

TERMS AND NOTICES.

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Religious Intelligencer.

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Rev. Joseph McLeod, D. D., - - Editor.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 1903.

Editorial.

—Two or three quarrelling church members will do more harm in a week than the faithful pastor and the rest of the church can undo in a year.

—The Methodist church in Australia makes much use of local preachers. In the state of Victoria alone there are 1,524 of them. They are valuable helpers in the work of the church. All denominations could find work for such brethren.

—The Methodist Episcopal church in the United States divided many years ago into two distinct denominations, known as the M. E. Church North and the M. E. Church South. In late years they have been drawing together, and there are indications that they may soon be united.

—Encouraged by the great good done in the last two years by open-air and tent evangelism in their city, the Presbyterians of Philadelphia are carrying on the work on a larger scale this summer. Among the prominent results of the last two years' work three new churches have been established. Thousands of people have been reached by the gospel message, and many hundreds, even thousands, have been won to a new life.

—One of the duties of the church of God is to speak forth in ringing tones whenever the welfare of the public is menaced. She is, as a recent writer well says, a watchman upon the walls of civilization, a zealous protector of the people in all matters of morals, ethics and religion. She is both guardian and counsellor. Throughout Christendom she is the instructor of mankind in all his social duties, and in whatever affects his life as an individual or as a citizen. The springs of highest patriotism are within her care. The ideals of the race are set by her. Upon her de-

volves the responsibility of maintaining a quickened public conscience.

—A new organization, called The Catholic Association of Ireland, and having the approval of the bishops, has for its object the compelling of all employers to employ Roman Catholics in the proportion they bear to the whole population. Its action is to be "business-like, well organized, prompt and secret." It does not always succeed, notwithstanding it has the blessing of the bishops. An attempt was made to make the managers of a railway discharge certain Protestants and employ Catholics, but the railway directors thought they were capable of managing their own business. In many cases, however, the association will succeed in coercing employers, and much injustice will be done.

—In an address to the ministerial students in a Missouri college, Dr. Northrup not only spoke of the much they would be required to do, and do well, but he cautioned them against certain things, in a series of don'ts, thus:

"Don't exaggerate. Don't fool with doubts. Don't let success tip you over. Don't dabble in business ventures. Don't snub anybody, not even a book-agent. Don't jolt in ruts; vary your services and methods. Don't make long pulpit prayers. Don't imitate others—better be a poor original than fine copy. Don't preach long sermons. Don't be cold in your delivery—preach red-hot from the heart a positive gospel. Don't speak in a monotone—the voice has numerous keys; play on as many as possible. Don't harp too much on one string—variety is pleasing, and God's Word gives ample choice of themes. Don't tire people out with long introductions—you can spoil the appetite for dinner by too much thin soup. Don't neglect study and closet prayer—the finest human pipes gives forth no music unless filled with the divine breath. Don't bawl or scream—too much water stops mill-wheels, and too much voice drowns sense. Don't scold your congregation or your burden-bearers. Don't go on after you have finished, saying, 'As I said before;' if you said it before, say something else after; let the clatter of the mill cease when the corn is ground."

UNION OF DENOMINATIONS.

One of the most interesting and encouraging things of the religious life of to-day is the spirit of denominational union. It is already very marked, and is apparently deepening. It is manifest in every part of Christendom, and is shared in more or less by every branch of the Christian church, more especially the strongly evangelical bodies.

It is noteworthy that the union of denominations that are nearly alike in doctrine and polity is heartily promoted in mission fields, and more quickly accomplished, than at home. In the presence of heathenism, and all the forms and forces of evil that abound in unchristian lands, the questions on which Christians have divided into separate organizations are seen to be less important than those on which they agree. They have no strength to expend in even friendly

Christian competitions, where all their strength is needed in the crusade against the powers of darkness. Besides, divisions that represent so little that is vital are quickly noticed by heathen teachers and people, and deepen their prejudice against Christianity.

The union of the English and the American Presbyterian missions in China was one of the first of such unions, and the results have clearly proved its wisdom. Others have followed. The "United Church of Christ in Japan" embraces six Presbyterian bodies, and is the strongest organization of native Christians in that country.

In India there are twelve Presbyterian bodies, representing churches in Scotland, England, Wales, Ireland, the United States and Canada. Several years ago a project for union of these bodies was mooted. A committee has formulated a basis of union and the twelve bodies are likely soon to be one Presbyterian church in India.

The Methodist bodies in England are moving towards each other. The Methodist New Connexion, with 207 ministers, 1,171 lay preachers, 43,000 members; the United Methodist Free Churches, numbering almost a round 100,000, including 450 preachers; and the Bible Christians, 30,000 in number, have been in conference about union. They have communicated with the parent body—the Wesleyan Methodist Church—to the Primitive Methodists, and to the Independent Methodists, asking them to appoint members of a joint committee to confer the whole subject in all its bearings. It is likely that in the near future a United Methodist Church of England may be constituted.

In Australia two years ago the Presbyterian bodies united. All the Methodist bodies in Australasia (except the Primitive Methodists in New Zealand) have become one. These unions have been greatly blessed. There is now a movement looking towards the union of the Presbyterians, Methodists and Congregationalists into one evangelical body. It is, of course, understood that such a union cannot be quickly brought about. There are difficulties of various kinds, and of different degrees of seriousness, which must be overcome. But, in view of the advantage union would bring to the cause of Christ, it is not too much to expect that even this larger union will some day be accomplished.

In the United States, the Presbyterians, North and South, and the Methodists, North and South, divided by the war, are getting closer together, and there are signs that it may not be long before there is but one Methodist body and one Presbyterian body for the whole country. Recently the United Brethren, a large evangelical body, Methodist in form, and the Methodist Protestants,

have been conferring about union, and so much progress has been made that they are likely to be one body very soon.

The experience of two denominations in Canada—the Presbyterians and the Methodists—emphasizes the wisdom of the consolidation of Christian bodies that, in belief and practice, have much in common, and few differences. A Presbyterian writer, reviewing the work of the Presbyterian church in recent years, says "it was a red-letter day in the history of Presbyterianism when on June 15th, 1875, in Montreal, the spirit of union which had manifested itself on several occasions found its final expression in one Presbyterian church for the entire dominion. The results of that union have been such as to abundantly justify the most sanguine hopes of its promoters. The many delicate and difficult questions were bravely faced, and the old lines of cleavage have practically disappeared. We can thank God for a church which feels the thrill and throb of a common life as she is called to face the great problems of the day." The Presbyterian church in Canada has a strength for the great work before it to-day which it could not have had were it divided into several organizations as before the union.

What is true of the Presbyterians, is true, also, of the Methodists. Several Methodist bodies were carrying on their work, often in sharp competition with each other. Since their union, only about twenty years ago, they have made most remarkable progress. Those ministers and laymen who objected strongly to union were long ago convinced that the movement was of God. And the many who feared friction and trouble, have rejoiced that their fears were not realized.

These two great denominations are occupying places amongst the Christian forces of Canada, and are doing a work in moulding the life of the country, which would have been utterly impossible in their divided condition.

So marked have been the benefits of a united Methodism and a united Presbyterianism, that the more thoughtful and far-seeing men in the two denominations are now beginning to look towards their union some day. The question has been canvassed somewhat, and already an agreement has been made by which there will be an avoidance of the overlapping of Presbyterian and Methodist work, especially in the great Northwest mission field.

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