

THE WESLEYAN
FRIDAY, MAY 5, 1882.

AN IMPORTANT PROBLEM.

Our American brethren are trying to solve the problem of the disposal of inefficient ministers. The peculiar polity of Methodism renders action with a view to this end unusually difficult. In other denominations failure to receive a call to a pastoral charge virtually places a man on the shelf, but Methodism in accepting a youth for the ministry is supposed to guarantee him a field of labor so long as he retains a place on her list of active laborers. Weak and indolent men are certainly not more numerous in Methodist ranks than they are elsewhere, but some such are everywhere liable to perplex the committee on whom may rest the responsibility of making Conference appointments.

For some time the American Conferences have recognized the necessity of measures for relieving the Church of the burden of ministers who persist in maintaining their ministerial standing year after year while no circuit is willing to receive them, and whose presence in any charge means little less than its serious injury or even destruction. To solve what the *Christian Advocate* calls "the most serious administrative problem in Methodism," the last General Conference passed a law permitting an Annual Conference, by a two-thirds vote, and without a formal trial, to "locate" any inefficient preacher, without his consent. In carrying out this disciplinary action greater difficulty seems to have been experienced by our Northern brethren than by their Southern brethren Methodists, in a similar attempt. The *Richmond Christian Advocate* only says in reference to the action of one of the Southern Conferences, "Two or three preachers had become slack-twisted and ravelled out. They were brushed out of the way." One of the earliest attempts at the North to carry the General Conference rule into effect was made at the recent session of the New York East Conference, when, after a debate which lasted through four full sessions, the location of the Rev. Simeon Howland, a minister of twenty years standing, was determined by a vote largely in excess of the two-thirds required. This case will have a certain historical importance. Possibly, through the exception taken by the located minister to certain rulings by Bishop Simpson who presided at the Conference, it may come up before the next General Conference.

Any growing Church is likely to find itself called upon to grapple with similar difficulties. Here, as elsewhere, prevention is better than cure. Special watchfulness in the selection of probationers—providing always that due allowance is made for the development of the youth who knock at Conference doors—may lessen the frequency of such trying cases. When they do present themselves—when it becomes evident that a man's heart is no longer in his work—that a Conference appointment is used as affording opportunities for secular business—that circuit after circuit suffers in its various interests through the presence of any one man—it is hard to see why they should be viewed in reference to the man rather than to the Church. In business—and Church work is but business of the highest importance—the interests of the one must give way to the interests of the many. A copper coin, if held close to the eye, may conceal even the sun from the gaze. Sympathy for an individual may blind a body of ministers to the interests of a vast number who may be affected for time and eternity by the neglect of the watchman upon the wall. A faithful discharge of duty should be in the Church as elsewhere a condition of continuance in service.

THE LATE GERVASE SMITH, D.D.

Many of our readers have already heard of the decease of this eminent English minister, whose visit to this city is still remembered with pleasure. Particulars of his last days have not yet reached us. For more than two years he had been a sufferer from ill health, caused by partial paralysis. Once or twice he visited City Road Chapel during the meeting of the Ecumenical Conference, but was unable to take any part in its services. Old friends saw him with sadness, and American visitors, who knew how kindly he had remembered attentions received in America, particularly regretted his feeble and shattered appearance. Late English papers informed us of his dangerous illness. On the 11th ult., Dr. Jenner visited him and gave slight hope of the recovery of his patient. Last week he passed away at the age of 60, having survived but a short time his early

friend, William Morley Pughon, between whom and himself there existed an attachment like that between David and Jonathan.

An American journal aptly remarks that Mr. Smith was a "representative of the old school Wesleyan minister who has succeeded in keeping pace with the best of the new and younger school." Such was the opinion of the writer after having heard him preach on the morning of the Conference Sunday at Nottingham, in August, 1876. His birthplace was near Nottingham, and among the friends of his school days were Dr. Pughon and George Alton. A three years' training at the Didsbury Theological Institution aided him in becoming a workman that needed not to be ashamed. In 1865 he was elected President of the British Conference. As Secretary of the Metropolitan Building Fund he rendered the Church very valuable service. His pen was also usefully employed in the publication of several memoirs and sermons. On this side of the ocean Mr. Smith had made an impression so favorable that his death will be deeply mourned.

PARLIAMENTARY.

At Ottawa the business of the country is being pushed with more vigor. On Monday, in the necessary absence of Sir Charles Tupper, the Premier introduced a Bill to hand over to the Nova Scotia Government the Pictou and Windsor branches of the Intercolonial Railway. It is probable that in a few weeks the Railway Act of last session will be in operation. On the same day Mr. Costigan's Irish resolutions were introduced into the Senate. We have said nothing of the display of fireworks in the House of Commons, where a discussion on the subject of Irish grievances ought not to have been allowed. It was simply a bid from both parties for the Irish vote and as such was, as schoolboys are apt to say, "a little too clear." Canada just then reminded one of a big boy with his hands in his pockets, and treating his father with disrespect as "the old man." All Canadians, though aware that Ireland has had her grievances, are not willing to be enrolled as the avowed friends of the imprisoned agitators, and of the men who in cold blood can waylay innocent men and women and doom them to death. Had George M. Grant given expression to his favorable impressions of Canadian legislators a few days later than he did we might have suspected a little irony on his part. It is sincerely to be hoped that the Senate will redeem the Dominion from disgrace. Another strange thing, if a dispatch in the *Chronicle* is correct, is the presence of Bishop Binney at Ottawa where he is said to be engaged in interviewing different members of the Government with a view to preventing, if possible, the deceased wife's sister bill from becoming law. Such an effort at interference with public sentiment might have been made with success a century ago.

FOREARMED.

Losses through emigration in the past have led the Archbishop of Canterbury to issue a circular advising emigrants to take out certificates of Church membership. The advice has not been without benefit, as is proved by the large increase in the number of emigrants who are furnished with commendatory letters from their parish clergyman. None will blame the Episcopalians for this: they are rather to be commended. We hope that our English brethren, and the pastors of our Provincial churches as well, will thus seek to guard all their members who are bound to the North-West. If any have gone without such recommendation let it speedily follow them. It may be all very well to settle colonists of certain denominational tenets in separate settlements, but no such arrangement can be permanent in this country. The New Zealand Methodist Conference met in January last in a very fine stone building, one of five or six respectable Methodist churches in the city and suburbs of Christchurch. And yet the district of which it is the centre was originally intended to be a Protestant Episcopal settlement. In like manner Otago, in the same colony, was intended to be kept Scotch and Presbyterian, but it too has yielded to the inevitable course of events and is now very largely influenced by other denominations. So will it be in our great North-west, where in a short time any attempt to harmonize denominational lines with those of the surveyor will prove a complete failure. Let us see to it that our Methodist settlers go there to make new homes and meet new struggles with all the aid that we can furnish them.

When addressing the students of Vanderbilt University, and urging them to

aim at that excellence which he assured them was only to be gained by hard and continued work, Dr. Crooks, of Ireland, found a happy illustration in a story furnished by Franklin: A boy wished to purchase an axe, and for this purpose went into a place where axes were sold. He saw some, bright and beautiful, but the price was beyond his purse. "Well," said the man, "I have axes I will sell you at a lower price, but they are not bright." "No," replied the boy, "I wish a bright axe." The dealer said, "I can make one of these bright for you; and if you will turn the grindstone I will do so." The boy gladly acceded to this proposition; but when the man began to bear on the stone the boy's arms grew weary, and he said, "Isn't it done yet?" "No," replied the man, "it isn't done yet." After a little the boy again said, "It must be done now." "No," was the answer, "it is not done yet." See," said the man, as he held up the axe, "it is only speckled." But the boy was unwilling to do more. He was weary and answered, "I like speckled axes!" Too frequently youth, blessed with rare opportunities, are willing to go forth to hew their way through life's thickets with only "speckled axes."

On Monday last a very interesting meeting of the members of the Women's Missionary Society of the Halifax North circuit took place. A lady who had not hitherto shown a deep interest in the movement joined the Society, and as a proof of the reality of her sympathy placed \$20 in the hands of the President. Who should sympathize more with the work of missions than woman? A few weeks since a missionary from China, lecturing in a Southern city, made a statement which the Christian women of America should read and read: "Buddhism," said he, "has no heaven for woman; woman is too impure; but with strange inconsistency she can beset to hell. So all the women of China labor with might and main to lay up merits, that they may prevail with the judges of the lower world to let them be born again as men, so that they may have a chance to get to heaven."

Revs. C. H. Paisley, A. M. and S. B. Dunn have been in the city this week as the Education deputation. Their sermons have been well suited to the important topic named, and the addresses given have been heard by all present with deep interest. Severe rain storms on Sunday and Tuesday evening lessened the numbers present, but apart from all hindrances, many more should have heard these addresses. It is a painful fact that, in all parts of the country and in connection with all the Churches, addresses on education awaken little interest—a fact depressing to the speaker and to the wise few who listen to him. W. H. Webb, Esq., presided on Monday evening at Brunswick St. Church, and Dr. Allison on Tuesday evening at Graf-ton St. Church.

Having on several occasions declined to become expositors of the Discipline, we cannot undertake to answer "Chios" who asks us to "inform the Methodist public of the Lower Provinces as to whether it is constitutional or not for mission stations, not intending to become independent circuits, to tender invitations to Methodist ministers to become their pastors for the ensuing year, and whether the Stationing Committee have the power of veto in regard to such invitations." It may however be remarked that invitations are but once mentioned, if we remember aright, in the Discipline, and then in relation to transfers. No Conference law we believe prevents any circuit from tendering invitations, nor the Stationing Committee from declining to act in accordance with them.

Our temperance organizations are often twitted with the use of any quantity of words and the neglect of diffusive movements. We know their difficulties, and can see the tremendous forces, personal, civic and financial, arrayed against them, and therefore in no unkind spirit quote Spurgeon's words as used at the formation of a Temperance Society at the Metropolitan Tabernacle: "I hope this Society will do something when it is started. I don't want you to wear a lot of cock's feathers and pretty medals, nor to be always trying to convert moderate drinkers, but to go in for winning the real drunkards, and bringing the poor enslaved creature to the feet of Jesus who can give him liberty."

The *New York Observer* has these words for discouraged ministers: "There are many ministers waiting for fields, who, if they would be satisfied to work in some retired spot, might soon find all

the highest aspirations of a true minister's heart fulfilled in seeing the work of the Lord prospering in their hands. It is not the field that makes a man useful; it is the grace of God in the man; and those who are called to toil in comparative obscurity may rely on the promise that the work of the Lord shall prosper in their hands. If they are not known in this world, God knows them, and their reward is just as sure as if they had been stationed on any of the high places of the earth."

The marriage of Prince Leopold, the Queen's youngest son, took place at Windsor on the 27th ult. His bride, the Princess Helen of Waldeck-Pyrmont, is the fourth daughter of a German Prince who surrendered his sovereign rights to the King of Prussia at the close of the war with Austria. The Princess of Waldeck, in which the family retain nominal power, embraces an area of 466 square miles and a population of something over 70,000. The Princess is said to be endowed with beauty and amiability which may tend to increase the popularity of Prince Leopold, which is already well marked.

Rev. A. W. Nicolson, pastor of Wesley Church, Hamilton, Bermuda, is desirous to find a home for an orphan child. He writes:—

A girl, eleven years, prepossessing features, father and mother, who were Methodists, both dead, living with two sisters, themselves young and delicate, can be obtained by a respectable family. The little girl has good health, and is quite strong for her age. Friends would forward her to Halifax. Her sisters would give her up without any restrictions to a family disposed to adopt her.

Application should be made to the office of this paper or to Mr. Nicolson.

Burdette, of the *Hawkeye*, thus advises correspondents: Avoid all painstaking with proper names. We know the full name of every man, woman and child in the United States, and the merest hint at the name is sufficient. For instance, if you write a character something like a drunken figure "S," and then draw a wavy line we will know at once that you mean "Samuel Morrison," even though you may think you mean "Lemuel Messenger."

Why do our Baptist brethren on every possible occasion speak of themselves as the "sect everywhere spoken against." We met with the phrase the other day in the *Christian Visitor*. It conveys a false impression, and if used as a rallying cry must soon lose its force. If Baptist ministers stand aloof in any sense from others, the distance is measured by themselves.

The American Book Exchange, of which so much was heard for a time, has not proved a success. The machinery of the concern was sold the other day by order of the Receiver. From the condition of the assets it was thought that the creditors would not realize more than ten cents on the dollar.

LETTER FROM JAMAICA.

Bath, Jamaica, W. I.
17th April, 1882.

To the Editor of the Wesleyan.

Sir, I have read with pleasure and profound interest your excellent paper, which by the kindness of a friend has been sent me for the past two years. During that time, in reading the items of news under the heading of "abroad," I have frequently wished that some intelligence from our Island could find its way into your columns, but it strikes me, we are in such an out of the way corner of the world that you seldom or never hear the name of Jamaica mentioned. I fancy the majority of your readers, (beyond the information gathered in their school-days, relative to Jamaica being "one of the islands known as the West Indian archipelago) have little or no idea as to what sort of a place it is, or by what kind of people it is inhabited. Some of our neighbors in the States have the crudest ideas imaginable, as to what sort of folk we are, who live in these western isles. I saw a letter last week, written to an American gentleman here by a friend in one of the Middle States, in which expression was given to the hope that the "natives had not eaten him up!" Now, so thoroughly permeated by the odor of tobacco as the body of the average American is—at least those who from time to time come this country—it would require so much dressing to deodorize and render it palatable, that the luxury would be far too expensive to be indulged in!

For the information of your readers, I may state that the island of Jamaica is nearly 160 miles long, 45 broad and 335 in circumference. The general appearance of the surface of the island is of great beauty. It is intersected from east to west by a range of mountains, in many places of considerable altitude, especially towards the east, where the peak of the Blue Mountain lifts its head 8000 feet above the sea level: towards the north the land rises into hills of great beauty and luxuriance, divided by

extensive vales, and streams of water. On the south side the country assumes a different face, the land is more hilly and irregular, and extensive plains stretch from the base of the hills to the sea.

The staple products of the country are sugar, rum, coffee, dyewoods and cocoa-nuts; there are also a great variety of ginger, arrowroot, and a great variety of minor products, most of which are capable of being developed into important industries. Of late years there has been opened up a trade for fruit between this country and the United States. Small in its beginning, this enterprise has grown steadily, year by year; in the transport of the banana several lines of steamers are engaged, and the fruit trade bids fair to become one of the leading industries of Jamaica. In this sunny isle of the West, almost every variety of climate is to be met with: away up in the mountain may be enjoyed all the year round a climate which is cool and bracing, sometimes very cold, while on the sea coast the heat is generally relieved by the delightful sea breeze which blows from "early morn till dewy eve." In certain quarters the climate of Jamaica has been pronounced deadly, and the island has been more than once spoken of as the "European's grave." Certainly epidemics come occasionally to these shores as to all others, but it is a great libel upon this God-favored land to state that its climate is constitutionally unhealthy. There are scores of Europeans on the island to-day, who have in the course of their many years residence never had any cause to consider the climate pestiferous. The majority of Europeans, and foreigners generally, whose death on these shores has been attributed to climatic influence, have really been victims to intemperance; no man accustomed to a more temperate climate, however strong his constitution may be, can stand against the combined influence of a tropical sun and Jamaica rum.

Travelling in Jamaica is very slow and expensive. We have not the network of railways, which on the American continent affords such vast facilities for social and commercial intercourse. There is a line of rail extending from Kingston to Old Harbor, a distance of 28 miles, but which is only available to a very small portion of the inhabitants. Our excellent Governor, Sir Anthony Musgrave, in his laudable desire for "works of progress," has recently started two additional lines, one in continuation of the present line from Old Harbor to Porus, a town in the centre of the Island, and the other running from the Angels to the foot of Mount Diabolo, to serve the large population on the north side. In addition to this the Governor has belted the entire Island with electric telegraphs, and subsidized a steamer to do the coasting trade for passengers and general freight. Sir Anthony's administration is drawing to a close, and when he leaves, he will take with him the affectionate gratitude of a warm-hearted, loving people, for whose social elevation he has perseveringly worked since his appointment to the office of governor.

The various sections of the church of Christ are fully represented on the island; and there are societies in connection with the Episcopalians, Wesleyan Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and several others. The Church of England, which for many years was sustained by the funds of the public treasury, has been disestablished and disendowed, and as far as the state is concerned, she stands on the same footing as the other religious denominations; this has told very disastrously upon the Episcopal church in one direction, and she is now for the most part in a languishing condition. There are many good and holy men in the communion of the Church of England in Jamaica, but among the bulk of them, ritualistic idolatry is eating away the vitals of the religion for which the fathers of the Reformation suffered and died. The Roman Catholic church has a very slender hold upon our people, but the High church party in the Anglican church are gradually undermining their own foundations and paving a way for the entrance of Catholicism.

The spiritual needs of the masses are met by the non-conforming churches, principally the Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians. The Baptists have quite a number of churches scattered up and down the country but of their number or condition I cannot give you any definite information.

Methodism has a firm hold upon the sympathies of all classes in the country. We have a complete belt of churches; up in the hills, in the mountain fastnesses, and away down in the fertile valleys, our Methodist sanctuaries are to be found, many of which would not disgrace either European or American towns. The population of Jamaica is about 500,000; of these our connexional returns show that 60,000 are regular attendants at our public services, and our whole membership is close upon 25,000. We have 30 fully ordained ministers and about 200 lay preachers, these minister to 170 congregations; in our schools we have 6000 children taught by 110 teachers.

Our annual District meeting has just completed its sittings, and its sessions were marked throughout by harmony and brotherly love. The year 1881, owing to the combined influence of drought and hurricane, was a time of great financial depression with our people, and in some parts of the island many families felt the pangs of hunger for weeks and weeks together, consequently our church income was sadly crippled, and the financial condition of the District was the source of profound anxiety to us all. The new year has opened more favorably, and the "bad times" seem to be passing away; we have supplicated the God of the harvest to stay His hand, and to smile once more upon His people, and there are unmistakable evidences that our praying breath was not spent in vain. In the

midst of these trying circumstances, we are cheered by the steadfastness of our people and the tenacity with which many of them cling to the precious promises, declaring by their trustfulness, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

For the first time in the history of Jamaica Methodism, the annual district meeting was presided over by one of our native ministers, and the business entire satisfaction of all the brethren. Bro. Geddes is a man of rich mental culture, and vast experience; his name is loved and venerated by all classes, and he is one of the sons of Jamaica, of whom we "native brethren" are so justly proud.

I ought to tell you something of our Theological Institution and High School; the former has been in existence six years and has supplied men for our local ministry and sent others to St. Vincent, Tobago and Hayti. Of the latter there are two, one for boys and the other for girls. Two years ago the Island Legislature passed a law creating a "West India Scholarship," which entitled the successful competitor at the examination to a three years college course in England at either Oxford or Cambridge University, and for the expenses of which he would receive £200 from the exchequer of the Colony. I am proud to tell you that at the first competitive examination, the prize was carried off by a lad trained in, and sent up by our York Castle High School, and the lad is now in England taking his college course; this will assure you of the thoroughness of the work at York Castle. The girls High School at Barbican is also in full swing, and the principal, an English lady, holding a university certificate, is proving herself the right person for the position.

At our District Meeting a brother from America presented credentials which certified him to be a minister in connection with the Society of Friends. His name is Eri Sharpless, the object of his visit being to evangelize the colored people of the West India Islands. He is much surprised at the advanced condition of affairs in this country, and his own statement as to his former ideas of the place and people and the opinions of those from whom he has come, relative to the moral, social and religious condition of the people, fully corroborates what I stated in the former part of this letter, namely, that in some parts of the United States the people of these West India Islands are regarded as being in a benighted and most deplorable condition. Brother Sharpless did not know there were any Methodists in these Islands! nor could he get the information as to whether or not there were any, even from the Methodists in his native State, Iowa! He has undertaken to visit all the churches irrespective of denomination, that will receive him, and is now with me visiting the churches of my pastorate. You may perhaps have seen a letter, written by Mr. Sharpless, in the "Zion's Watchman." This letter was written when he had only been two months in the island, and from observation made in the city of Kingston, and one other parish not 30 miles from the capital. In that letter there were some statements made, which broader experience and further information have convinced Brother Sharpless he was premature in making, chief among which is a statement to the effect that there are no "free schools" on the island; the fact of the case being, that there are a dozen or more.

I must not trespass longer on your time, but with the promise to write soon again,
Remain yours,
C. R.

PERSONAL.

The President of the English Primitive Methodist Conference, the Rev. Charles Kendall, is seriously ill.

The Rev. John Astbury, who had leave of absence for a year, has returned to Nova Scotia. His address until the meeting of Conference will be at River John.

A Wesleyan missionary to China, the Rev. David Hill, devotes himself to missionary labor at his own cost, and is travelling through England, advocating China missions without any cost to the mission funds.

The Rev. J. K. Burr, D.D., one of the prominent ministers of the Newark Conference, died in Trenton, on the 24th ult. Dr. Burr was a devoted minister, and also an able scholar. He wrote the Commentary on the Book of Job, issued by the Methodist Book Concern, and was known beyond his own Church as one of the American Revisers of the New and Old Testaments.

The Atlanta, Ga., correspondent of the *New Orleans Advocate* says: "Governor Colquitt is always to be found at the social meetings of the Church, aiding by exhortation, prayer and song. Judge Jackson has on several occasions filled the pulpits of ministers during their absence; teaches his class in Sabbath-school regularly. Ought not a people to thank God for such rulers?"

The Senate of Queen's University, Kingston, Ont., has conferred the honorary degree of D.D. upon the Rev. James Patterson Sheraton, editor of the *Evangelical Churchman* and President of the Protestant Episcopal Divinity School, Toronto. Mr. Sheraton is a native of St. John, N. B. He was formerly a student at the University of New Brunswick and at King's College, Windsor.

The death of the Rev. G. McMillen, of the Irish Conference, took place recently at the home of his son-in-law, Uitenhage, South Africa, whither he had gone from the state of his health. He