

Here were the representatives of more than one thousand ministers, and not far from half a million professed adherents of the Methodist Church, gathered to review the Missionary operations of the Society among the Ojibway, Muncey, Oneida, Delaware, Cree, Stoney, Blackfeet, and other Indian Tribes; among the settlers and half-breeds of British Columbia, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba; among the more newly-formed and destitute settlements within the boundaries of the Toronto, London, Montreal, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, and P. E. I. Conferences; and the truly Missionary work carried on in the Newfoundland Conference. The large and benevolent heart of Dr. Coke was first turned to the destitute condition of the fishermen of Newfoundland, and when baffled in his attempt to reach the island by the hostility of adverse storms, he then was taken to Antigua, W. I., where he began, on behalf of the Wesleyan Conference, those glorious Missions which rescued thousands from spiritual and eternal death, and contributed largely to the abolition of slavery. Newfoundland continues to share in the kindest sympathy and consideration of the Central Board. Last, but not the least in importance, the Board had to extend their vision and listen to the appeals from their latest Missionary enterprise—the Mission to Japan. No wonder their assembling in the city of St. John for such a purpose, where the voice of Wm. Black and Joshua Marsden, Wm. Crosscombe and the Manns, and many others now asleep in Christ, had been frequently heard in the delivery of the same Gospel truths the Board were met to advance, and not very far from the locality where, in 1782, the sons of John Wesley sowed the “seed of the Word,” now spread over the surface of the wide Dominion of Canada—no wonder there was felt a solemn responsibility, which contributed much to the devotional spirit that characterised the whole of the sessions.

The Vice-President gave out the 327th Hymn; the Rev. A. Sutherland read the 72nd Psalm, and the Rev. R. A. Temple led in prayer. The Rev. Wm. Scott and A. J. Donly, Esq., were elected Secretaries. First in order of business was the reading of the “Minutes of the Committee of Consultation and Finance,” who, by the authority of the General Conference, shall provide, during the intervals of its annual meetings, “for any exigencies that may arise.” There were six meetings of this Committee during the year, all connected with subjects which had been referred for adjudication to this court by the Central Board, or matters of business requiring immediate attention, and which could not, without injury to many interests, await the annual meeting. These “minutes” ran over eighteen folio pages; and diversified and sometimes onerous as were the duties of the Committee, after a very free and full discussion of the same, they were unanimously confirmed by the Central Board.

The financial condition of the Society was presented by the Rev. A. Sutherland, Secretary-Treasurer, which elicited a great many questions, occupying a good deal of time in giving explanations of the expenditure and debt of the Society, all necessary for a full understanding of the responsible position in which the Board was placed, and which led to the adoption of the following resolution regarding the necessity of retrenchment in the appropriation to some Missions, and the entire withdrawal of others from any dependence upon Missionary money. The lucid and painstaking manner in which the whole was presented gave universal satisfaction.

“That the Central Board, experiencing great embarrassment in providing for the really destitute portions of the Domestic Work, and finding great difficulty in responding to the calls made upon it from the Heathen World, and this difficulty and embarrassment arising, to a large extent, from the demands made by Domestic Missions of long standing and of