

THE REV. W. L. WATKINSON.

BY THE REV. W. HARRISON.



THE REV. WILLIAM L. WATKINSON.

In more respects than one the Rev. W. L. Watkinson, President of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference, England, for 1897, is a man of very special qualifications and character. Few men in the modern Methodist world have risen so rapidly to positions of commanding distinction and have won a popularity so extensive, genuine, and influential as the present chief officer of British Methodism.

Mr. Watkinson is the son of typical Yorkshire Methodists, and was born in Hull in the year 1838.

His father, though poor, was a man of more than ordinary intelligence, and had he been privileged with educational advantages, would himself have been a scholar. To him, the subject of this sketch is largely indebted for his intense and life-long love of books. His mother was a woman of strong religious convictions, and often, after the class-meetings which were held in their cottage home, the boy listened to wonderful stories about Richard Watson and the other great men of early Methodism. It is said that his mother also possessed the gift of