

THE WESLEYAN

FRIDAY, JUNE 20, 1884.

CONFERENCE WORK.

The work of an Annual Conference is in part one of review, and in part also one of arrangement. More definite statistics of membership are published by us than by others. It is well known that by the adoption of a system of computation in use in some quarters, a more imposing array of figures of membership might be obtained, but the more thorough method is by us deemed the best. Doubtless sometimes been expressed as to the correctness of our returns as tested by attendance at the class-meeting, but whatever reason there may be for such doubt, it cannot be denied that large numbers are included in the returns of other churches who would hold no place in the lists of our own.

No more important duty rests upon an Annual Conference than that of accepting young men for the ministry. To "lay hands suddenly upon no man," is however a piece of counsel presudably applicable to Methodism on account of her economy. In some churches the weak and inefficient naturally fall out of line, no congregation being inclined to seek their services, while the economical system obliges our authorities to find a place for each man so long as he may be accepted as a laborer. To dispose of a man who might go from circuit to circuit with little benefit to any, has occasionally demanded treatment of the highest order. The wiser course is to carefully inspect the candidate before he passes the gateway. Even there one man's responsibility at which he might well shudder. Dr. Milne only reached China to begin his grand work there, because he submitted to be sent out as a missionary's servant by that board to whom he had applied to be sent as a missionary; and Livingstone, the noble pioneer of present missions and of missions yet to be, was kept back for a time by men who doubted his fitness. On the other hand, that youth at the gateway may as a minister be a dead weight upon Church progress, while elsewhere he might serve with great benefit. "Field," said Spurgeon one day to a young Scotchman who had been eighteen months at his Training College, "I think you had better go back to your crackers; you can do more for God in that way than in the ministry." The young man looked startled, admitted that it might be so, and finally returned to his business. In that business he has been rarely prosperous, and has been able and ready to give most important financial aid to work for which it is probable he could have done little as a minister.

Very important, also, is the work of the Stationing Committee. There are men, women and children to-day—beginners in the Christian life—who thank God that some human agent was twelve months since sent near their residence to be a voice to their inmost souls. There are fields to which certain men are better adapted than are some others, equally good; and there are circuits to which, in view of special circumstances, even the appointment of an excellent man would be but an attempt to adjust an unequal tenon and mortise. To reach in every case the proper conclusion, in view of circuit preferences and personal prepossessions and prejudices, is no easy task.

The Annual Conference has no direct control over the foreign mission work of the Church, but it has much to do with the home work whose contributions must sustain the foreign work, and from which sons and daughters must be the messengers of the Churches. On this subject an English contemporary forcibly says:

The vine of a pure Gospel Church, of a true and living Christianity, which he well pruned, well fenced, well watered, well cultivated; we must gather the stones out of the vineyard that it may take deep root and fill the land, until the hills of England are covered with the shadow of it; and its boughs are like the goodly cedars; or we shall have but little of the wine of the Gospel, of the fruit of heaven to give to others, but few offshoots to be planted beneath other skies. We must have good husbandry at home, good seed and good sowing and plenty of it, multiplied conversions, glorious harvests, beautiful harvests at home, well-stocked granaries at home, or we shall have but little of the corn

heaven, of the bread of life, to give to a perishing world. In the end, the power of Christian missions will be measured by the zeal of enlightened piety and the strength of experimental godliness at home, just as the circulation of the blood at the extremities of the body depends on the soundness of the lungs and heart.

In view of such responsibilities, again we say, "Brethren, pray for us."

WOMAN AND FASHION.

Some comment has been provoked by the criticism last week of a friend of Mount Allison upon what he and some others deemed a tendency to extravagance of dress on the part of the young ladies. Nothing needs be added to his temperate strictures, but they suggest a broader view of the subject.

Similar criticism, not always from the flatterer's pen, must be looked for at this age of change in the relation of woman to public life and questions. Privileges have ever some corresponding penalties. The man who steps forward into the front ranks comes within the range of keener eyes; and woman, as step by step she emerges from the comparative retirement of the past, can scarcely expect to avoid the application of general law. With a seat on the platform, or a place at its front as an essayist or lecturer, she in fact challenges the criticism to which under other circumstances she might reasonably object.

To the rapidly increasing opportunities of to-day woman approaches under a certain bondage to that tyrannous master—fashion. A century since, when thousands of loyalists landed on the southern coast of Nova Scotia to build a town which should eclipse any of its neighbors, the merchants advertised various bright shades of cloths and trimmings with which to adorn our forefathers, while materials of simple texture and quiet colors were offered for the apparel of our foremothers. Since then fashion has laid stern hands upon woman as the model block upon which to hang out the gayest colors and the most superfluous arrangements. The man who would wear through the street the scarlet or blue hat with which the latter ornaments his window, would not be thought worth even a joke; the woman who wears such colors in dress of any description calls forth little remark.

With higher aims, it may be expected that the tyranny of fashion shall be broken, and that the dress maker and milliner shall no longer have the control of the tastes and consciences of Christian and cultured women. The topic is no trifling one. An inspired apostle in writing on his Master's sacrifice, and when on his own way to a death of martyrdom, thought it worth while to counsel woman that her "adorning" should "not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold or of putting on of apparel," but "the hidden man of the heart, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." If any woman can even say, "I think little of dress; it cannot affect my mind," let her not forget its influence upon others, and its relation to numerous passages of God's word. If any should urge that less time and care are demanded for gay than for sober dress—a consequence in part of the long reign of fashion—it may be worth while to reflect that it is worth some time or trouble to bring one's self into a position that shall not lead others into extravagance and sin; that shall not in society or in the house of God seem to inflict upon others the brand of poverty, and that above all things shall bring the persons themselves into line with God's commandments.

The day is passing away when a group of scholarly men shall feel it necessary to pause in their conversation when a lady may approach their circle, and to address her in some empty commonplace of compliment; the day is coming when the use of the compliment will in such circumstances be considered an insult. The always marvellous influence of woman is finding a practical development through her direct energies as well as through the agency in the past of brother, husband or child. We speak of missionary work and remember that Mary Michener went as a missionary to Africa, where she occupies a last earthly resting place near that of Melville B. Cox; of temperance, and think of Frances E. Willard as the leading agent in this work in America;

of literature, and we recall the fact that altogether the most important article in the June number of the *North American Review* is that of Elizabeth Stuart Phelps on "The Struggle for Immortality"—a paper that glows with wonderful thoughts and warmth of conviction; of physicians, and think of Miss Howard, a Canadian woman, as in charge of a missionary hospital in China which is first in repute in that vast empire; and in all departments of life are signs of advance on the part of woman.

Meanwhile, thoughtful women, who mark and inwardly protest against certain follies of fashion, can do much hasten to the better era. They may aid its arrival by keeping a grand fact ever before those children who in all their play are not unmindful of the words of their seniors. Let the child begin life with the idea that the intangible is "he"; the physical is "his." "I should never," says Elizabeth Peabody, "teach a child, 'You have a soul,' but 'You have a body.'" It was Benjamin Franklin, "one of the coolest of scientific men," as Miss Phelps remarks, who said a century ago, "We are spirits. That bodies should be lent to us while they can afford pleasure, assist us in acquiring knowledge, or in doing good to our fellow creatures, is a kind and benevolent act of God." No child trained up to view herself as spirit and her body as her agent can ever find her greatest joy, her most pleasing employment, in personal adornment. The temple of an immortal soul will not indeed be treated lightly, but it will be lighted up with inward beauty, and all its garb will be in harmony with heaven-inspired instincts. Reform here, as in nearly all matters whether of the Church or of the State, must begin in the home, and therefore Christian women who would have their daughters rise to the high estate for which they are fitted, will help their own teaching by training them in independence of the opinions of the hitherto so powerful modiste, and at the same time set them an example worthy of women professing godliness. To do this is worth a little trouble and expense. It will give us less girlhood—which in the adult is too often only another name for mental dwarfhood—but it will give us more true womanhood. And true womanhood will adjust all matters in accordance with apostolic injunction.

A FADING TOPIC.

A paragraph from an editorial in the *London Watchman* will furnish a reply in part to the question of a subscriber who wrote us recently from Massachusetts respecting the assertion of a minister who had been trying to impel John Wesley to condemn Methodists. The remark of the *Watchman* is called forth by a lecture on Methodism, recently given as one of a course in Edinburgh:

Mr. Williamson almost succeeds in avoiding the usual mistake as to the relation of the early Methodist Societies to the Establishment. We hope to see a day when that time-worn phrase, "The Mother Church," shall no longer be applied by Methodists to the Church of England. Mr. Williamson speaks of our origin as that of "a mere religious society within the English Church." Now, strictly speaking, the Methodist Societies were never within that Church. They had no organic connection with it. Wesley did his best to induce the Bishops to take over his societies, and thereby include them within the boundaries of the Establishment, but he failed, and, as societies, they remained outside, and so remain to this day.

Does not our contemporary concede too much? Abel Stevens, in his History of Methodism, recalls the fact that, so early as 1757, "Walker of Truro, a devout man but rigid Churchman, had proposed that Wesley should abandon all his societies in parishes over which evangelical clergymen presided," but that "Wesley's good sense led him to see that this course would soon result in their extinction, and the defeat of the great work for which God had brought him out: he 'therefore declined the proposition of Walker.'" And, says the historian, "a more prudent and important act had hardly occurred in his history."

Let it however be remembered that in our past history we recognize the hand of God rather than the "good sense" of John Wesley. The Englishman who, on the ground of origin, should seriously urge the American republic to become a part of the British nation, would be the laughing stock of the world. The application is obvious.

Even good men grow weary of "collections." But it appears that Canadian congregations are dealt with more tenderly than are some others. At a recently London anniversary, an English Methodist minister said:

Until about two months ago he thought Methodists had more collections than anybody else, but being in Holland he visited one of the churches with a relative, and five minutes after the official came round with a long stick, having a bag at the end, for the collection, to which he and his friend contributed; after another five minutes the official came round again, but as he had little but English money about him, he asked his friend to contribute for both, but this the collector did not agree to, and waited until he had put in a coin himself. He thought two collections in the course of a sermon about enough, but presently, to his dismay, he saw the insatiable collector approaching again, and knowing he had only sufficient current coin to pay his expenses home, he was about to make his way out, but the door was closed, and he was only allowed to leave on making his third contribution. On mentioning the matter to the hotel keeper, he said it was customary to have three collections at every service; so that, after all Methodists were not so highly favored in that respect as some other churches.

The *Price Essay on Missions*, for which the Rev. Dr. Patterson, of New Glasgow, was awarded the prize of one hundred guineas, has just been published in attractive style by our Toronto Book-room. Those who have read Dr. Lethbride's essay on the same subject will be anxious to see this, by which the prize was won. In its preparation a brief review is given of heathen systems "as now found in actual operation in the life of the several races and tribes subject to them;" then "a review of the actual condition of the heathen" and a "consideration of the need of the Gospel as the Divine and the only remedy for the evils under which they labor;" and, as a third topic, the "duty of the Church to supply them with the means of life." Dr. Patterson's previous volumes on the missions of the Presbyterian Church have no doubt helped him in the preparation of this, which will also be of permanent value. The gentleman whose liberality has called forth the recently published essay has done a good service. In accordance with his wish, Dr. Patterson's essay is sold at the low rate of 70 cts. Methodist Book-room.

The *London Methodist Recorder* says: "The ladies are victorious all along the line. It is announced this week that the only name in the First Class of the Moral Science Tripos at Cambridge is that of a lady, Miss Hughes, the sister, we believe, of the Rev. H. P. Hughes, of Oxford. It is a somewhat grave and reverend title for a lady to bear—"Senior Moralist" of the year, but it is one of great honour, implying, as it does, eminent successful toil in a field in which man has hitherto assumed that he alone could shine. Henceforth, certainly, there will be, according to Lady Psyche's prophecy, in 'The Princess'—

"Two plummets dropt, for one, to sound the Of science and the secrets of the mind."

To be overmuch studious is not a common fault in young ministers, but it is an occasional one. To Joseph Benson, John Wesley once wrote: "Beware you be not swallowed up in books; an ounce of love is worth a pound of knowledge. Throw away that thirst for books. That thirst is the symptom of an evil disease. The dreadful drowsy increases by indulgence. What is the real value of a thing, but the price it will bear in eternity? Let not study swallow up or entrench upon the hours of private prayer. Nothing is worth this. Simplify both religion and every part of learning as much as possible. Be all alive to God, and you will be useful to men."

The Rev. W. Ainley notes an error in his communication on the camp-meeting, which seems to imply a reflection upon an active member. It should have read: "The services will not be marred as they necessarily have been;" and not "unnecessarily." Another error is but trifling.

Lay representatives coming to Conference by the N. B. and Maine railway, and Grand Southern, having paid one first-class full fare, on presenting a certificate from the Secretary of Conference will get a return ticket free.

This is the concluding paragraph of an excellent leader in a Southern paper, on "Stationing the Preachers":

It will be found that the Church and the preacher, who loyally submits to the authorities of the Church, and who conscientiously refrains from intermeddling with them, succeed best. "But," you say, "others will elect me for a place, and if I do not, they will beat me. Your plan would do very well, if all would adopt it." Such a declaration leaves out altogether the superintendence of divine providence. It does not matter who counsels, or plans, or maneuvers, if God is for you, my brother, you cannot suffer because you do right. The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord, and they will lead in the right direction. The history of the Church verifies the declaration that those who are loyal to the principles of the itinerancy succeed best in the itinerancy. For our part, if it is to be directed by more worldly expediency, we are unwilling to trust it, and would like to get out of it.

The reports of the *Christian Guardian* in respect to the membership of the Methodist Church of Canada in the Toronto, London and Montreal Conferences during the past year, are very pleasing. The forebodings expressed some time since by certain timid ones have been proved to have been without any foundation. The Toronto Conference increase of 3363, apart from those districts formerly within its bounds, but now forming the Manitoba Conference, (embracing last year a membership of 4,286,) and from which we have not heard, added to the 3,457 for the London Conference, and 1,252 for Montreal Conference, makes a total of 8,072 for these three western Conferences. This exceedingly gratifying report shows that the numerous revivals reported throughout the year have resulted in substantial additions to the Church.

What Joseph Cook not long since said of Methodism in the United States, is in some measure true of Methodism in Canada. The trust is one of terrible importance. Mr. Cook said:

If America is ever ruined the Methodist Church will be to blame. For she is the strongest and most influential Church on the continent of America to-day, and can do more to turn back the tide of ruin than any other Church. Among her communicants, in her pulpits, and at the head of her schools, she has some of the finest minds. We used to think the Methodist adapted to only frontier and missionary work. But the frontier of our country to-day seems to center in our large cities, where more missionary work is needed than anywhere else, and where our greatest peril is; and the Methodist Church, adapted to the city as well as the country, and every kind of work, can do much to solve the problem—how to save America!

A bishop of the English Church has been appointed for the chaplaincies of Northern and Central Europe. But for these chaplaincies British subjects abroad would sometimes find it difficult to meet for public service. One Sabbath a few years ago, the writer took part in the only Protestant service held on that day in the old Swiss city of Fribourg, and was aided by a number of hymn books and prayer-books placed in the hotel for the use of travellers by the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge. Recently the Bishop of Gibraltar performed the rite of confirmation at Odessa—the first time it had ever been performed according to the Anglican mode upon the shores of the Black Sea.

Of the denominational relations of the Republican candidates for the Presidency of the United States, the *Baltimore Methodist* gives this statement: "Mr. Blaine was raised in the Presbyterian Church, but the rest of his family are Roman Catholics, as his mother was. Mrs. Blaine has always been a Protestant, and so was the daughter, and a member of New York-avenue Presbyterian Church, before marrying a Roman Catholic officer in the army, about a year ago. The marriage was performed by a priest. Senator Logan and his excellent wife are Methodists. They attend the Metropolitan Church, and are warm friends of the pastor, Dr. Huntley, who is chaplain of the Senate."

Of late Canadian invalids have looked towards California as earth's most favored spot, and yet statistics show that more suicides take place there than in any other State in the Union. Dissipation, financial embarrassment and domestic troubles, are the alleged reasons.

NOVA SCOTIA CONFERENCE.

The Eleventh Annual Session of the Nova Scotia Conference of the Methodist Church of Canada began at the Grafon St. Church in this city on Wednesday morning. Rev. W. H. Heartz, the retiring President, occupied the chair. After singing the 418th hymn, the Secretary read the 4th chapter of 2nd Corinthians, and Rev. J. F. Bent and G. O. Huestis engaged in prayer. The roll being called, between sixty and seventy names responded to their names. Before the election of President, Rev. W. H. Heartz addressed the Conference in a most earnest and touching speech, expressing his gratitude to God and the brethren for the comfort and success of the past year. As this address, by the request of the Conference, is to be published in full, it is not necessary to say further here.

On the first ballot for President, Rev. G. O. Huestis received 23 and J. A. Rogers 21 votes. On the second ballot G. O. Huestis received 36 and J. A. Rogers 22 votes. The former was declared elected. The retiring President congratulated Mr. Huestis, who on taking the chair addressed the Conference. He attributed his election to the affection of the brethren rather than to their objections of his fitness for the office. Thirty-eight years in the ministry had greatly endeared him to Methodism. His has been a happy life. There has been more of sunshine than of storm in it. He was glad to be elected to this office in Halifax. Many years ago he had sought and obtained a treasure here which he prized even more than the honor which had been placed upon him to-day. He was glad to be here at the outgoing of the old dispensation. Some one suggested the "intermediate state." He answered, "Well, it is paradise." Mr. Huestis was born in Wallace in 1821. He has been 38 years in the ministry, and has been Chairman of District five or six times. He has filled some important connexional appointments with marked success. Some few years ago he published a small book entitled, "Memorials of Methodist ministers in E. B. America." Mr. Huestis has always been an enthusiastic temperance advocate. He has been Grand Worthy Patriarch of three Provinces and most Worthy Chaplain of the National Division.

Rev. J. A. Rogers was elected Secretary, Rev. C. Just, a. m., Journal Secretary, and Revs. E. E. England, D. W. Johnson, a. b., and B. C. Bor-den, a. b., Assistant Secretaries. An enthusiastic vote of thanks was given to the retiring President for the kind, courteous, and satisfactory manner in which he has discharged the responsible duties of his office.

THE REV. CHARLES CHURCHILL, M. A.

The *Methodist Recorder* of the 6th inst., contains this sketch of a minister formerly well-known in the British North American Provinces, the Rev. Chas. Churchill, M. A.:

Having spent the first twenty-five years of his ministry in British North America, our departed brother took rank among the members of the English Conference as one of "the less known." Taking into consideration that his four years of probation were passed in the city of Halifax, Nova Scotia, and that subsequently his ministerial incumbency was continued four years in Montreal and five years in Fredericton, N. B., there is abundant evidence how highly he was esteemed by our churches across the water. His election to the office of Book Stevar and Editor in connection with the Nova Scotia Conference, and his occupancy of that honorable post during six years, testified to the confidence and esteem cherished towards him in the realm of the far West. The ten years of his public ministry in his fatherland were devoted to proclaiming the word of life in the spacious sanctuaries connected with the Oxford-place Circuit, Leeds; also in the miscellaneous congregations which gather from all parts of the country in the chapels of watering-places situated on the picturesque coast of South Devon and Dorset, as well as to the blue jackets and civilians uniting with us in worship at G. p. r. During his ministry at Windsor, he furnished the readers of the *Christian Miscellany* with a graphic description of the interior of the Royal mausoleum. As a preacher he exercised the happy art of compressing his thoughts into compact sentences, composed of choice words and terse phrases. A quick observer of the ever-varying forms of modern scepticism, and possessing a fair acquaintance with history, philosophy, and science, wherever he embellished his discourses, he was wont to give great prominence to the fundamental truths of the Gospel, and insist on practical godliness. He undertook the editorship of one of the earlier Year-books of Wesleyan Methodism, and felt deeply the importance and advantage of the annual issue of a volume supplying the Connexion with a review of current events and a resume of the official addresses delivered during the

past year, his declining Divine will perfect. Hence he A trustful A blissful A backward These are Born at he died at the forty

For the W

I not

"A Lov

some cr

of you

this pa

been en

Academi

past, an

the poss

he all m

among t

tendency

costline

of the c

cisely th

This ye

the mat

not cou

they di

ances a

Lover o

young

knowin

to thos

ial show

Sack

The

at the

donder

the bre

ent as

cheer

there h

remova

return

a show

line.

Quit

were in

inter

encour

trict n

and its

of

terest

were l

Dr. G

seem

evang

able s

inter

know

paper

Our

Corn

seve

pital

day,

prin

the ev

and

prea

hible

ment

minis

Br

a ver

doctr

mond

er.

natio

nexio

name

con

There

too in

the d