

SPECIAL
ARTICLES

Our Contributors

BOOK
REVIEWSPRINCIPAL PATRICK AND
CHURCH UNION.

By Rev. A. B. Dobson.

The nearest approach Principal Patrick makes to pertinent argument is in his reference to "The Practical Arguments for Union." What, according to Dr. Patrick, are they?

(1) "An increase of spiritual power." "This has been the invariable result of all unions springing from religious motives," such, for example, as the Presbyterian union of 1875, and the Methodist Union of later date. May I be pardoned for saying that I do not believe that this statement is true of either church. I remember both unions well and know a little of conditions prior to both. I freely admit that each church is a much bigger business concern, but that either of them to-day represents a greater spirituality is a statement quite beyond Dr. Patrick's knowledge. Is he able, for example, to prove to us that there is a greater reverence for God and for sacred things? Can he convince us that there is a more fiery zeal for the purity of the church? That there is more prayer? That there is more faith, more hope, more love, a truer respect for the knowledge of the scriptures as the infallible word of God? Is the Sabbath and its worship more truly and more largely observed? Is the home and the marriage relationship more sacred than in those other days before Union? Is Dr. Patrick sure that there is more business honesty and a greater degree of social purity? Does he know that there is a sterner sense of responsibility among professing Christians? Or that there is more of ministerial brotherhood and less official arrogance? Unless he can establish these things his statement is of no value. It is reckless. Sir Robert Park, a leading English Methodist, declares that a united Methodism in Canada, as compared with denominational Methodism in England, is a degenerating force. He can probably speak with some measure of confidence on this subject. It is not a matter which requires an expert knowledge of Theology nor even of Church History. The most casual reader knows that history does not prove that any mere aggregation of people has ever produced greater spirituality. If it can be done why did not Dr. Patrick specify a few cases in point? He knows that early Christianity displayed its greatest moral power when it was numerically insignificant and cruelly persecuted. He knows, too, that one of its greatest calamities befell it when it was proclaimed the established religion of the Roman Empire and became practically the only religion of the nation. He well knows that Protestant Christianity was at its best when the fires of Smithfield and of St. Andrews demanded the ultimate sacrifice. He knows better than I do that Presbyterianism, and Methodism too, were never so truly spiritual as when they were despised and persecuted. If I am not wrong the strongest and best qualities of human character have been produced in conditions of insignificance, in tears, in pain, in blood. "Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked."

(2)—If, as Dr. Patrick asserts, it be "most obvious that a richer and higher type of Christian character will arise from the fusion of these churches," why does he not cite a case in point? He has tried to make considerable use of the historical argument; why does he not apply it here? Why, for example, does he not venture to assert that the great, united church of Rome in pre-Reformation times produced a "richer and higher type of Christian character" than she has done since the great Protestant movement deprived her of at least one fourth of her followers? Why does he not

say that the church of Rome in those days gave to the world a generally "richer" form of Christianity, character than the little, persecuted church of Peter and Stephen and Paul and Ignatius and Polycarp had previously done? Will he tell us that the Church of Rome has produced a better type of men than Protestantism, with all its divisions, has done? Or will he kindly inform us of some other case in history which will substantiate his statement? A leader of such a cause as the Union movement ought to know, and certainly the rest of us are anxious to learn.

(3)—The Principal's next practical argument is stated thus: "The United church will possess greater facilities for evangelizing the country." He does not say, however, that the united church will use these "greater facilities" to the greater good of the kingdom of God. He does not tell us that this statement of his, taken generally, belies history. Will Dr. Patrick dare to affirm that Scotland and England, in the days when the established churches were supreme, had a more faithful ministry and a more spiritual people than when separation became general? Does he not know that the established church of England had to be divided by the followers of Wesley in order to save evangelical Christianity to that country? He must surely know that the country was in a deplorable condition until the time when the Methodists of several sects arose. The established church did not evangelize the masses. And it possessed all the union and power and wealth it could desire. Does Dr. Patrick believe that the separation from the parent church in Scotland despiritualized that church or the country at large? He knows better. It is at this point that Principal Patrick touches the old, worn out repetition of "overlapping," "waste of men," and "waste of money." The writer a few years ago asked the Union Committee to give the church specific information on the following among other points:

(a). How many small country corner churches, principally Methodist, which by present connection with larger churches are self-supporting, would, under Union, become mission stations? And how large will be the new fund which will be required to keep them in existence?

(6) How many ministers who are now really doing overlapping work will to Dr. Patrick's knowledge (not supposition) be available for more important work elsewhere?

He has boldly advised the church to enter unhesitatingly into this union and he may therefore be fairly expected to know these things. They are fair questions and they are "vital" and if Dr. Patrick cannot answer them he is not competent to advise the church on this question of Union nor even to express a very reasonable opinion on the question of "overlapping" and "waste," much less to base an argument on them. If Dr. Patrick cannot answer these questions HE DOES NOT KNOW THAT THERE WILL NOT BE AN ACTUAL AND A HEAVY LOSS BY ORGANIC UNION. His advice to the church and his special pleading are a piece of excusable recklessness. For the information here asked for could be as easily obtained as can our annual statistics.

Further. Even if the question of "overlapping" and "waste" be as serious as Principal Patrick avers, it is no argument for the proposed union. Such a result could be prevented in another way without the disadvantages of Union. A co-operative system would accomplish all in respect that is contemplated by Union. Principal Patrick says that it has been tried and failed. Is this the truth? I don't think it is, but if the Principal

will tell us where, when, and by whom a carefully prepared co-operative basis was formed and put into practical and general operation in Canada we shall be glad to know.

Fordwich, June 17.

GRAND TRUNK RAILWAY SYSTEM.

Its rail and water lines together will total 15,889 miles. In 1906 it carried 19,233,485 tons of freight and 13,916,417 passengers.

Many people fail to appreciate the commanding position that the Grand Trunk Railway System, with headquarters in Montreal, occupies among the Great Railway Systems of the North American Continent. It is the pioneer Railway of Canada, and one of the earliest built and operated on this side of the Atlantic.

From a financial standpoint, the Grand Trunk Railway System is the largest organization in Canada, and one of the greatest in the British Empire, the total capitalization of the Grand Trunk, and its subsidiary lines being \$435,069,355. Including the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway, the total capital at December 31st, 1909, was the enormous sum of \$534,180,795 for the entire Grand Trunk and Grand Trunk Pacific System of Railways.

The present total mileage of the Grand Trunk, including its subsidiary lines, is 5,400 miles, with a double track mileage of 1,035, which makes it not only the longest double track railway in Canada, but one of the longest continuous double track railways under one management in the world.

Including the mileage of the Grand Trunk Pacific Main Line now under construction and contemplated, 3,640 miles, of which 3,144 miles are under contract, also 5,118 miles of branch lines—the total length of the entire system of Railways will eventually amount to 14,450 miles.

In addition to the rail mileage the Grand Trunk operates steamer lines on the Great Lakes, between Midland, Depot Harbor and Port William, Milwaukee and Chicago. It also owns and operates large car ferry steamers on Lake Ontario, between Cobourg and Charlotte (60 miles), and on Lake Michigan between Milwaukee and Grand Haven (distance 80 miles), the total mileage of Lake Lines being 1,239 miles. Adding the Lake Line Mileage to the line mileage above, gives a grand total of 15,889 miles of rail and water lines.

With regard to the amount of business handled, the Grand Trunk also stands in the forefront. During the year 1909, on the entire Grand Trunk System, the number of tons of freight handled amounted to 19,233,485 tons, while the number of passengers handled was 13,916,417. According to the official reports for 1909 the Grand Trunk takes rank among the ten largest systems on the continent of North America, based on the business handled (freight, tonnage and passenger) while on its lines in Canada, only, it handled 1,431,754 tons of freight and 1,167,000 passengers more than the railway ranking next as a common carrier, also according to the Government records it handled 25 per cent. of the total freight hauled, and 33 per cent. of all the passengers carried by all the railways in Canada.

If men would only look at the life of Jesus to see what Christianity is, and not at the file of the poor representatives of Jesus whom they see around them there would be so much more clearness, they would be rid of so many difficulties and doubts.—Phillips Brooks.

The sovereign voluntary path to cheerfulness, if our spontaneous cheerfulness be lost, is to sit up cheerfully, to look around cheerfully, and to act and speak as if cheerfulness were already there. —William James.