

THE BRITISH CONFERENCE.

The Religious Experience of the Candidates for Ordination.

(In our last Number we copied from the Watchman of August 26th an account of the ordination of the Candidates for our Ministry, which took place August 26th, in Central Street Chapel, Manchester; but, unfortunately, in this (no. 447, 448th) their public examination commenced in Oldham St. Chapel, which was densely crowded, when a number of those who had previously on other occasions given a satisfactory account of their conversion to God, and of their religious experience, in consequence of the indisposition of the President of Conference, Dr. Newton, the Ex-President occupied the Chair.—Extracts relating to this very interesting service we now lay before our readers, confident they will inspire the hearts of the truly pious with holy joy, on account of the grace given to those who have been thus prepared for our Ministry.)

Dr. Newton said, he had known Mr. Chapman's excellent father: he would now call upon another young brother, whose father still lived, though he had been twice abroad,—first in Ceylon and then in Canada. How great must be his joy, to find one of his sons a candidate for the Full Ministry among them!

He then proceeded to call upon the following Candidates.

JOSEPH CHAPMAN said,—During the whole of his life, the lines had fallen to him in pleasant places, and he had had a goodly heritage. His parents feared God, and brought him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. To him it was an interesting and deeply affecting circumstance, that four and thirty years ago his father stood in that very position in that chapel. When scarcely eight years old, he was privileged with admission to Woodhouse Grove School. He had ever felt grateful for the advantages of a literary kind which he there received; but, especially, that there his heart was softened and renewed by divine grace. It was not until the close of his residence as a pupil that he experienced converting grace. At that time the school was visited with a peculiar influence, and nearly the whole of the youths were led to meet in class. Six months he groaned under the anguish of a wounded spirit, and was tempted to suppose that he had not repented sufficiently. One day, when in the play-ground, a light, as it were, from heaven, shone into his mind, the love of God filled his soul, and he experienced instant peace and joy through believing. He had looked for ecstasy and transport,—but it was peace. He did not confess that he had received this blessing,—but his peace continued, and his soul was drawn out in prayer. He was enabled fully to rely on Christ, and he felt that He had power on earth to forgive sins. Soon after he obtained mercy, it was impressed on his mind that he should be called to the work of the ministry. His father, on his death bed, had charged him not to resist the Spirit. He became deeply anxious on this subject;—he saw there were great difficulties; and that he must not enter upon the work without a special call and special help from God. He resolved, in his own mind, that, if asked by the new Superintendent, he would not refuse: he was put upon the plan; and his first effort was attended with a divine blessing. After that, he began to think of the itinerant work. His health was established, obstacles were removed, he offered himself, and during nearly five years had been engaged in the work. The happiest employment of his life was to direct sinners to the Saviour. He had had some few seals to his humble ministry, and he felt himself more fully determined than ever for God to live and for him to die. He trusted his heart was fully given to God, and his strongest desire was, to be "cleansed from all unrighteousness." During his period of probation, he had

been more deeply convicted, (though he always saw it in theory) that without God he could do nothing. He was often oppressed with a sense of insufficiency, and felt that without the special aid of the Holy Ghost, he could never be a successful or useful minister of Jesus Christ. It was his desire to become a Methodist Minister, in every sense of the word, and to save as many souls as he could. He felt the uncertainty of life, and the importance of entire dedication of body and soul to God. His prayer was that his heart might be enlarged and inflamed "with boundless charity divine,"—that he might lead poor sinners to "the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness,"—that while he lived he might labour for God,—and then spirit his course with joy.

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STEPHEN P. HARVARD was thankful for the early instructions he received from a faithful pious step-mother, whose prayers were owned of God in bringing him early in life, to see the importance of personal religion. The death of one of his schoolfellows at Kingswood, deeply impressed him: several others were led to seek the Lord,—and all who sought him earnestly found mercy. He was encouraged to persevere, being kindly noticed both by ministers and people; yet, for five years after his father went to Canada, though a member of society he never received a sense of God's pardoning mercy. Living in a small village, the preaching he heard was more adapted to convince of sin than to lead the sinner to Jesus Christ. He delayed to exercise a hearty trust in God. He expected to do more. At last, he became convinced there was in religion a joy and light to be had which he had not, and he was made willing to be saved in God's way. He believed on Christ, and peace and joy sprang up in his heart. But he was assailed by Satan, who told him to wait for the witness of the Spirit,—robbed him of light and peace,—and then suggested,—"You had the witness of the Spirit but you have lost it." He was never so happy as he had been since he began to tell others how to come to Jesus,—how to believe. He had learned the lesson himself; he wished others to learn it; and he had had an opportunity of leading many a discouraged sinner to earnest and hearty trust in the Saviour. Whenever there was a broken heart and a contrite spirit, he delighted to tell the poor sinner how to find mercy. When he first began to travel, he met with discouragement as to his call; but, during the last four years, he had been, every year, increasingly satisfied on that point: he had now no doubt of it; and he was determined, by divine grace, to live to God.

JOHN HERR attributed his first religious impressions to conversations with a pious father. Eleven years ago, he began in good earnest, to seek the Lord. He was then at school, and his custom was, by rising early, to devote two morning hours to the reading of devotional works, such as Doddridge's "Rise and Progress" and James's "Anxious Inquirer." He never looked back upon that period, but with great interest. From a diary kept at the time, he found his feelings were often very acute,—he had great mental distress with occasional gleams of hope. He continued in this state for about two years. At that time, he had to attend the Independent ministry, but always thought it a great treat to hear a sermon in a Wesleyan chapel. One Sunday night, after attending service in Halifax Place Chapel, Nottingham, when engaged in pouring out his heart at the throne of grace, God suddenly revealed himself to him as his reconciling father. He could say, "My Lord and my God." His experience was well described in one of their hymns—

Long my imprisoned spirit lay,
Fast bound in sin and nature's night;
Thine eye diffused a quick'ning ray,
I woke,—the dawning land with light;
My chains fell off,—my heart was free,—
I rose,—I went forth,—and followed thee.

The ecstasy of his joy corresponded with the intensity of his previous distress. He felt as he returned home, like one emancipated; and when he arrived there, he told his friends what God had done for his soul, and, as they perceived a change, they rejoiced together. For some time, he experienced heaven upon earth. "Not a cloud did arise far to darken the skies." He enjoyed close communion with God,—was never so happy as when pouring out his soul to him;—and many a spot, that delightful neighbourhood was enlivened by recollections of such intercourse, and manifestations of the divine favour. He began to be anxious for the salvation of others, and particularly of his sisters; and one of them attributed her conversion to his conversation and prayers. He also sought the conversion of his schoolfellows; and he mentioned what he conceived to be a remarkable answer to prayer on behalf of one of them. At sixteen he was sent to a college (as we understood) in Kent, and resided there some time; but, there was no Wesleyan

Ministry, and he lost ground, though he attended to the private means of grace, and knew something of what it was to bear the reproach of Christ. At that time, he was expecting to go to Cambridge; but during an interval which he had to spend at home, it pleased God to lay upon him a very heavy affliction. From early life, he had been impressed with a conviction that he should be called to the work of the Ministry.—This thought had incited him to diligence at school, and had directed his reading in the cultivation of his mind. His views had always been towards the Wesleyan Ministry, and his intention was, after his course at Cambridge, to offer himself to that Body; but his friends wished him to leave the question open and follow the leadings of Providence. During his affliction he received the greatest kindness from Wesleyan friends, particularly the Rev. Messrs. Sly and Nightingale, and his restoration, as many present knew, indicated the finger of God, and was a remarkable instance of the power of prayer. He then felt bound by additional ties to the Wesleyan Ministry,—was indisposed to risk the effect of a course at Cambridge,—was, through Mr. Marsden, placed on the local preachers' plan,—and was finally recommended as a candidate for the work. At the Institution, he had spent three happy years, and felt grateful to his beloved tutors. Since that time, he had some success in his Ministry; and he hoped there were many who would be his joy and crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord.

Here, at the request of Dr. Newton, the congregation joined in singing the hymn on the 417th page, which, he observed, was a prayer for the universal spread of the gospel, and the extension of Christ's kingdom to every land.

EDWARD KNAGGS had the benefit of early religious training. He was taken to the house of God very early in life, and serious impressions were produced on his mind by the sermons which he heard,—and especially, and irresistibly, by the prayers and instructions of a pious mother; yet it was not till about nine years ago that he resolved to give his heart to God. Under a sermon by one of the circuit ministers, he was deeply and powerfully convicted of sin, and began to seek the Lord earnestly and powerfully,—but seemed to seek in vain, though with many tears. One day when pleading for mercy in secret, he felt his mind inexpressibly happy. The load of sorrow was removed, he believed in Christ, trusted in his merits and blood, urged nothing but Christ; and God heard his prayer, and the Spirit bore witness with his spirit that he was, then and there, made a child of God. He had never doubted his acceptance, from that moment to the present hour, which he felt to be one of the most momentous and solemn in his life. In three or four months, he began to exhort sinners to flee from the wrath to come. The Ministers of the circuit took him kindly by the hand;—amongst others he saw one present who gave him his first ticket, and greatly encouraged him—the Rev. Mr. Wilson. Believing that he was called of God, he gave himself to the work: he offered himself, was accepted, and had the great privilege of reading three years in the Didsbury Institution, for which he thanked God and his beloved tutors and governor. He had now spent three happy years in the regular work of a circuit. He saw many imperfections,—that many fine opportunities of good had been allowed to pass by,—yet God had been pleased to own his humble labours. He believed that he was inwardly moved by the holy Ghost to take upon him the office of the Christian Ministry, and he preferred the Wesleyan Ministry before all others. He was cradle and nursed in Methodism; he loved it, and always had loved it, dearly,—once from early prejudices, but now from conviction; and, it received as one of its Ministers, he was resolved that it should be the one undivided business of his life to diffuse its principles. He could say, with a beloved friend and brother who had spoken before him, that he was resolved to save as many souls as he could,—and he prayed God to help him.

Dr. Newton—That was the great object to be kept in view: not preaching so many sermons, but saving so many souls. He hoped the day would never come, when they, as Ministers, would be satisfied with anything short of that. It was not large congregations, who listened attentively and went away delighted, that they should desire; but to have sinners awakened, and souls converted and saved.

W. M. Panshion, when he looked back upon the way by which the Lord had led him,—upon the unmerited mercies which he had enjoyed,—that he had been made a child of God, and still more, by God's preserving grace, had been enabled to maintain a religious profession for eleven years; and, most of all, that he should be called to take upon himself the office of the Christian Ministry: he felt overwhelmed with grateful feelings; and, while he erected his Ebenezer, would endeavour to make it a stone of consecration as well as of remembrance, feeling that the least he could do was to determine to "know nothing among men, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." He was the child of pious parents, and, consequently, early instructed in the tea-

of God,—taught to reverence ministers and to read God's word. The spirit of God frequently and powerfully strove with him. His first deep and lasting impressions were produced by a sermon from the Rev. W. H. Taylor. Still he grew on sinning and repenting, trifling with the grace of God, till his fourteenth year. He was then awakened to a sense of his sin and danger by a voice which came from a mother's grave. A series of providences deepened this impression, and the faithful appeals of an affectionate and pious father never ceased till he gave his heart to God,—till he was humbled at the foot of the cross, and cast his earnest for mercy. The ministry of the Rev. B. R. Hall was of great benefit to him. For three months, he sought the Lord carefully, and with tears. At length, in a moment, deliverance came. There was an open vision; his eye beheld and his faith rested on the Saviour. He trusted him entirely, and at once. A peace that was unmistakable, and still then unknown, came into his heart, he had power over sin, and was enabled to go on his way rejoicing. From that time, though conscious of much unworthiness, he had never entirely cast away his confidence. He had felt, since he was actively employed in preaching the gospel, that there was a danger lest personal piety should degenerate into official or professional piety;—lest, having to wear the garb and speak the language, he should lose sight of the vitality, warmth, and power of religion. But, by seeing his danger, and his inability to protect himself, he had been driven to the efficacious blood which cleanseth from all sin. Truly could he say, he had never repented the course he had taken. He had tried religion under various circumstances, and it had never failed him: he had no desire to part with it, and felt, at that moment, that he was a child of God. Shortly after his conversion, it was forcibly impressed on his mind that it was the will of God he should call sinners to repentance,—but he shrunk from the awful responsibilities. At length, in fear and trembling, he ventured to preach. He took the judicious advice of Mr. Squance, and of his relative Mr. Clough, and, after intense struggle and sincere prayer, offered himself for the work. During the years of probation, he had laboured under great discouragement and depression, but God had sustained and upheld him, both humbling and gladdening him by giving seals to his ministry. He felt that he was moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon him this office and ministry, and at that instant, he had an unflinching conviction that he was just where God would have him to be. Methodism was his birth-place, and, by the grace of God, should be his home. He knew not where there were greener pastures or stiller waters. It was his one purpose to devote his life to the service of God; and, before that assembly, before his fathers and brethren in the ministry, and before the spirits of the just made perfect, upon the altar which sanctifieth the gift, to live and labour, serve and suffer, toil and triumph, to do and to die for God.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NOTICES OF NEWFOUNDLAND.

[No. 1.]

Colonies, like men, have their character. Among the colonies of the British dominions not one bears so mean a character as Newfoundland. Appearing on the map as a fragment broken off the great continent of America by some convulsion of nature, and plunged headlong into the North Atlantic ocean, it is lost to the world amid its own native fogs. Its geographical position arrests the eye as it traces the map; but who stops for a moment to investigate its character? "Oh, it is but a rock for the fisherman to spread his nets upon," exclaims the traveller; and he listens to explore the rich forests of Canada, or to dig for gold in the mines of California. Thus fleeing from it as from a modern Tyre branded with an ancient curse. But stay, traveller! You have not cast anchor in our commodious harbours, the safest in the world. You have not inhaled the pure air of our mountain breezes; nor had your nervous system brewed up with a summer's atmosphere tempered by ocean's cooling breath. You have not entered our hospitable dwellings, nor feasted at our tables replenished often with the luxuries of every clime. Perhaps in passing by you snuffed the favour of our oil-cats and fish-stores, and was convinced that it was not that better land of which Mrs. Hemans so beautifully sings—

"On mid the green islands of glittering seas,
Where fragrant forests perfume the breeze."

However I am inclined to tarry awhile and send after you some "Notices" of its character and means. Its banks are known by every mariner of the North and Western oceans, and one had the honour of being ad-

ded to in the British House of Commons by an Hon. Member, as to the growing timber or corn! Cattle and sheep rise to rebuke the ignorant sons for whose support yield rich harvests from your land. The interior of the island of land has been never properly explored. B. Jakes, M. A., was employed by the colonial government to survey the country in the trackless wilds, the woods and extensive bogs, he found it too great to surmount. "The character of the island," he said, "is that of a rugged, and, for the most part, a barren country. Hills and valleys succeed each other; the rising into mountains, and the expanding into plains." From this another interesting volume published by Philip Toque, to which I shall refer in a future Notice, we learn that the land is on the sea-coast. The mountains in the interior, consist of rivers; and where there are no rivers, are no fertile valleys for the breeding, nor loaming soil for the growing. In some parts of the island valleys are found; but neither the birch nor the size of its Canaan Agriculture, though at present on a small scale, is rapidly increasing in means and extent. Sir John Lubbock, late Governor, paid special attention to the colony in his resolute adopted means for their development. Excellency introduced new modes of husbandry; formed rural society; and the ploughing prize for successful competition was given by him. And in order to encourage the pursuit of so important a business, Sir John formed new roads and thus connected the country and thus connected the which before were accessible only. And where the humble pedestrian did his weary way through bog the farmer and wealthy citizen their ear and sleigh. Every one will acknowledge that the five years of John's administration of the colony were a new era in its existence. In new roads, and communication with the land, facilitated by steam vessels, had seen nothing like it before. These remarks are not designed to the efforts of our present Governor, Lord Marchmont, whom I believe to be truly anxious for the good of the colony who is at this time adopting measures ultimately, will be of lasting benefit to the colony. It is at this moment passing crisis of a most important nature, greatly needs a man of Sir Gaspar's energy and independence of action. Sir John's Excellency has much to do to reform colonial habits and facilities. He is sometimes out of touch with this son of John Bull's who is a big and so Englishified in his father, Sir Gaspar gets out of touch with him;—particularly as the young spirit, who, of late, has been very rampant, is just now out of pocket-wants to borrow a dollar! Sir John complains that Sir John humours much,—allowed him to run to sea of riot which has at length broken orders in the chest. And the lad declares Sir Gaspar is not worth in the same room as Sir John's quarrel rose to such a pitch that stamped and stormed, and vowed to govern himself! Yes, told the his face, "I'll be a responsible man responsible for my own purse; a side for my own acts and deeds." Sir John suspects that some of the servants have been putting him. But when he considers again how the poor lad is of being put on being as his elder brother in (who bears his intellects are some- what?)

The Haligonians and other Nova Scotia have a habit of boasting of the superiority of their St. John's, our metropolitan city, certainly have a most beautiful