

The committee reported the following recommendations:

1. That inasmuch as a comparatively small proportion of the congregations throughout the bounds have adopted the Assembly's plan of temperance work, the attention of sessions be again called to the subject.

2. That this Synod expresses its gratification at the continued progress of the temperance cause, and especially at the general and emphatic expression of public opinion manifested in the plebiscite so recently taken in the Province of Ontario.

3. That our people be advised to look out for men, as members of Parliament, who will put the principle of prohibition above party, and accordingly will vote against their political party, if necessary, in order to secure the triumph of the aforesaid principle.

4. That this Synod, having learned with satisfaction that an overwhelmingly large proportion of sessions are in favor of a prohibitory law, earnestly looks to the Government having jurisdiction in the matter to embody the wishes of our people in such a law, at an early date, and would further assure such a Government of our hearty moral support in its enforcement.

5. That while we rejoice at the constantly growing temperance sentiment among our congregations, we would as constantly remind them of the importance of keeping the Gospel in the foreground as the great remedy for all moral evils.

The adoption of the committee's report was moved by Rev. Mr. Mullan, of Fergus, seconded by Rev. Mr. Johnson, of Durham. Brief addresses on the reports were given by several of the clergymen, but the discussion on the recommendations contained in the reports was laid over till Thursday when Rev. Mr. Mutch will also bring up the following resolution, seconded by Rev. D. J. Macdonnell: "That the General Assembly discontinue the Committees on Temperance, Sabbath Observance, and Systematic Benevolence, and that the work heretofore assigned to these committees be given to the Committee on the State of Religion."

On Thursday business was taken up promptly. This clause in the temperance committee's report evoked discussion as follows:—"That our people be advised to look out for men, as members of Parliament, who will put the principle of prohibition above party, and accordingly will vote against their political party if necessary in order to secure the triumph of the aforesaid principle."

Rev. D. J. Macdonnell objected. He would not say, he began, that these were not the times when questions of overwhelming magnitude might arise; but, he asked, was this matter of prohibition such a question? (Cries of "Yes!" and "No!") There were, indeed, just now before the public two great questions: that of education, which was vital to the future of the Dominion, and that of the tariff, upon the right solution of which might depend whether we were to have a country or not. Prohibition, he maintained, could not compare for a moment with either of these questions in importance. Besides, the recommendation of the committee, even if adopted, would prove a dead letter. Were the people of this country to be told that the questions of the right education of their children and of the maintenance of British connection, which, he had been told, was threatened, were to be subordinated to certain views on the temperance question? Was all the future of the country to be jeopardized because some men held that the liquor traffic should be rooted out, and because they would look at no other question but this one?

Rev. Dr. Mullan, of Fergus, who followed, is an advanced temperance advocate, and spoke as one. He said that the question of prohibition was more important than the tariff question or the question of education. When a country was cursed with a traffic like this, what was the use of it? or what was the use of considering British connection as more important than the suppression of such an evil?

Rev. Mr. Duncan, of Tottenham, although a temperance man, pointed out that it would not do to be too extreme, and he moved in amendment to the motion. "That our people be advised to use all legitimate means to

secure the triumph of the principles of prohibition."

Rev. Mr. McLeod, of Priceville, supported the arguments adduced by Mr. Macdonnell, and spoke with disapproval of the attempt to introduce politics into the church. Ministers were ordained to preach the Gospel, not to dabble in political affairs.

Rev. Prof. Gregg spoke of the evils of the party system. After a long consideration of this way of doing business, he had been forced to the conclusion that it was conducted on the principles which the Jesuits were generally given credit for pursuing. Men, he knew, often voted for party in opposition to their principles and their reason. So long as the system of party existed it would be impossible to have questions dealt with on their merits.

Mr. R. S. Gourlay held that some basis should be agreed upon, on which they could all of them stand. He expressed his disinclination to vote for a temperance candidate who did not even acknowledge the existence of God.

An amendment to the amendment was introduced by Dr. Smith to the effect that the Presbyterian people be urged, no matter to what party they belonged, to support prohibition candidates.

Rev. John Neil said that they ought not to pledge themselves to vote for a man who might take the prohibition stand, but whose life and character in other respects were not such as to deserve confidence.

Mr. Macdonnell, in speaking to Mr. Duncan's amendment to the motion, said that he would vote for it as amendment to the committee's report, but if it came to be a question as to whether it was the deliberate judgment of the Synod then he intended to vote against it. "I cannot vote," continued Mr. Macdonnell, "for a resolution urging members of the church to work for prohibition, because I question very much whether the passing of a prohibitory law will promote temperance so efficiently as a plan which would have the essential feature of the Gothenburg system. I should like a law which would give to the mass of reasonable and temperate men freedom to decide for themselves what they will drink, and at the same time have the sale carried on under such conditions as will take away the temptation on the part of the seller that arises from greed of gain. The Synod is going, in my judgment, beyond its sphere in committing itself to specific legislation. I did not vote for prohibition at the plebiscite. I did not vote against it. I was so thoroughly puzzled as to what my duty was that I simply refrained from doing either."

Dr. Smith's amendment to the amendment was then put, and lost by a vote of 36 to 54.

Mr. Duncan's amendment was carried by 77 to 4, and it became the substantive motion. It was then put as such, and carried by a vote of 80 to 1. The report as a whole was then adopted.

#### PRISONERS' AID.

Rev. Dr. Parsons read the memorial from the Prisoners' Aid Association, which the committee which had it in hand reported for the approval of the Synod.

Rev. Mr. Macdonnell objected to the report of the committee, and to endorsing the memorial. He moved as an amendment the following:—"That the Synod recognizes the great importance of the matters submitted in the memorial of the Prisoners' Aid Association, and commends the whole subject to the careful consideration and wise action of members of the church; but it does not judge it expedient to pronounce upon the details of the proposed legislation, as these are rather matters to be dealt with by experts."

The amendment was lost, and the report was carried.

#### STANDING COMMITTEES.

The committee appointed to strike the standing committees presented the following report, which was adopted:—

State of Religion—Rev. John Hay, convener; Revs. A. Gilray, H. Gracey, D. M. Ramsay, Messrs. Charles Davidson, Alexander Steele.

Sabbath Schools—Rev. James Rae, convener; Rev. J. A. McKeon, Robert Shapine,

D. J. Ross, Messrs. J. F. Clarke, James Turnbull.

Temperance—William Frizzell, convener; Revs. James Carswell, J. R. Gilchrist, Robert Johnson, T. A. Turnbull, Messrs. A. S. Allen, Joseph Gibson, R. G. Strathers.

Sabbath Observance—Rev. R. J. Beattie, convener; Rev. D. R. McDonald, C. S. Lord, J. L. Simpson, A. McAulay, Messrs. James McMullen, M. P., James Wilson.

Systematic Benevolence—Rev. R. D. Fraser, convener; Revs. W. A. J. and J. L. George, J. R. S. Burnett, Messrs. J. McI. Stevenson, George Turnbull, D. Ormiston, James Brown.

Committee on Aged and Infirm Ministers Endowment Fund—Revs. W. T. Wilkins, J. R. Gilchrist, A. Leslie, R. Johnson, Dr. Parsons, J. M. Duncan, J. A. McLaren, J. F. McLaren, G. Munro, W. Farquharson, Dr. Torrance, W. A. Duncan, Messrs. W. G. Craig, Richard Hall, Wm. Ratcliffe, G. F. Bruce, J. A. Paterson, J. A. Mathor, John Harkness, A. G. Allan, H. S. McKelrick, S. Hodgkiss, Alex. Paul.

Synodical Conference—R. S. Gourlay, convener; Revs. Dr. Parsons, J. McP. Scott, Donald McKenzie, Hay, Rae, Frizzell, R. J. Beattie, Messrs. R. D. Fraser, John A. Paterson.

At the afternoon session, after the customary devotional exercises, the report of the Committee on Sabbath Schools was presented by Rev. J. W. Rae. It showed an increase in the work throughout the bounds of the Synod and was adopted as read.

The report of the committee appointed to confer with Mr. John Douglas regarding his petition against the judgment of the session of the Parkdale church, was then taken up. In this church there had been a dispute between the board of managers and the session. The session took upon itself to deal with the matter in dispute, and Mr. Douglas appealed to the Toronto Presbytery. The Presbytery sustained the action of the session, and Mr. Douglas appealed to the Synod. The committee of the Synod appointed to consider the matter reported that, as Mr. Douglas had laid no specific charge, his petition could not be entertained.

A communication was read from Mr. F. S. Spence, secretary of the Dominion Alliance, requesting the Synod to appoint four delegates to attend the annual conference of the Alliance at Montreal.

#### THE SYNOD AND THE ALLIANCE.

Rev. D. J. Macdonnell objected to complying with the request of the Alliance. He thought it would be unwise for the Synod to take a subordinate part in the proceedings of a body made up of strange and erratic persons, and which was not by any means a religious body.

Rev. Dr. Parsons was in accord with the views expressed by Mr. Macdonnell. He held that the church should not place itself in affiliation with the Egyptians. He said that he had received a number of communications from the Dominion Alliance, and among them was one asking that his congregation should contribute to the expenses of the plebiscite vote. He thought the Alliance was an organization of political, rather than religious, significance, and therefore the Synod ought not to identify itself with it.

Several of the other members of Synod spoke to much the same effect.

It was finally resolved, "That the clerk be instructed to acknowledge the receipt of the communication from the Dominion Alliance; to forward a copy of the recommendation on temperance adopted by this Synod, and inform the Alliance that our Church is not accustomed to send delegates to any deliberative body outside of its own court."

Votes of thanks were then passed to Rev. Dr. Torrance for the efficient work he had rendered as clerk, in place of Rev. Dr. Gray; to the congregation of Westminster church, and to the press.

The Synod then adjourned.