

CHURCH UNION.

The first of the many meetings that will be necessary before the union of the Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational churches in Canada are united was held in Toronto last week. The committees which met represented, according to the last census, 1,624,248 people, divided thus: Methodists 840,765; Presbyterians, 755,326, and Congregationalists 28,157. The last general meetings of these bodies passed resolutions approving the general principle of union and appointed the committees that met last week. That such a meeting should be held is striking evidence of the growth and strength of the feeling for closer union of Christian forces with a view to the more efficient carrying on of Christian work.

The committee of each denomination had first a meeting alone preparatory to the joint meeting. The meeting was not open to the public. And as it was decided not to give out any statement till the close of the Conference, not much is known, at this meeting, what was done. It was decided to appoint several sub-committees to consider the different methods upon which common ground is to be found, viz.: Church polity, doctrine, organization, office and training of the ministry, and administration of the various funds of the churches. The membership of these committees will be in proportion as follows: Methodist, two; Presbyterian, two, and Congregationalist, one. The work of these committees will be watched with great interest. It is not at all probable that union will be quickly or easily accomplished, for many difficult questions are to be dealt with.

News of the Churches.

RIVER DE CHUTE, N. B.—The Sunday following the closing of the special services at Beaconsfield, protracted meetings were begun at River De Chute, and held for three weeks, closing Sunday, Dec. 18th. In order to clear the way for the best work a union service had been held here on Nov. 5th for the purpose of giving the Baptists and Free Baptists of this place the privilege of voting on the question of union. The vote was unanimous in favor of the union. It may be noted that no Baptist or Free Baptist organization has ever existed here. We began the services there without the backing of any organization; in a church building, like the Beaconsfield church, finished on the outside but not within. There were two advantages over the latter church, however, a good floor had been laid and stoves were already up. So we were comfortable from the first. Chairs were secured from the Methodist Hall and an organ borrowed from an obliging home; we had a pulpit made on the lines of the one made for the Beaconsfield church (for a good deal of the work on which thanks are due Mr. Ernest Wiggins of Royalton), and a permanent platform was put in. The surroundings were thus soon made in keeping with a place of worship.

The three weeks spent here gave just sufficient time to bring the Christians, hitherto having little opportunity for work, into line. The faith and devotion of these were increased. Others

expressed publicly a desire and purpose to lead a better life. If in Christian work there is really a seed-time and harvest nothing is lost in work here.

On the last Saturday afternoon, Dec. 17, (a conference having been called for this purpose) a church was organized. Twenty-three (nearly all adults) were present. The meeting was by all acknowledged to be the best. A strong religious motive seemed to influence the majority present, so that both the devotional and business parts of the service were expressive of devotion and fervor. Nine rose when the invitation to those wishing to organize themselves into a church was given. The organization was effected with nine adult members, all heads of families and excellent people. The church recognizes the Basis of Union adopted by the Baptist Convention and the Free Baptist Conference. The officers of the church are Bro. Douglass Wolverton, deacon; Bro. Walter Tweedie, clerk and treasurer. Bro. John Green, help.

A former resident of the place came to be present at the Conference and stopped over Sunday. His visit resulted in plans being made for finishing the interior of the building this spring, he offering to turnish money to paint the interior when it is made ready. The church accepted his kind offer. Besides this, the church has arranged for securing seats immediately. They have \$30 now on hand for that object, besides material donated for finishing the interior. The church voted \$20 to the Home Mission Fund.

It was disappointing to awaken the last Sunday morning with a severe cold. It seemed a risk to attempt to conduct the three services announced, but the attempt was made, speaking in the morning in a whisper. In the afternoon Bro. Fenwick came over the river, and rendered much assistance. At the close of this service a C. E. Society was organized, the secretary of which will report later. Bro. Fenwick has made plans to preach there periodically. He will have a hearty band to hold up his hands henceforth. I was able to attend the evening service and spoke a few words of encouragement to the infant church, indicating as best I could the general lines of work by which the Kingdom of Christ may be extended, and said good-bye.

E. S. PARKER.

FROM REV. C. T. PHILLIPS.—I have found out how the department of denominational news can be kept overflowing. Sometimes an obituary will bring a letter from the minister; sometimes a wedding will do it, but not always. But a donation will bring a letter from a minister supposed for a long time to be dead. For instance, my friends at Hartland made me a visit last week and gave us Christmas presents to the amount of \$35. And there was not a useless gift among them, not one automobile nor any superfluous thing like that; every gift was something to make the "wheels go round." I join with the family in giving public thanks for such expression of good will. Of course, this letter would not have been written if there had been no gifts.

It is now in order for me to tell how low and weak I found everything in this pastorate, and how, by my zeal and

faithful work, I am slowly but surely wiping out church debts, healing difficulties and getting everything systematically arranged, etc., etc.

"If I should speak thus, behold I would sin." "What can the man do who cometh after the King?" And when a man has to come after two kings and a long line of princes, he has to be something of a king himself, or his kingdom will be divided.

I hope to be able to leave the pastorate in as good a condition as I found it, for it has had good, faithful work, and good work always tells.

I am enjoying the work very much, and am stronger than when I came. I attend three prayer meetings and have a preaching service during the week, and preach three times every Sunday. If there were more Sundays I could preach more. Father Noble and I sometimes wonder why some pastorates seem too large for larger men than we are.

I miss the ministers' meeting of St. John, the Public Library, and my friends there. But there are compensations, and I am enjoying my work. I see Bros. Noble, Perry, Vanwart, Bonnell and once I have seen Bro. Fenwick. Twice I have been to see Bro. DeWare; he is quite comfortable, has a pleasant home, but cannot get out to do any work. C. T. PHILLIPS.

MINISTERS.—Rev. S. J. Perry is holding special meetings at Shannon, Q. Co., and there is a very good interest.

Rev. E. H. Cochrane has gone to Petitcodiac to spend the vacation at his old home.

Rev. J. N. Barnes was at Lower Queensbury last week. He spent Sunday in Fredericton. Mrs. Barnes is better, and they expect to go to White Head this week.

OTNABOG, Q. Co.—Licentiate R. McIntyre writes that the work of the church at Otnabog is going along very well. The Sunday school is doing nicely, and it is proposed to keep it open all winter. They are proposing to have an entertainment for the children about New Year.

TRACEY MILLS, C. Co.—Sunday, 11th inst., Rev. L. A. Fenwick preached at Tracey Mills in the morning. At the close of the service a vote was taken in Baptist union and carried unanimously. Rev. B. Beaty, evangelist, from St. John, is now holding evangelistic services in the church; the congregations are large, and there are good prospects for revival. L. B. CLARK, Clerk.

WHITE HEAD, GRAND MANAN.—Some time ago I called a business meeting of the church here (White Head) to consider and vote on the question of union. I am very glad to say that the vote was unanimous in favor of Baptist union. As quite a number of the members of the church were away at the time I have delayed reporting till they returned. All of them I have consulted are in favor of the union of the two bodies; so you can report White Head church unanimous in favor of union.

I expect to go to Seal Cove next week for the winter, or, at least, Mrs.

H. will remain there. I do not know just what I shall do. I have a call to go to Woodward's Cove, and, perhaps, I may go there part of the time. Am glad to say that my health at the present is very good.

I. D. HARVEY.

Dec. 17th.

SUSSEX.—Our mission band gave an excellent concert Tuesday evening to an appreciative audience. The programme reflected much credit upon both the young people and Miss Bertha Worden and Miss Ina Erb, who had so carefully trained them.

Evangelist Rev. B. Beatty comes to us January 15th to assist in special services in our church. We should pray and get ready for and expect God's blessing. B. H. NOBLES.

OF OTHER DENOMINATIONS.

—A Presbyterian church in eastern Nova Scotia has an elder, Mr. Henry Archibald, nearly 92 years old. One of his sons is an elder, and, also one of his grandsons. The grandfather, the son, and the grandson served as elders at the same communion table. A great grandson is at college studying with a view to the ministry.

—Rev. Wiley Smith has resigned the pastorate of the Mauderville, N. B., Baptist church.

—The movement among Canadian Congregationalists to free all their churches from debt by the end of the year 1905, is progressing. At a meeting of the jubilee fund committee last week it was announced that \$170,000 of the required amount, namely \$246,000, had been subscribed. Of that sum \$10,000 had been donated by Mr. Miner, of Quebec, who promised \$10,000 more on condition a sufficient amount, exclusive of this, be obtained.

WEEK OF PRAYER TOPICS.

The Evangelical Alliance, in asking the Christian world to unite in a week of prayer, January 1 to 8, suggests the following programme: Sermons January 1 and 8 on "World-wide Conditions of True Worship" and "The Reign of the Prince of Peace;" Monday, "The Kingdom of God on Earth;" Tuesday, "The Visible Church of Christ;" Wednesday, "All Peoples and Nations;" Thursday, "Missions, Home and Foreign;" Friday, "The Family and the School;" Saturday, "Our Own Country." In the call the committee says: "The very signs of the times bespeak the earnest plea that God will rule and overrule. Every realm of creation is giving forth light and truth. The unity of all truth, the unity of all life, the central unity of all mankind, are now familiar teachings. Prejudices, bigotries, hatreds, injustices, bitter strifes are more and more clearly seen in their real unworthiness. And all this is by the working of God's own Spirit, yet the powers of evil, organized and active, are still striving to wrest the truth from its designed beneficence and to hold back the advancing triumph of the kingdom of God. Therefore, let true prayer be everywhere offered to him whose kingdom on earth includes every blessing."

All efforts to establish the Salvation Army in Russia have so far been of no avail, said Gen. Booth at Guildford, as the Russian government has issued strict injunctions against the general or his followers crossing the frontier.