

A Song of the Blossoms.

Brown, and gnarled, and weather-beaten,
Sad as though no joy could sweeten
Their forlorn and bare existence, stood the
trees in winter-time;
Now they manifest awaking,
All their hidden splendour breaking
Into snowy drifts of blossom, filled with
fragrance in their prime;
Every flower sweet arbour making
For the birds that round it climb.

Such prophetic beauty settles
On their diverse silken petals,
Whiteness as of starry jasmine, or of lilies
opened wide;
Softly tinged with carmine flushes,
Fair as the unconscious blushes
Of June roses, or the colours that in little
cheeks abide
When the twilight angel hushes
Them to rest at eventide!

So, rich blossom and fruition,
Hid from our slow recognition,
In the marred and leafless branches of God's
human trees may wait
Till His spring shall end their sighing,
And His touch upon them lying
Shall unfold their beauty hidden in the winter
desolate—
Where the flowers bloom on undying,
And the crooked things are straight.

—Sunday Magazine.

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TORONTO, OCTOBER 27, 1883.

The Union General Conference at Belleville.

[We take from the Canada Christian Advocate, organ of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the following editorial.—ED.]

This is, perhaps, the most remarkable meeting of Methodist ministers ever held in Canada. Remarkable for its numbers, the object for which it assembled, and the spirit of concord and harmony, which, to such an extraordinary extent, marked the entire proceedings. This meeting of the ministers of four distinct Methodist Churches, brought together under circumstances so peculiar, and each moved, apparently, by the same spirit, is one of the strongest proofs of the extent and strength of the Union spirit which now prevails. The dignity, sublimity, and cordiality of the Conference impressed all who attended it very deeply. When we take into account the sensitiveness, the jealousy, and the rivalry, which has existed so long among those forming the several branches of the Methodism of Canada, it just seems

impossible to account for the marvellous spirit of Christian charity and brotherly love which was shown during the meeting by all without recognizing the presence and Spirit of Christ. It was hardly possible to suppress during the progress of the meeting, the exclamation of the Psalmist, which would involuntary rush into one's mind, "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes."

There seemed to be, on the part of the several delegations, an utter abandonment of all desire to press their peculiar views regarding any matter upon others. The utmost deference was paid to each by the others, and thus the best of feeling was preserved. The ministers of the Methodist Church of Canada, though outnumbering by far all the other delegations put together, and consequently were able, if so disposed, to have everything their own way, showed such a cheerful deference for the views and wishes of others, and exhibited such a nobleness of spirit during the progress of the discussions as to completely disarm all suspicion and charm all hearts. They certainly manifested a spirit of magnanimity highly commendable, and which proved the genuineness of their Union professions. This was abundantly shown in the election of the necessary officers for the new Church.

The machinery of the new "Methodist Church," though arranged with great care and, perhaps, as perfect as is possible to make it just now, will not be put into practical operation until the Dominion Parliament shall have legalized what has been done. The Conference has, therefore, decided that the 1st of July, 1884, shall be the day on which the new Church shall begin its legal existence. Dominion Day will, therefore, hereafter have a double meaning to Methodists in Canada, and they will doubtless prove as loyal to the one as the other. We trust, now, the churches will rest throughout all our borders.

Methodist Union in New Zealand.

WHILE the union movement has been growing steadily in Canada until now it is nearly consummated, the gratifying announcement was made by Dr. Dewart in the Conference recently that a similar movement has been on foot for some time in New Zealand, and that he had just received the proposed basis of union between the Wesleyans, the Primitive Methodists, the United Methodist Free Churches, and the Bible Christians, under the title of "The Methodist Church of New Zealand." The united body will have 512 churches, 9,092 members, 120 ministers, 500 local preachers, 21,823 Sunday-school scholars, 46,571 adherents, as per census of 1881, and an approximate value in connexional property of \$1,032,000. The friends of Methodist union in the country will be glad to learn that a similar movement is on foot at the Antipodes.

Opinions of the Press on Methodist Union.

The opinions of the leading papers of Canada have all been in hearty sympathy with the recent unification of Canadian Methodism. We have pleasure in giving, as an example of this, the following extract from the Montreal Herald:—

We congratulate the Methodists of Canada on the consummation of the

union of the four Churches into which they have hitherto been divided into one strong and united Church. Such a union is eminently fitting at this time when there is a disposition in the Christian world to sink minor differences, and there cannot be a doubt that it will have the happiest results not only in the Methodist Church itself, but in all other Protestant Churches in Canada. The united Methodist Church will now be the most powerful Protestant Church in Canada, taking the place held until now by the Presbyterian Church in Canada. According to the census of 1881 the adherents of the Methodist Churches now united were as follows:—

Methodist Church of Canada	582,983
Episcopal Methodist	103,272
Bible Christians	27,235
Primitive Methodists	25,680

Total 739,151

The Protestant denomination next in numbers is the Presbyterian Church in Canada with 629,280 adherents, the Church of England coming next with 574,818 adherents. The union will not much affect the Methodist Churches in Quebec, where the Methodist Church of Canada had 38,026 adherents, and the other three bodies now united with it only 1,128 combined. The same state of affairs existed in all the other Provinces except Ontario and Prince Edward Island, in the latter of which the Bible Christians were pretty numerous. The great strength of the three bodies now united with the Methodist Church of Canada was, however, in Ontario, where the relative proportions of the four bodies was as follows in 1881:—

Methodist Church of Canada	436,987
Episcopal Methodist	101,505
Bible Christians	23,726
Primitive Methodists	25,555

Total 587,775

It may interest our readers to observe how the united Methodist Church will stand in the several Provinces as compared with the Presbyterian Church in Canada and the Church of England. A comparison is furnished in the following table, compiled from the census:—

	United Methodist Church.	Presbyterian Church in Canada.	Church of England.
Prince Ed. Island	13,476	29,304	7,192
Nova Scotia	50,800	94,780	60,255
New Brunswick	34,508	39,102	46,768
Quebec	39,154	45,650	68,797
Ontario	587,775	402,573	366,539
Manitoba	9,470	13,928	14,297
British Columbia	3,511	3,488	7,804
N. W. Territories	459	475	3,166
Total	739,151	629,280	574,818

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On the tenth day of November all Protestant Christians celebrate the four hundredth anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther, the father of the Protestant Reformation. We purpose joining in that celebration by a special Luther number of *Pleasant Hours*, containing a sketch of the great Reformer's life and works, a paper on the footprints of Luther, and numerous Luther engravings. We will print a large edition of this number, and

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