

arch in such relief if it were not for the cloud on which it rested? Let not dear brethren be disheartened. Let them to their knees and to their ranks. Such was once an inspiring watchword, and they might well repeat it. Let them pray and put forth the effort, and the promised fulness of blessing was theirs. Faith in that promise was an important duty. Without it vain would be their seemingly observance and propriety of outward conduct, vain their solemn litany or loud hosannas! Let them have faith, and their lives would be lightning, or if their lives were not lightning, it did not matter that their words were thunder. Let them have faith, and by its loving gentleness it would make them still more abundantly active, and useful, and great. Let them have faith, and men should be converted, and the world should fall enfeebled at their feet, and the proud waters should retire abashed before the Lord's Israel, and the fire, forgetful of its fury, should be but a bright slave to light them on their pathway home. Oh, it there could be the prayer, as the sound of many waters, from all the sacramental host, "Lord increase our faith," he could ask for them no higher gift than that, and as it went up to heaven the Father would condescend to give the blessing, and in answer would say, "He stooped towards them. 'Great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt,' and let all the people say, 'Amen.'"

The meeting closed with prayer.

Provincial Wesleyan.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 30, 1871

COMMITTEES OF REVIEW AND LAY DELEGATION IN CONFERENCE.

None of the reported proceedings connected with the Manchester Conference have had more interest for us than those which took place in the Committees of Review, just prior to the commencement of the Conference session. These Committees, as perhaps most of the readers of the *Wesleyan* understand, are mixed bodies of ministers and laymen selected from year to year by Conference, to review at the close of each Methodist year the operations conducted in the different departments of church work during that period. In the performance of the duties devolved upon them, these Committees not only pass under review the transactions of the previous twelve months in the respective departments whose affairs and conditions are investigated, they also place on record such suggestions of change or improvement in the working of the various departments as they may deem it desirable or necessary for the Conference to effect. Those suggestions are invariably treated with great respect by the Conference and are not unfrequently adopted by it. In this way, the representative laymen of the Connection exercise a decided and occasionally an almost controlling influence upon the results of Conference deliberations.

This year the discussions which took place in the Committees of Review were unusually frank and spirited, though some times, if we mistake not, they took a range transcending the strict limits of relevancy.

Observing the part played in British Methodism by the Committees of Review, and noting how real a power for good they exercise on the course of Methodist affairs, some wonder why the laymen who compose so prominent and influential an element in those bodies are not permitted to become members of Conference, and thus exercise the influence by their voice and their vote directly which they bring to bear on Conference legislation indirectly. There are several reasons why this is not done.

In the first place, such a change is demanded by no considerable body of the British Methodist membership. A voice here and there and now and then advocates a change in the direction indicated, but the vast majority of the British Methodist laity do not feel or believe that such a change is a necessity of their times. Intelligent British Methodists clearly perceive that in one way or another the English Methodist laity now wield a most powerful influence in the administration of British Methodist affairs of every kind. Being an extremely practical people, the British Methodists do not attach much importance to mere constitutional theories, however symmetrical or scientifically developed they may appear to be; and we fancy they scarcely ever seek ecclesiastical changes merely for the sake of illustrating or fulfilling the requirements of a theory, however specious it may happen to prove. A practical grievance has more weight with them than a volume of eloquent abstract theorizing. But English Methodism seems to know no such grievance or defect in the working of its church system as would justify the getting up of a vigorous agitation to secure lay representation in its chief court.

Then, in the second place, there are certain legal difficulties in the way of introducing lay representatives into the British Conference,—difficulties not, as we believe, by any means insuperable, but yet sufficiently grave to forbid any serious attempt being taken by sensible men to secure such introduction, until the necessity for it shall be generally felt to be imperative. Technically speaking, the British Conference is properly composed of one hundred ministers, the legally appointed successors of the hundred men formed into a Conference by Mr. Wesley. Without the assent of the majority of that hundred no enactment of the more general Conference can become Methodistic law, and in that hundred is to a certain extent vested the vast property of the church in trust that it may never be diverted from its destined uses. It is deemed a difficult task to find a method by which representative laymen may be admitted directly to a share of the power vested in the legal hundred. But if ever the necessity arises for so sharing that power, the prudent method of doing it will not long remain awaiting. Meanwhile, it is our firm belief that even after the introduction of lay representatives into the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States, British Methodism as it is,

will be found to offer a really larger margin for the efficient play of the lay element than American Methodism, unless, indeed, other important changes besides that involved in the adoption of lay representation shall be speedily effected by our great sister communion of the neighboring republic.

With us, lay representation, in the sense used above, is not a practical question, and would not be probably for a long time to come, were we to remain as we are, unconnected with the Canadian Conference. And even should we form a union with that Conference, as is likely, the lay representation question may remain in abeyance for a number of years. It will doubtless come into prominence some day; but meanwhile we might account ourselves favored if our Preparatory Committees were relatively as well attended by our most influential laymen as are the British Methodist Committees of Review. Such an attendance would infuse new life and energy into some important departments of our church work.

J. R. N.

THE PASTORAL ADDRESS.

Of the Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Eastern British America, to the Members of the Church under its care.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—The return of the season for our assembling in Conference affords us the opportunity for addressing to you our Christian and pastoral salutations. We do it not in cold conformity to custom, nor in spiritless response to the call of duty, but in obedience to the dictates of love and as filled with solicitude for your welfare, gladly recognizing our obligations to take heed unto ourselves and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made us overseers, to feed the Church of God which He hath purchased with His own blood.

Our session has been greatly distinguished by the presence of the spirit of love. In the discussion of all matters, even those allowing greatest room for differences of thought and action, we have proved how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. The public services have been seasons of grace and holy joy. The preached word has been in demonstration of the Spirit and power. The interest of our several Anniversary Meetings has been well sustained, and from this we augur increased prosperity in the various departments of our work which they represent.

The pleasure and profit of our several services have been greatly increased by the presence of the Rev. Jesse T. Feck, D. D., and the Rev. George D. Currow, D. D., representatives of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States, and the Rev. Samuel D. Rice, D. D., representative of the Canada Conference. These revered ministers, coming to us from powerful and progressive branches of the Church and being men of rare gifts, withal have aided us by their sagacious counsel, and have greatly encouraged us by their word of hearty cheer.

Dr. Rice visited us not only to express the fraternal feelings of our sister connection, but also to invite us to consider the practicability of a union, into one grand and powerful Church of the different Methodist bodies of British America. We have cordially received him and his mes- sages, and have appointed a Committee to confer with a similar Committee from the Canada Conference on the subject of such union.

Now that the results of the year's prayer and toil are tabulated, so far as it is possible to express these by figures, we find, on careful review, that we have much occasion to remember with gratitude the way in which the Lord our God has led us. Many of our Circuits have been the scenes of special manifestation of saving power. From the lips of many have we heard the cry of repentance, and many are the souls we have been privileged to guide to the cross of Christ.

We regret that we could not record a greater actual gain, but the figures expressing the net increase by no means represent the good accomplished. For in addition to the removal of many by death, the tide of emigration for several years past setting westward has carried many from us. They go, we trust, to swell the membership of the churches in other lands. But we are not satisfied with these results. When we consider the number of our instrumentalities, the extent of our opportunities, and above all the rich investiture of spiritual power offered to us by our enraptured Lord we are greatly humbled. He who walketh in the midst of the golden candlesticks saith to us, "I know thy works." We invite you dear brethren, to join with us in renewed dedication to Christ and his work that greater faithfulness may characterize us in doing our part to win the world for God.

We commend again to your sympathies our connexional interests. We hope and believe that the importance of our several funds to our efficiency and prosperity as a church will be yet more fully appreciated. We thankfully recognize a considerable increase in the Home Mission Fund. But we remind you that year by year this Fund is made a greater necessity to us, and unless it be largely augmented we cannot hope to extend our work, nor even to maintain the efficiency that which we have already undertaken. Meanwhile from every side come to us the appeals of longing souls who look for the hastening "feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation."

We may expect under proper management and with God's blessing there shall come forth for the labours of the Ministry, workers that need not be ashamed, who shall rightly divide the word of truth. Let us then commend these Institutions to your deepest interest, and for both those who teach and those who learn let your prayers be daily offered at the throne of grace.

In this connection we bring before you notice again the Educational Society of the Conference, one of whose chief objects is the aiding of young men, who, in response to the call of the spirit, desire to be equipped for the work of the ministry, but have not the means to obtain it. The just anticipations with which this Society was organized a year ago have not been fully realized, but we abide in the conviction that its specific objects must commend it to all of our people who will give them the thought they deserve.

We have great satisfaction in saying that under the faithful and judicious management of the Rev. Dr. Pickard, the affairs of the Book Room and Provincial Wesleyan Office continue to improve. These Institutions of our church we deem to be of great importance. We know that they must continue to exert an influence ben- efitial to our connexion, and our country, and we hope to see them at an early day freed from pecuniary embarrassment, and placed on a strong financial basis. Next to the faithful preaching of the Gospel by the living lips no instrumentally can compare with a cheap and sound religious literature, and in this respect we are greatly pleased. With a sincere regard for your welfare, we again commend to your notice our Connexional organ, and the large and varied assortment of books always kept at our Book Room, in Halifax.

Death has been at work in our ranks during the year. Three of our members have fallen in the fulness of their days, in the midst of bright promises and hopes. We dare not question the wisdom of God herein, and we know that they do not. Upon God's dealings with us in this matter the cloud rests which we cannot penetrate, but there is no cloud nor mystery to them. They left indubitable evidence of their triumph over death; and now they are forever with the Lord. We are comforted by their early removal, and we resolve anew to work while it is day; to night cometh when no man can work.

Five of our Brethren have been compelled to retire, for the present, from the active work of our ministry. Some of these we regret to say are young men whom severe toil has laid aside. Let us together pray that they may soon be restored to the work of their high vocation.

Eighteen young men have been received as candidates for our ministry, ten of whom, however, have come to us from beyond the Atlantic. Even with this accession to our numbers, twenty-four Circuits are left without the necessary supply. We lay this matter upon the hearts of our people, and they would earnestly desire to be faithful in the specific duty enjoined by the Great Head of the church. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest. We extend our Christian young men, upon whom God has conferred the necessary gifts, and whom, by His Spirit, He is calling to the work of proclaiming the Gospel, that they be not wanting in number. Encourage, discharge the duties of his office, with becoming modesty and courtesy to the Brethren.

Christian harmony prevailed during both the forenoon and afternoon sessions. It was good to be there. Attention to financial matters in the right spirit, does not exclude the presence of the Master from our midst. But the business was not all of a financial character. Reading the word of God, singing, prayer, and spiritual conversation re- sulted in religious experience, and the state of the cause of God, formed a considerable portion of the exercises of the meeting. Our only regret was the absence of all the circuit stewards, except one, Bro. Bent of Berwick.

In carrying out the desires of the Conference concerning our Educational Society, it was resolved, "That every Preacher, requested to have at least one meeting in the entire bounds of his circuit, be present before the people the claims of this Society."

On the evening of the day of our meeting, a Home Missionary Meeting took place. The attendance was as large as we generally obtain at this season of the year. The chair was occupied by Bro. England, whose lucid remarks, after the reading of the resolutions of Conference, bearing on the subject by Bro. Spurgeon, presented the voluntary neglect of this institution of our church is a sure sign of spiritual decay. Not only as a test of church membership, but as a source of church life and power, we prize this method of communion, which God, in His Providence, has so graciously adapted to our times, and which, never more than to-day, we are bound to defend and maintain. Our week night services are prized by the more spiritually minded of our people, and a Christian influence has exerted a powerful and beneficial influence on the history of Methodism, and which, never more than to-day, we are bound to defend and maintain. Our week night services are prized by the more spiritually minded of our people, and a Christian influence has exerted a powerful and beneficial influence on the history of Methodism, and which, never more than to-day, we are bound to defend and maintain.

tion now demanding so greatly the attention of Christians; the various departments of philanthropic effort, and the work of God in your own immediate neighborhood. In connection with your own local church, afford all needed opportunity, yes, make urgent appeals for the more faithful exercise of personal labor, benevolence and prayer.

And now brethren we call you to prove all the meaning of the Christian life. Let no influence prevent your realization of the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ. "The world, passeth away and the lust thereof; but he that doth the will of God abideth forever." Know once for all that "ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price." Do not forget that your wealth is held in trust for God, and his work. You have dedicated this also in your repentance vows; and will a man rob God? The Christian church elsewhere is rising to meet the responsibilities which weath- ering, and the lust thereof; but he that doth the will of God abideth forever. Know once for all that "ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price." Do not forget that your wealth is held in trust for God, and his work. You have dedicated this also in your repentance vows; and will a man rob God? 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