

# WYOMING CONFERENCE

**SUPERINTENDENT L. C. MURDOCK'S REPORT—W. B. SIGNOR DROPPED—LAYMEN RECOMMEND FIVE-YEAR TERM—OTHER BUSINESS.**

## Scranton District Report.

Rev. Dr. Murdock's report, is as follows:

"In presenting the report of the second year's work on the Scranton district, I wish to record my gratitude to God for His sustaining grace and constant help in all the trying experiences, through which His workers have passed. These trying times have been unusually numerous; but He has been present in every trial, and has afforded marvelous strength and endurance. For our present faith, health, and joy, we are indebted to Him, and unto Him be praise.

"In the parsonage at Dalton, last October, Mrs. William S. Crandall after two weeks of serious illness, leaving the circle of loving friends on earth, went in triumph to the fellowship of friends in heaven.

"Mrs. S. C. Simpkins, whose husband joined the ranks of the triumphant last year, has gone to be with Him.

"William H. Hiller, who joined the Wyoming Conference in 1861 and served in the active ministry until 1902, with the exception of three years, 1862-3-4, which were spent as a soldier in the United States army; who had been honored and beloved by his brethren in the ministry and the churches which he served, and whose life had been one of especial efficiency, quietly folded his hands in sleep Friday morning, February 16.

"While none of our active ministers have died during the year, some have been suffering from serious illness. Rev. G. C. Lyman has been suffering almost constantly during the year, but with heroic endeavor has kept up his work, and the Tripp Park church to-day is in a most spiritual condition.

"H. W. Holter was overcome by the heat last July, and has been able since to attend to the work on only a part of the West Nicholson charge.

"On the evening of July 10, Watson B. Signor, with his wife and son, Duane, came to Scranton, ostensibly to attend an outing of the preachers' and their families the next day. Leaving his family with friends, he came to the central city, and since that time none of his friends have been able to locate him. Many clues have been followed but all efforts to find him thus far have been fruitless.

"Samuel B. Murray, who was our pastor at Waverly, Pa., returned his parchments and withdrew from our church and ministry last November. He is now assisting the pastor of the Second Presbyterian church, this city. Less than a month later, J. J. Neighbor withdrew from us to enter the "priesthood" of the Episcopal church. These withdrawals, together with the readjustments caused by removals and deaths in other districts, have made necessary several pastoral changes. David High, a local preacher from the Philadelphia conference, has been very acceptably supplying the work at Orson. J. S. Custard has had St. Paul's church added to the Throop church, and has served these fields most efficiently. When the changes were made during the fall, as a consequence of the death of Dr. Surdam, and the removal of Dr. Ferris, M. S. Godshall came to the Asbury pastorate; M. L. Harding to the church at Providence, and E. A. Gillespie transferred from the Wilmington conference, went to New Milford. All of these men have demonstrated their fitness for their new fields of labor, and the people esteem them most highly for their works' sake.

"The ability of Methodism to adjust herself to unexpected conditions, and the exceptional excellence of her polity have been fully demonstrated this year.

## Evangelistic Work.

"The true evangelistic note has been sounded in every part of the district. Our pastors all feel that the great work of Methodism is to get people saved from sin and at work in harmony with God. Nearly every charge has made accessions to its membership, and many have been blessed with gracious revivals of religion, in which old-time fervor has been manifest. The statistics of the work, that men might compile are many times misleading, and by far the greatest results of spiritual forces are invisible, but more than a thousand have professed conversion during the year, and in some instances whole communities have been quickened. However, the work of evangelization is growing more and more difficult, and the times call for the most powerful and thoroughly consecrated effort to win men from worldliness and sin. From the following charges, reports have come of successful revivals: Ariel, Beach Lake, Bethany, Brooklyn, Carley Brook, Clifford, Dalton, Damascus, Gibson, Gouldsboro, Hamlin, Heart Lake, Honesdale, Jermy, Lake Como, Nicholson, Peckville, Pleasant Mount, Taylor, Thompson, Thornhurst and White Mills.

## Church and Parsonage Property.

"Faithful attention has been given to the condition of our church and parsonage property. The pastors' reports will show that there has been a very material reduction in the indebtedness on a score or more of the charges. On New Year's eve, the congregation at Dalton, amid songs of rejoicing, burned the mortgage that had been against their church property for several years. This people now is entirely free from all indebtedness. Simpson church, through the heroic efforts of their pastor, has secured enough subscriptions this year to pay off its entire indebtedness, and less than \$250 still remains unpaid.

"Extensive improvements have been made on the church and parsonage property at Factoryville, Thompson, Moscow, Dalton, Wallsville, Taylor, Thornhurst, Blakeslee, Sterling, Orson, Embury, Peckville, Providence, Nicholson, Lackawaxen, Gouldsboro, Gibson, Brooklyn, Bethany, Aldenville, Waverly and Fleetville.

## At Dunmore, E. A. Martin and wife are happily located in one of the finest parsonages upon the district. This was completed this year at the cost of over \$5,000, \$5,

600 of which has already been paid. The new church at Milanville is nearly completed and will be dedicated shortly after the opening of the new conference year. This people have labored heroically and are worthy of the sympathy and help of the stronger charges of the conference.

"Peckville has been the recipient of several special gifts. From the estate of the late G. B. Newton, the trustees received a bequest of \$300, the income from which is to be used toward paying the insurance premiums for the church. From the estate of the late Anna A. Swingle, the Ladies' Aid society received \$100, and \$25 was left for the trustees. J. D. Peck, an official member of the church for over forty years, in January of this year cancelled a note of the trustees for \$200, on which \$27 interest was then due. The total of these benefactions to this church during the year amounted to \$653.

"White Mills, which started out with Cherry Ridge and Hoadleys as a new charge last Spring, has demonstrated the wisdom of this arrangement. They have paid the pastor a salary of \$700 with house rent, and are now planning to build addition to their church. This promises to be one of our flourishing charges.

## Pastoral Support.

"Thirteen charges during the year have increased the salary of their pastors, an amount aggregating \$1,925. This increase is especially gratifying, as it follows an increase of more than \$4,000 which was made last year. But we still have several charges on the district that are paying salaries too small to furnish a comfortable support to a minister and his family. It is gratifying to note that the churches are coming to realize more fully their obligation to our retired ministers.

## Missions and Benevolences.

"The cause of missions and the various church benevolences have been faithfully represented, and there will be a good increase in the amounts paid to these causes this year. We have some princely givers within this district; what joy will come when all have learned the blessedness of this means of grace.

"Three very spiritual and inspiring meetings of our District Ministerial association have been held during the year. We have held no camp-meetings within the bonds of the district. Several years ago meetings were discontinued and the Salem Grove camp properties were sold. I have not discovered, as yet, any evidence of strong, general desire to inaugurate this form of religious activity anywhere within our territory, but am hoping that every charge may be filled with the spirit that made those camp meetings successful.

"In closing, I think I may say for myself and every co-laborer that we have striven to do better, and hoped to accomplish more. We have had a vision of the field and have felt the burden of our duty. Our limitations have not been in weak purpose, or wrong intent. We have tried to do our best, and we give over our imperfect work, into His hands, who maketh perfect, with humble trust."

**Wilkes-Barre District.**

Conference gave careful attention to the excellent report submitted by Rev. Hugh C. McDermott, D. D., superintendent of the Wilkes-Barre district. Attention was called to the fact that the district has two cities; two country towns; thirteen other towns with a population from four to eighteen thousand and six smaller towns with a population ranging from two to four thousand each. In all but four churches have been established.

Eight of the ten delegates who will represent the Wyoming conference at the general conference of the Methodist Episcopal church were elected Friday afternoon by the laymen and ministers of the conference, and afterward all delegates listened to an address by Bishop Earl Cranston, D. D., LL. D., who came forth as an advocate of changing the rules of the church so that laymen may have a seat in the annual ministerial conferences. Bishop Cranston's address was strong. He told the place of the laymen, and the place of the minister, decrying both the bull-dozer of the pulpit and the self-willed obstinate layman.

Bishop's Cranston's address to the laymen and ministers at the joint session of the two electoral conferences was a masterful exposition of the relationship of the minister to the laymen, the laymen to the minister and of both to the church. The bishop called the session together and invited Thomas Henwood, president of the lay electoral conference, to take a seat on the platform. Rev. Austin Griffin, D. D., of Oneonta, offered prayer and then the bishop opened the meeting. He said that there would be no similarity to a political convention as there was no cut and dried program for the session. Mr. Henwood replied to the greetings of the bishop, saying that he was proud of the high standards of the church and wished to see them maintained.

The five lay delegates to the general conference were introduced. G. L. Peck, of Simpson church, West Scranton, said that it was a new experience for him to stand before the bar of conference, as two others had been elected general lay delegates for the second term. "These two brothers who have been chosen again are fortunate," Mr. Peck said, "in that they had not announced four years ago that they would under no circumstances accept a renomination and a re-election."

**Laymen Talk.**

Mr. Peck told of his first visit to a conference in Honesdale in 1877, when his father, the late Rev. Luther Peck, was presiding elder of the Honesdale district. Mr. Peck said that he had respect for the high office to which he had been elected and closed with this statement: "My hat is in the ring and I am going to be busy at the general conference all the time."

Bishop Cranston followed the lay delegates. In beginning his talk he said it was always safe to allow the

## BY THE GUMDROP ROUTE.



Democracy is sure it can reach the pole just as Dr. Cook did. —Thorndike in Baltimore American.

laymen to talk first, for if the ministers speak first, a shrewd laymen is liable to pick out a weak point and dwell on it.

"The Methodist church is rich in laymen," the bishop went on. "I doubt if there is any other church in which the laymen have advanced further in the support of the pastors as in our own church. Think of increasing the pastors' yearly salary \$1,700,000 in four years, and you have some idea of the worth of Methodist laymen and the fidelity of the laity to our pastors."

## Self-Willed Laymen.

"The ministers have their place and the laity have their place," the bishop continued. "The minister's throne is in the pulpit, and the laymen's place is in supporting the throne. The day of the pulpit bulldozer has gone by and I hope the day of the self-willed, obstinate laymen is passing. There is a preponderance of advantage. If anybody has the advantage it is the laymen. In the first place the laity must recommend us as local preachers and command us to the confidence of the conference. There is not a day that we are not dependable upon them for our support, for all of us require livelihood, except those of the preachers who marry money or inherit it. Those of us who do get money, soon acquire a sore throat and quit the ministry."

After the laugh which followed this remark subsided the bishop said that it wasn't a question of rights or equities, as very discriminately devised. It is what is best for the church that should guide the laymen and ministers, the bishop went on, what is best for the cause to which all are bound by vows too holy to be broken.

"I am not so sure that the presence of laymen in the annual conference will be an evil," said the bishop. "I am sure that it would be good for the laymen. I am thoroughly convinced that laymen in the cabinet would be bad."

## Laymen Favor Return to the Five-Year Limit.

By a vote which was practically unanimous the Wyoming lay electoral conference Friday afternoon voted to return to the five-year term limit for pastorates, and a memorial to the general conference asking that that step be taken. The following resolution introduced by Captain W. A. May, chairman of the resolution committee was adopted:

"Believing that a return to the time limit, whereby a minister of the Methodist Episcopal church could only be returned to a charge not to exceed a certain number of years, would be of a greater advantage to the majority of the appointments than the present system, the Wyoming Lay Electoral conference in session assembled, on March 22, 1912, direct that those elected its delegates to the general conference to be held at Minneapolis during May, 1912, support and work for the establishment of such a limit, the length of the term not to exceed five years."

There was practically no serious opposition to the resolution. The following were elected lay delegates to the general conference: George L. Peck, of Simpson church, Scranton; G. W. Laycock, of Kingston; Harry C. Perkins, of Binghamton; E. G. Nowlan, of Newark Valley, N. Y., and Perry Rood, of Bainbridge Springs, N. Y.

Announcement was made that the following veterans had requested that they be relieved from active duty and placed on a superannuated relation; Rev. E. L. Santee, of Courtland; Rev. G. C. Lyman, of Tripp Park church, Scranton; Rev. Asa J. Van Cleft, of Great Bend; Rev. M. D. Fuller, of Norwich, N. Y.; Rev. Austin Griffin, of Oneonta, N. Y., and Rev. Charles A. Frear, of Portlandville, N. Y.

Dr. Fuller and Dr. Griffin spoke feelingly of their service in the ministry. The usual interesting scene of the retiring ministers before the bar of conference was saddened somewhat by the illness and absence of Rev. Dr. Van Cleft and Rev. Dr. Lyman. Conference sent sympathy and greetings to the disabled ministers.

The conference was in executive session for an hour Friday when the candidates for ordination were examined. The disappearance of Rev. Watson B. Signor, on July 10 last, was the subject of consideration. Rev. L. C. Murdock, D. D., district superintendent reported the history of the case. It was finally decided to prefer a charge against the mis-

ing minister of being absent without leave.

## Methodist Notes.

Sunday last was a day of rejoicing with pastor and people in Pittston, the end of the conference year being marked by the liquidation of all indebtedness and the burning of the mortgage. Rev. George A. Cure and his loyal co-workers are receiving congratulations.

The people of the Methodist Episcopal church in Norwich, N. Y., and the community as well, are deeply appreciative of the good work accomplished by Rev. Dr. M. D. Fuller as a pastor and children. Heartfelt resolutions to this effect have been adopted and his return to the pastorate of Broad Street Church has been unanimously requested.

Thirty-seven Italians were received into the First church, Carbondale, Sunday, March 10. Rev. Dr. Frederick White, superintendent of Italian Methodist Missions of America, assisted by Rev. Dr. T. F. Hall, the pastor of the church, presided at the evening service.

Rev. J. A. Tutbill, pastor of the Methodist Episcopal church, Clifford, formerly of Beachlake, has been greatly blessed in a series of Evangelistic meetings held in Hickory Ridge Pa., beginning January 29 and closing February 25.

## A Demonstration.

"It is wicked to follow the fashion to extremes." "Why, grandma, I am surprised to hear you say so! Isn't it right to walk the straight and narrow way, and that's what you have to do if you wear hobble skirts."

## Beats Description.

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The Editor—Mebbe not, but I got four barrels of samples.

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ARRIVE.	LEAVE.
8:20.....Scranton.....	1:30.....Dunmore.....
8:13.....Dunmore.....	1:37.....Nay Aug.....
8:02.....Nay Aug.....	1:46.....Elmhurst.....
7:54.....Elmhurst.....	1:55.....Wimmers.....
7:43.....Wimmers.....	2:07.....Saco.....
7:40.....Saco.....	2:10.....Maplewood.....
7:34.....Maplewood.....	2:16.....Lake Ariel.....
7:20.....Lake Ariel.....	2:34.....Gravity.....
7:09.....Gravity.....	2:41.....Clemons.....
6:59.....Clemons.....	2:51.....Hoadleys.....
6:53.....Hoadleys.....	2:56.....West Hawley.....
6:37.....West Hawley.....	3:27.....White Mills.....
6:12.....White Mills.....	3:38.....East Honesdale.....
6:03.....East Honesdale.....	3:47.....Honesdale.....
6:06.....Honesdale.....	3:50.....

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## DELEGATE TO REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTION.

I hereby announce myself as a candidate for delegate to the Fourteenth Congressional District of Pennsylvania to the Republican National Convention to be held at Chicago June 18, 1912. If elected I shall go unpledged, and shall support for the presidential nomination that man who at the time of the convention appears most fully to represent the will of the Republican voters, and is best fitted to lead the party to success at the polls.  
HOMER GREENE.  
Honesdale, Pa., March 12, 1912.

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## M. Lee Braman

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