

which however a very animated debate had taken place, in which Dr. Grant made a long and able speech from his point of view. The report was then taken up seriatim. To the clauses advocating prohibition, Principal Grant moved amendments suggesting restrictive instead of prohibitive legislation. Rev. J. B. Mullen, and Rev. Dr. MacVicar led the debate against Principal Grant's views. Mr. Hamilton Cassells and Rev. L. H. Jordan supported the amendments, which were however lost.

#### PREPARATORY COLLEGE COURSES.

On Wednesday the Rev. Dr. Bryce presented the report of the Committee on Preparatory Courses in the Colleges, to which was also referred the overture from the Presbytery of Guelph in regard to an examining board for entrance and exit upon the Arts and Theological course in the colleges. The Committee made the following recommendations:

The General Assembly approves of the abolition of the Preparatory Course in Knox College, as hitherto conducted, and of substituting for it a three years' University course as proposed by the Senate of Knox College, and authorize the Senate to put said three years' University course into operation after the Session of 1898-99.

The Assembly deems it necessary to conduct an entrance examination for said course, as proposed.

The College of Manitoba, having signified substantial concurrence in the proposed Scheme, is also empowered to bring it into operation as soon as convenient.

There being no preparatory department either in Queen's, Kingston, or the Presbyterian College, Halifax, candidates for the University in both of these places, not studying for a degree in Arts, not taking a University course somewhat similar to that now recommended by the Senate of Knox and Manitoba, be required to take the three years' course in Arts now suggested for Knox and Manitoba Colleges instead of the subjects at present recommended by the Book of Forms.

With the view of securing uniformity of standard in the training in Arts deemed necessary by the church for candidates for the ministry the Scheme set forth in the document referred to shall be sent down to the several Colleges of the Church in order to its careful consideration by these bodies, to report to next General Assembly.

The subjects on which, according to the Scheme herein approved, university examinations must be passed are as follows, viz:

First year—Latin, Greek, English, Mathematics, and Biology or Chemistry.

Second year—Latin, Greek, English, Logic, Philosophy, and Ancient History.

Third Year—English, Mental and Moral Philosophy, History (medieval or modern) and Hebrew.

It is strongly recommended that two years of Hebrew shall be taken in this course.

In this Scheme the order of subjects may be changed.

The General Assembly remits the question of having a more perfect system of examination of students presenting themselves for license to be considered by Presbyteries during the year, of which report be made at the next General Assembly.

The General Assembly directs that students who come from other churches, who have not taken a course equal to that now proposed in Arts, be required by the Assembly to complete their Arts course before being received into the church.

This clause was added:

"That it shall be the duty of Presbyteries to examine all students for the ministry in Bible knowledge, Shorter Catechism and Confession of Faith." The report as a whole was unanimously adopted.

#### WIDOWS' AND ORPHANS' FUND.

The Montreal Presbytery's overture: "that the regulations of the Fund shall be so changed as to permit of the following method of administration:

I. The annual rates of ministers shall form a separate department of the Fund, and shall be administered exclusively in the interests of the widows and orphans of those who have regularly contributed thereto.

II. Contributions from congregations, legacies, interest on investments, donations, and all other monies given for the support of the Fund not otherwise designated (apart from ministers' rates), shall form another department of the Fund, and shall be administered in the interest of all widows and orphans of ministers of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, was lost by a vote of six to twenty-two.

#### FRENCH EVANGELIZATION.

Rev. Principal MacVicar, Convener of the Committee, said it was a custom in Scotland and Ireland, and to a considerable extent in Canada, for conveners to occupy much time in delivering

eloquent speeches, but he would be pardoned for departing from that ancient custom. Not that he felt incapacitated from speaking on a great national work, but because he believed the feeling of the ministers and elders present was to hear those who were working in the field.

There are thirty-eight fields, having ninety-four preaching stations, served by twenty-eight ordained missionaries, sixteen colporteurs and students, and twenty-one missionary teachers, a total staff of sixty-five. In three districts there was a movement among the French people to have the Gospel preached to them, and getting houses for the purpose they asked for teachers. There was a great onward and upward movement among the people. They were calling for better schools, better education, and fuller presentation of the Word of God on the Lord's Day. He did not think he went too far in alleging that the very near historical past gave proof of the independence of the people, and in spite of ecclesiastical domination, they insisted on what they wanted politically.

Addresses were given by a number of missionaries engaged in French Evangelization work.

#### COWAN AVENUE CASE.

This case occupied the attention of General Assembly for a considerable period of time on Thursday, and created much discussion. The ultimate finding of the Assembly was that the present site must be abandoned within two years, it being considered too near to Dunn Avenue church.

#### SABBATH SCHOOL PUBLICATIONS.

Rev. Dr. MacVicar submitted the report of the Special Committee appointed to consider the Sabbath school report and all relevant matters, which recommended the following:

1. That the Sabbath school publications be continued.

2. That the necessary periodicals to be published are: (a) teachers' monthly; (b) home study quarterly; (c) primary quarterly; (d) leaflets for senior and primary scholars.

3. That from the beginning of 1899 the Sabbath school publications be issued in Toronto, and that Revs. Dr. Warden (convener), Dr. Fletcher, Dr. McIntosh, Dr. Thompson, L. H. Jordan and J. A. Brown and Mr. Hamilton Cassells be a Committee to select and appoint an editor and manager, and to take the supervision of this work.

4. That the gentlemen who endorsed the notes last year be requested to endorse the necessary notes this year, and that the contribution of Children's Day, less the necessary expenses in connection with that day, be devoted to the reduction of the face value of these notes.

5. That the Assembly Sabbath School Committee be recommended to make the department of Higher Religious Instruction self-sustaining, or abolish it.

The report was adopted.

#### YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES.

The report of the Committee on Young People's Societies was presented by Rev. R. D. Fraser and adopted.

The total number of societies reporting is 993, an increase of 74 over 1896. Some societies have been disbanded. Many new societies have been formed. The probability is that the estimate of last year as to the Young People's Societies actually existing within the Church is approximately correct, namely, about 1,200. The great majority of the societies reporting, namely, 783, are Christian Endeavor, which number includes 33 Junior Christian Endeavor. There are 17 Young People's Home Missionary Societies, and 7 Boys' Brigades.

The total membership reported is 36,521, a decrease from last year of 1,883. The average number of members in each society has also declined, and is now 39, as compared with 42 last year. The proportion of young men to young women has not varied greatly from the previous year. It is about 37 to 64. In the rural districts there is a relatively larger number of young men in the societies, whilst in towns and cities the number of young men is in some instances quite insignificant. The situation calls for grave consideration.

The total contributions of the societies is less than last year, being \$29,393, as against \$34,131, a decline of \$4,673, and a lowering of the average per society from \$38 to only a little over \$29.

#### CLOSING SERMONS.

The closing day (Friday) witnessed a small attendance of commissioners.

At the opening of the Session the moderator appointed a committee to consider the formation of a ministers' sons' society, with a view to securing contributions from minister's sons and daughters for the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund and the Widows' and Orphans' Funds.

Uniformity of public worship was discussed on a report by Rev. Dr. Laing, and a book by Sir Sandford Fleming.

The question of Commissioners' expenses while attending Assembly, was before the Assembly and was referred to Presbyteries for report.

The extra Moral Session will be continued in connection with Manitoba College, notwithstanding a strong effort for its abolition.

The Assembly adjourned to meet at Hamilton on the second Wednesday of June next year.