

est to a superlative degree and a great exception to the natives of this wretched country. He was a native of Fertit and was minding his father's goats, when a child of about six years old, at the time of his capture by Baggara Arabs. He described vividly how men on camels suddenly appeared while he was in the wilderness with his flock and was forcibly seized, thrust into a large bag and slung over a camel's back and carried hundreds of miles to Dongola, there sold to slave dealers who took him to Cairo. He afterwards was put in the Austrian Christian Mission House, with other boys, on the Nile, and afterwards turned out into the world to seek a living. He had been taught something about the Christian religion and came to Mrs. Baker and begged to be taken under her care, and was taken by her. Sir Samuel Baker gives a very touching account of the honesty and faithfulness of this poor boy who was some years after taken sick in his service with fever and lost his life. See this traveller's account at page 167 of his travels—small edition.

Sir Samuel, in this work, says it is astonishing to see the great similarity between the description given of these deserts and their people in the Bible and what we see in actual life there now, after the lapse of four thousand years. Everywhere the traveller can see that the manners and features and habits of the Arabian deserts and their peoples in the time of Joseph and his father Jacob, as well as in the time of Moses, are very like those even of this distant day. Would it not be well for those who doubt the truth of the Mosaic account to read Sir Samuel Baker's book with care.

But to return to the beautiful incidents in the conduct of Joseph to his brethren and father; I would ask any dispassionate reader to read the few last chapters of the Book of Genesis, giving an account of the selling of Joseph into captivity, his wonderful history, rise into power with Pharaoh; from his wisdom and virtue; and his forgiveness of the treachery and villainy of his brothers to him, as well as affection after shown to them and his father, and see if he is not, like myself, struck, not only with the undoubted truth of the story, but also with the evident dealings of God in the transaction? Joseph himself says the whole thing was brought about by the providence of God, in whom he put his trust. The temptation of Potiphar's wife, and Joseph's imprisonment in consequence of resistance to her evil words, stand out in history as a great *landmark of virtue*, warning and encouraging thousands of human souls of both sexes, who from this have had their eyes turned to God's holy Spirit and taken courage to turn from evil ways, to trust in a living God. "How can I do this great sin in the sight of God?" are his angelic words.

Joseph's forgiveness, parental love, deep virtue, faithfulness to Pharaoh, wisdom in the management of the kingdom in great peril, and wonderful kindness as well to his wicked brothers as to his aged father, all united render him the most wonderful man of the Bible, and we may well say that if the Book of Genesis contained nothing else than this beautiful history, it would be a treasure of countless value. Where, too, in profane history, can we find such an exhibition of great qualities of goodness and wisdom as appear in Joseph's angelic career?

Shall we discard this Book as a fable or as apocryphal because we cannot understand the Garden of Eden, the flood, or the ark of Noah, when we find in it so many gems like those of the life of Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph?

Toronto, Oct. 6, 1884. CHARLES DURAND.

#### SMALL CONGREGATIONS.

MR EDITOR,—The liberality of sentiment displayed in the editorial article on the above subject in this week's PRESBYTERIAN tempts me to put a question through you to our Church generally on a matter that is beginning to have a disturbing effect on the minds of many good Presbyterians. You say, I think correctly, that it is a mistake to suppose "that when our Methodist brethren form a congregation or station we are bound to place one alongside of it." You add—and again I agree with you—that the friendly relations between us and the Methodists might prevent this. "Should the Methodists be largely in the majority," you say, "why might they not be allowed to occupy the field? Should the Presbyterians be largely in the majority why should the Methodists interfere?" And again, "the same remarks may apply to evangelical Episcopalians."

My question is: why should we stop at this point? Why should we recognize the principle of division of labour—which is after all only one form of co-operation—in dealing with two other denominations, or rather with one and a half, and decline to recognize it in dealing with the Baptists, with the Congregationalists, with the other half of the Anglicans, or even with the Roman Catholic Church? The only logical ground of distinction which I can imagine is that within the one denomination and a half, man may find salvation, while outside of these, with the solitary exception of our own, he can find none. I do not suppose that any of us are prepared to take this extreme position, but where are we to find standing ground, as reasonable men, short of it?

We hear much in these days of the desirableness of Christian union, and I think you are right in saying that the virtual union implied in the kind of co-operation you favour is more to be desired than any formal union at the present time; but let us clearly understand where we are. We must in my opinion, to be consistent, either go on with the proselytizing struggle in which the various Christian churches have been so long engaged with each other, or we must be prepared to make terms with all Christian denominations alike. The vast importance of this question is beginning to be felt by our people, and it will be more fully realized when the burden of North-west Missions presses more heavily on all the churches. At a time when some of our fellow Christians, in our own country are beginning to look to the United States for the aid they in vain look to the older Provinces for, can we afford to keep up organized raids on each others' constituencies for the purpose of filching a few proselytes here and there? Were the fraternal greetings between church courts last June a delusion and a mockery? Are we all members one of another?

I trust, Mr. Editor, that you or some one equally capable, will endeavour to remove the difficulty I feel in trying to draw the line between denominations, or parts of denominations, with which we can, as Presbyterians, fraternize and co-operate, and those whom we must hold at arm's length and counteract.

Toronto, Oct. 16th, 1884. WM HOUSTON.

#### ORGANIC UNION OF CHURCHES.—A SUGGESTION.

MR EDITOR.—The Methodists in this country, following the good example of the Presbyterians are now united. This happy result has raised the question whether a union more comprehensive than any that has yet taken place may not be one of the probabilities of the future. The subject has been discussed in private, more than hinted at on the platform, and even advocated through the press. A plea for the Organic Union of all evangelical denominations was published in the *Methodist Magazine* an extract from which recently appeared in the columns of this paper. Many and great difficulties, no doubt, lie in the way of the attainment of this end. Steps, however, might we think be taken which would lessen these difficulties and bring such a union within the range of the possible and practicable. It should not be impossible to establish what we may, for want of a better name, call *Denominational Reciprocity*, so far at least as concerns the Home Mission work of the churches. Let us illustrate this. There are whole districts in this Province which are being sparsely settled, and, from the nature of the country, likely to remain so. In one of these localities we find say sixty-families, striving to wrest a living from a churlish soil. Twenty-five adhere to one branch of the church, fifteen to another, while the remainder are connected with as many different denominations. Under these circumstances, and they are not exceptional, it is manifestly unwise, as well as injurious to the cause of Christ, to establish a representative of each denomination among them. The people are too poor to adequately support two or three church organizations. The effort to do so produces chronic dissatisfaction on the part of the overburdened members. The eagerness also with which each congregation will naturally endeavour to increase the number of its adherents results only in intensifying and prolonging the existence of sectarian feeling. What is the remedy in such a case? The only effectual course in our opinion is (1) Leave that church which has first broken ground and gathered the people together to pursue the work without interference. (2) In places where there are already two or three at work, let that church whose people largely outnumber

the others taken together, have undisputed possession of the field. If some such action were taken, it would bear witness to the sincerity of the desire for Organic Union, and, indeed, might pave the way to it. We could then reasonably expect great benefits to flow from our Home Mission work, the following being among the number: (1) An end would be put to unseemly rivalry. (2) Two or three weak and rival causes, dragging out a burdensome and precarious existence, would give place to one homogenous body, fairly well equipped, united in effort, and able and willing to carry on and support the cause of God among them. (3) The surplus energy, hitherto uselessly wasted, could be drafted off to other and needier fields. (4) Such reciprocity on the part of the churches would vindicate them from the charge of sectarianism, and be a blessing to the country.

We make the foregoing suggestion believing that some such mode of Church co-operation is necessary to the advancement of pure and undefiled religion, and to the consolidation of the Redeemer's Kingdom in our land.

Belleville, Oct. 10, 1884.

#### CHATHAM PRESBYTERY AND AUGMENTATION.

MR. EDITOR.—The following paragraph appears in your issue of last week.

"A member of Chatham Presbytery says that there is one congregation in the Presbytery of Chatham, loyal, diligent, yet not wealthy, whose minister's salary is far below the minimum of \$750 and manse, yet gets nothing from the Augmentation Fund. The above can be proved by looking on the Minutes of Assembly of this year."

The indefiniteness of the above, makes it somewhat difficult to deal with. Whether the Presbytery or Home Mission Committee are censured, or whether there may not be something special in the case referred to, that has prevented assistance from the Committee is not stated. All I can say at present in reply is, that as a rule the Committee have faithfully and rigidly carried out the instructions of the General Assembly, and indeed in some cases have given aid, when the Presbytery did not see its way clear to ask it. If the members of the Chatham Presbytery had corresponded with Mr. Walker, or had called my attention to the case by letter, no doubt a satisfactory explanation could have been given; at all events, if any error exists it could have been rectified without resorting to your columns.

The Committee in making their grants, do not ask whether a congregation is "loyal, diligent, and not wealthy," but simply, has it come up to the regulation of the Assembly, and is it recommended by the Presbytery? Yours very truly, WM. COCHRANE.

Brantford, October 20th, 1884.

#### HOME MISSION COMMITTEE.

##### WESTERN SECTION.

The Presbyterian Home Mission Committee met on Tuesday, at two p.m., in St. Andrew's Church. There were present the convener, Rev. Dr. Cochrane, and Rev. R. H. Warden, secretary; Dr. Campbell, Dr. Laing, and Messrs. D. J. Macdonnell, P. McFarlane, McLeod, E. Cockburn, A. B. McKay, P. Straith, R. N. Grant, M. W. McLean, J. Pritchard, H. Currie, R. Hamilton, J. Cleland, Robertson, Dunnville; J. Robertson, Winnipeg; C. B. Pitblado, R. Torrance, A. Tolmie, W. Walker, J. H. Radcliffe, J. Farquharson, J. Somerville, A. Gilray, Cameron, ministers; and Messrs. McCrae, Mitchell, and Kilgour, elders.

It was reported that the Committee had appointed Rev. J. S. McKay, of Knox College, to the pastorate of St. Andrew's Church, New Westminster, and the Rev. Donald Fraser, of Mount Forest, to Pandora Street Church, Victoria, B. C. Both these gentlemen have been settled under exceedingly encouraging circumstances.

Claims for mission work in Quebec, Ontario, and Manitoba for the last six months, amounting to \$15,000, were considered and passed.

The convener read a letter from Rev. John Morrison, missionary at Sault Ste. Marie, regarding his work there, and intimating his desire to be relieved of the care of this field at the end of his two years engagement in November.

Rev. W. Clarke, M.D., missionary at Metis, Quebec, also sent a letter asking the Committee to relieve him from his present engagement in November, as he felt his health was not equal to the physical toil dur-