

CONFIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

TO THE OFFICIALS AND MEMBERS OF THE PRIMITIVE
METHODIST CHURCH IN CANADA.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD :—

The recurrence of another Annual Conference brings with it the duty, and affords the opportunity of addressing to you a few words of greeting and counsel.

The assembling of your representatives this year took place in the beautiful Carlton Street Church, Toronto—a monument to the zeal and liberality of the parent society of Primitive Methodism in Canada.

A review of the year's work has afforded much cause for thankfulness to "The Father of mercies," and revealed some things we have reason to deplore. The various funds were mostly found to be in a healthy state; revivals of religion have been experienced on several stations; but the migratory habits of the people have left us with a small decrease of members for the year. Our removals this year amount to over eight hundred, and during the last twenty-seven years our net losses by the same cause amount to over fourteen thousand.

The all-absorbing question of Methodist Union received, as it deserved, a large share of attention, and forms the chief topic of this address. This important matter has from time to time during a number of years been brought before our own and the other Methodist Churches of Canada, and the desirableness of Union has been admitted; but never before has there been such unanimity of feeling and action on the part of all the contracting churches as during the past year. Many of the wisest and best in all the churches believe that the hand of God may be clearly traced in this movement, and that by the concentration of the now scattered forces of Methodism a great saving of men and money will be accomplished, the welfare of both ministers and people promoted, and the glory of God advanced. The nearly unanimous decision of our last Conference having by such a large majority been endorsed by you in the vote given in January last, your representatives this year had no alternative but to go forward in this work. We have therefore expressed our hearty approval of the "Basis," thanked the brethren who composed our Union Committee for their labours, and appointed delegates to attend the General Conference appointed to be held in Belleville, in September next, when it is hoped the Union will be consummated upon such a basis as will secure to the laity of Methodism in Canada a due share of power and responsibility in the government of the Church, and prove acceptable to all parties.