Correspondence.

Letters from Rev. R. Knight, D.D.

No. IV.

CONTINGENT FUND.

From my former letter it will have been seen that the sources from which the fund derives it support, in connexion with the Parent Conference, are the yearly collections in the classes,—the July collections from the congregations,—and the annual grant from the Book Room.

The proceeds were divided off, to meet, as far as the means would allow, the deficiencies, both ordinary and extraordinary, of those Circuits in the home work whose limited means, or regular income, was inadequate to defray the annual expenditure.

Co-eval, in time, or nearly so, to the institution of the July collection in the Congregations, it was found necessary to organize plans for the more steady and extended financial sustentation of our foreign missions then rapidly multiplying. Doctor Coke, whose zeal in the cause of our Missions has emblamed his name in immortal memory, had consecrated and laid upon the altar the whole of his private fortune, in addition to his unwearied effort to elicit the benevolence of others. Still, the means fell short of the demand.

The Contingent Fund having been originated and sustained in the home Circuits, for the sole purpose of aiding the home work, no help could be reasonably expected for the foreign missions from this source. The same necessity (only in a greater degree) however, existed here as there, when the fund was first formed. For if then it could be said of the Parent land, "Many are neither able nor willing to bear the expense, nor can it be expected of them—stay till the word of God hath reached their hearts, and then they will endeavour to provide for them who preach it," surely this would more directly apply to the population generally occupying the scenes of our mission labour, and more especially so among the heathen.

From the mission fund alone could hope of aid be indulged,—and from the beginning, as far as means would admit, has help been cheerfully afforded. On the inspired principle that the "*labourer is worthy of his hire*," our missionaries have been from the first instructed to raise, as far as practicable, the means of their support from the people for whose spiritual benefit their ministry was intended,—supplemented by the promise from the Missionary Committee, to supply the means additionally required to meet all their reasonable wants.

Hence, in a broad sense, the missionary treasury has to our missions been the Contingent Fund,—and, in the same wide view, it may be said that the amounts contributed by our foreign auxiliaries and branches have been in the form of contributions thereto. In this consideration of the subject, however, there has been no departure either from the principle of its sympathy or the mode of its application. The design has been, on the part of the strong, to help the weak, and the object of its use has been to meet the ordinary and extraordinary deficiencies of the mission stations.

Both the propriety and necessity of introducing to the Foreign Missions the whole machinery of our financial discipline, as far as practicable, from their commencement, will, we think, be manifestly both just and proper. The omission of this is to the present painfully felt; with respect to a large portion of the older circuits,—and the evil has been of so long duration as to become too deeply rooted to admit of effectual remedy.

Well would it have been had early attention been given to all the existing connexional funds as our mission field enlarged, and claimed attention to moral and religious culture. The ground when freshly fallowed is the best time for casting in the seed. As soon, therefore, as societies came into existence on all our foreign stations, to introduce the yearly appeal, as also to make the July collection in all places where stated congregations had been raised, would have been the more desirable method. However small at the first might have been the proceeds, the principle should have been introduced. Had this been done in the case before us, we should ere this have had a Contingent Fund, in a stricter sense than that which we have before alluded to,—one indeed strictly analogous to that of the Parent Connexion.

Though but partially attended to, still, in some of the principal circuits the yearly collection has been made in the classes, the proceeds of which, however, were usually merged in the ordinary receipts, and solely applied to the exigencies of the particular station where the rule was attended to. Hence the Connexional order of the parent body, to set it apart from the usual circuit income, for the purpose of benefiting other stations was not practically regarded.

Self-sustaining circuits have hitherto been but "few and far between." Even the St. John South Circuit, where the uniform and growing liberality of our people demands and merits our praise, did not so become, earlier than 1849. Then it left a balance of some sixteen pounds as the unappropriated portion of the yearly collection to the circuit expenditure. In 1850 the balance increased to £57. In 1851 to £87 8s. In 1852 to £153 16s. 5d, and in 1853 it was £147 19s. 8d. These amounts, of course, in accordance with the object sought to be attained by the yearly collection, as one of the sources from whence the contingent fund is sustained, went to the aid of the dependant circuits, and were gratefully acknowledged, and received as the first fruits of this Connexional effort.

It has already been said that in a broad sense the annual allowances from the treasury of the Parent mission fund may be designated the Contingent Fund as regards our foreign work. Circumstances, however, have required changes in the bestowment of these laudable liberalities. When the writer, more than forty years ago, commenced his missionary labour, the order was to send home the Circuit accounts in detail, and a sum, including the income of the station, adequate to meet the annual expenditure was allowed. Subsequently, this laborious and inconvenient process was discontinued, and a plan less objectionable as such, but much less equitable in its results was adopted. A scale of allowances was fixed for the ordinaries, (which continues to the present,) adjusted in accordance with the peculiar circumstances of the missions respectively. To meet the financial exigencies of the circuits—then without exception, more or less dependant on the general mission fund, the sum of fifty pounds was allowed to the single, and seventy to the married stations as the maximum. The grants being made to the Circuits respectively, and not to the Districts, as now; should a balance remain unappropriated after the expenditure of any given circuit had been met, this was not allowed to be set apart to meet the exigency where the grant was not sufficient. Consequently some Circuits had more than was required, some much less.

This was at least the order as regards the oldest of our present foreign missions, Newfoundland. How far this arrangement obtained with respect to other departments of the Mission field, I am unable to say; but as the managers of our Missions ever have, as far as attainable, adopted and applied a uniform and general principle, I presume that from this arrangement no departure was admitted, unless compelled by local differences not to be controlled. In the mean time our Missions had greatly multiplied. Serious financial embarrassments were pressing on the Mission fund. The magnitude of the claims, and the means at command, demanded mutual consideration, and to meet this exigency as far as practicable, grants were made by the Committee to the Circuits no longer in their distinct relation, but to the Districts, with this instruction, that the sum thus granted as the maximum amount should be divided off in accordance with the pro-rata claims of each Circuit—reserving, at the same time, a reasonable sum to meet the unforeseen contingencies, as they might be found to exist at the annual session of the District Committees.

The Chairmen of Districts, very properly, were not allowed to draw on the Treasurers of the Mission fund beyond the grants for the purpose of meeting any excess of expenditure. Had this been allowed, confusion and inevitable embarrassment must have been the consequence. This direction of the Committee to set apart a reasonable portion of the annual grant to Districts for the purpose of meeting the excess of expenditure may be said to form the era of an authorized Contingent fund in these Provinces. This appropriation, however, was supplemented by an annual collection made in all our principal congregations, and from these conjointly, aid was given in proportion to the means, as circumstances required,—and so far, was the principle essentially pervading a Contingent Fund practically applied.

But the period of partial effort and irregular administration has passed away, we hope, for ever. By the formal adoption of this fund, we are bound to sustain it. We are hereby brought under an improved dispensation more ample in its range, and equitable in its operation, and which, carried out in all the fulness of its capability, will prove a large and lasting blessing financially, thereby relieving cases of Circuit embarrassment, and enlarging the dissemination of the Gospel of our salvation.

By the decision of the Conference at its late session held in the city of St. John, this fund is at present prospectively deprived of one source of income which is secured by the Parent Connexion to the fund at home; namely, an annual grant from the profits of the Book Room. We hope, however, this will not always be the case. We have a Book Room of our own, which, though at present limited in its means, will, we believe, at no very distant time attain to a vigorous, and, we also hope, a profitable existence, as well in a pecuniary sense, as in the circulation of useful knowlege. In connexion therewith is our growingly popular and excellent periodical, the "Provincial Wesleyan." The management of our book affairs, and the editorship of our weekly paper are entrusted to men peculiarly competent, effectively to fill their office,—men whose diligent and unwearied attention will be in keeping with their well-known ability to perform the tasks they have undertaken. Hope, therefore, may indulge the anticipation of a coming period, notwithstanding the Conferential arrangement above alluded to, when the Book Room, and the "Provincial Wesleyan" shall form a remunerative investment, and from which the affiliated Conference of "Eastern British America" shall bestow a portion annually to strengthen the sinews of our Contingent Fund, and thereby follow the liberal and noble example of its venerable parent. Then, and not before, as regards resources, shall we place our Contingent Fund on a basis similar to that connected with the British Conference. No possible argument can bear more directly, or urge its pleadings more powerfully, for the purpose of eliciting and enlarging the benevolent efforts of our societies and congregations, in the support of this Fund, than to be enabled by the authority of Conference to assure our people that a portion of the anticipated profits which may arise from the "Book Room," and the "Provincial Wesleyan," shall form one of the sources of its income, thereby affording more ample means to meet the spiritual destitution of the Provinces, by the extension of the mission field, relieving cases of present circuit embarrassment, and the dissemination of sound and useful information.

In this view, untiring attention should be paid to the sale and purchase of our standard and other useful books, while no pains should be spared to obtain for our paper, the connexional organ of communication with our own people and the public, that wide and still wider circulation to which it is so meritoriously entitled.

If sincerely desirous to occupy, as a branch of the Christian Church, a more enlarged sphere of usefulness, our own people should prove this by making it a matter both of duty and conscience, to encourage and extend the sale of our books, at least by personal purchase, as far as their means can justify, and also by introducing our periodical to every family belonging to our denomination.

We may here honestly say, what we conscientiously think—that if, owing to limited means Wesleyan families can afford to take but one paper, interest, prudence, and even consistency, demand that that one should be the *Provincial Wesleyan*. As the matter in question stands however at present the sources to which the Contingent fund looks for strength are the yearly collection to be made in the month of March, the public collection to be made in the congregations in the latter part of the month of August, and private subscriptions from our friends. Through these channels we fondly hope, and can see no reason why we may not confidently believe that streams of liberality will cheerfully, statedly, and increasingly flow. Relying on the fact that expansive liberality is a prominent doctrine in the financial creed of our denomination no specific amount is named in connection either with the classes, the congregation, or the personal appeals to our particular friends; room is allowed for the ascending scale from the pence of the poor to the pounds of the rich: while to these even there is the placing of no limit. We leave the amount to be adjusted by the accredited liberality of the minds of the givers, ever ready, we trust, to devise liberal things. We gratefully acknowledge that during the year this fund obtained the charitable consideration of one of our friends now no more as to this life, who, in the final arrangements of his worldly affairs, awarded to it the bequest of one hundred pounds.

To the members of our churches in their several classes we may confidently and consistently appeal. These, we may presume, have been more or less savingly benefited by the ministry of the Word. Their hearts, therefore, should be warm and free in its support, and, as far as their means will admit in connection with other claims, resolve to give to this fund a vigorous existence. It may be clearly seen that the public collection has a legitimate claim on our congregations. The blessings they receive from Sabbath to Sabbath through a stated and faithful ministry, they can but desire to make more diffusive, that others might be similarly privileged. This result the Contingent fund seeks to consummate. We may therefore hope that our annual public collections will be increasingly liberal, while our friends whose means through the smiles of a propitious providence are placed in a higher order than that which falls to the common lot, will, we cannot doubt, give to the claims of this fund due consideration.

The same rules and regulations in connection with this fund will obtain and be reduced to practice as those which have been adopted, and faithfully and impartially acted out by the British Conference. The distribution of its proceeds will be placed under the direction of a Committee composed of Ministers and lay official members whose line of duty is clearly defined, and on whose ability and integrity the strongest reliance may be placed as to equity of administration.

In conclusion, we have only to say that the nature and purpose of this fund are now plainly and fairly placed before our Societies in particular, and our congregations in general. It is thrown upon their practical patronage and general support. As but few of our Circuits are self-sustaining, and are therefore annually holding out the hand for help, it remains that in the same ratio as they resolve to sustain this fund will they be benefited by the reaction. To help the fund will be to help themselves, while to our friends on self-sustaining Circuits will be the award of strengthening the weak, comforting the afflicted, unloosing the heavy bardens, extending the influence of the gospel of Christ, and deriving to themselves a richer reward than they could otherwise obtain. They hereby aid in preaching the Word to the needy, visiting the widow and the fatherless in their affliction, and that which is thus bestowed God will amply repay.

R. KNIGHT.

Barrington Circuit.

REVIVAL OF THE WORK OF GOD.

MR. EDITOR,—The *Provincial Wesleyan*, always interesting, has been rendered doubly so for several months past, by the revival intelligence with which its columns have abounded. While we have read communication in addition to communication, detailing the wonderful working of the Divine Spirit with the hearts of many, we have been led to adopt the heart reviving words to which the sainted Wesley gave utterance, while he lingered upon the utmost verge of life, contemplating that Providence by which the cause to which he had devoted his time, talents, and substance, had been raised up, sustained, and remarkably prospered, in spite of the malice, rage, and open hostility of a host of ignorant, bigoted and wicked enemies,—"The best of all is, God is with us."

But our hearts have not been gladdened merely by what we have read of the Lord's gracious dealings with the people in other places, but also, by the displays of His saving power we have witnessed in parts of this Circuit. We shall not weary your patience, and the patience of your numerous readers, by lengthy details of the scenes with which our eyes have been delighted, and the sounds which have fallen upon our ears like heavenly music, causing our hearts to dance for joy, and our lips to exclaim, "What hath God wrought!" Suffice it to say, that during the last two Methodistic years, the work of God has been revived, more or less, in far the largest portion of the Circuit.

At Baccaro and the West Passage, about sixty persons were received on trial for Church membership, during the months of March and April of 1856, the largest part of whom still profess to be "working out their own salvation with fear and trembling." During the last Winter and present Spring the kind hand of the Lord has been stretched out to save at Cape Negro and Upper Port Latour, and about fifty more have been added as members on trial. The extra services held at Cape Negro were kept up for several weeks, with short intermissions, amidst very discouraging circumstances, arising out of the previous low state of religion, and the very inclement state of the weather. But those prolonged services, though not successful to the extent desired and hoped for, were far from being in vain. The cause there is now in an encouraging and prosperous state. Soon after we had concluded our extra meetings at the last named place, we, by the earnest request of the people, commenced similar meetings in a part of Upper Port Latour where there had never been much preaching by the Methodist ministers, until since the last Conference. Those services were, from the beginning, of a most interesting and encouraging character. It would be in vain to attempt a description of our second meeting. We do not know that we ever felt more of the presence of God in any place. All present seemed deeply conscious of His presence—and many, we are sure, felt as Jacob did when he said, "How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." We may merely add, that we now have in this place, a large and flourishing Class with a prospect we think, of further increase. Other matters of interest, connected with this Circuit, might be referred to, were it not that we have already made this communication longer than we had intended. But permit us to state in conclusion, that although the state of the Circuit is not what it might and ought to be, we have upon the whole reason to "thank God and take courage."

C. LOCKHART.

Barrington, May 21st, 1857.

Provincial Wesleyan

THURSDAY, MAY 28, 1857.

Communications designed for this paper must be accompanied by the name of the writer in confidence.
We do not undertake to return rejected articles.
We do not assume responsibility for the opinions of correspondents.

Wesleyan Conference of Eastern British America.

PREPARATORY COMMITTEES.

The members of the different Preparatory Committees will please to take notice that they will be expected to attend the different meetings at Sackville, N. B., in the week immediately preceding the Conference, in the following order:

1. Contingent Fund Committee on Friday, June 19, at 9 a.m.
2. Education Fund Committee do., do., 6 p.m.
3. Supernumerary and Ministers' Widows Fund Committee, on Saturday, June 20, at 9 a.m.
4. Book Committee, on Monday June 22, 9 a.m.
5. Sackville Academy Board Meeting, on Tuesday, June 23, at 9 a.m.
6. Auxiliary Missionary Committee, on Tuesday June 23, at 6 p.m.

The Conference will meet at 10 o'clock on Wednesday, June 24, 1857.

MATTHEW RICHEY, D. D.
PRESIDENT.

☞ THE PRESIDENT would request of the Chairmen of Districts that at their several meetings they will secure a record of the precise date of birth of each child having claims on Circuit allowances; and also to impress on the minds of the brethren the necessity of having their Missionary Lists prepared *correctly alphabetical*, not only in the initials but succeeding letters.

Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society.

We have already conveyed to our readers the cheering announcement that the anniversary of this Society held at Exeter Hall in the present month was of the most animating description. The columns of the *Watchman* of the 6th inst. are crowded with reports of the addresses delivered. Some of these we shall select and present to the attention of our readers. Meantime we copy the leading article of our cotemporary, and append the speech of the President of the Conference, the Rev. Robert Young, well known and greatly esteemed and beloved by many in this Province.

The *Watchman*, after some expressions of gratification at the general character of the meeting, which we noticed last week, proceeds:—

What one looks for on such an occasion is the men themselves who are, or have been, employed in the Society's Missions. "I want," said the late Czar Nicholas during his visit to London, "to see, not your Household Troops, but the soldiers who have won your battles and kept your empire in India." So a Missionary Meeting looks for the good soldiers of the Cross who are enlarging the boundaries of the Kingdom of Christ. There they were from all climes, both veterans, and those who, still young and vigorous, are pressing forward to many another campaign in the militant Missionary Church. The Rev. W. B. Boyce was there, but not with the intention of speaking, which to many of us was a disappointment, and robs the *Watchman's* Report of an expected column for Australia. The Rev. E. E. Jenkins was on the platform, but sat so far back that any hopes of such a speech on India as thrilled through the Hall last year had to be given up at once. The Rev. Wm. Shaw had not been seen in that place for twenty years before, and was known to be going back to South Africa. There was much to say about these Kaffrarian Missions in whose behalf it may have been necessary that the Rev. J. S. Thomas should become a martyr, in order that British Christians might be admonished to give up their silver and gold for the conversion of the wild tribes for whom he poured forth his blood and life. Mr. Shaw took up this theme, and also the larger one of the influence of our South African Missions in a political as well as a religious point of view, and upon the European Colonists as well as the native races. There was also the Rev. J. Calvert to tell the inspiring story of the conversion of Feejee, and to give us in living accents, what no written page can adequately record, the narrative of the last hours and the last prayers of the young apostle of these islands, John Hunt, who expired in his arms. Our excellent President is not only a veteran Missionary, but may be called a Missionary President; and his manly address was full of Missionary reminiscenses.

Whatever the programme of the Committee may have been for that morning, some happy incidents disarranged it. The Rev. F. Monod, just arrived in London on his way to Edinburg, entered the Hall, and, rightly thinking that his card would as readily as a ticket procure him a seat, sent it in, and was not only admitted to hear the proceedings but pressed into the service of the meeting, to which he made a hearty and loving *impromptu* speech in moving the second Resolution. Dr. McCrie to whom the Society is indebted for his sermon in Great Queen-street on Friday, was in like manner caught up unexpectedly to the platform, from which his heart improvised an address that went straight home to the hearts of all present. These incidents were among the pleasantest of the Anniversary, yet they produced, together with the length of the Report, some inconveniences.—The Rev. S. W. Christophers appeared to us to have been thrown so far into the later period of the day, that he had less than convenient room to develope the outlines of an address full of grand and pregnant thoughts. The Rev. John Walker, of Tralee, must have felt himself in an unfavorable position to do justice to Ireland when he rose to address an assembly which had already sustained the tension of high-wrought feelings for more than five hours; but such opportunity as he had, he employed with discretion and effect. Mr. Robinson Kay had the advantage of an early call from the Chair, but after a few excellent sentences he surrendered it, we think too soon, in favor of his successors. Besides the speeches already mentioned, there were four to which not to refer would be unpardonable. For Mr. Kinnaird's presidency and opening address the Society must feel an obligation, though to him it was evidently a pleasure. The speech of Mr. Thomas Chambers was the most vigorous and in some respects the most effective of the meeting. Before it was concluded we began to pity the speaker who would have to follow, but all these apprehensions were soon dispelled. It was Dr. Etheridge who rose next, and in a voice which probably scarcely filled the vast area of Exeter Hall, but which fixed as by a spell the attention of every one it reached,—with tones which never rose into declamatory vehemence, but sounded on with the solemn cadence of a distant bell,—and in a style of oratory ennobled by imagination, and by imagination softened and subdued into pathos, in which nevertheless feeling itself seemed restrained by something if possible still higher and more spiritual, which made it all the more beautiful and true and touching;—in such a voice and tone and style, did this speaker, in whom the gifts of genius, the stores of a rare scholarship, the meekness of sanctified suffering, and a child-like simplicity are all united, pour forth an address which possibly was inferior to many that have rung through that place, as the natural music of an Æolian harp may be inferior to the swell of the mighty organ in the same Hall, but which can never be forgotten by those who have heard it, and can no more be represented even by our faithful Report to those who heard it not, than the fragrance of a bank of violets can be preserved in a *hortus siccus* of withered leaves. If this speech was the poetry of the meeting, the Rev. James Calvert's, to which we have already alluded, was the type of its Missionary agency, simple, strong, affecting by its details, and hallowing by its spirit.

A few words we must say of the Annual Report. Such reports are often heard with a little impatience, especially if they are long; and this was of the largest. But there was no impatience last Monday, and we venture to say the Report was the best thing by far in the whole meeting. It was read, and read well by the Rev. J. H James, who gave to its close all the effect of the peroration of a masterly speech; and it was pleasing to see the Secretaries devolve this duty upon the son of a Secretary who had passed to his reward. The Report announces that the Wesleyan Missionary Society is out of debt, and that its income is a little in advance of the large sum of last year. In this Report the Committee also officially, and thankfully accept, appropriate, and earnestly recommend to the Connexion, the idea—shall we call it the inspired thought?—of raising the Annual Income to One Hundred and Fifty Thousand Pounds. Mr. Young Mr. Calvert, M. Monod, Dr. Hannah, and in fact almost every speaker, and, last and most decisively of them all, Dr. Bunting, showed that it was an object to be achieved, that it was attainable, and that in reality it could no longer be done without, if Calcutta and Bombay are to receive Missionaries from this Society, if the tribes on whose spears Mr. Thomas perished are to obtain, in requittal for his martyrdom, the Word of Life, if the West African Missions in visiting which Mr. West closed his too brief career are to be maintained in that extending efficiency which his last testimony records, if our present stations are to be kept up and providential openings to be occupied. We have done financially a little more, or perhaps it would be more just to say, events have brought us a little more this year than last, notwithstanding the full pressure of war taxation, which will now be lightened. But we have not quite turned the corner of £120,000, and to add £30,000 to that sum will require faith and zeal, self-sacrifice, and perhaps time. Our most cautious friends, however, now declare that it will be done, and our Missionary speakers are pledged to advocate it wherever they go. The proposal was dropped as a seed in the genial soil of Yorkshire Methodism, it has been transplanted to the Mission House and to Exeter Hall, it is already reproducing itself in the Colonies and in India, and it is taking deep root in the hearts of the Methodist people.

It is now six months since the Wesleyan Mission at Canton was broken up, and the five young Ministers who composed it were driven to seek refuge where best they might find it.—Mr. Cox lingered latest at his dangerous post, and, when that was no longer tenable, proceeded first to Hong Kong, and then, leaving the shores of China altogether, but not its people, sailed to the Straits of Malacca, and soon began distributing books among the emigrant Chinese whom he found settled under British rule at Singapore, visiting their houses, and collecting many of them who understood the Canton dialect at evening meetings for religious instruction and prayer. That spirit of deadly hostility, acting by treachery and massacre, which has made it dangerous for a European vessel to take Chinese passengers on board, which keeps the authorities of Hong Kong in perpetual alarm, and which had almost brought to a tragic close the marvellous story of Sir James Brooke's enterprise in Borneo, has also given tokens of its presence in Singapore. But there it has been kept in subjection by the strong spell of British power, and our devoted Missionary, we may expect, will be able to continue his labours in safety and in peace. Mr. Piercy, with his three other colleagues, found a nearer harbour of refuge at Macao, and there, like their brother at Singapore, they have employed their days of Missionary exile in evangelizing the Chinese, and have surrounded themselves with a congregation larger than they could collect at Canton. These six months of ejection from their appointed scene of labour have not been a blank, nor can we be sure that ultimately they will prove to have been a comparative loss. It is remarkable that three Chinese converts, their first spiritual children, have been borne and baptized during this period of exile. Our Missionaries have not made the interruption of the work at one place a reason for neglecting it at others. They have asked for no vacation; they have entered in at such doors as they found or as they could push open; and they seem to have been too busy to spend time in complaining.

We all, of course, anticipate that, at such time as He who sent these five devoted evangelists to China sees best, they will be restored to their place and work somewhere in that empire. Of that no question at all was made last Saturday, when the annual morning meeting on behalf of the "Mission to China" was held as usual. It becomes us, nevertheless, to remember that for the present we have no Mission in China.—The light has not, indeed, been extinguished, but it has been dispersed, and carried elsewhere. The Mission, though still a Mission to Chinese, is no longer one to China. And before it is once more collected and restored, who can say what may have befallen the great population to whom it was sent? Can we be certain that our Mission, when re-established in China, will be re-established at Canton? That, certainly, is the post of honour, because the post of danger; for at none other of the five ports is the feeling against the teachers of the Gospel so rancorous. The command which our Missionaries have, at so great cost of time and pains, acquired of the dialect of the South might be found greatly lessened in value on their removal to Chusan, or any one of the new ports which will be opened. But the question will not be, which is the post of honor or of convenience, but which is the post of duty; and a change of the political and commercial position of things may require a corresponding movement in Christian undertakings.

Four of the imperial nations of the world are knocking at the gates of China. Two of these are certainly about to employ force to burst them open, and obtain access to the mighty population within: the other two will do the same, if necessary. In point of numbers, this one Asiatic people surpasses the aggregate of the population of its four assailants, in the proportion of three to one. Add together the census of Great Britain, France, America, and Russia, and then multiply this sum by three, and the product will still very probably be much below the true figures of the population of China. It is perfectly appalling to think of the military superiority of the nations of the West being exerted to throw fire and death upon such a mass of human beings. It is not possible without a thrill of horror to conceive of gaps and lanes being made in it, whether for the merchant or the missionary to find entrance, by the rush of rockets and the sweep of cannon balls. From such calamities the Church can only look away, waiting the issue with a beating heart. As far as can be foreseen, the victory of the West appears to be certain. The Rebellion may be a difficulty, for, if the Chinese did not know what Emperor to obey, we should have conquered one of the two in vain. But the coast of China is at the mercy of the maritime Powers, and the command of it will secure those objects which are desired, whoever may rule, and whatever may be the temper of the people. The contest, be it observed, is undertaken on behalf of the interests of commerce,—not of Missions. And what a commerce! The Chinese send us their native tea, which has done much to make intoxication in these lands a disreputable and solitary vice; and we, in return, send them an Indian drug, which is destroying the body, soul and spirit of their population!

These thoughts were vividly present to the minds of the friends who were gathered at the London Tavern, under the presidency of Mr. Charles Buxton, and subsequently of Mr. Farmer, on the morning of Saturday last. The meeting was less like a pleasant festival, we think, than that of last year; but the feeling was still more serious and earnest. The speeches, perhaps, were not, with one or two brilliant exceptions, so popular and eloquent as those we heard in that room last May, when the Mission at Canton had met with no disaster, and a war between England and China was an event of which nomonitory shadow had been cast before; but they have on no previous occasion been surpassed in the power and ability with which momentuous questions were grasped and displayed.—After the Chairman's perspicuous outline of the entire case for China Missions, Major-General Alexander and the Rev. Mr. Welton, late of Fu-chau, applied themselves to the denunciation of the opium traffic, the latter almost overpowered by his recollections of what he had himself witnessed. Mr. George Smith, of Camborne, spoke with powerful effect on the war; and Mr. E. Corderoy commenced one of his happiest speeches with a reference to the contrast between the hostilities which the united nations are carrying on against the Chinese, and the aspirations of the Church, and of that meeting, which breathed only peace and good will to the same people. The Rev. G. C. Harvard made an interesting Missionary address, and Dr. Hannah, towards the close of the meeting, refreshed and delighted it with a few sentences of genial encouragement. The other speeches were necessarily brief, and of these the most interesting to the audience seemed to be the parenthetical remarks of Mr. Farmer, after he had succeeded to the Chair which Mr. C. Buxton was compelled to vacate at an early hour of the morning. Our report of this meeting will, we hope, instruct and interest thousands of readers at home, and it will carry to our Missionaries, in their temporary exile at Macao and Singapore, the consolations of the sympathy and prayers of their friends, and the assurance of that continued support which the noble list of donations and subscriptions for the China Mission guarantees to them.

THE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH.

The Rev. ROBERT YOUNG, (the President of the Conference,) in supporting the resolution, said,—Mr. Chairman, my Christian friends, it is my privilege to have seen the largest portion of the Mission field occupied by the agents of this Society, and to have witnessed the various forms of success which have been realised by this and kindred institutions. As the resolution which I am called upon to support speaks of success, it may not be improper on the present occasion very briefly to refer to some facts bearing on that subject. The great object of the Missionary enterprise is undoubtedly the world's conversion, and it is very encouraging to know that in the prosecution of that enterprise much preparatory work has already been accomplished.—Languages previously without characters have by great labour and industry not only been conquered but have been stereotyped in the words of Holy Scripture. Education has been given to tens of thousands of the adults and children of dark and degraded tribes who are thus prepared to search the Scriptures daily, to repel the Man of Sin, and to occupy an important position in life. Wandering tribes have been collected and have been taught to cultivate the soil, to build suitable habitations for their comfort and accommodation, and to gather around them many temporal enjoyments. Laws have been enacted and governments instituted according to the privileges of Christianity, and tribes the most debased and sanguinary are becoming elevated and happy. Infanticide has been arrested in its fearful progress, and Christian influence, like the ark of bulrushes, has preserved to many an anxious mother her weeping and helpless babe. The fire of the funeral pile no longer casts its lurid glare on the Eastern sky, nor does the cruel grave, as it did formerly, devour the living with the dead. Women, long fettered by dark and cruel superstitions, have been gloriously liberated, and invested with legitimate rights and influence to bless and cheer the circle of domestic life.—Slavery, that foul blot of human nature, has everywhere been removed from the British empire, and the deepiy oppressed negro, so long found in the category of goods and chattels, has had his humanity conceded, and is now recognised as a man and a brother. Idolatry, in some places, has been completely abolished, its oracles have been silenced, and its priests like those of Baal, have been found in circumstances of great embarrassment. Heathen temples have been transformed into Christian sanctuaries, and a very great impression has been produced in almost every part of the un-Christianized world that idolatry is destined to fall before Jehovah and his conquering Son. Now, Sir, were it at all necessary, it might be easily shown that all these results have been produced by Christian Missions. They are not only valuable in themselves, inasmuch as they confer personal benefits; but they are especially valuable in preparing in the desert a highway for our God, that his glory may be revealed and all flesh may see it together. But as our object is to save immortal souls—and I hope that object will never be lost sight of—has that object to any extent been accomplished? I am happy to say that it has. Multitudes formerly sitting in darkness and in the region of death, have been illuminated by the glorious Gospel of the Son of God, and under various degrees of religious influence, are now walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost. We ought not to forget, on an occasion like the present, that a great multitude which no man can number, have passed away into the eternal world, and we trust into the joy of their Lord, as the fruit of Missionary toil. It has been my privilege to have been personally near some of those spirits which have departed this life, and from their dying, quivering lips to have heard expressions of thankfulness to the friends of Christian Missions for having remembered them in their low estate. When in the West Indies, I remember visiting a dying negro.—After some preliminary conversation, he gave me the Christian and delightful account of his conversion to God and of his hope of eternal life. His feelings then overcame him, and for some moments I thought he was no more. But he opened his eyes again, and by a long and desperate effort he looked at me and said in broken accents—"Stay, my masse—stay, my massa—me forget one thing—when you go to England tell them good people they made me most happy—that me most thankful for the Gospel them sent—that me now pray for them." So saying, Sir, he closed his eyes again, and for ever on this perishing world, and his spirit took its flight to the Paradise of God. Other forms of success have also been achieved, which are being realised in the reflex benefits that have come upon the churches at home. Christianity is aggressive, and it will become languid and enfeebled unless it be carried out according to the intentions of its glorious Author; and as the Missionary cause furnishes ample scope for the exercise of its lofty powers, it cannot but improve the piety of those who sympathize with its object and engage heartily in the promotion of its interests.—And what has already been accomplished at home as the result of this Missionary movement? Information respecting the work has been communicated, tending to enlarge the mind, and to confirm the truth of God. By the reception of Christian ideas the standard of Christian benevolence has been elevated, and many a noble sacrifice has been made in support of the interests of Christ's kingdom; love to souls has been extreme, and unquenchable zeal for Christ has been inspired; many a talent concealed in the earth has been brought to light; and the man possessed of but five talents has received five talents more. Christian professors, by this instrumentality, have been greatly excited to action, and it has provoked the lukewarm and indifferent to love and to good works. The Missionary cause has widely multiplied intercessory prayer, and has strengthened the faith of God's elect. It has taken hold of the youthful mind so that the children in our schools know more of missionary objects than even the ancients, and with loud hosannas, they celebrate the triumphs of the Redeemer. It has elevated every one coming within the sphere of its influence, so that the feeble has become as David, and the house of David as the angel of the Lord. It has softened scorn and asperity,—subdued the spirit of bigotry and prejudice,—and given to the Protestant faith a legitimate Catholicity. It has brought together men of every creed to unite in religious worship, so that the Episcopalian and Presbyterian, the Churchman and the Dissenter, the Wesleyan and the Congregationalist, the Calvinist and Armenian, have mingled their incense, and have presented one united offering to Jesus. Then, instead of the thorn has come up the fir tree,—instead of the brier has come up the myrtle tree, which is to the Lord as a name and an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off. In reviewing, then, the success of the enterprise, we have good cause to thank God and to take courage. Whether we look at home or abroad, we ought to be grateful to the God of Missions for having fixed His seal of approbation on our humble efforts. At the present time the position and prospects of this Institution are more encouraging than they ever were at any former period. We have not only got rid of our debt, which is a great relief to the Society, but we see marks of the divine approbation multiplying in every part of the world where our Missionaries are laboring. And, what is not the least encouraging to us, is the circumstance that there is an improvement in our condition at home. The spring has returned amongst us, and we can say that the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land. Under such circumstances we ought to attempt and expect great things, and surely we are warranted in anticipating such manifestations of grace and salvation as we never before realised. We ought to be up and doing, and with greater attention, than we have ever hitherto done to this glorius cause. It is the cause of God, and while we depend upon him for success we have nothing to fear, for he will enable us to overcome every difficulty, and through his gracious influence to carry his conquests to the ends of the earth.

EXTRACTS FROM THE REPORT.

The following General Summary presents a view of the Society's labours and agency:—

Missions under the direction of the Wesleyan Missionary Committee and British Conference, in Europe, India, China, South and West Africa, and the West Indies.	
Central or principal Stations called Circuits, occupied by the Society in various parts of the world	145
Chapels and other Preaching Places, in connexion with the above mentioned Central or Principal Stations, as far as ascertained	912
Ministers and Assistant Missionaries, including three Supernumeraries	[illegible]
Other paid Agents, as Catechists, Interpreters, Day school Teachers, &c.	554
Unpaid Agents, as Sabbath-school Teachers, &c.	3,113
Full and accredited Church Members	64,775
On trial for Church Membership	3,469
Scholars, deducting for those who attend both the Day and Sabbath schools	38,579
Printing Establishments	5
Other Missions of the Society having also relation to Conferences in Ireland, France, Australasia, Canada, and Eastern British America.	
Central or Principal Stations called Circuits	313
Chapels and other Preaching Places	2,712
Ministers and Assistant Missionaries, including Twenty-seven Supernumeraries	437
Other paid Agents, as Catechists, Interpreters, Day-school Teachers, &c.	332
Unpaid Agents, as Sabbath school Teachers, &c.	6,720
Full and accredited Church Members	49,653
On trial for Church Membership	868
Scholars, deducting for those who attend both Day and Sabbath-schools	54,040
Printing Establishments	3

RECAPITULATION.

Central or Principal Stations called Circuits	458
Chapels and other Preaching Places,	3,624
Ministers and Assistant Missionaries, including Thirty Supernumeraries	623
Other paid Agents, as Catechists, Interpreters, Day-School Teachers, &c.	886
Unpaid Agents, as Sabbath-school Teachers, &c.	9,833
Full and accredited Church Members	114,428
On trial for Church Membership	4,337
Scholars, deducting for those who attend both Day and Sabbath-schools	92,619
Printing Establishments	8

In reporting on *Financial affairs*, the Committee began with devout thankfulness to God, by whose blessing the Society has been placed in more favourable circumstances than for many past years.

The entire Receipts, for the year ending December 31st, 1856, have been ascertained to amount to £119,205 8s. 2d., being a little in advance of the Receipts of the previous year. The entire Expenditure has also been £119,205 8s. 2d.; including in the amount the sum of £6,397 10s. 1d., the balance of debt reported at the last Annual Meeting of the Society. The following is an Analysis of the Receipts:—

	£	s.	d.
Mission House and Home Districts	67,525	9	5
Hibernian Missionary Society	4,699	11	5
Juvenile Christmas and New Year's Offerings	6,688	15	2
Total Ordinary Home Income	78,913	16	9
Foreign Auxiliaries	25,720	11	7
Colonial Grants	2,567	6	10
Legacies,	1,635	15	0
Donations on Annuity	1,690	0	0
Contributions for the China Mission	1,255	1	3
Dividends	903	2	10
Interest	459	0	0
Lapsed Annuities	6,129	12	8
Total	119,205	8	2

The details of the Contributions to the Funds of the Society received during the year 1856, from the several Auxiliary and Branch Societies, at home and abroad, and of the Income arising from other and miscellaneous sources, are as follows:—

The Home contributions were £67,525 9s. 5d.

The Juvenile Christmas, and New Year's Offerings for 1856 (received in time,) and Balance of those for 1855, amounted to £6,688 15s. 2d