

Provincial Wesleyan.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 29, 1870.

FIRST DAYS OF THE CONFERENCE.

At the hour of publication Conference is rapidly closing up the business of the Session. But at the moment of our writing, Conference is well into the third day's work only. The particulars of the business transacted up to the date at which we write, appear in another column from the pen of the authorized Conference reporter. We shall therefore ourselves indulge only in a few general observations on Conference matters as they appear to us in surveying them as a whole.

And first, in regard to that not very original, but yet, in this case, pleasant subject of remark, the Conference weather—it is perfectly delightful. It is just what we could wish it to be. It is warm but not specially hot. It is breezy but not windy enough to raise much dust along the well-travelled streets. Ministers heavily freighted with fat and good nature can move round briskly enough without discomfort. And, to the immense gratification of the man who loves to be bathed in the clear sunlight and to watch the feet-footed shadows chasing each other over the billowy grass and the tinted meadow flowers, the skies are fogless for the time.

Not only is the weather bright and cheering, the Conference town is also looking its very best. Refreshed by the cooling rains of the few days immediately preceding the first Conference day, the fields and gardens and hedges and shrubbery are beautiful in their soft eye-pleasing verdure. Nest cottages nestling in tree-guarded enclosures and stately mansions rising from spreading lawns, meet the gaze in various directions; and on every side the marks of thrift and taste strike the attention. True to their reputation, the people also are kind, cordial, hospitable.

The Conference wears a somewhat juvenile appearance this year. The men of silver locks present among its members are few. Dr. Richey, it is true, is there looking as well as we have seen him for some years past. Father Davis is there hale and fresh. Father Bent is there in a good state of preservation. But, oh, how many venerable men we miss that were present at Conference sessions a few years ago—Richard Knight, John Brownell, Arthur McNutt, William Smith, William Smithson, William Miller, J. B. Strong and William Wilson, are we believe, with Wesley and Fletcher and Benson and Bunting and Newton to-day. And William Temple, John Snowball and Henry Pope, though they have not yet crossed over to meet the shining ones, "are waiting on the shore," and are not with their brethren in Conference this year. Nor have the genial features of Charles DeWolfe and Michael Pickles as yet met our eye this Session.

But though there are only a few aged men in Conference this year, there are many, who but a short time ago were considered to be young that are fast growing old; and the time is near when amid the front ranks of the Conference but few heads will appear unspinkled with snow. Indeed, the frost work is going on now in those same ranks with decided diligence.

Thus far the spirit prevailing in Conference has been almost all that we could desire. No Conference within our recollection has equalled this one in the unbroken harmony of feeling exhibited by it. There has been diversity of opinion elicited upon important subjects, discussed, as in the nature of things there must be when earnest men surveying important questions from different stand points compare notes with each other. There has also been a very free interchange of sentiment during the deliberations held, as there ought to be on matters in which all are bound to feel interested. Yet the tone of feeling prevailing in the discussions has been genial and brotherly in a very high degree. If during the remaining part of the Session a similar tone should characterize the proceedings every brother present will bear away with him more agreeable memories of the second Yarmouth Conference.

Apart from the matters referred to, the early portion of the present Conference Session will be memorable for the large number of promising young men received on probation as candidates for the ministry, and for the formation of a Conference Educational Society. It is a most gratifying circumstance that the Lord of the Harvest, whose eye alone takes in the wide extent of the whitening fields that are ripening for the sickle, is calling so many vigorous young labourers to the ministerial work. It should be the earnest prayer of the whole Church, that these young men may be qualified to the utmost before assuming the most weighty responsibility connected with the Sacred office of the Christian ministry.

With regard to the formation of our Conference Educational Society, we can only say here that this is a movement which, in the providence of God, is fitted to render incalculably valuable service to the very best interests of the Church. A very slight degree of reflection only is needed to show that this movement merits the unanimous support of the denomination. More on this subject by-and-by.

Although thus far the main interest of the Conference proceedings has clustered around the two subjects just mentioned, much attention has been given to our ministerial record and to considerations connected with the manner in which the yearly returns of Church membership are made up among us. On the latter question, it is strongly felt that an improved system of making those returns would render to our position more justice than is obtained under the working of our present plan. With respect to the death-roll, increased interest was felt in the record, because during the year three aged ministers well known in our work had

passed away to their rest—two of them each more than 80 years old—most peacefully and hopefully, from beds of sickness on which they "lingered into life"—and one of them suddenly in the midst of his long-loved work. Very touching, sad, fig, and comforting were the references to these departed worthies who died in the Lord, and whose works do follow them.

May all who have ever heard the word of life from their lips on earth, share with them the felicity in reserve for God's faithful ones in Heaven. J. B. N.

CONFERENCE PREPARATORY COMMITTEES.

Committee Room, Yarmouth, 21st June, 1870.

The sixteenth annual convocation of the ministers of the Conference of Eastern British America takes place this year by request of the members of our church and congregation, in Yarmouth.

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Rev. H. Pope, Jr. Co-Delegate preached in Wesley church at 11 A. M. from 2nd Timothy 4th chapter 6th verse, and the Rev. D. D. Currie Secretary of Conference at 6 P. M. from Deut. 32nd chapter and 31st verse. Providence church pulpit was occupied by Rev. John S. Addy, who discoursed from Habakkuk 2nd chap. and 2nd verse, and by Rev. H. McKewen, at 6 P. M., whose text was 2nd Cor. 8th chap., and 9th verse. The sermons of these brethren are said to have been of a high order, and the word spoken, it is hoped, will produce fruit to the glory of God. A service was held in each of the churches at 12 P. M., in the interests of the Sabbath-schools in connection with our Church in this town. Rev. Messrs. Hennigar, Cassidy, and Winterbotham addressed the children assembled in Providence church, and Rev. Messrs. Angwin, T. Rogers, Pitblado and Lathern those who were congregated in Wesley church. The addresses were peculiarly adapted to the occasion, and the presence and power of the Divine Spirit were so sensibly realized that many felt it to be a season of grace and sweet delight.

The members of the Supernumerary Fund Committee met on Monday at 9 A. M. The statements of the Secretary and Treasurer were read, and it was decided that the collections from the Circuits had advanced during the year, yet that the income of the Fund would be insufficient to meet in full the claims of those brethren who in the Providence of God, have been laid aside from the active work of the ministry and are compelled to look to this Fund for support of themselves and families.

The Parsonage Aid Fund Committee and Committee of Church Relief Fund met during the afternoon. The Reports of sub-committees for examination of candidates were presented to the general Committee immediately after the various districts' recommendation in the case of each of the young men was occurred in. In the evening the Committee on Children's Fund and Circuit Finance met. Resolutions affirming the conviction of the Committee that it would be inexpedient for Conference to change the plan for providing for Ministers children were adopted, and also a resolution recommending that the Salary of the Ministers in future be put in one sum and not in separate "items" as formerly.

The Contingent Fund Committee met at 9 A. M. this morning. The collections from the various Circuits were more than those of previous year. Nevertheless, but a small surplus of \$1400, could be met, inasmuch as there were but \$130 for this purpose.

The Committee of Home Mission Fund met at 3 P. M. The income of the Fund was found to be in advance of the amount estimated at last Conference. The amounts contributed on the various districts were nearly \$2000, and after paying the sums apportioned to the different Missions there was a balance of \$400. It was felt that this department of our work demanded liberal support from all our Churches. Letters were read from two Gentlemen in Halifax, furnishing valuable suggestions in regard to the future of this Fund. One of these noble-hearted friends, offered to contribute \$500, per Annum in support of our Home Missions.

The position of the Methodist Church in this town is both hopeful and cheering. Possessed of a considerable portion of the best of the places, the Methodist have done themselves much credit by the erection of two large and well-finished churches, designated respectively "Providence" (South) and "Wesley" (North), which while waiting in all unnecessary elaboration of finish, may be regarded as models of neatness and architectural beauty. The latter of these was dedicated to the worship of God about four years ago, and is the Conference Church of this year. The Rev. Messrs. Joseph Hart and Shugart are the esteemed pastors of these churches.

According to arrangements made at the last Charlottetown Conference, the first of the Preparatory Committees was appointed to meet on Wednesday, 15th inst. Owing, however, to the non-arrival of several of the ministers and lay gentlemen comprising the Children's Fund and Circuit Finance Committee, it was adjourned, without transacting any business, to meet at the call of the President sometime before Conference.

Thursday at 9 A. M., the Committee for Examination of Candidates recommended by the District Meetings met. Ten young men were reported as in attendance from their respective Districts, and three in Newfoundland, excused on account of distance. The theological examination of these young brethren, conducted by the Rev. H. Daniel, President for the past year, was thorough and generally satisfactory. The literary examinations, oral and by means of written papers, were assigned to sub-committees whose reports were to be made to the Committee at an early day. Arrangements were also made to allow the young men to preach at the several pulpits of the churches, and to secure reports of the character of their pulpit performances. Should the candidates pass all these tests to the satisfaction of the Committee, they will then be recommended to Conference to be taken out on probation.

The names of young men on Trial were reported as follows:—Thomas Allen, C. W. Doerill, Wilson, W. Lodge, R. B. Mack, A. D. Morton, A. B. C. H. Paisley, A. M. George Forsey, John Reay, and Thomas Rogers, A. M., who have travelled four years. A committee to examine these brethren was appointed and a morning session of Conference appointed for Saturday, at 6 o'clock, at which the public examination of the young men should take place.

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