

TERMS AND NOTICES.

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Rev. Joseph McLeod, D. D., •• Editor.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 1904.

Editorial.

—Among the "Passive Resisters" of England's unjust education law are many Nonconformist ministers; who permit their goods to be sold to pay the rates. One Wesleyan minister spent seven days in jail, in solitary imprisonment, for conscience sake.

—Rev. Dr. Day was elected a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church at the recent conference of that body. He declined the office, believing that he had yet important work to do as chancellor of Syracuse University, of which he has been the head for some years.

—Rev. Dr. Berry, one of the newly elected bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, was born in Canada, where his father, a retired Methodist minister, now lives. The bishop began his ministerial work in this country. Another of the bishops of the M. E. church, Bishop Warne, of India, is also a Canadian by birth and training.

—The attempt in the Methodist Episcopal Conference to change the rule of the church which declares dancing, card-playing, theatre-going and like things inconsistent with membership in the church, was defeated. If the attempt had succeeded it would have been serious. The removal of the rule would have been a serious departure from the style of Christian living the founder of Methodism marked out for his people. Experience testifies that the practices mentioned are not only promotive of spirituality, but that those who indulge in them are lacking in some things of importance in Christian character and life.

—Writing of the union movement amongst the Presbyterians of the North and South in the United States, and of other union movements, the *Christian Evangelist*, one of the Disciples' papers, says:

Isn't it about time that some of the divisions in the great family of immersionists were getting together? We do

not remember how many branches there are of the Baptist family, but there are several, to say nothing of the Disciples, who, if they do carry a sword in one hand, always have an olive branch in the other. One thing we are sure of—leading Baptists and leading Disciples of Christ are much closer to each other than they are to their own lagging brethren who multiply causes of division by magnifying little differences about opinions and methods into tests of fellowship. The time has arrived when the centripetal force of love for a common Master should overcome the centrifugal force of opinionism.

—The evangelization movement, begun by the Presbyterians of the United States three years ago, has proved a great blessing. At the recent General Assembly meeting in Buffalo, the report of the committee having the work in charge was one of the most cheering and impressive features of the meeting. The movement which dates from 1901 was shown to have been signally successful. For the four years preceding 1901 the ratio of additions to the church had steadily decreased; but since the evangelistic movement began the increase of members has averaged 84,312 a year. This is a larger number than ever before in the history of the church. But these figures do not tell all the story, nor even reveal its most important features. The outstanding facts are the revival of thousands of church members, the awakening of whole communities to the importance of winning the world to Christ, and especially the new methods of aggressive work put in motion and found effective. Nothing less than a new era in the history of the spread of the gospel has been inaugurated in these three years.

THE CENSUS INVESTIGATION.

We have not desired to refer again to the action of the census officials by which the Free Baptists of New Brunswick have been robbed, in the official records, of about two-fifths of their numerical strength. Having shown by evidence that must be regarded as indisputable by every fair minded person who has given any attention to the matter, that the census in this respect is a humbug, we have been satisfied to rest our case there. But recent statements of the Minister of Agriculture, who is the head of the Census Bureau, make it necessary that we once more refer to this matter.

Last year the census errors, as they relate to Free Baptists, were discussed in parliament. The facts were presented so clearly by members in whose constituencies huge blunders had been made, that the Minister of Agriculture was compelled to acknowledge that inquiry in certain cases seemed necessary. To make this part of the case clear, we quote from the House of Commons debates. The discussion occupied several hours, during which the Minister of Agriculture sought by every sort of evasion to justify the census figures. But the case against the census was so strong that even his colleague, the Minister of Finance, was moved to express surprise at some of the facts brought out. For instance, referring to the Kars, K. Co., case, Mr. Fielding said:

It does seem a most extraordinary thing that, if there are two churches known to belong to the Free Baptist body, the enumerator failed to find a single Free Baptist in that district. That is beyond understanding. . . . I cannot conceive of any explanation of the matter. I quite agree that the minister should look into that and try to ascertain the cause of complaint.

When Mr. Fisher was so pressed by the facts that he was unable any longer—then and there—to dodge them, he agreed to make some investigation. Subsequent events have shown that his promise was made merely to secure relief from the uncomfortable place in which he found himself.

His first promise was as to Kars, K. Co. He said: "I shall certainly see that a thorough investigation of the condition of affairs there is made, and shall try to get at the actual truth." When Mr. Wilmot stated that an even more flagrant error had been made in the enumeration of Lincoln, S. Co., and asked for an investigation there, and that he "extend his investigations over the whole province," Mr. Fisher said that he would "investigate any place where a definite statement is made that there has been an inaccurate return." The places about which definite statements were made concerning serious errors, proof of them being given, were in Victoria, Carleton, York, Sunbury, Queens, Kings, Westmorland and Charlotte counties, and St. John city, and Mr. Fisher was told that to carry out his promise he would need to cause the returns from all these places to be thoroughly revised. And then we waited.

We next heard of the matter in a letter from the Minister of Agriculture, dated August 15th, 1903, in which he said he had "pretty carefully gone into the statements of errors . . . supposed to have been made," and that he believed "the statements as published by the census are absolutely correct." If anything is wrong, he said, it is because the people have misinformed the enumerators. Commenting on that letter, the INTELLIGENCER expressed surprise that Mr. Fisher should intimate that one-third or more of the Free Baptists of New Brunswick did not know their denominational name, and added: "It was bad enough to suffer from the blundering of census officials, it was worse to be denied correction of the wrong, and now the whole has been crowned by an insulting reflection on the intelligence of the wronged people."

We did not expect to hear of any more "investigation." More of such work as Mr. Fisher had shown himself capable of doing and getting done was not desired. He had had the effrontery, in the face of the clearest facts to the contrary, to say that the errors were only "supposed," and to declare the false census "absolutely correct."

Something moved him to make one more show of "investigation." A few weeks ago it came to our knowledge that an official from the census staff at Ottawa was making inquiries in Lincoln. A little later we were pleased to see that Mr. Wilmot, who represents Sunbury County, and is a resident of Lincoln, asked certain questions in parliament

about the reported investigation. The questions were printed in the INTELLIGENCER of May 11th. The answers given by the Minister of Agriculture were that a census official had been authorized to make inquiries in Lincoln, S. Co., Kars, K. Co., and St. John city, and that the results showed that the religious classification in those places was according to the information given the enumerators by the people.

Knowing that no honest investigation could produce the results stated by Mr. Fisher, we instituted some inquiries as to the character of the work done. We have discovered enough to satisfy us that the whole business was scarcely more than a pretence.

An Ottawa official did visit Lincoln, Kars and St. John. Accompanied in each place by the enumerator who did the original blundering, he made some inquiries. In neither place did they interview any considerable number of the misrepresented people. Their object was, evidently, not to secure corrections of errors, but to secure statements which they could construe as justifying the stupid, not to say dishonest, men who made the false enumeration. One letter we have received says: "They kept away from those who had said they were Free Baptists." Another letter says: "It is a humbug right through in regard to their going around." And of the few they did see, those who declined to be sworn, and those who were unwilling to say exactly what language they had used in answering an enumerator three years ago, were regarded as supporting the contention that the religious classification reported by the enumerators was as given them by the people. We learn, too, that some of the people got the impression that if their statements contradicted the returns, the enumerators would be in serious trouble. And, unwilling to get them into trouble, they either declined to say anything or gave indefinite answers. The enumerators concerned in this sham inquiry were not nearly so careful of their neighbors as their neighbors were of them.

In St. John one pastor was called on, but was not seen. The enumerator was directed to the clerk of the church, but did not go to him. The Ottawa official interviewed a gentleman in St. John not a member of the denomination. In his conversation he admitted that there were errors in Kings Co., but claimed they were few, and treated the whole matter as very trifling. A gentleman present, who had some knowledge of the wholesale character of the errors, ventured to tell him what he knew, and that the complaints did not overstate the extent of the blunders. But this, evidently, had no weight with the man, for, if Mr. Fisher is to be believed, he reported that the enumeration was correct.

We have a letter from a St. John clergyman of another denomination who says: "There can be little doubt that the instructions of the enumerators were faulty, or that they were not sufficiently careful." He was chairman of one of the wards in the religious enumeration made by the city S.S. Association in the spring of 1903, and the returns came into his hands. He points out that owing to a variety of causes, some families were missed by the S. S. census