

The usual votes of thanks to all whose kind services had contributed to the success of the meeting and the comfort of the delegates were then passed.

Mrs. Mutch, of Toronto, gave notice of a motion to amend Note I of the bye-laws of the Society to the effect that, anyone having a motion to bring up at the annual meeting, should first give notice of the motion in writing to the executive of their Presbyterian Society one month before its annual meeting, so that it may be, if adopted, be passed on with or without approval to the General Society at its annual meeting. Many and excellent reasons, some of which will at once occur to all, were given for this proposed change.

The subject of a Training Home for preparatory instruction of various kinds, before sending into the foreign field those who offer themselves for service, and which has been before the Society for some time was referred to at this point by the president. She stated that conference had been held on the subject with the Foreign Mission Committee of the Church, with the result that it does not see its way at present to institute such a Home; that the Toronto Training School, an inter-denominational institution, is doing a good work in this direction, the services of which could be taken advantage of for the purpose desired; and, lastly, that a sub-committee appointed to confer with the professors of Knox College had reported that, they would gladly render any service in their power of a special kind connected with the work which it was felt desirable to have. The president also in this connection stated that, in the opinion of missionaries, the desirability of attempting to acquire the language of any of the foreign fields, before reaching them, was for various good reasons, questionable.

A notice from the Guelph Presbyterian Society to keep the devotional services of the first session apart from all business was not concurred in.

A motion to rearrange the work of the foreign secretary and secretary of supplies so as to have one secretary both of supplies and mission work for the North-west and another for mission work and supplies for all foreign fields strictly so called was agreed to. In asking this change it was explained by the president that it had become necessary by the great expansion of the work, and by the inconvenience and extra work caused by the overlapping in many ways of the two matters of supplies and of what was more strictly missionary work.

It was also agreed to sanction the taking part by the executive of the W.F.M.S. in such work as providing suitable buildings for the missionaries or their work, so far as they found it advisable when requested to do so by the Foreign Mission Committee.

Questions to be answered of a great variety of kinds bearing upon the Societies work were put in charge of Mrs. Watt, of Guelph, who did her work with great readiness and good humour. The time for the train was now drawing near and delegates began reluctantly to leave. Suitable closing words were spoken by Mrs. Grant, of Toronto, prayer and praise were offered, and the twentieth W.F.M.S. annual meeting with all its interest and influences for good was a thing of the past. Next year the annual meeting will be held in Hamilton.

## THE SYNOD OF HAMILTON AND LONDON.

The annual meeting of this Synod, at which there was a good attendance, was held in St. Andrew's Church, Chatham, beginning on the evening of the 20th inst. The retiring Moderator, the Rev. J. L. Murray, M.A., of Kincardine, presided, and after the usual opening devotional exercises preached from John iv. 54. "God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." In the introduction the preacher said that the woman to whom these words were spoken, was concerned about the place and the form of worship, not about the Being that should be worshipped, and the spirit in which worship should be offered to Him, and he added, there are myriads in Christendom to-day who are under the same delusion, who imagine that when the externals are duly and decently attended to, acceptable worship is offered, and that the account with heaven is squared for the present. Our own branch of the Church, he said, will soon be called upon to consider certain possible changes in the form of our public worship. We are to worship God first for His own glory, and to do so in spirit and in truth; and next we are to worship for the right development of our own character, for as we worship our character becomes assimilated to the Deity worshipped.

Several things were next referred to which may be made either helps or hindrances to spiritual worship, such as, the minister, the leader in public worship; the praise or song-service; the Church building; bodily postures, the use to some extent of a set form of words, or a modified liturgy. In conclusion he said, "Let us never lose sight of the one supreme object of the church service—spiritual worship. It is our privilege and our duty to employ whatever may help, and avoid whatever may hinder that worship, having the Scriptures as our guide. Yet the best of means are means at best. The only aid that is absolutely essential is that of the Holy Spirit. A soul attuned to the service and praise of God is what the true Christian is in quest of."

The usual form of procedure was followed, the calling of the roll, noting changes which had taken place during the year, the choosing of a new Moderator. To this office the Rev. Dr. Lyle, of Hamilton, was unanimously called, and on taking the chair thanked the court for the honor done him in electing him to the office. A

vote of thanks was passed, conveying to the retiring Moderator the thanks of the Synod for his conduct in the chair and for his closing discourse. After the business notices usual on such occasions the Synod adjourned to meet on the following day.

On Tuesday morning, after one hour spent in devotional exercises, the Synod proceeded to business and took up first a communication from the Synod of the Anglican Diocese of Toronto, asking co-operation in petitioning the Ontario Legislature for the adoption of religious instruction in the public schools. The gist of the communication referred to was that as the formation of character is the ultimate object of education, and since this could not be done without due attention being paid to the moral and religious nature of the young, and that as this can only be secured by careful instruction in the teaching of the Scriptures, and setting before the young the example of Christ, and as no provision is made in our public school system for such instruction, the Legislature be asked to make provision for such instruction for one-half hour daily during school hours, by ministers of the various religious bodies or their representatives, to the children of their own communion, provided that it shall be optional with parents whether their children shall attend such instruction or not. The question was, after discussion, referred to a committee consisting of the Rev. Drs. McMullen, Thompson, Laing, Hamilton and McDonald.

At a subsequent sederunt this committee reported as follows:—"That the Synod of Hamilton and London of the Presbyterian Church acknowledges the receipt of the communication of the Anglican Synod of the Diocese of Toronto in reference to religious instruction in the Public Schools of Ontario, and further that this Synod, while holding very strongly the importance of the religious element in education, declines in present circumstances to take part in a public agitation on this question." This was passed unanimously.

A report was next submitted by the Rev. Dr. Cochrane on the state of the

### YOUNG LADIES' COLLEGE,

Brantford, stating that the number of pupils enrolled had been larger than in the previous year, the total attendance being 45 boarders and 81 day pupils. The instruction given is thorough and the teaching staff complete. A heartily-expressed resolution of approval of the college, recommending it to the members of the Synod, was passed unanimously.

The next business taken up was an appeal against the decision of the Presbytery of Huron in the case of Mrs. Gavin Ross against Rev. J. S. Henderson of Carmel Church, Hensall. After a good deal of debate, chiefly upon the constitutional aspect of the case, the matter was referred to a judicial committee.

The report of this committee finally carried and acquiesced in by all the parties was to the effect, "That the so-called appeal of Mrs. Ross against the Presbytery of Huron be dismissed. That at the same time it appeared from the records that Mrs. Ross had a grievance against the Hensall session, inasmuch as she had been refused a certificate on the ground of certain charges which had not been investigated, and from which she had

not been given an opportunity of clearing herself. That as Mrs. Ross had not made a formal complaint in the matter, the Synod recommend that the Presbytery be instructed to cite the said session before it, with a view to removing the grievance and vindicating the good standing of Mrs. Ross."

The next subject brought before the Synod was one which, during the year has given rise to considerable discussion in the columns of this paper, namely

### THE RIGHT OF RULING ELDERS

to act as Moderators of Session. This question was brought up by an appeal from the action of the Presbytery of Hamilton, which had appointed a ruling elder, Mr. Robert Lowry, as Moderator. The Presbytery having been placed at the bar, the Rev. Dr. Laing, who had been appointed to defend its action in the Synod, addressed the court. He based his defence on four propositions. First, that there had been no violation of the law of the Church, which was not that the Moderator "shall be" but "is" a minister; the cautions wording of the statement being intentional and significant. Second, in any organized society, unless the constitution pronounced otherwise, every member was eligible for election to the Presidency, and there was no provision to the contrary in the law of the Church. Third, when a Presbytery is constituted there is strict parity between ministers and ruling elders, except when functions other than those of government have to be performed. On this point Dr. Laing argued at some length, contending that a minister is really an elder who is authorized to teach. Fourth, exceptions had occurred in the past to the use and wont of the Church on this point.

Rev. Dr. Lyle also spoke for the Presbytery. He took strong grounds as to the absolute parity of the New Testament elder and Bishop. He, in fact, advocated a much greater extension of the functions at present exercised by the eldership, saying he thought they should be allowed to baptize, preside at communion, and preach.

Dr. Macdonald, of Hamilton, held that the services of a large number of men who would be useful in the eldership and in the Church might be retained by increasing the privileges and powers of the eldership. After some further discussion the Presbytery was removed from the bar. The Rev. Dr. McMullen championed the opposite view. He contended that by Dr. Laing's argument there was no scriptural ground for the Presbytery itself. It was a far-reaching, radical and revolutionary change, which would destroy Presbyterianism as it now is. The new theory would result in Congregationalism, or worse, for in the latter form of Church government the minister is chairman while by the theory advanced by the Presbytery of Hamilton the minister would be nowhere. He concluded by moving that in view of the far-reaching nature of the change proposed the Synod deemed it advisable to refer the whole matter, simpliciter, to the General Assembly.

Mr. Alex. Bartlett, of Windsor, also took part in the discussion adopting the cause of the elders, who, he thought, do not now occupy the position in the Church which they should.

After some further discussion Dr. McMullen's motion was carried unanimously.



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The Augmentation Fund was reported upon by the Rev. J. C. Tolmie, who strongly advocated its claims. He stated that thirty-one congregations in the Synod had contributed nothing on its behalf. The report recommended that the Presbyteries be instructed to send deputations to congregations which have been deficient in their givings to this fund, and also that the Presbyteries, where possible, re-arrange the fields so as to lessen the demands upon the Fund.

Rev. Dr. Lyle supported this in an ardent speech and the recommendations were carried.

### REVISION OF THE PSALMS.

Rev. W. J. Dey, of Simcoe, submitted an overture on this subject from the Hamilton Presbytery. He spoke at some length upon it illustrating in a most interesting manner the improvements in point of rhythm and often of sense which have been effected in the version now in use. This was carried, Rev. Mr. Dey, and Rev. Mr. Thompson, of Ayr, were appointed to support the overture at the General Assembly.

At the evening Session the church was crowded to the doors.

### CHURCH LIFE AND WORK

was presented By Rev. Dr. Cochrane, reading a full and able digest made by Rev. Peter Wright, of Forage la Prairie, from reports from eight Presbyteries of the Synod, upon this subject. The Rev. J. G. Shearer, of Hamilton, presented a report on

### SABBATH OBSERVANCE,

embodied in a series of six resolutions, referring in substance to a growing tendency to Sabbath

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