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PRESIDENT OF CONFERENCE, REV. R. WHITTINGTON, M.A., B.Sc.

It is not an everyday occurrence that a minister of the Methodist church is elected two years in succession to the Presidency of an Annual Conference. Only a comparatively small number ever succeed in winning the honor once, for the Presidency of the Conference is a position of dignity and distinction in the eyes of all Methodists and is reserved for the most worthy. When then a President is re-elected, the unusual circumstance points its own moral. The minister so honored must enjoy to an unusually high degree the affection and confidence of his brethren—and indeed of the church generally, for an Annual Conference is sufficiently representative in its character to pretty well reflect the wishes and opinions of the whole church for which it acts. Such tribute of esteem has been accorded our beloved President, Rev. R. Whittington, M.A., B.Sc., he has been elected to the chair for a second year. A very bare outline of Mr. Whittington's personal history appeared with the first regular issue of this paper July, 1899. A Scotchman by birth he is a Canadian by adoption. To this land he came as a boy, and received his education in the schools and colleges of the Province of Ontario. He was converted to God at the age of 20 and became a member of the Methodist church. After spending some time in the Collegiate Institutes of Peterboro and Cobourg he was graduated a B.A. in Victoria University with first-class honors in Metaphysics in 1879. From this institution he obtained also the degree of M.A. in 1882.

When this valuable mental equipment had been gained, Mr. Whittington, the same year, yielded to his earlier and irrepressible convictions and offered himself to the Toronto Conference as a candidate for the Methodist ministry. He was accepted and at once appointed to labor in the Melville circuit, Ontario. He remained here but one year, for in 1883 he proceeded to Japan, in which country he spent the next seven years engaged in educational work under the sanction of his church and filling the important position, first of Principal of the Anglo-Japanese College, Tokyo, and afterwards of Professor of Metaphysics,



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Returning home on furlough in 1891 he lectured for a year in Victoria University on Logic, Christian Evidences and History of Philosophy, obtaining from his Alma Mater during the same period the degree of B.Sc. In 1892 Columbian Methodist College, New Westminster, was instituted by our Conference, and Mr. Whittington, upon the earnest appeal of the College Board was induced to accept the position of Principal. The college started hopefully enough, but soon was severely tried by the great financial depression which for three or four years was felt all over this continent. Mr. Whittington, however, held on to his task with great devotion and self-sacrifice, for five years, and managed to keep

the young institution alive when many through the difficulties, for which he was in no way responsible would prove insuperable. But in 1897 he resigned and returned to the regular pastorate, and was appointed Superintendent of Princess Street Circuit, Vancouver. The ability, zeal and strong common-sense he brought with him made him a success in this field from the first; while his sterling Christian character, and his deep sympathetic nature, which latter is fully appreciated in him only by close and continued acquaintance, secured him an increasing hold upon the affection of his people, insomuch that they were prepared, at the end of the regular term of three years (completed at this Conference), to do any legitimate thing to secure his appointment for a longer period.