

1. Has the attention of the census department been called to alleged errors in the religious classification of the people in the counties of Sunbury and Queens, N. B., especially of the Free Baptist denomination?

2. Has the commissioner directed the enumerators, or any of them, in the foregoing counties, to revise their returns, with a view to the correction of errors in the religious classification, if any?

3. If so, what report did the above enumerators make to the commissioner; and will that officer be directed to correct the classification of the religions of the people in the above counties?

The Minister of Agriculture replied:

1. No, except generally for the whole province.

2. Yes, concerning persons who were recorded as "C. Baptists," whose identical sect was in doubt.

3. The revision showed that some persons so described were Calvinistic Baptists and that others were Christian Baptists, and the corrections were made for the first volume of the Census Report, the Christian Baptists being counted as Free Baptists, and the Calvinistic Baptists as Baptists.

As to the foregoing answers by the Minister of Agriculture we have a few things to say. In fairness to the Minister (Mr. Fisher) it must be stated that the answers are, doubtless, such as were prepared for him by the Census Commissioner. But it must, also, be said that, as appears in the report of the discussion of the matter in Parliament last week, Mr. Fisher seems ready, on his own account, to go nearly as far as the commissioner in disregarding facts placed before him in this case.

1. The answer concerning St. John is very strange. Immediately on reading it we wrote the Minister of Agriculture asking an explanation. To that inquiry no answer has been received though, at this writing, sixteen days have passed since it was made. Awaiting the reply, we may say for the information of our readers that no question has arisen about the number of communicants in any church, nor about the seating capacity of a church building, nor about the number of non-resident church members, nor about a church's way of keeping its membership record, nor about any of the things concerning which Mr. Dillon is said to have secured information. We had pointed out to Mr. Blue that the enumeration of St. John Free Baptists was shamefully wrong. We gave him particulars. We furnished him with the statement of the oldest pastor, the late Dr. Hartley, concerning his church, to which the census gives only 95 people—men, women and children, when the actual number is nearly 600. We pointed out that in the wards in which the people live who attend the other two Free Baptist churches in the city there are about four times as many of our people as the census records show. Mr. Blue's answer to all this is to get a Mr. Dillon to tell him about a fancied difference between the stated seating capacity of a church edifice and the number of communicants on a church roll, with some meaningless observations about letters of dismis-

sion. As a matter of fact, Mr. Dillon did not get any information from the pastor of the Waterloo St. church, as he says he did. But even if what information he got from another source had been presented fully and in an intelligible form, it is quite without any bearing on the matter in question—the charge that the enumeration of Free Baptists is grossly erroneous. And yet Mr. Fisher presents this stuff to Parliament as a satisfactory accounting for the disappearance of nearly four-fifths of our St. John people.

2. Mr. Fisher's answer concerning Grand Manan is an admission that no attempt has been made to correct the errors in the enumeration of that parish. This, notwithstanding it was long ago pointed out to Mr. Blue that serious errors existed. There are five Free Baptist churches in the parish, and no Baptist church, and yet the census says there are only 470 Free Baptists there, and 1,353 Baptists. The thing is absurd.

3. The answer to Mr. Wilmot's question is to the effect that any errors that occurred in Sunbury and Queens were corrected before the first volume of the Census Report was issued. The answer is an evasion of the question. It was only after the first volume of the census was issued that we were able to point out specifically the errors in Sunbury County. And these Mr. Blue has not touched, nor does Mr. Fisher's answer refer to them. Lincoln, S. Co., in which the census says there are no Free Baptists, is a most glaring case. The census people's manner of treating it is dealt with in another part of this article.

4. The answer to Mr. Hale, as to Carleton Co., is both admission and denial—admission that some errors were discovered, and denial that the original entries were wrong because sworn to. And from the original entries the compilation was made, and the announced totals are according to them. The intention, evidently, is to give the impression that the ascertained errors were too few to warrant any change in the report.

We have some facts about the Carleton Co. "revision" which throws light on it. In a letter dated Feb. 5th, 1903, Mr. Blue said:

We are making further inquiries from the enumerators concerning the religions of Carleton county where the Free Baptists are numerous and I shall communicate with you again when their reports are in.

On the 21st March Mr. Blue sent us his final report of his "revision," which report he assured us contained the result of all that had been or could be done to correct the census. Two errors, the report said, had been discovered—one of 472, in favor of Free Baptists, and one of 30 against them, leaving our people with a net gain of 430. Neither of these errors was in Carleton Co. No mention was made of Carleton Co. in Mr. Blue's report. If we accepted the report as correct we had to believe that the enumerators in Carleton Co. had not discovered any errors, or had not reported them. But we knew that

errors had been discovered. We made further inquiries, and learned that corrected returns had been sent to Mr. Blue. We learned of reported corrections which ran into the hundreds. If investigations extended throughout the county we would probably discover that corrections totalling thousands of names had been reported, for Mr. Blue's census has refused recognition to about one-half of the Free Baptists in Carleton Co. With knowledge of corrections made and reported, we had to regard Mr. Blue's report of the result of his revision a false report, intended to mislead. And the statement of mixed admission and denial which he furnishes Mr. Fisher as an answer to Mr. Hale's questions does not improve his case.

(A portion of this article has to be held over till the next issue.)

### THE PRESBYTERIANS.

The Presbyterian General Assembly of Canada ended a nine days session in Vancouver, B. C., on the 17th inst. The report on church statistics showed the membership to be 222,470, a net increase of 2,561 over last year. The number of infant baptisms decreased slightly, and the number of adult baptisms were slightly increased. The receipts for all purposes during the year were \$2,098,293, an average of \$9.45 per communicant was paid. The salaries of the ministers amounted to \$1,143,130. The missionary work of the church, both at home and abroad, is prosecuted with great vigor. The Foreign Mission Board, in commenting on the state of the work, approves of the Presbyterian Union in India, suggests the establishment of a theological college in each mission field, the providing of instructors in manual training for each mission, and urges that every effort should be made to make missions self-supporting. The estimated expenditure for the coming year is \$151,645.

The next General Assembly is to meet in St. John in June, 1904.

### THE METHODISTS.

The Methodist Conference of N.B. and P. E. Island was in session last week in St. John. Rev. J. C. Berrie was elected president. The statistical reports showed a membership of 13,954, an increase of 162 in the year. The amount of money raised for all purposes was \$137,519.83, an increase of \$13,161. Of this amount \$43,522 was for ministerial support.

Rev. Dr. Carman, General Superintendent of Canadian Methodism, was present. In the course of a fine address he not only dealt with purely denominational matters but spoke strongly of the importance of political purity. It is suggested sometimes, he said, that ministers should not deal with these subjects. If there is any guilt in this he had been as guilty as any, and he was not disposed to withdraw anything he had said or abate his utterances as a man of God for maintaining political morality;

right and purity of government, purity and freedom from bribery of the electorate. He felt these things were part of the gospel, part of the good old prophetic visions anyway. The prophets rebuked iniquity in high places and he believed this one of the solemn duties of the man of God. The ballot box was not what it was or ought to be and he felt bound to clear utterances on the great principles governing such matters of righteousness, fidelity to the crown, and truth. It was not right to say these things should be excluded from the pulpit. How can you honor legislators that are not there by right. He held that governments should place themselves on all great moral issues, free from party cliques and caucuses. If they have great measures of public policy, then stand for them as free men. When it comes to a moral policy such as prohibition or Sabbath observance, no legislator has a right to follow the party shout, that is no place for party politics, and they had no right to submit to the party whip.

### News of the Churches.

#### BLISSVILLE-PATTERSON PASTORATE.

—The work on this field is moving along very well. At Blissville we have two Sunday schools—one at the church in the morning, under the energetic leadership of Bro. M. L. Orchard, and the other at the Blissville Hall in the afternoon, led by Bro. W. D. Smith, who for many years has worked for the interest of our Sabbath school as superintendent. Recently, by the combined labors of the two schools, nearly one hundred books were added to their library.

The work of repairing the Mill Settlement church will soon be completed; we are just now waiting for a workman. The church at Gaspereaux is nearly finished, and looks well. Bro. Dewitt was with me on Saturday evening, June 13, at Gaspereaux, and we organized a church under the name of "Clarendon Free Baptist Church of Gaspereaux." Fifteen were received into membership, and nearly as many more will unite next Sunday. The officers elected were: Bros. Jos. Hoyt and Henry Washburn, deacons; Bro. Robert Kelley, clerk, and Sister Mrs. Chas. Perkins, treasurer. Bro. Dewitt expects to be with me Sunday next and baptize and administer communion. This church bids fair to be one of the strongest in this pastorate. But it has greatly weakened the Patterson Settlement church, as many were members of the branch of that church. Yet I do not fear for the Patterson church, for we have good, strong Christian men and women there who will not be wanting in Christian fortitude and strength during this crisis in their church history.

W. O. KIERSTEAD.

NORTH HEAD, GRAND MANAN.—  
Although the church here is not off  
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