

Religious and Missionary Intelligence.

THE GENERAL CONFERENCE.

We cannot attempt to do more in the few pages at our command than give some general impressions of the ecclesiastical parliament of our Church. These quadrennial Conferences are very notable occasions. It is no small tribute to their affection for the Church of their choice that many men of mark, leading statesmen, busy merchants, and professional men, ministers in charge of important stations and circuits, professors of our colleges and others, devote themselves week after week with such assiduity to their duties as representatives of the Methodist Church. If anyone thinks it is a mere holiday to attend the General Conference he would be greatly undeceived by a practical experience of its duties. A continual succession of committees or Conference sessions fill up every day from nine o'clock till often late at night. How our ever-youthful General Superintendent, the Rev. Dr. Carman, keeps up with the exhaustive strain of his public duties is a marvel. One of the most interesting features of the Conference was his magnificent inaugural address.

This statesmanlike document swept over a wide range of topics, ecclesiastical and civil, the greatest emphasis, however, being made upon the great moral crusade, the Prohibition campaign, which is now being waged in this land. Dr. Carman's stern arraignment and tremendous indictment of the liquor traffic as the enemy of all righteousness, the foe of God and man, and his summons to the Church to fight it to the death, rang like a trumpet call. The Conference ordered 100,000 copies of this appeal to be printed as a campaign document, and circulated throughout the length and breadth of the Dominion.

THE MILLION DOLLAR FUND.

The first field day of the Conference was the debate on the Million Dollar Fund. This was suggested by the proposition of George Perks, Esq., M.P., of the British Conference, to raise a million guineas as a thank-offering for the past, and for aggressive work in the future. It was brought forward in Canada by the Rev. Dr. Potts, our energetic Secretary

of Education, whose proposition was strongly indorsed by the Annual Conferences. His resolution recognized the great and manifold blessings, temporal and spiritual, national and social, which we have so abundantly shared as a Church, blessings which call for thanksgiving and practical acknowledgment. He supported this in a stirring address. It was not, he said, a time for mere rhetoric gush or the fostering of denominational pride. It was an occasion for bringing in the tithes into God's storehouse and making the offering a benediction to the Church. The movement should be characterized, too, he said, by strict business principles, so that it would appeal to the strong, hard-headed business men of the Connexion. The completion of the undertaking would send them over into the twentieth century on a tidal wave of success which should make the Church an influence for righteousness in the world that could not now be fully estimated. He urged that it should be a united work, not merely the work of the millionaire Methodists and those who are millionaires in mind though not in purse; it should enlist the sympathies and co-operation of every individual in the entire Church.

The motion was seconded in a vigorous speech by a representative layman of New Brunswick, Dr. Inch, the Superintendent of Education of that province. The Hon. J. J. Rogerson, of Newfoundland, another large-hearted layman, promised the enthusiastic support of the Methodists of Britain's oldest colony. Mr. Joseph Gibson, an Ontario lay delegate, aroused great enthusiasm by the statement that the victory of the Prohibition party at the approaching Prohibition Plebiscite would effect such economies as would many times exceed the amount of the proposed fund.

The Rev. Dr. Courtice, Editor of the *Guardian*, considered that one of the chief benefits of the movement would be the cultivation of a wider, stronger, deeper connexional spirit throughout the Church. If the people were fused to a white heat by some such large and aggressive onward movement they would be welded together as never before.