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C. BLACKETT ROBINSON,

Manager and Editor

OTTAWA, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 16, 1909.

The Dominion Government has issued instructions that timber cut on Government lands in Manitoba for the use of educational, religious and charitable institutions shall be exempt from the payment of dues. This will facilitate our Home Mission Work to some extent and lessen the cost of churches and other buildings.

Our Baptist brethren in Toronto have decided that the time is not yet ripe for union even among themselves. It will be remembered that at a convention in Ottawa last year steps were taken towards a union of all the Baptists in Canada. When that is not approved of there is little prospect of the Baptists entering into the larger union of the Protestant churches now being negotiated.

Life insurance is supposed to be a protection for the widow, and fatherless, but it ceases to be so if it can be lightly set aside on such flimsy ground as that urged in a case tried at Hamilton a few days ago. A widow sued for \$250 on a policy on her husband's life. It turned out that there was a balance of ten cents due on the last premium which had not been paid within the thirty days grace allowed, and so the woman lost her suit. Of course the company was technically right, but what company of standing would take advantage of such a miserable technicality.

Very humiliating was the fact brought out at the Presbyterian General Assembly that the home missionaries are in some cases so poorly paid that they have not enough to live on—in fact that they frequently do not receive even the minimum that they are promised. Where the fault lies it may be difficult to say, but while this condition lasts it cannot be wondered that it is hard to recruit men for the ministry. If the system of administration is wrong—and that seemed to be the general opinion—the sooner it is reformed the better. The Presbyterian Church cannot afford to treat her ministers so meanly.

WILL THERE BE UNION?

The union question has reached another stage and the critical point is now approaching. The committee which has been acting in conjunction with similar committees of the Methodist and Congregational bodies has virtually completed its work. A basis on which union is deemed possible by many has been agreed upon and reported to the General Assembly. An amendment in favor of a federal rather than an organic union was voted down by about three to one, and the report of the committee adopted by a somewhat larger majority. The basis now goes down to presbyteries, sessions and congregations for their information and consideration. As the matter will not come before the Methodist church till their general conference meets in September, 1910, it was not considered desirable to take a vote of the Assembly on the abstract question this year. In the meantime, the question can be considered by the lower courts and membership of our church, with whom the decision ultimately rests.

Although the report of the Union Committee was adopted by a large majority union is by no means assured. Many of those who voted for the adoption of the report are not committed to union, and some who voted for the amendment—in favor of federation—will support organic union if they cannot have their preference. It has always been understood, even by those most strongly in favor of union, that it is a movement which must not be unduly pressed, and that if even a considerable minority are opposed to it, and should refuse to remain attached to the united church, it would never do to carry it into effect, at least for the present. There are prejudices and sentiments to be overcome, so strong that we question whether it would now have a majority in its favor if submitted to a vote of the membership of the Presbyterian church.

Meantime, the basis of union as drawn up by the joint committee will come up for consideration by the body of the people. We hope it will be considered in a Christian spirit, and that the circumstances of every part of the country will be taken into account, and that selfish interests will not be allowed to influence the minds of our people.

One thing, should union come, must be carefully attended to. The necessary legislation affecting the property of the united church must be of such a character as to prevent any difficulty such as that which arose in Scotland in connection with the union of the Free and the U.P. churches, where a small minority of the former who remained out succeeded in securing the whole of the property of the Free Church. A similar difficulty occurred in the United States, where two branches of the Presbyterian church which separated many years ago agreed to unite. Profiting by the experience of the Scottish churches, they thought they had made everything secure, yet in Nashville a handsome new church has been put into possession of fifty anti-unionists who had contributed about \$800 to it, while, three hundred unionists, who contributed \$25,000 find themselves without a church home. We want no such unjust results in Canada.

Even if carried out it will be three or four years before the union can be consummated, and it may be a good deal longer. That it will eventually come to that we have little doubt, even if we are among those who are not very enthusiastic for it.

WORK OF THE Y.M.C.A.

In view of the fact that the Ottawa Y.M.C.A. has just moved into its new building, provided for it by the liberality of the people of Ottawa, a recent tribute of President Taft to the work of such associations will be of interest. Speaking of the construction of the Panama Canal he said that "the work of the Young Men's Christian Association had shown in the character of the men and in the stimulus to order and decency and wholesomeness of life; that it was a great power for good, which the Government was only too willing to recognize and apply to for the exertion of its influence in carrying out this great national work."

In the United States and Canada the Y.M.C.A. now controls property valued at \$60,000,000, and there are eighty buildings projected, or under construction, which will cost \$9,000,000. Last year on this continent the organization erected eighty-four new buildings, which cost \$10,000,000. There are now about 2,900 branches, with a membership of 456,000, and 2,544 secretaries and directors, specially trained for this work. The work of the Y.M.C.A. does not aim in any way to overlap or supersede work done by the churches; and one exceedingly welcome feature is its interdenominational character. It should be, and is, a valuable ally to the churches.

Experiments with the wireless telephone service have proved eminently satisfactory. A cruiser at sea off the coast of France was able to hold communication with land stations over 100 miles distant. In another test on land, conversation was carried on at a distance of 60 miles. The age of wonders is not yet past.

The reference to the deadly automobile in our last issue appears to have been amply justified. In one day and a half last week three persons were killed and six injured by automobiles in Detroit alone. A town in Georgia has passed an ordinance prohibiting their use entirely within its limits, and the police are instructed to arrest on the spot anyone using the engines of destruction.

There is now no need to go abroad for suitable lesson helps in Sabbath School work. Ten years ago perhaps there was, but now our church issues ten publications, which cover the entire field of Sabbath School literature. Their combined circulation is over a quarter of a million. Their quality is second to none, and they are far more suitable to be put into the hands of Canadian children than those which come from the United States. In this matter we say Canada for the Canadians.

The faith cure is to be investigated scientifically, the British Medical Association having appointed a committee to consider the various types of spiritual and mental healing—psychotherapy we believe is the technical name. The committee will investigate how far these processes can be brought within the category of the natural forces with which the medical profession have to do. Some interesting results may be looked for as the outcome of the committee's work.