

# The New Zealand Graphic

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## CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF NEW ZEALAND.

THE thirteenth annual meeting of the Council of the Union was held at Wellington, commencing on the 5th, and concluding on the 11th of February. Close on fifty ministers and delegates from the various churches throughout the colony were present on the occasion. The forenoon of each day was devoted to the consideration of various matters of business affecting the welfare of the churches connected with the Union, and the interests of the denomination generally. The annual report of the Union Committee was read by the Secretary (Mr J. Bowden), in which reference was made to the repurchase, from the Baptist Union, of the Congregational Church at Timaru; to the building of a church at Raglan free of debt, and to the continued success of the work inaugurated at Napier about fifteen months ago under the supervision of the Rev. H. W. J. Miller (late of Onehunga); also to the gratifying fact that all the churches of the denomination in the colony (excepting one) have settled ministers. Other interesting matters were also referred to, all tending to show advancement and progress in the work of the churches during the past twelve months. The treasurer (Mr W. H. Lyon) presented the

financial statements of the various branches of the Union funds, and urged increased liberality on the part of all our people in view of the many spheres of work open to the Union, but which could not be overtaken for want of necessary funds. The Registrar's Report (compiled and read by the Rev. C. H. Bradbury) showed the attendances on the ordinances of worship to be well maintained, and the membership of the churches increased by 73 during the year.

The afternoon meetings of the Council were devoted to reading of papers on the following subjects:—'The Ethics of the Land Question' (Mr G. Fowlds), 'The Minister's Attitude in Regard to Modern Biblical Criticism' (Rev. B. Rhodes), 'The Social Outlook' (Rev. C. H. Bradbury), and 'The Denominational Outlook' (Rev. J. R. Glasson). These papers were all followed by interesting and profitable discussions.

The Council passed several resolutions regarding the liquor traffic, and reaffirmed its resolution of last year on the Bible in Schools' question to the effect that in the opinion of the Council it is neither the duty nor the right of the State to teach or control religion, and that in view of open designs and covert attempts to establish denominational education it is not desirable to alter the present educational system. A resolution was also

passed to the effect that the Contagious Diseases Acts should be repealed, a copy of this resolution to be sent to the Premier.

Deputations were received and welcomed from the New Zealand Alliance and the Local Ministers' Association, bearing messages of comfort and encouragement from these bodies of co-workers in our common cause.

The election of officers for the ensuing year resulted as follows:—Chairman, Mr W. H. Lyon (Auckland); secretary, Mr J. Bowden (Auckland); treasurer, Mr G. Fowlds (Auckland); registrar, Rev. C. H. Bradbury (Dunedin); auditor, Mr J. Elkin (Auckland); and a committee of twenty members of Council.

A pleasant and agreeable break in the meetings occurred on Saturday, the 8th February, when a picnic was held at Day's Bay, across the harbour. The members of the local district committee had made most complete arrangements for the occasion, the result being a thoroughly enjoyable outing.

The Wellington friends did their utmost to make the meetings a thorough success in every way, and the visiting delegates will not soon forget the hearty reception and the untiring attention and hospitality accorded to them by their Wellington brethren.



Herrmann, photo.

DELEGATES TO CONGREGATIONAL UNION MEETINGS, HELD AT WELLINGTON, FEB., 1896.