

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE UNION MOVEMENT.

The negotiations that have been going on for the last five years, looking to an organic union of the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational Churches in the Dominion of Canada, had their origin in the efforts that were put forth during the years 1899 to 1903 to prevent, as far as possible, any unseemly rivalry and any waste of men and means in the mission work which is being carried on by these different Churches, especially in the newer districts of the country.

In 1899, at the request of its Home Mission Committee, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church appointed a small committee "to meet and confer with representatives from other evangelical churches, having power to enter into any arrangement with them that will tend to bring about a more satisfactory state of things in our Home Mission Fields, so that the overlapping now complained of may be prevented." This action was communicated to the authorities of the Methodist Church, and the General Conference of that Church, in the autumn of 1902, appointed a similar committee.

These two committees met on three different occasions for the consideration of the problem of co-operation in Home Mission work. As a result of their deliberations, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

"1. THAT a letter, couched in identical terms, be sent by the Missionary Secretaries, on behalf of the Joint Committee, to the Superintendents of Missions of their respective Churches, and also to the ministers or missionaries in charge of Home Mission Fields, setting forth the action of the General Assembly and General Conference, the views and wishes of the Joint Committee, and the expectation that they will co-operate in all practical ways to promote the end in view. We also recommend that the letters be published in the denominational papers of the two Churches concerned.

2. That the Superintendents of both Churches be strongly urged to keep the principle of comity and co-operation steadily in view, and to apply the same wherever practicable in the arrangement of the work. To this end we recommend that the Superintendents whose jurisdiction covers substantially the same field, meet together at intervals for consultation in the spirit of mutual helpfulness and ready concession, respecting the opening of new fields, or the possible readjustment of fields already occupied.

3. That where a field has been occupied for at least one year by one of the Churches, the Superintendents be recommended to act as far as possible on the principle of non-intrusion, having due regard to the promotion of the Kingdom of Christ, and the interests of the two Churches.

4. That ministers and missionaries of both Churches whose missions cover the same territory, in whole or in part, be recommended to consult, where it seems necessary or desirable, regarding a possible readjustment of their fields, when that can be done to mutual advantage, and report their views to their respective Superintendents, District Meetings and Presbyteries."

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