

Twenty-Seventh General Assembly.

SECOND DAY—THURSDAY.

The opening hour this morning was devoted to devotional exercises; and the first item of business was a report from the committee on Bills and Overtures with a programme of business recommending that Mr. J. W. McMillan, of Lindsay, be appointed to act as joint clerk of the Assembly in place of Dr. Warden, moderator-elect. The report was adopted.

Applications From Ministers

were then considered. Among them was one from Rev. J. C. Madill, former president of the P. P. A. and a Congregationalist, which was endorsed by the presbytery of Winnipeg. Protests against Mr. Madill's reception were read from the Presbyteries of Ottawa and Stratford. One from the presbytery of Paris was worded so as to read that Mr. Madill's application be entertained but that inquiry be made into the circumstances under which he left the presbytery of Toronto and the Presbyterian church. Rev. Dr. McMullen said the minute from the Paris presbytery should read that Mr. Madill's application be not entertained. The moderator ruled that to make any change such as suggested would be a dangerous precedent. Rev. Dr. Thompson, of Sarnia, pointed out that Mr. Madill had been separated from his church by the Congregational union, the fact of this gentleman having been disciplined ought not to be ignored. The application, with all its accompanying documents, was referred to committee.

Leave was given the presbytery of St. John to place upon its roll the name of Rev. Dr. McRae, until recently principal of Morin college, Quebec.

A welcome to Ottawa was read by the moderator from the Ministerial association of Ottawa and inviting the assembly to designate ministers to occupy the pulpits of the various churches on Sunday.

AFTERNOON SIDERUNT.

Reports of the various Colleges were presented. The Presbyterian College, Halifax, shows a falling off in the attendance and a slight decline in the funds, but the smaller attendance is attributed to the raising of the standard in the opening classes. The opinion was expressed that the attendance would pick up. In eleven months of the last church year the college took in \$10,905 as compared with receipts of \$11,207 for the previous year.

The report was presented by the Rev. Dr. Sedgewick and in it a scheme was outlined to consolidate all the funds of the church in the eastern section, and then apportion to each fund including colleges, a proportionate share. This was adopted. Dr. D. A. Murray, of Harvard, will be called to take the chair of mathematics in succession to the late Prof. Chas. Macdonald.

President Forrest, of Dalhousie College; Principal Pollok and Rev. J. A. Macdonald spoke on the report.

The impression was current that the falling off in the number of applicants of candidates for the ministry was because there were so many difficulties in the way of a student getting a charge after he had graduated from college. After passing his examinations he must then go before an entirely different tribunal, a congregation, and preach for a call. Principal Pollok referred in a humorous way to the deterioration in some quarters on the part of the people in the

caliber of minister required. Persons writing to him to recommend a minister asked that he be a "young man," "agreeable socially," "fond of athletics," and not one moral quality mentioned. Rev. Dr. Warden, the moderator, told the assembly that there was a diminished attendance of students for all the professions in the colleges of Scotland.

When the report of the Montreal Presbyterian College came up Principal MacVicar smilingly told the assembly that he had a prosperous year to report. The number of students enrolled was fifty-eight, of whom nine were studying for the work of French evangelization. All the funds of the college are in a good condition but the Principal would like to see some person come forward with funds for the exegetical chair. Dr. MacVicar said the falling off in the number of applicants for the ministry was a serious matter and should be considered by the church, but Dr. Lyle who seconded the adoption of the Montreal College report, said there was no cause for alarm and that the young men would be obtainable as they are needed.

Rev. Dr. Patrick presented the report of the Manitoba college. This was Dr. Patrick's first introduction to the assembly and he received a hearty welcome. The total number of students enrolled at present in theology is twenty-five and the arts students for the year numbered 150. The endowment fund totalled \$59,750; ordinary fund, \$23,192; scholarship fund, \$9,625. Dr. Patrick paid an eloquent tribute to Prof. Bryce and delivered a graceful panegyric on the late Dr. King, who did so much for Presbyterianism in the west. He said that the ministers must be practical, thorough men, who know how to preside over a kirk session, or run a Sunday school. They have no antiquated, out-of-date fashions in the west. He said that the church could go to the old country for a professor but it required Canadians for the ministry. It wanted men who knew which end of the horse to put in the buggy. There are no better men than the sons of Ontario farmers now in Manitoba and the Northwest. The motion to adopt the report was moved by Rev. R. G. McBeth, Vancouver, seconded by Mr. Robert Murray, Halifax, and carried.

Dr. Gregg, Toronto, presented the report of the hymnal committee. The edition sold for the year totaled 63,778, an increase of nearly 20,000. The royalty increased over \$1,500. Of the royalty \$1,000 goes to the aged and infirm minister's fund and \$500 to the widows' and orphans' fund.

Term Eldership.

An overture, which originated in presbytery of Owen Sound and was endorsed by the synods of Toronto and Kingston, dealt with the term service of elders. At present elders are elected for life, and it is proposed to give congregations power to elect when desired for a stated term of years.

Dr. J. B. Fraser, said that men are sometimes elected for life who prove a hindrance to the church. It might be said that the logical outcome would be term service in the ministry. He did not think it would; but, if so, it would not be a calamity. When elected for a period of five years the elder would be eligible for re-election. Dr. Fraser concluded by moving the reception of the overture. This carried, he moved that the overture be approved and sent down to the presbyteries under the barrier act. If a majority of the Presbyteries endorse the overture, it will be subject to confirmation at a future meeting of the assembly.

Dr. Thompson, of Sarnia, said he did not think the church was more troubled with fractious elders than with fractious preachers, and moved in amendment that the overture be not entertained.

Dr. Forrest, Halifax, seconded the amendment, and said whenever there is a little trouble anywhere some people are always rushing to upset and amend the constitution. He thought the same treatment should be provided for preachers, and thought the elders would bear comparison with the ministers. He deprecated these changes. The present system is good enough as it is, and he hoped the assembly would give the quietus to the proposal.

Mr. McQueen, of Beverly, opposed the proposal and thought the assembly was wasting time. He said the proposal degraded the office of elder.

Rev. Mr. Gracey, Gananoque, said that when the Kingston synod approved the proposal it was not from any desire to weaken the eldership and pointed out that the proposal was not retroactive being dependent upon the will of the congregation. Dr. Sommerville, Owen Sound, objected to some of the comparisons made, which he said were unfair. He asked where in the New Testament the Presbyterian church got its authority to appoint elders for life and managers for a term of years. Knox was a pretty safe Presbyterian and he never thought an elder should be appointed for life.

Dr. Campbell, secretary of the assembly, said John Knox soon discovered that term service was not satisfactory and for 300 years the church had got along nicely and would do well to stay where it is.

Rev. Mr. McDougall, of Spencerville, opposed the overture.

A. F. Wood, ex M. P. P., Madoc, said that he never heard of any complaint with the system in the section in which he lived for many years.

Principal McVicar urged the rejection of the overture.

In closing the discussion Dr. Fraser said he was surprised and pained at the lightness of the debate. The proposal should be brought seriously to the attention of the church. He asked if the assembly was averse to submitting the question to the 55 Presbyteries for discussion.

The first vote showed a large majority for Dr. Thompson's amendment throwing out the overture which was made the substantive motion and an amendment was moved by Mr. Cassels, Toronto, that the overture be "remitted" to presbyteries for discussion, which carried by a vote of 107 to 105.

To the proposal that the amendment be made the substantive motion, Dr. Sedgewick moved in amendment that further discussion be deferred until after the report on the elder-moderator question be submitted and disposed of.

The amendment was defeated by a vote of 74 to 80.

Mr. Cassels' amendment was then finally adopted and the overture goes to the presbyteries.

EVENING SIDERUNT.

Home Missions had the floor. The report from the Eastern Section was submitted by Rev. S. G. Carson, of Pictou, N. S. The committee was unable to tell of rapid extension or of any marked expansion in its work. In the east it is difficult to do more than occasionally to add a promising field to those already under charge. The number of stations with home missionaries was 23 as against 31 the year previous. Their