

ADDRESS
TO THE
MEMBERS OF THE METHODIST NEW CONNEXION CHURCH
IN CANADA.

DEARLY BELOVED IN GOSPEL BONDS,—

Through the tender mercies of God, we, the representatives of our Churches, are permitted to meet in Conference, and address to you our annual epistle and fraternal greeting. May the rich blessings of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost be yours, is our earnest prayer.

At the close of our Ecclesiastical year, and just entering upon another, it is proper we should review the past as well as contemplate the future—learning from the past, laying our plans and forming our purposes with reference to the time to come.

The year just closed furnishes cause for gratitude to God for his abundant mercy to us as a people. War, with all its horrors, has been raging on our very borders, and again and again has threatened to enter our midst; but the voice of God has been heard above its surging billows, saying, "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." For while we admire the prompt and judicious course taken by our rulers in the matter, we would recognize above all the hand of God in our preservation, and call upon you to join us in giving him the glory. It is cause of gratitude also that that terrible war has ceased; the sword is again sheathed, and out of the chaos the nation has emerged with that foul blot—slavery—wiped from her escutcheon, and some three millions of our race merge into liberty, their shackles being broken off, and they made free. May we all learn that God is always on the side of the oppressed, and against the oppressor—never forgetting the golden rule, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets."

During the past year our country has been called to pass through severe financial difficulties, which we have doubtless all felt. Perhaps we were not as thankful to God as we ought for prosperity; perhaps we did not honor him with our substance and first-fruits in the time of prosperity, as we should have done, and God is now chastening us. Let us be thankful that it is no worse; for, though we may not all have enjoyed the luxuries of this life, we have its necessities; yea, more than our Master, who had not where to lay His head. Let us learn in whatsoever state we are therewith to be content; for if we have conflicts, toil, grief, we have also triumphs, rest, joy; and if faithful the former of these shall soon end, and we shall participate in the latter forever.

We are pleased to be able to report to you that, notwith-