoyant as ever, having only kind words of everybody and everything.

Judge Wilmot deserves a Biography. Rich, comprehensive and eloquent it well might be, if material at all corresponding with the magnitude of his services to the country can be obtained. Who is to take his place—in Fredricton, its Methodist Sabbath School, its University gatherings, its social circles?—in our General Conference, its debates, its great public occasions?—in fact, wherever he has held an honoured place?

A mysterious blow has thus fallen upon the distinguished delegates for the Southern General Conference. Dr. Douglas prevented by illness, while on his way, from proceeding beyond Hamilton; and Judge Wilmot, about the date when he would have electrified the Southern brethren by his marvelous magnetic eloquence, laid low in death! May the kind Hand of Providence preserve to us still for many days the surviving member of this delegation!

A message to the *Telegraph*, gives these particulars:

"Our whole community received a great shock at five o'clock, by a report that Ex-Governor Wilmot had died suddenly. It could be scarcely be believed as he had been seen in his carriage about four o'clock driving down Queen Street, but inquiries proved the rumor to be too true. The Judge, on reaching home after his drive, walked in his garden feeling a slight pain in the region of the heart. He went into the house and in five minutes was a corpse. Dr. Atherton was in immediate attendance but Mr. Wilmot never spoke after reaching his room. The doctor says that the rupture of a blood vessel was the immediate cause of death. It is a terrible shock to the people, to his church and to every citizen of Fredericton, being so unexpected."

THE SHEDAC MURDER CASE.—The finding of McCarthy's body has been followed by the discovery, near the same spot, of a stone corresponding with that sworn to by Annie Parker as having been tied around the neck of the dead man by young Harry Osborne. These are strong corroborative facts. On the other hand, two coats, said by Annie Parker to have been left by McCarthy hanging in the house, one of which she avers was used afterwards by the Osbornes, have been found on the body. A surmise that the body must have been taken up, and the coats put on the murdered man, to falsify this evidence, seems rather weak, in view of the fact that any one disposed to do this would naturally have hidden the body somewhere else, and so brought about a contradiction of her story. This girl adheres to her statement, as to the murder. But everything is not yet out, or we are very greatly mistaken.

BROTHER BROWN is having his little letter to Brother Currie answered with a will. It was amusing to us last week, the reading of Mr. Brown's answer to Mr. Currie's first letter, sent for publication in the *Wesleyan*. Mr. B. took Mr. C. to task for evading the question—*for, in fact, telling something like an untruth, by affirming that the lexicons did say what they did not.* In our drawer, at the same time, was Mr. Currie's second letter, treating this subject, as our readers have seen, in the most pitiable light of mutilated lexicons. It would have been a fine specimen of "The Biter Bitten," had we published the two letters, side by side. By the way, we wonder what proportion of 's are used in Baptist publishing offices? Our Foreman complains that Brother Currie is using all of that letter which can be gathered or borrowed; yet he writes the word *baptizo* only as once to a score of times compared with the Baptists. Still, a voice near us whispers—It will be bad for the printers when *baptizo* is settled.

N.B.—Mr. Brown's epistle does not appear in the *Messenger*!

It has been decided by the Executive Committee of the Eastern Book Room, to try the experiment of a summer agency in Newfoundland. Mr. George O. Fulton, now four years in the service of the Conference Office at Halifax, is to proceed by steamer of the 28th inst., to be in time for the District Meetings and Conference. This arrangement will of course prevent the Book Steward from going thither as he had

planned; though the prospect of meeting his brethren on that island was very pleasing, he has decided to merge the prospect of personal gratification in the general interests of a concern for the prosperity of which he cannot but feel very anxious. Mr. Fulton will be guided largely by the advice of our brethren in Newfoundland, and the prospects of business, as regards his movements. He carries with him the fullest confidence of the Book Committee. His knowledge of our trade is very thorough. Any counsel that may be required in respect to books, tracts, stationery, the *Wesleyan* or other interests he will be competent to give. He is commissioned to represent our business in all its departments.

There is a wide field for the circulation of our literature in Newfoundland. Our Ministers and people there, will now have a rare opportunity of calling to their aid in this work a young man of experience and energy, for his object primarily will be to serve the cause of God. We need not add, for it is a reasonable conclusion from a business standpoint, that his stay on the Island will depend upon the extent to which his time can be profitably occupied.

THE GENERAL CONFERENCE of the Methodist Church South, has been in session at Atlanta since May 1st. We are sorry to find that our own delegates did not reach that city, Judge Wilmot having been detained by business and Dr. Douglas by illness. It is surely a mistake that alternates are not appointed for these duties.

(N.B.—Judge Wilmot's death, occurred after the above was written.)

There had been some important decisions reached up to latest dates, of which we have record. Much time was occupied over the rights of one lay representative to his seat. As lay delegation is new with them, they doubtless resolved to begin well by defining their ground.

We note a few of the decisions:

A communication was received from the committee from the M. E. Church in regard to the propriety of holding an Ecumenical Conference of Methodists, and was referred to a special committee, composed of some of the ablest and most prominent members of the Conference.

This provides for a careful consideration, as least, of the measure we have ourselves advocated in common with other Methodist papers—a conference of representatives from all branches of Methodism. This may lead the way for a conference of, at least, several denominations who could find it advantageous to adjust certain differences in a brotherly way, enabling them to bring a more united and compact front to the foe.

The Committee on the Itinerancy reported against the extension of the pastorate. Report adopted.

There is a fourth year allowed in the South now, we believe, under certain conditions, but a memorial came up for an extension of the ordinary period where it might be thought advisable. This General Conference has voted against it. Perhaps the presence of the laity had much to do with this adverse vote, as in our own General Conference. Where the laymen are against the measure, ministers, in all modesty, ought to avoid pressing it.

BIOOTRY is a thing of general growth. It seems to have found its way into Pennsylvania—the State of that famous old Quaker—and into the Methodist Protestant Church, too. The *Recorder*, organ of that body, in Pittsburgh, has this little note from a correspondent, with the editor's reply. It is a pretty stroke of irony:

MR. EDITOR.—Could not our Publishing House in Pittsburgh issue a Methodist Protestant Bible? The copy we use in our church does not recognize our denomination anywhere from Genesis to Revelation. Besides the very same Bible is used by the Methodist Episcopal Church; and even the Unitarians preach from it. Unless we can issue an edition of the Holy Scriptures with special reference to our polity as a denomination, there is danger that our beloved church may fail in accomplishing its mission in the world. EPSILON.

Not exactly knowing what our correspondent is driving at, or whether he inquires sincerely or sarcastically, we are at a loss what to say. We are sort of choked up, so to speak, and rather inclined to pass the conundrum and its wrappings to Bro. Robinson. Such inquiries, now that we come to think of it, should be addressed to the Publisher and not to

AN EXPLOSION of gas at the North Sydney Mines, on Tuesday last, resulted, as will be seen by the following despatch to the *Chronicle*, fatally in several instances:

NORTH SYDNEY, May 21.

The killed at the Sydney Mines explosion are—Murdoch McDonald, Rory McNeil, Robert Hutchie, Robert Mellum, Chief Overman Isaac Greenwell and his assistant, William Oram.

The bodies of the two latter have not yet been recovered.

The first to enter the mine after the explosion were three brothers Sullivan, who succeeded in rescuing thirteen of the cutters, who had been overcome by the gas after the explosion, which took place in the north side of the mine, where sixteen pairs of cutters were at work.

There were a large number of men at work in the south side of the mine, but all escaped uninjured. One of the Sullivans was prostrated while searching for the dead, but was fortunately rescued by his brothers in time to save his life.

DIOCESAN SYNOD.—The Episcopal Bishop and clergymen have been in annual convocation in Halifax. By a resolution brought up for confirmation at a stage in the proceedings, we may infer how far the Bishop's authority is considered to be agreeable and constitutional. Here it is:—

"That in case it shall happen that the Bishop shall withhold his assent to any act or resolution of the Synod, the same may be brought up again at the next Session; and if it shall then be passed by a majority of two-thirds of each order present and voting, and shall again be dissented from by the Bishop, such majority shall have the right to appeal to the House of Bishops in General Assembly in Canada, whose decision shall be final."

This hedging about of a Bishop's dignity and power does not indicate that the office is considered incapable of being abused. A milder form of resolution was afterwards submitted and passed, though we cannot see that it deviates materially in intention from the former.

"That the House of Bishops of the Ecclesiastical Province be respectfully requested to inform the Synod of this Diocese, in the event of an appeal made by them on a subject dissented from by the Bishop, their Lordships would be ready to receive an appeal and give an opinion thereon."

Here is the Report adopted by the Synod on Temperance. It plainly shows that in the Episcopal body Temperance is making head-way. The last clause implies that a pledge has been used by the parochial societies which allows a moderate use of stimulants:

"Your committee beg to report that in accordance with a resolution passed at the last session of this Synod, a public meeting was held in the city of Halifax at the Bishop in the chair, at which a Diocesan Society was formed. Since then several parochial societies have been organized, a few of which have become affiliated with the Diocesan Society.

"By taking this action the church in the Diocese has publicly acknowledged the importance of the Temperance movement, and showed their sympathy therewith. But we regret that more has not been done by the church in this matter, but believe it due to some extent to the wave of Temperance Reform which swept over the Diocese shortly after the formation of our Society. Your committee has reason to think that much good has been effected by the Reform movement, and that after a while our own organization will take a more prominent place among the various Temperance bodies in the land. At the same time your committee cannot but express their regret that so many of the clergy have as yet held aloof from the work, and would fain hope that ere long more of them will follow the example of our Bishop, and if they cannot see their way clear to become total abstainers, will at least give the more general pledge their hearty support."

THE outward bound mail steamer which leaves Quebec to-day will have, as part of its cargo, four white whales, commonly called porpoises in the regions of the lower St. Lawrence. Such a "whale" was first exhibited in the New York Aquarium but soon died owing to a severe cold caught by a sudden change in the temperature of the water of his tank, when renewed. Since then quite a number of them have been caught alive at the mouth of the St. Lawrence, and, being packed in sea-weed, have been transferred to New York. The present, as far as we are aware, are the first which have crossed the ocean alive, except by their own endeavours.

The above is from the "Montreal Witness." It seems to us, after visiting this greatly celebrated New York Aquarium, that it is, itself, very much of a "whale"—one of the most successful instances of "blowing" in these days of sound and pretensions. A visitor pays fifty cents for admission, walks around a very small circle of very tame exhibitions of fish. When he enquires for the Chimpanzee, he is politely told that this is an extra charge. Meantime his ears are assailed by the short yelping of dogs, going through some training, under the lash,

for an evening's performance. It is altogether a fine exhibition to be lauded and illustrated in newspapers and magazines! It ought to pay a handsome dividend, however, as, certainly, its advertisements have gained for it a magnificent share of public attention.

Active movements for the defence of our chief seaports are apparent upon the part of the military and government authorities. We notice Digby, St. John, and Yarmouth as places where armaments are to be provided.

CORRESPONDENCE

TWENTY YEARS AGO.

Gratitude to God is awakened by a thoughtful review of the past. We should not forget His manifold mercies, providential and gracious. While it is true that the hope of success is the life of any enterprise, it is also certain that occasional indications of success are necessary in order that hope may not fail. As a religious organization, Methodism rejoices in the progress she has made in the past, and is very thankful to the Head of the Church for continued manifestations of His presence and grace. We would at this time,—not for self-glorification, but to inspire fresh courage to work in the vineyard,—go back in thought to the year 1858, and compare with 1878.

Methodism then, in the Maritime Provinces, was comprised within the boundaries of the Conference of Eastern British America. The Conference at that time was but three years old. It was formed out of three Mission stations, viz., Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland. These stations had been carefully looked after by the British Conference for more than seventy years.

It was evidently quite time that they should, with the consent of the Parent, assume something like self-government. The result has proved the wisdom of the movement.

In 1858 in the Conferences named, there were 114 ministers, including supernumeraries and young men on probation. There are now within the same boundaries 255, as follows: Nova Scotia, 110; New Brunswick & P. E. Island, 96; Newfoundland 49.

The Conference commenced with 7 Districts, but in 1858, the Truro District was formed,—the Eastern part of Nova Scotia having for a time been a part of the Charlottetown District. Those 8 districts comprised 80 circuits. N. S., 35; N. B., 25; Nfld., 5; P. E. I., 6; Bermuda, 1. There are now 197 circuits, N. S., 80; N. B., 76; Nfld., 41.

There were then 13,511 church members; at present, 23,385, in the three Conferences as follows: N. S., 8,877; N. B., &c., 7,718; Nfld., 5,790. From these figures we learn that the membership has not increased in equal proportion to the ministerial force.

Twenty years ago, we had 6 Supernumeraries, now 24; N. S., 11; N. B., &c., 10; Nfld., 3. Then, 1 in 19 were supernumeraries, now one for every 10 and a-half. Then, there were 9 men who had been 30 years in the ministry; now only seven in the active work, all but one being in the N. S. Conference.

There were then 60 men who had been in the work 10 years and under; now, there are of this class, 185, nearly two thirds of the whole number of preachers. In the Nfld. Conference there are only 9 ministers who have travelled more than 10 years, in N. B., 25, and in N. S., 86. Of the 141 who were in the Conference of E. B. A. in 1858, 41 are still with us in the active work; 33 have been removed by death; the rest are found among our supernumeraries, and in other portions of the Methodist field; only one of the 141 has left the connexion and joined another denomination.

In 1858 the officers of the Conference were, President, Rev. M. Richey, D.D., Co-Delegate, Rev. R. Knight, D.D., Secretary, Rev. H. Pickard, D.D.

In 1874 three Conferences were constituted out of the E. B. A. Conference, namely, N. S., N. B. and P. E. I., and Nfld. These annual Conferences, with three of similar nature in the West, are now governed by a General Conference, meeting once in four years. This Conference comprises a larger territory than the Dominion of Canada, for it includes the Island of Newfoundland, which seems as yet to prefer Downing street to Ottawa.

As a branch of the Christian Church we have been greatly favoured by the Head of the Church, for during the last 10 years, before the Census, our increase was much larger than that of any other denomination. As the largest branch of the Protestant Church in the Dominion, we should feel deeply the responsibility devolving upon us, to continue to spread scriptural holiness through the land.

Our approaching annual Conference meetings in June, and the General Conference in September, ought to awaken much thought and prayer. If special wisdom from above can be obtained, we ought to have it, for many