

## THE SEVENTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

## FOURTH DAY.

The Saturday session of the Assembly was devoted to the consideration of the colleges.

Principal King submitted the report of Manitoba College. The state of the college was most cheering. In the theological classes there were twenty-two. They have been able to send into the mission field ten students. About fifty have the ministry in view. Manitoba College is one of the four constituting Manitoba University. In financial matters the report is also encouraging. Every year since his appointment the income has met the expenditure and the income has shown a steady increase. The amount last year was about \$20,000. The institution is now free from debt. A legacy of \$10,000 had been left to the college by the late Mr. Robertson of Vankleek Hill. Others would probably follow. Building and scholarships have been formed. The Manitoba College is providing higher education for a large proportion of the community. There are interchanges of teaching in physical science between Manitoba and Wesley Colleges. A new building is becoming necessary. The theological department is not sufficiently equipped with professors; it is proposed to appoint Mr. Baird to a chair in the college and relieve him from his pastorate.

Dr. Warden moved the adoption of Manitoba College report, concluding with a recommendation that the appointment of Mr. Baird to a professorship be sanctioned.

Mr. Mortimer Clark seconded the resolution, congratulating Principal King, and recognizing the great value of Manitoba College to the Church and to the North-West.

Principal Caven spoke in the highest terms of the qualifications of Mr. Baird for the proposed professorship.

Dr. Duval also spoke of the great value of Mr. Baird's services. The motion was passed unanimously.

Mr. Mortimer Clark presented the report of Knox College. It contained a number of cheering facts respecting the progress of the college in the large number of students in attendance, the efficiency of its teaching staff and its healthy financial position. He concluded by moving the adoption which was seconded by Dr. Laing.

Rev. Peter Straith and J. B. Mullen supported the resolution and spoke of that part of it which proposed that Principal Caven be granted six months' leave of absence for foreign travel, to which Dr. Caven gave appropriate expression to the grateful feelings with which he received the kindly action of the Senate and Assembly.

The Hon. Justice McLennan then presented the report of Queen's University. He regretted that they had to report a small deficit in the income for the maintenance of the theological department. He trusted that the Church would generously remember the immediate needs of that department. He moved the adoption of the report.

Rev. G. M. Milligan seconded the adoption of the report. He urged the claims of this institution to the cordial and generous support of the Church. Dr. Laidlaw represented that the interest of the Church is one and that the congregations should equitably contribute to the maintenance of the colleges. Rev. John Pringle also urged that an effort be made to remove the deficit. The motion passed.

Dr. Warden submitted the report of the Presbyterian College, Montreal. The property in possession of the college is to a large extent the gifts of Montreal people now amounting to nearly half a million of dollars. The graduating class was smaller this year than usual, a fact accounted for by the prevalence of small pox, epidemic at the time that class began its course. Next year there are prospects of a larger number in attendance than ever. The endowment movement is making satisfactory progress. The library contains many rare and valuable works. Mr. Redpath has given several costly gifts to the library. The facilities afforded at McGill bring increased numbers of students, and in this there is hope for a large increase in the Presbyterian College. There is urgent need of additional professors.

Principal Caven moved the resolution disposing of the report. He thought that there should be a cordial interest in all the colleges. Montreal College had justified its establishment. He showed the consistency of the Church endowing its colleges, and concluded by stating that the other colleges rejoiced at the liberality with which Montreal College has been sustained. Rev. Peter Wright seconded.

Rev. D. Tait submitted the report of Morrin College. In doing so he made a fitting reference to the sudden death of Professor Weir. Morrin College does not draw much of its support from the Church. It has done good service in the training of ministers who labour in Quebec Province.

Dr. Thompson moved the reception and adoption of the report. He had in his earlier years occupied a place on the teaching staff of that college and he had pleasant recollections and an abiding interest in the institution.

Rev. F. M. Dewey seconded the resolution. As an alumnus of Morrin, he spoke feelingly of the loss sustained by the death of Professor Weir. He sketched the present condition and future prospects of the college. Students of Morrin spoke with warm feelings of their indebtedness to the teaching of Dr. Weir.

The following resolution relating to the death of Professor Weir, on motion of Rev. D. Tait, seconded by Dr. Thompson, was unanimously adopted:—

The General Assembly having learned of the death of the Rev. Dr. Weir of Morrin College, Quebec, desires to put on record an expression of the high appreciation of the services rendered to the Church for many years by Dr. Weir, and the sense of the loss sustained by the Church in the death of Dr. Weir and of its sympathy with the relatives of the deceased, and would pray that the Lord of all Grace may comfort them in their bereavement. The General Assembly would also express its sympathy with the governors and professors of Morrin College in their great loss.

Rev. D. M. Gordon, in the absence of Dr. Burns, presented the report of Halifax College. The college had been partially rebuilt and enlarged and now there is ample accommodation for a large number of students. There has been a good attendance. The financial condition is in a very satisfactory state. It is contemplated that when the small debt now resting on the building is extinguished, an additional theological professor will be appointed. The prospects are good. Mr. Gordon ended by moving a resolution disposing of the report. It was seconded by Mr. A. G. Troup and unanimously adopted. The Assembly then adjourned till Monday morning.

## FIFTH DAY.

After the devotional exercises and preliminary routine on Monday morning, Mr. W. B. McMurrich moved, seconded by Mr. John Cameron, that for the remainder of the session the time limit be applied to all speeches. The motion did not meet with much favour.

Rev. John Somerville presented the report of the Committee on Remits, Professor Gregg remarking that it is hoped the matter of the deceased wife's sister question will remain as it is for a while now.

Principal MacVicar moved that the report be received and dealt with at a subsequent sederunt. Professor Gregg moved that the report be received and the subject be not further considered in this Assembly. Professor MacLaren moved that the report be received and remitted to the Committee on Bills and Overtures to give it a place in the order of business. The Presbytery of Toronto's overture, asking for a Summer College session, was then read; from Presbytery of Brandon and Synod of Manitoba to the same effect.

Dr. Robertson, in support of the overtures, intimated that there was no desire to lower the standard of theological education, but the neglect of many districts through the inadequacy of missionary supply

requires some method of securing labourers in the Home Mission field, especially in the North-West. There are sections in the North-West where no religious services of any kind are held. The peculiar circumstance requires the presence of religious influences. He enforced his argument by giving several telling illustrations from what had come under his own personal observation. Graduates of the colleges do not volunteer in large numbers for work in the North-West. The devil does not withdraw his agents, summer or winter.

Dr. Bryce noticed the objection to summer sessions as to lowering the standard of theological education. He thought that it would be advantageous rather in that it would secure uniformity in curricula and examinations. If this proposal does not meet the approval of the Assembly, then it is bound to propose something better to meet the difficulty complained of. Dr. Robertson moved, and Dr. Bryce seconded, that the overtures be received and remitted to a committee to consider and report at another session.

Principal MacVicar rose to oppose the motion. In the object aimed at he thoroughly agreed. He had great confidence in the grand body of the elders, many of them are as competent as ministers in preaching the Gospel. Probationers and retired ministers might be more largely employed. We should train men to do this work. The movement will impair the training of men for the work of the ministry. The term of study should be lengthened, not shortened. Our congregations are desirous of stronger, not weaker, men. The tendency on the part of young men is to depreciate theological training. Rev. G. Bruce did not think that Dr. MacVicar's arguments precluded the wisdom of sending the question to a committee.

Mr. William Drysdale supported the position contended for by Dr. MacVicar.

Principal Caven intimated that he had in thinking over the question come to the same conclusion reached by Dr. MacVicar. He admitted that the problem was a most serious one. It requires most thorough consideration from all sides. He proposed the following motion:—

That in regard to the overtures on summer sessions in theology the General Assembly is deeply impressed with the importance of securing, as far as possible, adequate and continuous supply for the Home Mission fields and regards the subject as well entitled to the most earnest attention of the Church, and, without expressing any opinion on the proposal of the overtures, instruct the Home Mission Committee and the several theological colleges to consider fully and carefully during the year the whole subject involved in its bearings both upon the work of the Home Missions and theological education, and to report to a committee, to be named by the Assembly, their views as to the best method of providing for the necessities of the Home Missions during the winter, and especially on the question whether without injury to their studies still further services might be obtained from the students of the Church; said committee having carefully considered the suggestions and reports made to them shall report to the General Assembly.

Principal King had listened carefully to Dr. MacVicar's arguments, but they had in no way weakened the force of Dr. Robertson's plea for summer sessions. He did not see that Dr. Caven's proposal would secure in sufficient time and in a satisfactory manner the solution of the question now before the Church.

President Forest said that we were all agreed that need is urgent. You have a high ideal of an educated ministry that you neglect many fields. He admitted that the summer session might lower the standard of theological education, but then many of the most brilliant victories have been won by raw recruits. Dr. MacVicar's and Dr. Caven's resolution would simply shelve the matter for another year.

Professor Gregg differed from Principal Caven. He remembered that the Scottish Secession had only short summer sessions and had done excellent work. Principal Caven, perhaps the ablest theologian in the Assembly, is a fine example of such a method of training.

Rev. R. N. Grant thought that the Home Mission Committee and the College Boards had enough business of their own without having a question of this magnitude added. He instanced the condition of things in the Muskoka field. We failed in early days to adjust our machinery to the actual conditions of the country. Dr. Caven's and Dr. MacVicar's theory is perfect, so perfect that at present it cannot be applied. Principal Grant thought that the House was drifting into a discussion of the question on its merits instead of the motion. He supported the proposal to send the matter to a committee.

Rev. John Gray proposed a motion for an additional year's study, but it was ruled out of order. Dr. Robertson's motion was adopted.

At the afternoon session on Monday Principal McKnight presented the report of the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund for the Eastern Section. The receipts and expenditures nearly balance each other. There is a small deficit. The congregations very generally contributed to the fund. Three names have been removed and four are to be added. Increased contributions are necessary. He moved the adoption of the report, with thanks to committee and Convener, urging non-contributing congregations to contribute now, and that the others increase their giving by one-third, in order to equalize income and expenditure, and that the younger ministers be urged to connect themselves with the fund.

Mr. J. K. Macdonald stated that there has been an increase of income, but there has also been an increase in disbursements. There has been no possibility of increasing the annuities above \$200. The fund in the east is in a better shape than in the west. To meet the requirements of the current year under the present rules \$15,000 would need to be raised. Sixty-seven annuitants have been on the fund last year. Three of these have been removed by death. The effort to raise the endowment fund has not met with the success it deserved. Nearly \$40,000 has been raised in Toronto. In order to secure Sir Donald Smith's conditional donation, energetic efforts will have to be made to raise the proposed \$200,000. Mr. Macdonald took up in detail the proposed alterations in the rules governing the fund. The committee were unanimous in favour of the changes.

Dr. Cochrane presented the report of Brantford Ladies' College, showing that the attendance at the college has been very satisfactory. The teaching staff was never stronger nor more efficient. Special rates are made for the daughters of ministers. Religious and moral training of the students receives special attention. There are no pupil teachers. All are thoroughly qualified.

Dr. Thompson moved the reception and adoption of the report, and a full expression of the Assembly's confidence in the equipment and efficiency of the institution, and appointing Rev. G. M. Milligan the Assembly's visitor. Dr. Laing seconded, and the resolution passed.

Mr. Macdonald moved that the report of the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund be received and remitted to the Committee on Retirement of Ministers.

Rev. Dr. Robertson presented the report of the Board of Management of the Church and Manse Building Fund. Before the commencement of the work of this Board there were fifteen churches; now there are 171 churches. During last year fifteen churches were built. The financial affairs are in a good state. The revenue for the year amounted to \$9,372, and the expenditure, \$5,357, leaving a balance of \$3,637. Now the operations of the Board extend to British Columbia and North-West Ontario. Its boundaries are now the same as those of the Synod of Manitoba and the North-West. He gave several instances of the character of the work in the North-West, and urged a liberal support of the Church and Manse Building Fund.

Principal Grant moved a resolution approving of the work done,

and empowering the Board to raise the capital to the amount originally contemplated—\$150,000. He spoke with enthusiasm of the work. At present there are many advantages for the carrying out of this work on an extended scale.

Major Walker seconded the resolution, and in doing so gave vivid descriptions of services held in the early days of settlement in the North-West. He also told how they had managed church-building in Calgary and neighbourhood. He thought manse-building as necessary as church-building. He paid a high compliment to Dr. Robertson for his indefatigable work in the North-West. The resolution was carried.

Principal MacVicar then presented the report of the French Evangelization Board, detailing a number of interesting facts connected with the work. He also referred to the work done by Coligny College, and it is doing much to counteract the tendency of Protestants in sending their daughters to Roman Catholic educational institutions.

The bulk of the people of the Presbyterian Church are heartily in sympathy with the work of French Evangelization. It is easy to keep silence, but it is better to remain faithful to principle and to duty. He wished to be relieved from the Convenership of the Board, and concluded by moving a resolution commending the work to the confidence and support of the Church and thanks to those who have so greatly contributed to the success of the work.

Dr. Laing seconded the resolution. We have a testimony to bear before the world. We are Presbyterians and Protestants. We are not ashamed to stand by the side of the Protestants at Spiers, of the Huguenots and our covenanting forefathers. We protest against the enslavement of conscience, against the usurpations of the Church of Rome. He proceeded to show the claims to supremacy in all matters of state, the formation of public opinion and education. Against this we protest. This freedom we obtain from the Lord Jesus Christ. The claims of Rome are based on errors, all of them derogatory to the honour of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is more toleration now; education is advancing, and our opportunities are greater than ever; the prospects of the work are bright.

Rev. George Bruce did not wish to take up time since the venerated and aged Father Chiquy was present and would be listened to with interest. The work accomplished by the Board has been remarkable and most encouraging. He told how a Church, that was nearly extinguished at Grand Falls, N.B., had been resuscitated through the aid of the French Evangelization Board and others. He also related how the work is now progressing at Edmonstone.

Father Chiquy then addressed the Assembly. "When you fight for Rome, you fight against your liberties and your lives," he said; "many Protestants do not really understand the work. From your training in Christianity you cannot suspect that Rome is so bad as it is. Some of you will consider this an exaggeration, but I am eighty-two years old and I understand that system better than you do. I have been inside the walls for twenty-five years and know what is behind the fair exterior. It is baptized paganism. Romanism is not Christianity. They worship a false Christ—one made with their own hands." He then proceeded to explain transubstantiation and the mass. He held up an image of Vishnu in one hand and a wafer in the other, and said: "Here is the god of India, and here is the god of Rome." "There are many facts," he said, "that indicate that the Church of Rome is shaken to her foundations. Many of the converts from Roman Catholicism have gone to the United States." He concluded by requesting the prayers of the people for the French-Canadian Roman Catholics.

## SIXTH DAY.

Dr. Warden presented the report on the Record. The showing was very satisfactory. The resignation of the editorship by Mr. James Croil was intimated. A fine tribute was paid to Mr. Croil for his valuable services, and it was asked that he be voted the sum of \$1,000. It was suggested that the appointment of a successor be left to the Record committee.

Dr. Cochrane moved that the report be received and adopted, and its recommendation be approved: that \$1,000 be voted to Mr. Croil as a slight token of esteem for the admirable services rendered by him, and that the appointment of a successor and contemplated arrangements for the enlargement of the Record be left to the committee on that publication. The first part of the motion was agreed to. In reference to the second part Dr. Warden moved instead that Rev. Robert Murray be appointed editor of the joint publications. The salary of the editor to be decided by the committee.

Rev. Styles Fraser presented the report on Temperance. He recounted the steps taken to advance the cause of temperance. It is the duty of the Church, apart from politics, to use moral suasion and to urge the Government to protect our people against the awful influence of strong drink. We claim that the Government is bound to put down this evil, whatever the cost. The Convener held correspondence with the societies connected with the Presbyterian Churches in the Old Country. It is desired that the committee be empowered to continue its work of organization so that the completed plan may be submitted next year. The Convener asked in reply to the question, why pass a law for which the people are not ready? Were the people ready for the moral law when it was given? The prospects of the temperance cause were most encouraging.

On motion of Rev. E. Cockburn it was resolved to receive and adopt the report and to take up its recommendations *seriatim*. Mr. Cockburn suggested that the Church should take a deeper interest in the temperance reformation. There should be a greater unity of aim among all temperance societies. The public sentiment would be greatly strengthened were the Church more energetic in its efforts in seeking the suppression of intemperance. Office-bearers should be faithful in the exercise of discipline on those who transgress the law of sobriety. He concluded with a reference to the growth of temperance principles during the last twenty years, and spoke approvingly of the Anti-Treating Society commenced in London.

Mr. Walter Paul seconded the motion, and thought that the report would occasion little difference this year. Is the country ready for prohibition? Is the Church ready for prohibition? If not, why not, and if not, what right has the Church to ask the State to enact and enforce prohibition? As one of the delegation to interview the Dominion Government recently, Mr. Paul gave a graphic view of what took place on that occasion. A reference to the attitude of the Minister of Finance elicited a vigorous outburst of applause. He spoke of the progress of the temperance movement in Montreal. He also spoke of the special difficulties experienced in the Province of Quebec.

The first recommendation of the report was to the effect that nothing in the way of legislation short of prohibition strictly enforced can be regarded as satisfactory.

Mr. Douglas offered an amendment. Rev. Allan Simpson supported the amendment and questioned the statement that either the country or the Church were ready for prohibition. Rev. John Pringle seconded the amendment. The latter was voted down by a large majority. It was resolved to proceed with the consideration of the Foreign Mission report, and that the temperance deliverance be taken up on Wednesday afternoon.

Rev. W. T. Herridge presented the report of the Committee on Loyal Addresses. The addresses were adopted.

The consideration of the Foreign Mission report was then taken up. In reference to the proposed mission to the Jews, Principal Grant moved that one medical missionary be appointed to the Jews in Palestine. It was agreed to. It was also resolved to secure the