

## AN INTERESTING REMINISCECE.

At the jubilee celebration of Westminster church, Mount Forest, Senator McMullen told how the site for church and manse was secured. Our older readers will recognize in Dr. Burns, Rev. Robert Burns, first minister of Knox church, Toronto, whose inspiring missionary visits to many weak churches in Ontario is still remembered by the surviving pioneers. Senator McMullen said:

"We went to Toronto, there were no railways then, narrow gauge or broad gauge, via Guelph, and to the best of my recollection I think the Grand Trunk was then finished as far as that point. When we landed in Toronto we went to Dr. Burns' house and found the old Doctor at breakfast in his dressing gown. After finishing he came into the parlor and Mr. Jas. Reid introduced us to him. He remained in the parlor while Mrs. Burns adjusted his tie and prepared him to go out to see the Commissioner of Crown Lands. When he was in shape we started off. Of course there were no street cars in those days and we had not thought of taking a carriage for the Doctor. On the way to Mr. VanKoughnet's office we thought he would surely be run over, when we approached a corner or went to cross a road he rushed straight ahead, thinking every one knew Dr. Burns and would stop for him, but we reached Mr. VanKoughnet's office at last and found the ante room full of people waiting to see the Commissioner of Crown Lands. The Doctor looked round and came to the conclusion that if we would have to wait until these people were all attended to it would be a long time, so he handed his card to a messenger and said, 'Tell Mr. VanKoughnet that Dr. Burns wants to see him.' The messenger came back in a minute and said that Mr. VanKoughnet would see him. When we entered his office Mr. VanKoughnet got up and gave Dr. Burns his chair and shook hands with the rest of us, and the Doctor lost no time in telling him our business. He asked if we had made a selection and when told the lot, etc., rang a bell and set to see if the lot were taken up. We found that Mr. Traynor, of the O.S.R. had made application for it, but Dr. Burns said, 'You know it is a lot to build a church on and it must be a becoming lot and this is the only place in the town that would suit. Mr. Traynor will be paid for any trouble he has had. Mr. VanKoughnet said he would have to comply with his request and cancelled the lot to Mr. Traynor and entered it to the Presbyterian Church of Mount Forest as a gift from the Crown. After he had done that, Dr. Burns said, 'You know Mr. VanKoughnet, when you have a church you have to have a manse too.' So we got the site for that also."

## UNION OF CHURCHES.

A notable gathering was that at City Road Wesleyan Chapel, London, England, September 17, when 700 delegates and officials of three Methodist bodies met to give effect to their agreement for union. The bodies thus brought together were the Methodist, New Connection, the Bible Christian Church, and the United Methodist Free Church. Previously there had been held a reception to the visitors, and after the important meeting of the 17th a thanksgiving service, a great missionary demonstration and a young people's rally were held in City Temple. On Wednesday the lord mayor and sheriffs of the city of London attended in state and extended a civic welcome to the united body. This is the largest Methodist reunion that has ever taken place in England, and the new organization, which is to be known as the United Methodist Church, begins its work strong in membership and in the best of spirit.

## AN APPEAL TO THE SOBER-MINDED.

(Concluded.)

The position of the Methodist ministry is slightly different. John Wesley did not empower any of his preachers to dispense ordinances. It is true that he did ordain some individuals to the presbyterate, but his doing so only makes it clearer that the great mass of Wesleyan preachers at first received no recognition as ministers of the Gospel in the full sense of the term. It is well known that Wesley censured very severely those who attempted to discharge what he termed priestly functions, i.e., the functions of presbyters. It was not until 1836 that the conference began to ordain, and by that time all who had been clergymen of the Church of England had passed away. Whether Wesley really possessed the power he claimed, as a New Testament bishop, to ordain those whom he thus set apart, is a very debatable question. He was a clergyman of the Church of England, and under vows of obedience to his bishop and ecclesiastical law. He had no right, without renouncing these authorities and separating himself from that church, to perform functions which were forbidden to him by the discipline to which he owed submission. His action was, to say the least, entirely irregular. It is simple historic fact that Wesleyan orders as conferred to-day were self-assumed by those who inaugurated them in 1836, and those of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States rest upon the doubtful action of Wesley and those presbyters of the English Church who united with him in ordaining the superintendent and "elders" who organized that body.

On the other hand, Methodists do not hold the low views of Congregationalists in regard to the ministerial office. They would, I believe, willingly concur in all that our standards teach regarding its sacred functions. In uniting with them we would receive a reinforcement of spiritual life and energy, and the union would not be unecumenical. Congregationalism stands for latitude of belief and a minimum of authority, but Methodism gives no uncertain sound on the cardinal truths of salvation, and loyally maintains the close articulation of church courts and the subordination of all to a supreme court.

I am very far from regarding our evangelical brethren as "intruders" whose "ecclesiastical acts" are "so many impious nullities." I gladly receive them as honored brethren in the Lord, called by the Holy Spirit to their work, and as fully and effectually ministering to the edification of the Body of Christ as the saintliest Presbyterian. I have no hesitation in exchanging pulpits with them, for I believe that Christ has accepted them, and therefore I have no right to refuse them the most complete fellowship consistent with the affirmation of my own belief. My attitude towards them is analogous to that of the Baptist towards them and us. They fail to conform to one of our Saviour's institutions, and so I cannot but regard their orders as irregular. That, as far as we can see, the Master's presence and blessing rests with them as really as with us, does not prove that the original constitution of the ministry has been abrogated. The Holy Spirit does not surely intend to throw discredit upon the order He Himself established by the hands of the Apostles. It only proves that the gospel is always the power of God unto salvation to every one who believes, no matter by whom it is preached, much more when godly men, full of faith and the Holy Ghost, act as the stewards of God's mysteries of truth and blessing. As a Baptist considers that we have not obeyed what he believes to be a divine ordinance, namely, believer-baptism by immersion, and therefore while accord-

ing to us all love and honor as brethren in Christ, conscientiously declines to admit us into ministerial fellowship, so do I regard, and similarly would I act towards those brethren of the Methodist and Congregational communions who have not the necessary continuity of office.

When forming corporate union with these bodies, the form of ordination might be dispensed with. Recognition of their "de facto" standing would be sufficient. They already have all that is symbolized in the rite, and their amalgamation with us would engraft them into the historic stem. Ordination is superfluous, and could not but be misunderstood and regarded as humiliating; moreover, the mere outward rite would receive an undue emphasis. But unless the doctrine of our standards becomes that of the united church and there is an explicit stipulation in the union contract that for the future the practice of the church shall conform to it, I do not see how any Presbyterian, of the Westminster type, can come into the union. Very many much more important questions may be left open because they treat of inferences drawn from statements or facts which all parties acknowledge to be true. But this concerns the doing, or not doing a certain thing. If our standards rightly formulate the teaching of the New Testament, no one may assume the office of a presbyter without presumption, and no one may confer the office upon another unless he has himself received it. What possible room for compromise is there in the case?

Mr. Editor, I feel very deeply the importance of raising this question now. The views I have expressed I have held for over thirty years. I would never have become a Presbyterian minister if I had not found the church's doctrines in accordance with what seemed to me the clear teaching of the Bible. I have never pressed my opinions upon the notice of my brethren before because there was no special reason for doing so. But now I must speak, when the banner is proclaimed, or forever hold my peace. Silence would be unfaithfulness to my convictions, and would bar me from the action which I must take in the event of a union on the suggested basis. This is my apology for these lengthy letters which trespass upon the patience of your readers and the indulgence of yourself. Hoping that what has been written will interest many of your readers and convince some that the doctrine of our standards must be expressed in our procedure, and that it must not be permitted to go by default in the union negotiations, and also thanking you very much for the opportunity you have given me of laying the matter before the public of our church, I beg to bring the subject to a close.

PACIFICUS.

## "THE CALL OF THE WILD."

There is not another place on the continent of America to compare with the "Highlands of Ontario" for deer and moose hunting. This part of Canada still forms a portion of that small remnant of the world's pristine wilderness—not yet the abode of man and his mighty civilization.

Northern Ontario with its rich resources is regarded as the richest deer and moose country in the world.

Moose season in the Moose country opens October 16th for 31 days. Deer season in the Deer country opens November 1st for 15 days.

These sections of Ontario are the places to hunt and valuable information as to how and when to get there and all particulars can be had free by addressing, J. Quinlan, D.P.A., Grand Trunk Railway System, Bonaventure Station, Montreal.