

## AFTERNOON SESSION.

After devotional exercises the Synod resolved itself into a conference with Rev. E. Cockburn, M. A., in the chair.

The first paper taken up was on the "Sympathetic Response to the Spirit of Truth for preaching," by Rev. T. A. Cosgrove, B. A., of St. Marys. This was a most exhaustive treatise on a most theological subject and tended to emphasize the importance of preaching as a power of causing men to think of nobler and higher things. He also emphasized the necessity of the preacher's being thoroughly imbued with the spirit of truth in order to be effective in his preaching. Rev. John Anderson, of Goderich, and Rev. R. Aylward, of Parkhill, led in the discussion, in which, also, Rev. E. R. Hutt, of Ingersoll, Rev. A. Grant of St. Marys, Rev. W. J. Clark and Rev. Dr. Johnston, of London, took part, emphasizing strongly the need of a strong conviction by the preacher, himself, in presenting the truth, so as to appeal to the reason of his hearers and not for the sake of the speaker's own dogmatism.

The second paper of the afternoon session was on "How Can We Best Preserve the Lord's Day?" This proved to be a most practical and interesting paper. The speaker, Rev. John Young of Hamilton, having given the subject much thought as a result of practical observations. The matter of Sabbath observance, he contended, was largely in the hands of the ministers, who had much to do with moulding public opinion. Mr. J. G. Shearer, Field Secretary, endorsed all that Mr. Young had said. He pointed out the dangers that assailed the Lord's Day, the various evasions resorted to, such as greed for money, saving of time and such like. He then went on to outline the work of the alliance, which he classed under three heads:

1. The people should be educated through the pulpit, press and platform. Here he paid a tribute to the good work of the press along this line.

2. Organization was a strong point in this work and the Dominion was thoroughly organized in every province but in Prince Edward Island, which had a few local organizations.

3. The crystallization of public opinion into clear definite law was an important work, though there should be a minimum of litigation. In this connection the speaker pointed out that the trade unions were a source of help as they were instrumental in demanding the day as a day of rest. Sunday visiting was the only evil that permeated the entire Synod.

## EVENING SESSION.

The evening session convened at 8 o'clock, with the moderator in the chair. Devotional services over, Rev. Dr. Robertson spoke on the Century Fund, outlining the objects of the scheme and making an earnest appeal on behalf of a greater giving towards the common fund.

Rev. R. M. Hamilton, of Brantford, presented the report of the Synod on "Church Life and Work," under a number of headings. Many of the answers to the questions asked, the speaker pointed out, were only surmises and were, therefore, unsatisfactory. Others were, unconsciously, considerably colored. In reference to the work amongst the young people the indications were that the homes of Presbyterians throughout the Synod were religiously sound. The home had not lost its attributes as the nursery of religious life. An effort should, therefore, be made to see that the older people should not leave to the ministers the entire task of interesting people in Christian work. Church attendance continued to be good, but it was to be regretted that prayer-meetings had to a sad degree fallen into a decline. A discouraging feature of the reports was that there was little mention of "conversions." Members were added to the church, it was true, but that was not a hard thing to do, but real "conversion" was never heard of in the reports. It was a startling circumstance, too, how few sermons were addressed to the unconverted. Under the heading of liberality the speaker questioned whether the increasing love for sport and luxury of the times was not cutting off the desire for more liberal giving to the cause of religion. An encouraging sign, however, was the growing missionary spirit which was characteristic of city churches, but it was sad to see how many small churches found too much difficulty in making ends meet to give to the schemes of the church. The Lord's Day, as a general rule, was well observed, except in summer resorts.

The report concluded with the following recommendations:

1. That sessions be urged to be more careful in preparing their answers.

2. That inasmuch as Christian homes are the nurseries of religious life, pastors should emphasize home training.

3. That a "Lord's Day Sunday" should be established, say the first Sunday in May, when the pastor should urge the question of Lord's Day observance.

4. That inasmuch as there was dissatisfaction as to the present trend of the temperance question, and increasing drinking amongst the laboring and social classes, pastors should more frequently preach upon temperance questions.

In the discussion which followed, Rev. P. A. McLeod, in seconding the motion, contended the preaching of to day was not adapted to conversion as heretofore, and a more direct appeal should be made to the unconverted. Rev. Dr. Johnston, of London, urged that the unchurched masses were not being reached and that a different method would have to be pursued. The eldership was good, but in some cases the preachers lacked organization. Prayer meetings, too, were looked upon by some preachers as of a secondary nature. Rev. Dr. McKay, of Woodstock, dealt with the causes of decrease in candidates for the ministry, declaring that vital religion was deficient in the family. He also pointed out that there was not the respect for the ministry that there was heretofore. Rev. W. J. Clark, of London, combated the pessimistic view taken of the condition of affairs, in the report, and was inclined to take a more optimistic view.

The first paper was "The Sunday School Report," which was read by Rev. E. R. Hutt, Ingersoll. He said that all but 26 schools had reported, and there was a slight falling off both in the schools and the attendance. The whole situation called for a forward movement by the preachers and the sessions. The number coming into full communion with the church was a decided increase on last year.

The adoption of the report was moved by Rev. Colin Fletcher, who said that the condition of affairs was changing. Two months holidays were taken each year in many schools and this materially decreased the attendance. Rev. Dr. Laing, Rev. J. H. Ratcliff, and others, emphasized the work of the home, as the church and Sunday school depended on it.

## WEDNESDAY—MORNING SESSION.

Rev. G. S. Patterson of Embro presented the remit in reference to the appointment of a Sunday school synodical field secretary. Sympathy was expressed with the general principle of the report, but it was contended that while such an officer was necessary in unorganized districts, the older congregations should do their own organization work.

Rev. J. S. Henderson presented the report on Y. P. C. E. S., the general gist of which indicated a receding of the forward wave which spread over the country a few years ago. In many congregations, however, new organizations and other methods of work had sprung up. The adoption of the report was seconded by Rev. A. Grant, of St. Marys, who spoke upon the treatment of "The Boy," and the best means of securing his attention. Rev. Drs. Johnston, McMullen, Mr. Young and others emphasized the fact that while the C. E. was receding in force other organizations kept the young people as true to the church as ever, and there was no need of complaint from this source.

## AFTERNOON SESSION.

The report of the Augmentation Committee was presented by Rev. A. Henderson of Appin. This report indicated that during the year some four or five congregations had been added to the list, while an equal number, having reached the self-sustaining point, was taken off. It was to be regretted that the contribution from the church at large and the Synod was insufficient to meet the demands of the fund. Rev. E. Cockburn in seconding the motion to adopt the report, emphasized the fact that as this was not a popular fund it was all the more incumbent upon ministers to press the support. Rev. Dr. Robertson spoke about some of the arguments urged against this fund. Some thought that the minimum salary of \$750 paid to a minister was too high, but he showed that in Scotland, where living was cheaper the minimum was \$1,000, and pointed out that some congregations which had supported missions still volunteered support when they became augmented charges. He drew a striking picture of how some ministers strove to make ends meet in the northwest, and averred that money could not be spent in a man-

ner that would give better results than by giving it to the augmentation fund.

Rev. Dr. McMullen presented the report of the committee on the overture by Rev. Dr. Proudfoot last year, in reference to the reduction of the number of Synods, and the enlargement of their powers. The purpose of the overture was to reduce the number of Synods to three—one for the Maritime provinces, one for Ontario and Quebec, and one for Manitoba and the North west; also that these Synods should have charge of the colleges and home missions within their bounds. The General Assembly would meet once every three years, and would deal with matters of interest to the church at large. The committee didn't report in favor of the overture, deeming it rather too radical in its nature. The report of the committee was adopted.

Rev. Mr. Patterson, of Embro, presented the report of the special committee on the remit concerning the manual on "Aids to Social Worship," which recommended that for the purpose for which it was prepared its use should be recommended by the Synod. A vigorous discussion followed the reading of the report, some of the more conservative members regarding it as the entrance of the thin edge of the liturgical service. The report, however, was adopted.

The Synod then formed itself into a conference with Rev. E. Cockburn in the chair, to discuss the business of the session.

## The Young People.

The only paper taken up was on "How to Retain the Young People in the Sunday schools after the age of Fifteen; Also How to Make the Y. P. C. E. S. More Aggressive." This was presented by Rev. W. A. J. Martin, of Zion church, Brantford, and proved to be a bright and thoughtful paper. He pointed out that there was a leakage of Sunday school scholars after a certain age had been attained and dealt with the causes. The first great essential to the remedy was the revival of religion in the home. This was a matter of great importance in all church work and especially in this respect. A truly religious atmosphere should pervade the home and parental influence should be brought to bear upon the children and thus keep them in the Sunday schools. Godless homes recruited loafers and vagabonds, while the homes of the religious gave to the world its best men and women. Another reason for the leakage was that older students dropped out because the subjects taken up were not interesting to them; and this brought up the important question of lessons for the students of different ages. This was being accomplished to a certain extent through the International Lessons which outlined a plan of procedure for the various classes. The speaker also emphasized the question of the more effective training of teachers.

Under the second heading of the paper—that of Y. P. C. E. S.—the speaker pointed out that the movement had originated under special circumstances and was receding because it was not suitable to the changed conditions of to-day. At present each congregation might be different in some particular from its neighbor, and it was therefore necessary to study the wants of each in order to get the best results.

The discussion was taken up by Revs. Larkin, McMullen, Ross, Johnston, Young and others, and the consensus of opinion seemed to be in favor of graded lessons for the Sunday schools in the hope that thereby the interest in the work might be maintained.

## EVENING SESSION.

The first hour of the evening session was devoted to the business of the session, in the course of which the following convenors of standing committees were appointed: Church Life and Work, Rev. A. McGillivray, London; Sunday Schools, Rev. R. Pettigrew, Glen Morris; Young People's Societies, Rev. J. S. Scott, Brantford; Augmentation, Rev. A. Henderson, Appin.

The paper of the evening was on the important subject of "The Relation of the Pulpit to Sociological Problems," by Rev. Neil McPherson, B. D., of Hamilton. The paper was a most masterly one and was more of the nature of a magazine article than one which could be briefly reviewed in the short space at the disposal of newspaper. The discussion was taken part in by Revs. Dr. McMullen, J. S. Scott, Hamilton and Young, all of whom paid high compliments to the paper.

The Synod was brought to a close with votes of thanks to Rev. Mr. Leitch and the officers of Knox church for their kindness towards the members, and to the press for their reports; also to the conference committee for their work.