THE METHODIST JUBILEE.

WORK OF THE CONFERENCE.

GRAND SUNDAY-SCHOOL DEMONSTRATION

Over Twenty-Five Thousand Children Gathered Together in the Churches—Interesting Addresses on the Sunday-School Work of the Church.

[Reported for the Baltimore Sun.]

Ministers attending the Methodist Centennial Conference preached yesterday and last night in the various Methodist churches of the city, besides a number of other Protestant churches. As is usual in cases where a stranger of some prominence is going to preach, the congregations were generally large. Among the bishops and others who preached were the following: Rev. F. Merriel, D. D., of the Ohio Wesleyan University, at the First Independent Christ Church; Rev. J. M. Buckley, of New York, and Rev. Dr. J. B. McFerrin, of Nashville, M. E. Church South, at Madison M. E. Church; Bishop E. G. Andrews and Rev. C. B. Galloway, at St. Paul's M. E. Church South; Bishop Walden and Rev. A. H. Southerland, at Broadway M. E. Church; Bishops Granberry, of the M. E. Church South, and Fowler, of the M. E. Church, at Mount Vernon Place M. E. Church; Rev. Dr. McAnally and Rev. Dr. J. W. Locke, at Calvary M. E. Church South; Bishop R. S. Foster and Rev. J. E. Evans, of Georgia, at Trinity M. E. Church South; Rev. Dr. A. S. Hunt, at Strawbridge M. E. Church; Rev. Charles N. Sims, chancellor of Syracuse University, at Grace M. E. Church; Rev. James Gardiner, of Canada, at Fayette Street M. E. Church; Bishop Bowman and Rev. O. P. Fitzgerald, at Columbia Avenue M. E. Church; Rev. George H. Whitney and Rev. W. H. Locke, at the First Presbyterian Church; Rev. G. R. Browder, of Kentucky, and Rev. Israel Luce, of Maine, at the Associate Reformed Church; Rev. H. B. Ridgaway and Rev. Dr. George R. Crooks, at Brown Memorial Church; Rev. Earl Cranston, D. D., at the First Lutheran Church; Rev. Dr. A. J. Kynett, at the Third Reformed Church.

Saturday's Proceedings.

As the session of the Methodist Centennial Conference progresses the more interesting does it become, and Mt. Vernon Place M. E. Church, where the body convenes, is crowded at times to overflowing. On Saturday the most intense interest pervaded the entire conference as the essayists and speakers referred to the Methodist pioneers and their work, and as to whether Methodism is losing its power among the masses. The influence extended throughout the house, and delegates and spectators at times joined in a chorus of clapping of hands that almost made the church ring. The effect of such a happy reunion among Methodists belonging to such a memorable body, composed, as it is, of leading Methodists throughout the country, is expected to have great influence upon the churches in the Methodist connection, and as predicted by one of the speakers Saturday "a glorious revival is looked for throughout the country as a result of this Centennial Conference." The very best debaters in the various branches of Methodism represented, both white and colored, are attending the conference, and subjects brought before the body are discussed with great ability and with much earnestness and impressiveness.

Lieut. Gov. G. D. Shands, of Senatobia, Miss., presided at the morning session, and Rev. D. H. Ela, of Worcester, Mass., conducted the devotional services. Several papers were presented and referred to the business committee, including a resolution offered by Rev. Mr. Scarrit, of Missouri, looking to a closer union of the different branches of Methodism. Rev. Dr. A. J. Kynett offered a resolution, which was adopted, for the issuing of a pastoral address by the Centennial Conference.

NATIONAL AID TO EDUCATION.

Rev. Dr. J. C. Hartsell, of Cincinnati, Ohio offered the following:

"Whereas the permanency of the civil and religious institutions, as well as the life of the nation, must always depend upon the intelligence as well as the morality of the people; and

"Whereas there are in the United States 6,250,000 people ten years of age and over who cannot read or write, and there are 2,000,000 of voters who cannot read the ballots they cast; and

"Whereas statesmen and Christian educators, irrespective of party or section, throughout the nation, have united to secure aid from the national treasury to supplement the expense of common school education for a few years in the several States, the distribution to be made on the basis of illiteracy, as shown by the census of 1880:

"*Resolved*, That this Centennial Conference of American Methodism, representing a membership of fully 14,000,000 of people in the United States, heartily approves the movement and earnestly calls upon Congress, now in session, to consummate this proposed measure."

The paper was referred to the business committee.

Rev. Dr. Bayliss, of Cincinnati, said in referring to the action on Friday in regard to revivals that he regretted that any impression should go out from this conference that it was losing confidence in the revival idea. It might not be thought of so much importance now, but the millions now gathered around our altars were brought to Christ through the medium of the revival. A centennial conference of Methodism was the last body, either by direct action or inference, to discourage the importance of the revival system in Methodism.

Rev. T. B. Lemon, of Nebraska, believed in conversion being insisted upon. He did not favor, however, a minister asking any one in the congregation who wished to go to Heaven to hold up his hands, and then enroll such as being converted. When a person is truly converted he or she will want to go to class-meeting. Such a person will be anxious to find persons of a kindred spirit, to tell what Christ had done for them.

Rev. Dr. Tanner, of the M. E. Church, said that the majority of the colored Methodists had been converted through the instrumentality of revivals pure and simple. It would not do to relegate such religious influence to the fireside. The poor people have very little household culture. They do not have the time or culture to take the children and instruct them in ethics, which, it is said, may result in conversion. This conference should be the last body to echo that Methodism is getting above or prefers some other method to the old-time revival.

The Rev. Dr. Marshall, of Mississippi, was afraid that the Sunday-schools as now conducted were opening a field of peril to their children. He favored culture by the fireside. Some of the Sabbath-school literature had as much to do with the conversion of the soul as the old story of the man in the moon. [Laughter.] Rev. Mr. O'Connell, of Philadelphia, argued that the church had to look to the Sunday-school more than to any other source for a supply for the ministry.

Rev. Dr. Wheeler, of Pittsburg, said discussion seemed to be all in reference to the poor, and they seemed to have advertised to the world that all effort among the rich and well-to-do society had been given up. If there was any class in society who need religion it is the rich. If the time comes when they were to preach only to one class it was time to disorganize. God never intended that His church should be for any one class.

CANADIAN METHODISM.

"Rise and Progress of Methodism in Canada" was the subject of a well prepared essay read by Rev. John A. Williams, D. D., of St. Catharine, Ontario. The history of Methodism in Canada, he said, goes back nearly to its settlement by English-speaking people. Mr. Williams spoke of the work of Rev. Mr. Black, a local preacher, who went to Canada in 1779 and engaged in evangelistic work. Mr. Black was afterwards a delegate to the famous Christmas Conference. He was subsequently ordained by Bishop Coke in Philadelphia and went back to Canada, taking with him six fellow-laborers. Canada having been ceded to the British by the French in 1763 but very little progress was made until after the revolutionary war. The first circuit in Canada was formed in 1790 by Wm. Loosey, a probationer, in connection with the New York Conference. He was very successful, the people receiving him with gladness and opening their doors to him, and they were never afterwards closed. The first decade of work showed five circuits and 1,150 members, the second twelve circuits and 2,700 members. The third decade, which included the war of 1812, was full of disaster to Methodism. The General Conference of 1824 had to deal with the question of lay representation, which was agitating the whole Methodist community. The principle for which the Methodists were contending at this time was that all churches should be put on equal footing with the Church of England with regard to rights of property. The question of separating the Canadian Methodist Churches from those in the United States came up for discussion in the General Conference of 1828 at Pittsburg, and was decided by a large majority in favor of the separation. On October 2, 1828, the Canadian Conference assembled and adopted for its government the Discipline used by the Methodists of the United States. This connection lasted thirty-seven years. The Methodist Church of Canada was now fully organised with 39 ministers, 8,700 members and 900 converted Indians. The act of Parliament declaring the right of all religious bodies to hold property was finally passed, and the right of Methodist ministers to solemnise marriage was at last acknowledged. In 1874 the growing sentiment in favor of organic union of all Methodist bodies led to an attempt to find a common basis on which the Canadian Church, the Wesleyan bodies and the New Connection might stand together. These churches met in General Conference in Toronto and formed the Methodist Church of Canada. The church now consists of 10 annual conferences, 1,884 ministers, 169,803 communicants and about 880,000 adherents. This comprises about 30 per cent. of the entire population. [Applause.] There are also 2,159 churches and 877 parsonages. The estimated value of church property is $9,130,807. There are also 2,787 Sunday-schools, with 22,434 teachers and 175,052 scholars. The Methodist Church of Canada has 443 domestic missionaries, of whom 43 are among the Indians; also 10 foreign missionaries, principally in Japan, the object being to train up a native Christian ministry there. The first Methodists in our province, said Dr. Williams, were born in and nourished in the Methodist Church of the United States.

At the suggestion of the presiding officer a hymn was sung, the entire audience joining in singing "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing."

THE PIONEERS OF METHODISM.

Rev. Charles J. Little, a professor in Dickinson College, next read one of the most inspiring essays of the conference, on "Methodist Pioneers and Their Work." So vivid was the portrayal of what the pioneers did and suffered for the cause of Methodism that the conference and spectators were moved to laughter and tears at the speaker's will. Cries of Amen, Hallelujah, went up from various parts of the house, and there was an almost constant clapping of hands as Mr. Little told of how the pioneers traveled through the woods and slept upon the ground amid the howling of wolves and the shrieks of wild cats; of how Christians in those days had to fight as well as pray; of how the pioneers often went hungry, after asking a blessing on a crust of bread, and for days sometimes even without that; of how they wore homespun clothing, sometimes patched all over, with no desire to possess anything but the religion of Jesus Christ; and of how one of the pioneers who had been given a house gave it back, because he could not then sing that hymn which gave him so much delight, "No Foot of Land Do I Possess." Mr. Little said he could find but few of the pioneers but what "set out deliberately to have a hard time." Their religious activity was the outcome of religious experience. They were not men of their times, but men above their times. [Applause.] Coke, he said, never separated himself from England. Asbury never separated himself from America. [Applause.] Coke crossed the Atlantic eighteen times, Asbury only once; not even to go see his mother, for whom he would have given his last shirt, would he leave America. [Applause.] Coke twice married. Asbury refused to bind a woman to his hardships. Methodist pioneers were itinerants in the true sense of the word; they were not prescribed by State lines. They were appointed to large tracts, some covering several States, and for small periods. Jesse Lee had all New England for his parish, and Waters preached in Virginia, Maryland, his native State, and in New Jersey. American pioneers were thrown out into the ministry at a time when good roads were rare, rivers plenty and fords few, [laughter,] and bridges scarcely any. They were men who were daunted by no obstacle and always ready for any crisis. What other men explained as metaphor they knew as facts. [Applause.] The most ungrammatical of them refused to construe that Christ's blood cleanseth us meant at some future time. [Loud applause.] Methodism as an organization, Methodism as an energy in American life, is such, the speaker said, because the Methodists of the eighteenth century, according to the judgment of their redeemed natures, left the nineteenth century to take care of itself, or rather to Him who is from everlasting to everlasting. [Applause.] The speaker took up the names of many of the preachers prominent as pioneers of Methodism, and spoke of the characteristics of each. Of culture they were almost destitute, but happy is that school of theology where the students hunger after righteousness as did the fathers. In two kinds of knowledge they were profoundly versed—in that of the Bible and that of human nature. They were no respectors of persons, and so made an impression on men and women in every kind of life. The time allotted to Mr. Little for his essay was 45 minutes, but this expired when he was only about two-thirds through. When the presiding officer rapped on account of the time being up, there was such a general cry all over the house for him to go on, and such general enthusiasm manifested, that the speaker went on and concluded with common consent of both conference and audience.

At the close of the address Bishop Walden said there was a "Methodist spell in all our hearts," and moved to adjourn as soon as the usual announcements were made, which was concurred in by unanimous consent.

Bishop Andrews announced that Bishop Holsey could not be present on Monday; his essay on "Methodist Means of Grace" would be read by his substitute immediately after the devotional exercises on Monday morning, and that the time allotted to Bishop Holsey on the programme would be given to Rev. Dr. J. H. Vincent, whose essay on the "Possible Dangers to Future Methodism" on Friday created such a favorable impression, to make an address on "The Methodist Church and its Youth."

Afternoon Session.

At the afternoon session Gov. R. E. Pattison, of Pennsylvania, presided, and Rev. Frederick Merrick made the opening prayer. "Is Methodism Losing Its Power Among the Masses?" was the subject of an essay read by Bishop S. T. Jones, D. D., Washington, D. C., of the African Methodist Episcopal Church Zion. Nothing could give him more pleasure, said the Bishop, than to discuss the negative side of the question to which he had been assigned. Methodism was especially suited to meet the wants and needs of the hitherto neglected masses and to hold its sway over them. The church now established in grandeur and wealth, is yet a church of the people—a church for the masses and the poor. Methodism has been lifted to an altitude to which all the denominations have aspired, but to which few have attained. She looks down with pride from the lofty height and satisfactorily surveys the field of her labor. She takes care of the poor, administers to her sick, and gives consolation to the dying. Her ministers follow the simplicity of Christ in teaching the masses and endearing them to the simple tenets of the Gospel and the everlasting truths and saving power of God. The class-meetings and love-feast, which are purely Methodistic, are particularly adapted to the masses. The social features of Methodism, Bishop Jones argued, was one of the great causes of the success of the church. Each one feels a care for the other, and all feel they are equal before the Lord. If Methodism desires to continue to its control over the masses, it needs only to guard its simple forms against the innovation of all others, and its success is assured. The itinerant plan of its ministerial service is most acceptable to the masses. The simplicity and grandeur of the songs of Methodism must ever hold a conspicuous place in the world of song. [Applause.] The true old, thrilling, elevating and inspiring songs of the Wesleys will have a power and influence in all coming time. They are not confined to the Methodistic communion; others have learned them from Methodism. The three white and two colored men who formed a nucleus of Methodism in the rigging-loft on Manhattan Island have drawn around them the masses, until today nearly four millions of Methodists, with a following of twenty millions who are proud of Methodism. [Applause.] Methodism has largely outstripped all other denominations in membership, churches, church property, and institutions of learning, as well as in reforming and refining the unwashed millions wherever found. [Applause.] If Methodism maintains the purity and simplicity that characterises it today, its second century will find it still matchless in its power to draw souls to Christ.

CHURCH WORK AMONG THE MASSES.

Following the essay, "All hail the power of Jesus' name" was sung, after which Dr. G. C. Rankin opened the discussion of the subject. "Methodism," he said, "may have lost in the non-essentials as to methods of work, but not in the weightier matters of doctrine and its mission to the world." [Applause.] Rev. F. C. Holliday, of the Allegheny Conference, African Methodist Episcopal Church Zion, said they were anxious for a union of Methodism. [Laughter and applause.] They never would have gone out but for the fact that it got too warm for them, and they had to go. [Laughter.] They were ready to get married. [Laughter.]

Rev. E. W. Moseley, of the Colored M. E. Church, said that 155,000 members who formerly held a relation with the M. E. Church South had united with a separate organization. They loved the Lord our God as much as their white brethren, and he wanted the brethren of the M. E. Church to remember them, and not to forget that "we are coming." [Applause.]

Rev. W. B. Derrick, of the African M. E. Church, said that instead of Methodism retrograding, it is progressing. Methodism is designed to free the world. [Applause.] It knew no North, no South, no East, no West, but one God, one faith, one baptism. They were not there as white or colored Methodists, they were all children of one common Father. They made the same prayers and sang the same hymns.

Dr. A. J. Kynett argued that something should be done to secure a large attendance at their churches. There were vast multitudes who never attend their churches. Eloquence of speech seems to have lost its power over men, and a style of eloquence is demanded now higher than was demanded years ago.

Rev. Dr. J. M. Buckley, of New York, appeared as a speaker upon the floor for the first time since the opening of the conference, and his presence brought forth hearty applause. He said the masses when Methodism first arose were not what the masses of today are. Then there were no large cities, and the people were scattered all over the land. There were no daily papers. The churches were plain, and plain people went in them. It was not then only fervent preaching, but the exhortation and testimony of laymen, that accomplished such a great work. Wherever there was the right kind of preacher the right man for class-leader could be found. If it is not so, the fault is with the preacher. You can't fill up the church with children who don't know when they were converted, and make class-leaders of them. [Applause.] The fanatical Salvation Army is doing what once was done in class-meetings, and that was all there was in it. [Laughter and applause.]

Dr. Wheeler argued that it was not the fault of the church that the masses did not come; they were all welcome. They fenced themselves off from religious effort through the social relations of guilds which they have formed. The church did not have access to them. It was for the church to break down these barriers and get its arms around the working classes again.

Rev. James Hill, of Ohio, who said he had been converted at a camp-meeting in Baltimore county, strongly favored the class-meetings. God forbid that there ever should be an aristocratic church of Methodists. [Applause.] It was not that he objected to grand structures like the one they were in. The Catholics, he said, outbuilt them in the matter of churches, and yet they draw the masses. The Methodists, he argued, should be more particular in their social life and in looking after the poor. There was danger to Methodism in the liquor traffic, with its consequent degradation. He had never chewed tobacco or smoked a cigar in his life, but if liquor was done away with they could have all the tobacco they want. [Laughter.]

METHODISM IN MEXICO.

Rev. Ygnacio Sanches Rivera, who is engaged in Christian work on the borders of Mexico, made an address in his own language, and which was interpreted by Dr. A. H. Sutherland, who has charge of one of the Mexican missions. The speaker said the people with whom he labored thanked God for their political independence, and for what is of far greater importance, the entrance of the gospel into his native country. Before the introduction of Methodism in Mexico that country slept in great lethargy. There is today a great change in converted Mexico. He thanked God for the blessings of the gospel. The Mexicans attached much importance to class-meetings. [Applause.] Both the M. E. and M. E. Church South have in Mexico more than 100 preachers, and have 4,000 members. The Mexicans like the doctrines and constitution of the Methodist Church, and more than all the sublime doctrine of sanctification. [Applause.]

"Blest be the Tie that Binds" was sung, and Dr. Sutherland gave a brief account of the work under his charge. The work there, he said, was Methodistic—it was genuine, and has the element of true Methodism. They made no improvement on the Methodist methods or doctrines, but, in the language of Jabez Bunting, they believed in repentance, faith, holiness, a penny a week and a shilling a quarter.

Dr. Tanner said that in the sublime paper read by Rev. Mr. Little he did not mention a single black hero in all the land. The colored Methodists had them, too, and they played as great a part for the colored race as the white man did for his. [Laughter.]

Bishops Andrews, chairman of the business committee, reported a resolution, which was adopted in favor of preparing a pastoral address, and appointing Bishops Merrill, of the M. E. Church; Bishop Wilson, of the M. E. Church South; Bishop Campbell, of the African M. E. Church; R. B. Vance and H. S. Stannard, as the committee to prepare the address. It was announced that Bishop J. W. Hood, of the African M. E. Church Zion, would preside at the morning session Monday, and Bishop Ninde, of the M. E. Church, in the afternoon.

The conference adjourned until 9.30 o'clock this morning.

Mayor Latrobe was among the visitors to the conference Saturday afternoon.

The ladies connected with the various Methodist churches have arranged for a reception to the delegates to the conference in the Concert Hall of the Academy of Music from five to seven o'clock this evening. Cards of admission have been sent to the delegates and none but persons holding cards will be admitted. Itzel's orchestra of twelve pieces has been engaged to be present.

The reception committee is composed of the following gentlemen: Dr. H. M. Wilson, chairman, Charles J. Baker, Gen. John S. Berry, T. J. Magruder, T. P. Baldwin, J. S. Hagerty, J. Frank Supplee, P. Hanson Hiss, Gen. C. B. Fisk, Wm. Rudolph.

Gov. Pattison, who presided at the conference Saturday afternoon, is a young-looking man, and had a kind way of enforcing the rules of the conference.

Rev. T. B. White, of Albany, Oregon, who traveled 2,500 miles to come to the conference, brought with him an apple which is 14¼ inches in diameter, and a pear about 7 inches long. They were displayed Saturday in the lecture-room of the church, and attracted much attention.

Centennial Services.

A centennial service was held last night at Eutaw M. E. Church. The church was well filled, notwithstanding the heavy rain. The Rev. S. M. Hartsock, pastor, presided. In opening the meeting he said Eutaw Church was dedicated in 1808 by Bishop Asbury. The pulpit at which he preached the dedicatory sermon is still in use in the lecture-room of the church. The remains of Bishop Asbury were deposited April 10, 1816, in a vault in rear of the pulpit, and rested there for forty years, until they were removed to Mount Olivet Cemetery by order of the General Conference. The Rev. Mr. Hartsock then introduced Bishop Thomas Bowman, of St. Louis, who reviewed the statistics of the growth of Methodism in the United States. In speaking of religious publications he said: "There are 150 official Methodist papers—not the dailies, full of nonsense, wickedness and trash that we find in all of them." While treating of temperance Bishop Bowman said that when he was a boy in Pennsylvania he knew of a church where the pastor and elders pitched quoits for drinks before the service began. The Methodists were hated because they preached against the drinking habits of that day.

Gen. Clinton B. Fisk, of New York, the next speaker, sketched the rise and growth of Methodism in a graphic manner. He described a visit made on Saturday to Perry Hall, in Baltimore county, where Bishop Coke stopped during the Christmas Conference of 1784. In company with Mrs. Fisk, the speaker drove out the Harford road and found a dilapidated house built on the foundation of the old mansion, which was burned many years ago. The place belongs to the Meredith heirs, and is occupied by a farmer named Wm. H. Deal, whom the General found to be a Methodist. The ruins of a part of the old mansion are still to be seen, showing the magnificence of its former architecture. It was the residence of Mr. Goff, a wealthy Baltimore banker. Mr. Goff and his wife Prudence were in the habit of giving dinners weekly, which were attended by the fashionable people of Baltimore. Some of the slaves belonging to Mr. Goff attended a Methodist meeting in the neighborhood, and through them Mrs. Goff was converted. Her husband was induced to attend a meeting, and also became a Methodist. The banquet hall was changed to a house of prayer, and is a noted place in the annals of early Methodism.

A temperance mass-meeting was held Saturday night in the Eutaw Street M. E. Church, in accordance with the action taken by the Methodist Centennial Conference. Besides the presiding officer and speakers a number of members of the Centennial Conference were present. The meeting was called to order by Rev. Daniel Dorchester, D. D., of Natick, Mass., who presided. Dr. Dorchester said that the friends of temperance would find that Methodism was one of their strongest advocates. Asbury was such a teetotaler that he even refused to take a toddy prescribed for him as a medicine. Addresses were afterwards made by Dr. J. H. Carlisle, of Spartanburg, S. C., Methodist Episcopal Church South, and by Rev. Dr. W. H. Olin, of Binghampton, N. Y. Dr. Carlisle argued that Methodists, as a duty, should most emphatically pronounce against intemperance. Dr. Olin, who was a member of the New York Legislature at its last session, said he consented to go there to fight the liquor traffic. He did not believe in the license system. A resolution offered by Rev. J. McKendree Reiley, of Baltimore, was adopted, thanking the Centennial Conference for giving temperance a proper place among other great causes.