

by the action of the Senate from practical destruction, and as the present year may see this Act submitted in many of the counties of our Province, the Union hopes that the Congregational churches will not be behind in the fight against intemperance, which is certainly coming."

This motion was carried, and the Union adjourned for the Home Missionary Society.

MANITOBA MISSIONS.

On motion, it was resolved that a special committee be appointed to take charge of the Manitoba mission, and that it be authorized to make no grants of moneys for the work there beyond those amounts specially contributed by the Colonial Missionary Society, by churches, or by individuals, for the purpose of missions in Manitoba and the North-West, the following gentlemen to form such a Committee: Rev. J. L. Forster (Secretary), Revs. Dr. Stevenson, Prof. Fenwick, A. M. McFadyen, Messrs. George Hague, T. Robertson, J. R. Dougall, H. Saunders, and C. Cushing.

Several resolutions were then passed concerning the sale of certain church buildings not now occupied by churches.

MISSION OPERATIONS.

Rev. W. H. Allworth read a paper on the re-adjustment of our present missionary operations. He feared that the interest in home missions had greatly decreased. There were many towns in Ontario where no church of our faith has been established. The question he would ask was—Is our present plan satisfactory? The great Manitoulin Islands, Muskoka and other places need the Gospel. He submitted that each district take full charge of their section. He would advise the individualizing of this work. Each church should know to which church its funds are applied, and what that mission is doing. No new mission should be undertaken without careful preparation; churches would in this way be stimulated to speedy self-support.

Rev. Dr. Wilkes thought there was need of a more local interest being encouraged; the largeness of our fields prevents this somewhat. In England counties had the work in their hands, but it was found to be defective in that weak counties were kept weaker from want of outside help. They are now adopting an organization similar to our own. In the four districts of Ontario and Quebec the amounts raised and expended were about equal. The districts need to be better worked.

Dr. Stevenson did not think the localizing of effort would increase enthusiasm. Home missionary work could never excite much enthusiasm. The helping of small churches and weak churches does not create enthusiasm. We must have a great self respect and be confident of success. Christ has made the Congregational churches very useful in the past, and we have a great future if we are willing to enter it. We should not rashly start a Congregational church, but when it is started let us stand by it, and make it good, healthy, and strong.

Rev. J. Burton thought it a great pity to separate our interests. Congregationalists have had much of the apologetic in their tone. We need to cultivate a missionary spirit. Every pastor, every church should take the work to heart. Every church should be visited and these matters freshly discussed before the people.

Prof. Cornish urged that some one be appointed in every church to take this matter of collection to heart, and see that every one be visited.

Rev. H. Pedley said that every one in his congregation had the opportunity of giving, and the poor should not be passed by, we want the small gifts of the many.

Rev. M. S. Gray gave some very interesting incidents concerning missionary work. He had laboured hard in the past, and was willing to labour in the future.

In the afternoon various societies held meetings, and committees met and finished their several duties.

Revs. Dr. Stevenson, W. H. Allworth, J. Burton, B.A., and W. H. A. Clary were appointed delegates to the National Council of Congregational Churches to be held at St. Louis, Mo.

Rev. J. Wood was appointed to present the annual Sunday morning sermon in June next.

The Finance Committee reported that four dollars be deducted from each delegate's expenses to the Union.

Application was made to the chairman of the Union to sign a document praying for a commutation of the sentence pronounced upon Robert De Coursier, to be hanged on Wednesday next, to imprisonment for life. The chairman consulted the Union as to what was his duty. There was at once a prompt reply, "Don't sign it; let the law take its course." It was not signed.

The General Missionary Committee met at five p.m. The business transacted was the appointing of a committee to make an application to our Parliaments for a law to enable us to sell our disused church property not held under the new forms of church deeds. The Revs. J. L. Forster and Samuel Cushing, LL.D., advocate, newly appointed for Quebec, and Revs. H. D. Powis and J. Burton, newly appointed for Ontario. It was moved and carried that the proceeds of such sale be put into the fund now accruing for a chapel building fund.

The advisability of establishing a Congregational Church on St. Joseph's Island was discussed, but the matter was referred to the Western District.

The committee chosen to look after the Manitoba Mission met at 5.30 p.m. Rev. J. B. Silcox was requested to visit Winnipeg during the absence of Rev. W. Ewing.

CLOSING MEETING.

Dr. Stevenson occupied the chair. Rev. J. Wood led in prayer.

"FREE THOUGHT."

Rev. Hugh Pedley, B.A., addressed the meeting on the free thought of the age, its advantages and its disadvantages. Christianity to-day has a firmer hold on the world than ever before; yet the fact is the people are thinking, and rationalism is spreading everywhere. He quoted Goldwin Smith that a religious collapse was imminent. Gregg's "Creed of Christendom" is being read everywhere. There are sceptical men going through the land lecturing in halls to men on rationalism. The common people are becoming acquainted with free thought. It is a necessity that our ministers should be able to meet these doubts and lead men to think *truly* as well as freely. Our theological colleges should train men to understand and guide free thought. He would have these works of rationalism read and studied by every theological student. The physician of souls should know the diseases of the soul. He rejoiced that he was a Congregational minister, for he stood unfettered, and could be the master not the slave of the free thought of the age.

Rev. James Roy, M.A., was the next speaker. He spoke on "The Reasonableness of Faith." He defined faith to be a conviction of the reality of things not seen and not demonstrated. It is common to confound faith and knowledge. It is reasonable to base our conduct on a strong conviction of things not seen. The pyramids of Egypt rest upon the axioms of mathematics and these axioms cannot be demonstrated. They are self-evident. The best progress of the world is based on faith in the unseen. Christianity in its fundamental principles has never yet been shaken one iota. He had been reading Haeckel, but was convinced that evolution would never destroy men's faith in the personality of God. Christianity has endured the keenest criticism, and through the ages it endures the same. The fact that other religions taught and enforced truths which are associated with Christianity confirms our faith in its divine origin. Personal experience of the blessing of our Gospel is the highest proof of its divine origin and the best reason for putting faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. A chemist could analyze sugar and shew that it produced a sensation of sweetness to the taste, but there was an easier and better way of finding that out, viz., by tasting it. So it was with the atonement of Christ, no one could know it until he knew it experimentally. "Taste and see that the Lord is good." Our religion is being tested to-day very severely, but he was sure

we shall come out stronger and firmer in our belief in the great truth of God's Word. Not everything calls itself Christianity will endure, but the Christianity that Christ taught, and that Paul preached and lived—this will endure forever and forever. Christianity is the truth and power of God, and it is wisdom to accept it and live it.

George Hague, Esq., was the last speaker. He advocated the claims of the CANADIAN INDEPENDENT. The paper, he said, was steadily growing in the estimation of the people. We must have a denominational paper, and it is the duty of every one to heartily support it. Although the paper was not large in size it was good in quality, and should be in every family of the denomination. There was an urgent necessity that more stock should be subscribed, so that the Directors may have a sufficiently large working capital.

CLOSING BUSINESS.

Votes of thanks were passed to the pastor and members of Emmanuel Church and others who had given such Christian hospitality to the Union members, and after singing a hymn, the benediction was pronounced by the Rev. Dr. Stevenson, and the Union dismissed, to meet in Zion Church, Toronto, in 1881.

THE

CANADIAN INDEPENDENT.

TORONTO, THURSDAY, JUNE 17th, 1880.

THE BOND STREET CHURCH.

WE expressed a hope at the close of our article a fortnight ago on "The Bond Street Investigation" that its lessons might not be lost on pastor and people, and that out of the storm just passed a time of peace and purity might come. THE INDEPENDENT containing that article was not in the hands of country subscribers when a new scandal arose, so exact in its details, supported by testimony so reliable, and by admissions so damaging that the church was driven to take decisive action, and at a special meeting a week ago decided by a large majority to accept Mr. Handford's resignation, the minority desiring, not his continuance in the pastorate, but that he should be "dismissed," which is, we suppose, another name for expulsion.

Such is the sad ending of what might have been a career of usefulness and blessedness. With a fatuity which was surely insanity, Mr. Handford was no sooner acquitted of the charges against him and had been welcomed back to his pulpit with an enthusiasm that was, at any rate in its demonstration, bordering on the indecorous, than he rushed into company and practices which had so nearly proved fatal to his reputation immediately before; and the friends who would have saved him, as one of the warmest and most untiring of them said to us, were compelled to let him go.

In the presence of this great calamity, for calamity it is, it would ill become us to utter words other than of sympathy for the church and sorrow for the man. These are our feelings. Of Mr. Handford we can hardly hope that his future may be different to the past. All the warnings that he has received appear to have been in vain. The grace of God is boundless or we should utterly despair, for he has sinned in no ordinary degree, having caused the enemies of God to blaspheme. To us one thing is very evident—that the beginning of his decline was contemporaneous with his return to the use of intoxicating liquors. Let us pray that repentance unto life may yet be vouchsafed to him. As to the church, may we hope that it will now return to the brotherhood of churches, and again do the work and exercise the influence of the "Bond Street Church" of the past.

If any person found a return Grand Trunk Railway ticket from Montreal to London, in Emmanuel Church, at the closing meeting of the Union, will be forward it at once to R. W. Wallace, 396 King street, London.