

THE WESLEYAN DAILY RECORDER.

CONFERENCE OF 1869.

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[Vol. I.]

Poetry.

"WHY STAND YE HERE ALL THE DAY IDLE?"

BY THE REV. WM. MORLEY PUNSHON, M.A.

Two fields for toil—the outer and the inner,
Both overgrown with weeds;
Who to the labor hasten, to be winners
Of all the laborer's meeds?

To bathe in radiant mornings, daily spreading
Over the heavens anew;
To sit 'neath trees of life, forever shedding
Their bounteous honey dew.

To rouse a spirit, formed from God, from slumber,
And robe it for the light;
The heirs of Heaven from clay to disencumber,
Which clogs their upward flight.

To lift a world, 'neath sin and sorrow lying,
And 'pour in oil and wine;
To warble, in the dull ears of the dying,
Refrains of hymns divine.

Work for a lifetime, in each path up-springing,
In low or lofty spheres!
Hark to the Master's summons, always ringing
In quick and heedless ears!

Cool brain, strong sinew, heart with love o'erflowing,
Shall all in sloth escape?
Like vine, which fruitless through its wanton growing,
Ne'er purples into grape!

The daylight wanes and dies—"Why stand ye idle?"
Life hasteth toits bourne!
The bridegroom tarries—will ye greet the bride,
Or in the drudgery mourn?

Lo! in the fields the yellow harvest drooping,
As lilies in the rain;
Where are the reapers, that they come not,
To gather in the grain?

Some, in the festive hall disporting gaily;
On slothful pillow, some;
Some, in delays most blameful, and yet daily
Exclaiming, "Lo, I come."

And some, infatuate, 'mid the alien's scoffing,
Quarrel about their toil;
As wreckers, when ships founder in the offing,
Grow murderous over spoil.

Meanwhile the harvest waiteth for the reaping,
God's patience hath not tired;
Ye cannot say—extenuate of your sleeping—
"We wait, for none hath hired."

Through the hushed noon-tide hour the Master calleth;
Ye cannot choose but hear;
Still sounding when the lengthening shadow falleth,
"Why stand ye idle here?"

Up! for a while the pitying glory lingers!
Work while it yet is day!
Hear rest the Sabbath rest—where angel singers
Make melody for aye.

RISE AND PROGRESS OF METHODISM IN TORONTO.

BY REV. JOHN CARROLL.

SECOND ARTICLE.

In the Conference year 1820-21, York stood connected with what was called in the Minutes, "THE LOWER CANADA DISTRICT," of which it was the most Western circuit. The appointment, as we have seen, was the Rev. Fitch Reed. He had been transferred from the New York Conference, which sat that year in the city from which it took its name (which session he attended), to the Genesee Conference, which met at Lundy's Lane, July 20th, 1820. Soon after this Conference session, Mr. Reed, after accomplishing a horse-back journey of over 500 miles, arrived at his destination. He reports the population of York at that time at about 1,500, and the membership in Society at about 40. He was domiciled during his first year in the house and family of Mr. Wm. P. Patrick. He returned 43 members at the close of the year.

"YORK, AND MISSION TO THE NEW SETTLEMENT," was the designation of this charge for the year 1821-22, with Fitch Reed and Kenneth McK. Smith, "Missionaries." The new settlements were those of Toronto, Trafalgar, Nelson, Chincouaousee, Erin, and other places adjacent. Mr. Reed, who made his home at the Doels', remained mostly in the town, while Mr. Smith preferred to work up the "bush," which he did on foot, with pocket compass and hatchet in hand, to find and mark his way, "blazing" paths through the trackless forest, and felling trees to bridge the streams he had to cross. In October, they held their first quarterly meeting, around a burning log-pile, on the flats of the Credit, where Meadowvale now presents its beauties to the eye of the passing traveller. Mr. Reed's congregations, especially the evening ones, in the little wooden church in town, were crowded. He was much esteemed, and he returned a net increase of 4 members in the town, and 70 in the mission.

From the Conference of 1823 to that of 1826, the town stood connected with the Yonge Street Circuit, which usually had two preachers. They came fortnightly to the town meeting-house. A similar visit from each of the Ancaster ministers, gave the place preaching every Sunday. During those years it enjoyed the ministrations of such men as Shepherdson and Poole, Smith and Harmon, Williams and Atwood, Richards and Messmore, Egerton and William Ryerson. The membership for "York and Yonge Street," at the close of the Conference year 1826-27, stood at 462.

At the Conference of 1827, York was made a station, and committed to the pastoral care of the Rev. William Ryerson, then in the zenith of his popularity and usefulness. Both Society and Congregation were greatly increased under his ministrations. The chapel was enlarged by

an addition of twenty or thirty feet. The division of the augmenting classes and the appointment of new leaders were events of quarterly occurrence. The appointment of young men as assistant leaders to all the classes, developed a great deal of youthful talent. Some of these became travelling preachers, such as Mr. Patrick, Jas. Currie, and John Carroll. The membership stood at the end of the year at 176, divided into 8 classes.

York, during the Conference years 1828-29 and 1829-30, enjoyed the genial and evangelical ministry of the gentlemanly and pious Franklin Metcalf, who was universally beloved, and the death of whose precious wife during his sojourn, elicited deep and general sympathy for his loss. For plainness and piety, the York Methodists were now at their best.

During the last year of Mr. M.'s time, the *Guardian* came into existence, with Egerton Ryerson for its editor.

The next year (1829-30), the town had an unmarried preacher in the person of the Rev. Wm. Smith, well-bred, well-educated, fluent, pastor-like, and laborious, who was greatly esteemed. At the close of this year, the Conference sat for the first time in what is now the city of Toronto. A gracious revival commenced during that Conference, which went on through the ensuing year, under the pastorate of the Rev. John Ryerson, and issued in augmenting the membership to the goodly number of 264.

THE REV. W. M. PUNSHON IN CANADA.—LETTER XI.

FROM THE METHODIST RECORDER, ENG.

Dear Sir,—The snow is clearing away rapidly, and some of the cities of Eastern Canada are suffering from those periodical floods which ensue on its departure. The St. Lawrence rose five feet in twenty-four hours, between Saturday and Sunday last at Montreal, and the lower part of the city is largely under water, that is, so far as the comfort of the inhabitants is concerned. Within the last three days, we in Toronto have had two heavy thunder-storms. The weatherwise say that fine weather will follow them—that as the approach of a king is announced by the roar of artillery, so these are the boisterous heralds of the coming of the fair young spring. The season, however, is nearly a month later than last year, and business of all kinds is dull, awaiting the spring trade. Navigation is opening on the lakes, bays, and rivers, and the steamers will soon begin to ply to the various ports of interest or commerce. I should say, from a twelve month's experience of the variations of Canadian climate, that there is nothing about it of which any intending emigrant needs to be afraid. With ordinary care and temperate habits, and recognition of the laws of health in the avoidance of excess of every kind, life may be prolonged and enjoyed to hale and hearty old age.

I have had one or two opportunities of seeing what Canada used to be, in my travel to several points which are at the extremity of the railway system, or which lie considerably beyond it. The desolate appearance of these uncolonized regions, and the still more desolate appearance of the regions in which the forest has been cut down, but where the blackened stumps are in the ground, or the swamps extended for miles, can hardly be imagined. One scene which I recently passed in the course of a forty mile sleigh ride through alternate swamp, clearing, and forest, is vividly before me. The road was narrow, and close on either side of the snow lay in drifts from four to six feet deep. Close on the right stretched out the vast waters of an inlet to one of the great lakes. On the left, at the distance of some three hundred yards, a mountain rose, wooded with dark pines to its summit, and beneath it forest trees in every direction, save where a small space of about half-an-acre presented the usual array of stumps, grim and ghostly, some slowly rotting in the ground, some jagged at the termination in a weird resemblance to a human hand, as if some imprisoned fiend appealed mutely heavenward, pointing thither with a spectral finger. Just in this clearing, about ten yards from the road, stood a miserable log-house, a little remove from a shanty, with no fertile land about it, a draw-well, and a young grindstone, the only signs of civilization—miles from any other human habitation, with no apparent means of subsistence for the tenant, with no prospect but the waste of waters, and no music save the cry of the lynx, or the screech of the night-owl, or the sighing of the melancholy wind. As I passed it, I was mentally wondering what must be the idiosyncrasy of a man who could live contentedly in a spot so barren and dismal, when my meditations were interrupted by the remark of a good Methodist brother who was driving me, "The man who lives in that place is about the most worldly-minded man in these parts." The mental revulsion was ludicrous in the extreme, and it set me to moralising how after all we carry our own world within ourselves, and how independent of all circumstances piety can walk with God in the crowded city thoroughfare, and rebellion be rebuffed still amid the solitudes of the dreariest Sahara, on which the first course of barrenness hath lighted down.

Out in the Georgian Bay, there is a group of islands called the Christian Islands, on which we have a mission station, with upwards of a hundred and fifty Indian church members. They have built a church at a cost of fifteen hundred dollars, and have raised the money among themselves. Into this church they go

in a style of elegance of which in England you have no idea; and to watch the moonlight on the broad St. Lawrence, and then retire to rest as comfortably as at home, and wake in the morning under the shadow of the Citadel of Quebec, is a very pleasant experience of travel. Quebec is a wonderful and fascinating city. In the first place, it is almost alone among its peers in having a history. You can walk round it with something of the romantic interest which is so wofully wanting in the new towns by which it has been commercially injured. Here are the Heights of Abraham, where Wolfe fell dying in the moment of victory. Close by the English Cathedral is the spot which tradition preserves as the place where Champlain pitched his tent, and planned his future capital. There is the scarp of rock from which Montgomery and his soldiers were swept to their heroic fall. Yonder is the proud Citadel which has stood full many a siege. Thus hallowed by historic memories, where in the world can be found greater picturesqueness of scenery? Looking from the citadel, 350 feet above the river, with the St. Lawrence and its forest of masts at your feet; the St. Charles rolling its pleasant waters on the left, the green slopes of the Isle of Orleans, the long and undulating country beyond, the rich woodlands in the suburbs; the little French villages, each with its tin spire flashing in the sun's rays, and the Falls of Montmorency, streaking the mountain sides in the distance with a silver thread—the eye has rarely gazed on a vision of more exceeding beauty. The city has suffered greatly by the removal of the Government and the comparative failure of the ship-building trade by the demand for iron vessels instead of the old "hearts of oak," and worse than this, the people seem to have lost their energy and their hope. There can be no surer prophecy of a city's decay. I found it the same in church matters, too. We have a fine church, and an intelligent and respectable congregation, but they groan under a heavy debt, and seem to doubt both their own and their city's prosperity. (This same feeling of hopelessness is a hindrance, I am sure, both to commercial revival, and to the more sacred revival of the work of God.

W. MORLEY PUNSHON.

DONATION TO THE REV. J. GEMLEY.

FROM BRANTFORD EXPOSITOR.

The Rev. J. Gemley, of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Brantford, was the recipient of a very handsome donation, amounting to over \$150. A few friends called at his residence on Wednesday evening last, and on behalf of the members of his church and congregation presented him with a purse containing the money, at the same time expressing their high appreciation of his labors in this vicinity, and the great respect in which he was entertained as a minister of the gospel and as a man, by the members of his own church and congregation, and by the Christian community generally. Mr. Gemley replied in a feeling and appropriate manner. We congratulate the Rev. gentleman upon this very marked expression of the good feeling and kindly regards of his flock, and we think it must be exceedingly gratifying to himself, now that his labors in this section are to close. During his sojourn in Brantford, the church over which he has presided with so much ability and watchfulness, has increased very largely in membership. It is likely that Mr. Gemley will leave his charge here during the next month, but wherever in the providence of God his lot may be cast, he may rest assured that he carries with him the sincere regard of the people of Brantford.

SCOTCH SERMONS.—He led up to his theme in the most masterly manner. It was feebly like some Scotch sermons, which one dimly remembers. You know the preacher's theme from his text, and you hear him go away into subjects apparently irrelevant, possibly three vague themes, which seem to have no relation to his text. You sit puzzled, and yet pleased, while he spins his first crude mass of yarn off into a single thread and leaves it. Then he spins you another heap of yarn into thread; and leaving that, another; and then, taking his three threads, he spins them into a cord, which brings you back to his original proposition, and his text. Then you take out your watch and find that you have been sitting, with your intellect at its highest power, for one hour or so, and have thought it twenty minutes. A good Scotch sermon is not a thing to be despised. The Scotch are not considered to be devoid of brains, and they like them.

WESLEYAN CHURCH.—On Sunday evening last a large congregation assembled in the Wesleyan Church, Wellington street, to witness the baptism of three adults by the Rev. Mr. Gemley, pastor of the church. This makes eight adults baptized in this church recently. We learn that our Methodist friends contemplate the enlargement of their present already spacious edifice. Either this or a second church has become a necessity. Some think the latter preferable. We congratulate them on the necessity for increased church accommodation.—*Brantford Courier.*

All male children born in France this year on Aug. 15, the birthday of Napoleon I., whose parents will consent to their bearing the name of Napoleon, are to be taken under the special protection of the government.

The *Manzumeh* of Constantinople announces that the new and splendid palace of the sultan at Dolmabahche is to be vacated for the purpose of preparing it for the reception of Francis Joseph, the Emperor of Austria, who is soon to pay a visit to the Sultan. It is also rumored that Napoleon III. is to follow him on after. It seems that the Sick man is getting convalescent.

The Monarchs are to meet this year. King William and the Emperor Napoleon will see each other at a German watering place, and the Czar will call upon the King of Prussia in June.

AUSTRALIAN GOLD.—The largest nugget ever yet found in Australia was discovered in February, near Moliagul, in Victoria. It contained not less than 2,268 ounces of pure gold when cleaned; it was found within two inches of the surface by two Cornish miners, and it was named the "Welcome Stranger." Its value is computed at £9,534. The next largest nugget on record was the "Welcome," exhausted from a depth of 180 feet, in June, 1858, and valued at £8,376.

THE CONFERENCE.

On Wednesday, of this week, the WESLEYAN CONFERENCE again assembles in this city. Welcomed, as its members will be, once more to the hospitalities of Toronto Methodism, which they have always gratefully appreciated, they will assemble with all those mingled feelings that are peculiar to the annual meetings of Methodist itinerants. The social interest at their temporary homes; the renewed intercourse with ministerial brethren; the formation of new ministerial acquaintanceships, so easily formed between Methodist preachers; the inquiries respecting their friends on former fields of labour, and news respecting them, sometimes sad, sometimes pleasing, but always interesting; the respite from exhausting, though pleasant, circuit labour; the exciting uncertainty, not always unpleasant, nor always pleasant, respecting the final arrangements of a certain Committee—all these, and a great many other things, make the meeting of Conference a matter of peculiar personal interest to the ministers.

We have called the Conference a respite from labour. It is hardly that; certainly the time is pretty well filled up. Sitting for ten days—it ought to be fourteen—in Conference Sessions, with the attention constantly engaged, upon various arguments, or details of business; spending, as many of the members do, every evening till late at night, on committees; many attending other committees in the mornings at five or six o'clock; religious services every evening, and five services on Sunday,—the Conference can hardly be called a time of idleness. Then, there are some who make work, wherever they are, and do good as they have opportunity.

Methodist Conferences are distinguished, pre-eminently, for the "despatch of business." They do in a number of days, what would occupy some other assemblies as many weeks. Their functions are judicial, administrative, and legislative. They try character, deciding on both law and fact; they examine candidates, guarding the door most diligently; they station ministers, succeeding wonderfully on the whole; they hear and consider many reports, adopting or rejecting their suggestions; they receive returns from hundreds of circuits, and consider the aggregates of the spiritual and financial statistics; they enquire into the state and necessities of the various institutions and funds of the Church; they hear and consider addresses, which are by no means of little importance; they elect brethren to posts of connexional responsibility, and elections are always interesting—especially to those whose names and merits are so freely discussed and disposed of; and besides all these classes of items, and many more, they sometimes have debates on some new proposition, or proposed regulation, or even on some constitutional principle. Thank God, we are well agreed on all doctrines of practical importance; and we are agreed to leave non-practical speculation to mystery-mongers and Millerites; and it is as well to leave unreal issues, and mere verbal formulas, on practical questions, to the *ex cathedra* deliverances of the Plymouth Brethren. Except on new questions, which offered essential or permanent interests, Methodist Conferences have little of what is called debate. They have not time for that. The member who gets up on every item of business, to distinguish himself by useless wordiness, is soon taught that he is considered a bore! Except on questions that have created the interest of an important pending issue, the Conference discussions are mere "Conversations." A remark or two, from one and another, as pertinent and conclusive as possible, is what is desirable. Side issues, elaborate trivialisms, stump oratory, and the *argumentum ad hominem*, are all perfectly intolerable. A brother once said to us, what we believe is true: "When the Conference is allowed to get at all the facts, and all the issues, of any case or question, its vote is hardly ever wrong." This is true of all honest deliberative bodies.

The annual Conferences of Methodism, like many other Methodist usages, have been suggested and stimulating to a very large extent. Since Methodist activity and progress, began to interest thoughtful people, all sorts of associations and churches, Roman Catholic as well as Protestant, have felt it indispensable to have their anniversaries, conventions, conferences; and old synods have greatly enlarged their business, giving them an abundantly greater practical and business-like character. Activity is the condition of progress, whatever the cause; and we rejoice in the activity of all good causes, for the activity of a good cause will always secure success, in the end, however frantic the bad opposition may become.