

ANOTHER STEP FORWARD—CHURCH UNION.

People of broad minds and broad sympathies have read with pleasure of a sort of federation between the Congregational, United Brethren, and Methodist Protestant Churches of the United States. These Churches have for some time been considering terms of union. A joint committee, representing the three denominations, met recently at Pittsburg, Pa. A platform of union and a joint address were unanimously agreed upon. The union is not to be organic, but federative, though it may in time lead to something nearer. A common general council is proposed. The council will only have advisory power; but it will promote fellowship and co-ordination of activity. It will prevent the unnecessary multiplication of churches, and unite weak churches in the same neighbourhood. The basis of representation in the general council will be one for every 5,000 members. The Congregationalists number 659,327, the United Brethren 277,325, and the Methodist Protestants 184,097. They would thus have 132, 55, and 37 delegates respectively. In doctrine the three denominations are practically the same, and the differences in church government are not very marked.

BETTERMENT OF FORT ERIE AND MAISONNEUVE.

For some time Canadians have felt much indignation that professional sports from Buffalo and other points in the States were resorting to Fort Erie to follow the ring as the law would not permit in their own country. Law-abiding citizens on both sides of the line are gratified to know that the police magistrate has brought judgment against the manager of the International Athletic Club for promoting a fight a short time ago, and has stated his determination to see that the law is observed in future. Also at Maisonneuve, a suburb of Montreal, notorious in the same line as Fort Erie, the chief of the Provincial detective force has taken action to prevent further contests.

A NEW EDUCATIONAL EFFORT.

There is a new educational movement on foot in New England. Its object is to stimulate the people living in rural communities to studious work in some one line of a wide range

of studies. The work will be directed by a central educational bureau, which will outline courses of reading and send lecturers to the local centres of literary activity. The methods will be closely akin to those of English university extension work. One of the pleasing features of our age is the increasing effort for the spread of educational opportunities in rural districts.

The work of Father Damien in Hawaii, of Mary Reed in India, and of other self-devoting spirits elsewhere, has been inaugurated recently in Surinam, South America, among the victims of the living death of leprosy, who there are numbered by hundreds. Near the Government asylum the combined Protestant Churches of Surinam established in 1899 a leper settlement possessing the attractiveness of a Christian home and named "Bethesda" (the House of Mercy). Friends in Europe and America have given aid, and a tiny village of little houses, each accommodating two patients in separate rooms, is now full. A young married couple, the Rev. H. T. Weiss, a clergyman of the Moravian Church, and his wife, with two deaconesses, Sisters Philippina and Martha, have devoted themselves to this charge, dangerous but divine, and to the naturally repulsive but humane services it requires.

Never was there so much money spent, says Harper's Weekly, for erection of new church edifices and all the apparatus of a modern church as was given last year by the church members of this country. Schemes are now under way by which it is planned to add \$40,000,000 to the working capital of the several sects of the country. Methodists, Presbyterians, and Lutherans are especially vigorous in their plans for enriching the treasuries of their mission boards, colleges, and various denominational agencies.

Miss Sarianna Browning, only sister of the poet, died recently in Florence, where she lived with her nephew, the poet's son, at the latter's villa, La Torre all' Antella. Miss Browning had led a singularly unselfish life, devoted first to her mother, then to her father, and finally to her brother after the death of his wife.