

those bodies, with a view to promote agreement in the truth and the restoration of outward unity to the Church of Christ, that the world may see it and believe."

It remains to be seen what fruit will come from this motion. Let the immediate result be what it may, we hail the spirit of the resolution.

At the recent Presbyterian Council at Philadelphia prominence was given to the catholicity of the Presbyterian Church, and catholicity abhors isolation and looks to union and unity. Such are a few of the signs of the times. We take courage, but it is not sufficient to stand still, and wait for, and watch the stately goings of Providence. Every denomination as such, and every individual Christian as such, has the weight of influence either for or against union.

AIDS TO UNION.

The first is official action something in the spirit of that which is contemplated by Mr. Langtry's resolution. Why should not each Protestant denomination have a small committee of outlook and of work in this direction. Inter-denominational comity is a department of Christian ethics which has not always been studied as it should have been. If we cannot get union in all things we might ere long secure it in one or two things. When the ten years' negotiations for union between the Free and United Presbyterian Churches of Scotland failed, one good thing was secured in the mutual eligibility which made it possible to call ministers from a charge in the one denomination to a congregation in the other.

Is it not possible to have, in addition to official efforts towards a better understanding, social clubs of ministers or laymen, or both whose special work it shall be not to magnify differences by mere debate, nor to ignore them by silence, but by friendly conference to discover the present extent of the common ground, and the concessions which, in the present stage of knowledge and feeling, it is possible for each party to make.

Union can never come without mutual concession on the part of all the denominations. Some of the many existing divisions, nay, most of them were heroic in their origin. Some of them sprang into being in protest against oppression. Others went forth as the champions and apostles of what they fondly believed to be purer doctrines—yea, the very truth as opposed to error.

At the beginnings of many a division when Protestantism was yet young and untried, the founders of a sect and expounders of a system of doctrine, may have fondly imagined that they had got the dominant truth at last, and that it was only a question of time when theirs would be the one Church. The time for that has gone by, and even when Archbishop Lynch suggests, as he is reported to have done, that the only way to secure the union and unity for which men like Canon Carmichael and Mr. Langtry plead, is for all to go back to Rome, we regard it as more of a pleasantry on the Archbishop's part than a serious proposal, for he reads history, and he knows that there are great movements which may lag, or be eccentric in their forward motion, but they can never go backward. Episcopalians will never become Presbyterians, Presbyterians will never become Episcopalians. The Church of the future will find a platform on which they can join hands, and when that day comes the best and most essential in both will be preserved.

This demands intelligence. Ignorance sometimes belittles differences, but it sometimes magnifies them. The union that could be obtained by a generation rising up that did not know the historic differences between the Churches would be fraught with danger, and certainly of disruption. A true union must be based on intelligence and mutual respect. Learn the doctrinal and historical position of your own Church. Learn wherein it agrees with and wherein it differs from the faith and polity of other denominations. Separate the essential from the non-essential. Get the root forms away from the historical accretions. Let the dead bury their dead, but look out into the fair future and listen to the Saviour's prayer. Learn to be catholic in spirit, but do not mistake indifference for liberality. I have heard people very complacently enlarging on the profit, and so forth, with which they could worship here or there, when they were ignorant of the points at issue between the churches in question.

Proselytizing is to be deprecated. It can never end schism, but it can embitter the relations of sister Churches to each other, and retard the end of schism.

Above all, my friends, strive after personal holiness.

The nearer to Christ, the nearer to each other. He is the Rock of Ages in the midst of the sea of life. From every point of the compass they hasten to Him, and every step they take nearer to Him they draw so much nearer to each other. By-and-by we shall all get so near that we shall mingle with each other, and forget our shibboleths. Then shall we be what we are not now, "One in Christ Jesus." Then, "there shall be one fold and one Shepherd."

MISSION WORK ON THE CANADA PACIFIC RAILWAY.

The following interesting and racy account of Mr. McCannel's travels and labours during the past summer will be read with interest. The Home Mission Committee have endeavoured as far as possible to give Gospel ordinances to the men along the line of the Pacific Railway, and the labours of such men as Mr. Cameron, Mr. Russell, and Mr. McCannel, have been greatly blessed.

WILLIAM COCHRANE.

TO REV. WILLIAM COCHRANE, D.D.—I beg to submit a report of my missionary labours on the Canadian Pacific Railway during the past summer. I left Collingwood by the steamer "City of Owen Sound" on the last day of April, and arrived at Thunder Bay on the evening of 4th May. Thunder Cape and McKay's Mountain, rising to a height of 1,300 and 1,150 feet respectively above the water, were still white with the snow of the preceding winter. The bay was full of ice, sufficiently strong to bear the weight of several hundred men who walked ashore from the steamers "City of Winnipeg," "Quebec," and "Ontario," which we found fast in the ice, having arrived shortly before us. Next morning all four steamers set to work to force their way through the ice and succeeded, although the day was far spent. When this was accomplished I immediately reported to the Rev. Mr. McKerracher, who was to be my bishop for the summer. He was delighted that the Home Mission Committee had complied with his request to send a missionary to the railway. Owing to a smash-up on the railroad I was unable to proceed to my destination for a week. At last I got aboard the "Pullman" and proceeded to the end of the track. The "Pullman" is merely a box car divided into two compartments, one of which is reserved for the use of the contractors and any distinguished traveller (like your missionary) who happens to be going over the line. The rest of the passengers, in number about 200, were accommodated on the flat cars amongst the supplies for the road. Many of them, knowing from experience that they were going to a land where temperance principles are strictly enforced, armed themselves with bottles of whiskey to help them to bear the inconveniences of 150 miles journey into the wilderness on open cars. A last journey it proved to one of them for, moving about from one car to another while intoxicated, he fell between two cars and was killed. We reached the end of the track at dusk. Twenty miles lower at the ballast pits my work was to begin. Making inquiries I found that my parish extended from the ballast pit at Martin station, 120 miles from Fort William, to Eagle River, 170 miles from Winnipeg. Thus my mission field was 110 miles long, but the breadth was not by any means proportionate to the length, being only sixty-six feet. In speaking of stations on the Canada Pacific Railway it must not be supposed that they are in, or in the immediate vicinity of, prosperous towns and villages and a well settled country. On the contrary, although sidings are put in for stations every ten miles, frequently there is no station house or indeed a house of any kind within twenty miles. The nearest settlement is that at Fort Francis between eighty and a hundred miles to the south, and Thunder Bay and Manitoba east and west, hundreds of miles away. To the north, with the exception of an occasional Hudson Bay post and a few wandering Indians, the nearest settlement is on the other side of the pole in the penal colony of Siberia. This is literally "the great lone land." Anywhere away from the portion of the road under construction, a person might travel hundreds of miles and see no living creature larger than a squirrel or a rabbit. The country is mostly covered with scrubby pines from one to six inches in diameter, and here and there a sprinkling of poplar and white birch. There is an endless succession of lakes, hills, rocks, and muskegs. Of all the material difficulties with which a missionary has to contend a muskeg is the worst. The best definition I can give of a muskeg is that it is a sea of

mud, partly covered by a rank growth of weeds, and having or not having a bottom according to circumstances. There is usually from six to eighteen inches of water on the surface, and as the ice in the large muskegs never wholly melts, the perspiring traveller is treated to a luxury denied in less favoured localities, viz. wading up to the knees in ice-cold water. It is not necessary here to admonish him to keep cool. It is much more important that he should be careful to keep above ground, as one careless step may send him floundering in the liquid mud. It is no easy matter for one to extricate himself, and indeed it is doubtful if it can be done at all independent of outside help. I know of one instance where the head only was all that was visible, and it was slowly but surely disappearing when a staff of engineers appeared on the scene and released the victim. Wherever there is any extra heavy work, such as rock cuts, there is quite a large village consisting of stores, boarding-houses, blacksmiths' shops, engineer's office, and sometimes a watchmaker's and a shoemaker's shops. These are built of small logs and covered with scoups, canvas, bush and sand, and in some instances with flour-barrel staves. The houses for the men are divided into three parts, the kitchen at one end, the sleeping room at the other, and the dining room in the centre. The roof is waterproof or otherwise, according to the material of which it is composed. I was always given what was considered the driest part of the room, and on the whole fared very well, although on one or two occasions the friendly aid of an umbrella and a waterproof coat was necessary to make the bed tenable. Services were usually held in the dining room, so that those who might not be disposed to attend would hear even if they remained in the sleeping room. The navvies are of all nations and forms of religious belief. They might almost be described in the language of Scripture as being "out of every nation under heaven." Roman Catholics and Protestants are about equally divided, the majority of the latter are Presbyterians. Father Baxter—a Jesuit priest—ministers to the spiritual wants of the former. The men as a rule were anxious to have the Gospel preached unto them, and regularly attended—Roman Catholics as well as Protestants. Owing to the distance I had to travel—all on foot—I could only hold two services a month in each of the different camps, and in some camps not that often. Men were coming and going continually, so that in many instances those to whom I preached when going up the line were all away, and their places supplied by new hands, when I returned. This being so, the result of my labours was not so evident as otherwise it might have been, but I trust that the seed sown has been carried away by many, to bring forth fruit in due season. I held altogether eighty services on the line. Once, twice or thrice on Sundays according to the part of the line I might happen to be on, and sometimes every night during the week. Every day was Sunday with me, and every evening some of the men were ready to attend service. There was some work done by certain parties on Sunday, but as the terms of contract expressly prohibit Sunday labour there is very little open desecration of that day. I heard, but little profanity, and, owing to the absence of intoxicating liquors, quarrelling and fighting are, in the strict sense of the term, unknown. A strictly prohibitory law is in force all along the line. Detectives on the two sections, A and B, are employed and paid by the Government and contractors. The good order prevailing on section A may be known from the fact that one policeman is sufficient, but he is worth at least half a dozen ordinary men. Conscientious in the discharge of his duties, and a stranger to fear, he makes it anything but a profitable place for whiskey pedlars to carry on their disreputable occupation successfully.

Large numbers of Swedes and French are employed on the work, and in consequence of my inability to converse with them in their native languages, and their ignorance of English, I have had some amusing encounters with them.

Human nature is here to be seen and studied in its simplicity. Men appear and act naturally in all their intercourse with each other. No society restrictions are around them, but they daily live face to face with nature, from which we may hope many of them shall rise to walk closely with nature's God.

My work was a peculiar one, but on the whole I have reason to think I spent a profitable summer. I am sure it was a pleasant summer to me, and it would have been still more so but for the myriads of mos-