

(Continued from page 407)

brought to bear on the hearts and consciences of the people history must repeat itself, and our fellow-countrymen sink into religious indifference and infidelity. The work of demolition is going on. Our work is to build up and restore by presenting in the spirit of its Author the Gospel. What has been done in this way—little compared to what must be done—is the assurance of the favour of the Great Head of the church, and the pledge that the Gospel will yet win its way against misrepresentation and established error, and give light and liberty and peace to the people. The most notable conversion during the year was that of Seigneur Papineau, a man of unblemished character and great influence.

The Rev. D. Tall, of Quebec, bore testimony from personal observation to the high character of the work done and the workers engaged in it.

The Rev. Mr. Duclos referred to his preference for the Presbyterian Church, because it had a representative form of government.

Principal Bourgois, of Pointe aux Trembles school, referred to the national aspects of the work. The French in Quebec are nominally enjoying British liberty while really slaves to Rome, but a great tide of dissatisfaction is rising, and a new day is dawning.

Rev. Father Chiniquy added, that he owed to the Presbyterian Church the conversion of 45,000 of his countrymen.

SIXTH DAY—TUESDAY.

Leave was asked by the Presbytery of Barrie to retain the name of Rev. Mr. Moodie on its roll which was granted and expression given to the high esteem in which he is held by the church at large. The venerable senior clerk asked to-day for an assistant in the work of age of the church. The request was cheerfully granted, after which Dr. Reid returned thanks.

The first business to-day was a change in the regulation regarding the distribution of the reports of the Assembly. Hereafter one copy will be sent to every minister, one each to every session and board of managers, and one to every member of sessions contributing to the Assembly funds.

An overture very largely signed by members of the Assembly, protesting against the discrimination against the Chinese immigrants, was read by Dr. Cochran. It set forth that Canada ought to welcome people from all countries to develop her resources; that it is contrary to righteousness, to international comity, and to British practices and treaties to so discriminate; and that the present law of Canada discriminates in an unjust and odious way against the Government and people of China; that the General Assembly take into its serious consideration to endeavour, in conjunction with sister churches, to bring influence to bear upon the Canadian Government to remove the unjust restrictions. The overtures were largely signed. Rev. D. M. Gordon, in moving for a committee to deal with the matter, made a forcible address. Moderator McKay spoke most eloquently, upholding the cause of the Chinese, and condemning the course adopted in placing restrictions upon them. It was said here that the Chinese work cheaply, they retain their own food, habits and customs, they returned home after they had made money in this country, and they were grossly immoral. He would like to hear of any charge against the Chinese here, including their immorality, which was not made by the Chinese in their own country against the European residents there, and upon as good grounds. He said he felt that in Canada and the United States it was high time that the people removed the scales of prejudice and national pride from their eyes. He would feel proud to go back to Formosa, knowing that the church he loved in the country he loved had placed itself upon record as against unjust restrictions against the Chinese. On motion of Rev. D. M. Gordon and Dr. MacVicar, a large committee, with Principal Grant as convener, was appointed to bring this matter to the notice of other denominations with a view to joint action between the churches of Canada and the Parliament of the Dominion for the removal of an impost discreditable to the Dominion.

The motion was passed by a standing vote.

An overture was read from the Presbytery of Montreal asking the Assembly to appoint a suitable person to labour among the Chinese in the cities of Ontario and Quebec. There are 10,000 of these people in these provinces. Classes had already been formed, especially in Montreal, and much good had already resulted. More might be expected when these people were home and carried the truth of the gospel with them. Principal MacVicar supported the plea of the overture. The discussion on this overture, which was supported by Rev. F. M. Dewey, occupied the whole evening. All the speakers agreed to the necessity of such a work, but differed materially as to how it should be done. Moderator McKay said he did not believe the work as now carried out by Sunday School teachers is satisfactory, and gave a number of instances in support of his contentions. Finally it was decided that the overture be remitted to the Foreign Mission Committee to carry out the prayer of the petitioners.

VACANT CHARGES.

The problem of the settlement of vacancies was next considered. Overtures from Toronto and Montclair Presbyteries were read. Rev. D. J. Macdonnell very ably supported the overture from Toronto, setting forth the evils of long vacancies and the rights of Presbyteries in caring for and securing the settlement of vacant charges. This is a matter of vital and pressing importance. The average length of vacancies is about a year, or about eighty years of pastoral work lost to the church yearly. Something must be done to stop the leakage and waste of service.

A strong plea was made for term service by Rev. R. P. Mackay.

Dr. Reid reminded the Assembly of the difficulty of getting Presbyteries to carry out the regulations of Assembly. He opposed the idea of superintendents or even of granting Presbyteries authority to settle ministers. He deprecated the idea of restoring patronage in any form.

Mr. Macdonnell said that the only semblance of patronage in the church was in the hands of the principals and professors of colleges, a statement repudiated by two of the principals, Principal Caven and Dr. McRae.

Dr. Proudfoot and others took part in the discussion.

It was moved by Mr. Macdonnell, and agreed to, that a large committee be appointed to take up the overtures and the whole matter of the call and settlement of ministers, to suggest such modifications in the practice of the church as shall secure that vacant charges shall be more speedily and suitably filled, so that the services of ministers shall be more fully utilized by the church, and report to the next General Assembly, with Rev. D. M. Gordon, D. J. Macdonnell, and Prof. Hart as joint conveners.

IN THE EVENING.

After routine business at the evening session, loyal addresses to Queen Victoria and to Lord and Lady Aberdeen were adopted by the Assembly. Rev. D. M. Ramsay, submitted a report on the state of religion.

The committee, after dealing with many encouraging evidences of spiritual activity, proceeded to discuss what were termed the hindrances. It did so in these words:—

"Their name is legion. Some sessions have no special hindrance. Worldliness in its various forms,—covetousness, ambition, love of pleasure—seems to be one of the greatest hindrances throughout our bounds. Indifference and inconsistency interfere with the work of all sessions. Sabbath-breaking and unfavourable outward circumstances, with that of many prolonged vacancies, have had a disastrous effect in not a few places. Various forms of error—infidelity, Mormonism, Universalism, Adventism, Plymouthism, Roman Catholicism—lift their heads up here and there. Cranks and grumblers, gamblers and swearers, are to be found in many parts. We are not without internal dissensions. A spirit of antinomianism may be set over against a love of ethical preaching. One session, with no little candor, complains of the laziness of its own elders. Loud talkers, who are also lazy workers, and note-hunters with beams in their own eyes, are gibbeted, each in one report. Satan, one tells us, is at work seven days in the week and every hour in the night. It is remarkable how comparatively few sessions seem to find the drinking usages of society a hindrance so great as to be worthy of mention. Perhaps this is their fault, but it is certain that were drunkenness to cease from the land, the church would still have gigantic foes to contend with, and of these the evil heart of unbelief, out of which proceeds worldliness, inconsistency, indifference, etc., must be reckoned the great source. Accordingly it is gratifying to find that the chief weapon with which these foes are met is the word of the Cross."

The following recommendations were made:— That Presbyteries be urged to hold a conference on the state of religion, and the consideration of their report on the same subject, a standing order for some regular meeting or meetings of the Presbytery, and that a copy of this resolution be sent to the clerk of every Presbytery.

That sessions be strongly advised to hold meetings for devotion and conference on the state of religion, and to divide their fields into districts suitable for the supervision of the elders.

That Sabbath Schools be carefully graded, and suitable parts of the mother's or shorter catechism and passages of scripture be assigned to each grade, to be committed to memory.

That ministers be again instructed to give due prominence to the subject of family religion, and Presbyteries to use due diligence in securing from all sessions full and definite reports on this subject.

That sessions be asked to interest themselves personally in the various societies connected with their congregations, especially in those which are occupied in work for the young.

That faithfulness in private dealings with the individual conscience, and directness of inculcation of Christian duties in pulpit discourses, be commended to all who labour in the word and doctrine.

Rev. Mr. Hay, of Cobourg, seconded the report, which was adopted.

A communication was read from the W. C. T. U. of the Maritime Provinces, congratulating the Assembly upon the advanced position it has taken upon the temperance question. They promised all possible co-operation with the church in the work of promoting social purity and the religious training of the young. This was accepted and a suitable reply was ordered to be sent.

REPORT ON TEMPERANCE.

R. Stiles Fraser, convener, submitted the report on temperance. The report referred to the work done by the Special Committee on Temperance, and also to the disposal of the funds in hand by giving to Dr. Maclaren towards the further payment of Mr. Spence's work the sum of \$300, making the total amount given for that purpose \$800, and also a sum in favor of publishing a manual on temperance. The report also deals with the plebiscite taken in the different Provinces, and finds encouragement in the growth of temperance sentiment, especially in Ontario, where the whole Province, with the exception of a few places, stands out emphatically in favor of Prohibition; and its Government, led by Sir Oliver Mowat, stands pledged to enact such prohibitory legislation as the Privy Council shall declare to be within the power of the Province to enforce. The report goes on to say:—

"The prohibition sentiment, which has been slowly but steadily rolling up for years, and which is now rising with striking rapidity, is evidently gathering itself into a mighty torrent that cannot be much longer restrained, but must carry away in its rush, like a Johnstown flood, those forces that vainly strive to hold it back, be they men or money, licenses or legislators, groggeries or Governments, for God and the right must surely win the day. Look at our schools where our children are taught

temperance, look at the many juvenile societies where they are pledged against strong drink, look at our Sabbath schools, where by lesson and pledge our children are led into the paths of sobriety as a Christian duty, look at our Young People's Christian Endeavor and kindred societies, and measure, if possible, the irresistible power of intelligent, heartfelt prohibition sentiment that is even now rising up before us as an earnest of the coming victory for 'God and home and native land.' Will some still be skeptical? Ours must be the faith that works by love and never ceases to hope while it works." The report refers to the temperance work of the different Presbyteries, and the encouraging reports received from all of them regarding the furtherance of the cause. Temperance education in the schools is touched upon. After dealing with questions to sessions and Presbyteries, the following resolutions were moved:—

Be it resolved:—(1). That this Assembly give thanks to God for the evidence, furnished by the report, of the encouraging progress in temperance sentiment and practice throughout the bounds of the church, of the good work being done by a large majority of congregations on behalf of the young—either according to the Assembly's plan of work or along similar lines—and urges ministers and other office-bearers, members and adherents to continue every proper effort to deepen that sentiment and increase that practice, and further recommends the 'plan of work,' especially to congregations that have not yet undertaken active temperance work among their children and youth.

(2). That this Assembly approves of the recommendation of the special committee appointed to act with the Committee on Temperance as given on page 1 of this report, viz.:—That of the balance of the fund raised in 1892-3 in re the royal commission on the liquor traffic, \$300 be handed to Dr. J. J. Maclaren, Q.C., Toronto, to aid the Dominion Temperance Alliance in paying for the labors of Mr. F. S. Spence in connection with that commission; and that the remainder be given to the Committee on Temperance for the purpose of publishing a small manual on temperance, and of placing the Assembly's plan of work on a self-sustaining basis.

(3) That in view of the pronounced state of public opinion in favor of prohibition, as expressed by the recent plebiscite held in Manitoba, P. E. Island, Ontario, and Nova Scotia, by the unanimous vote of the Legislature of New Brunswick, and by the reports of sessions and Presbyteries, and in accordance with this request of the Synod of Hamilton and London, this Assembly instructs its Committee on Temperance to approach by memorial and petition the legislative body or bodies which shall be declared competent by the Privy Council, asking the immediate enactment and vigorous enforcement of legislation prohibiting the liquor traffic. This Assembly also advises electors to secure, as representatives in the Legislatures, Dominion and Provincial, men whose opinions and practices are in accord with total abstinence and prohibition.

(4) That this Assembly notes with satisfaction the progress made in the teaching of temperance in the Public Schools; that during 1893 improved textbooks have been adopted in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Ontario; that in Ontario temperance has been placed upon the list of required subjects, and that the moral phase of the question is receiving increased attention; and that in accordance with orders of the Hon. Minister of Militia and Defence, the sale of all intoxicating liquors has been discontinued at all camps of instruction. At the same time, this Assembly regrets that no action has been taken to close the canteens connected with the Northwest Mounted Police, and instructs its Committee on Temperance to press the matter upon the attention of the proper authorities.

(5) That in future, until otherwise ordered, questions on temperance be sent down to sessions only once in three years; and that in the intervening years Presbyteries be enjoined to watch over the interests of temperance within their respective bounds, note the course of events bearing upon the movement, hold conferences upon the subject, and report direct to the Assembly's Committee on Temperance, which shall report to the Assembly.

(6) That Synods be recommended to hold conferences on temperance, dealing with such features of the work as may, in the circumstances, call for special attention."

Several stirring temperance addresses were made and the report was adopted.

The Rev. Joseph Hogg moved the reception and adoption of the report.

This was seconded by Dr. Chiniquy. In doing so he gave the Assembly a bit of his history. When he went to a parish near Quebec it was an old parish, there were seven taverns but not a school. In four years there were seven schools and not a tavern.

THE SABBATH SCHOOL.

The Rev. T. Fotheringham presented the report upon Sabbath-schools. "There are fifty-seven more than the previous year. The increase of scholars in the schools of the Presbytery of Montreal was 484. The committee had published several leaflets for the assistance of teachers and scholars. Much had been done in the work of higher religious instruction, in memorizing of the Scripture and in teaching the catechism. There had been contributed to the schemes of the church the sum of \$30,093 and \$6,431 to other objects."

SEVENTH DAY—WEDNESDAY.

After opening exercises this morning, Rev. Dr. MacRae submitted the resolutions on remits, colleges, representation of mission stations and Synodical powers. The committee recommended that, in regard to the representation of mission stations, the interim account become the law of the church, that in regard to enlarged powers of the Synod no further action be taken in this direction by the General Assembly.

The report on standing committees was read, and a few additions made.

Dr. Forrest read the report on the reception of ministers from other denominations. All the applicants were received, except the following: Rev. Mr. Harvey applied for by Sarnia Presbytery, and Rev. W. B. Anderson, asked for by Picton Presbytery. Report also recommended that Rev. Mr. Tinkham, Baptist, be received by the Hamilton Presbytery, after one year's attendance at a Presbyterian college; Rev. Mr. Lambe, Congregationalist, by the Presbytery of Brandon, if agreed to by the Synod of Manitoba and the Northwest Territories. Mr. Kovas, a member of the Reformed Church of Bohemia, by the Presbytery of Minnedosa, if upon inquiry they are satisfied. Mr. Kovas brings his congregation of Hungarians with him. Rev. J. F. Somerville, applied for by Toronto, was accepted, if it appears that his certificates, which have not arrived, are correct.

Rev. D. J. Macdonnell submitted the report of the Special Committee appointed to revise the augmentation scheme now in operation. This report brought on a good deal of discussion. Its chief recommendations were that the minimum stipend for unmarried men not requiring a house be \$700; for married men, \$750, with house, or \$800 without. \$850 with manse, or \$900 without, in Manitoba and the Northwest, where the expense of living is exceptionally high, and in cases of exceptional liberality on the part of congregations, the grant may be increased at the discretion of the committee. Grants asked by Presbyteries shall be reviewed by Synodical Committees to be appointed, which will also do all possible to stimulate interest in the fund. In the Western section, as in the Eastern section, the fund shall be administered by a committee distinct from the Home Mission Committee.

The following applications of students for special courses were granted:—Messrs. D. J. Scott, R. A. Guthrie, W. E. Ashe, J. B. Cropper, M. S. Scott (second year extramural), J. A. Slimmon, T. W. Richmond (on completion of two years), M. S. Mackay, G. M. Morrow, R. Murray, D. McLean, A. Stewart (advised to take university course), C. A. Colman (to take special course under Presbytery of Victoria), J. A. McConnell (to have standing of first year in theology).

Memorials from the Presbyteries of Barrie and Algoma, asking for the establishment of a Church and Manse Fund for Muskoka and Algoma were received. The memorials were referred to the Home Mission Committee, Western section, to consider the advisability of instituting a fund for the more destitute fields in the Western section east of Manitoba.

LEAVE TO RETIRE.

The following ministers have leave to retire, and to be placed on the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund:—I. J. Murray, John Morrison, John Anderson, Nathaniel Paterson, John Scott, D. M. Beattie (annuity up to time of death), G. E. Freeman (half benefit), M. Turnbull, John Ewing, W. Maxwell, Dr. Patterson, Alex. McRae, Edward Roberts (half benefit), E. Grant.

An overture from St. John Presbytery asks the Assembly to define a family for statistical purposes, and to say how families in the congregations should be reckoned. The overture was transmitted to the Committee on Statistics for consideration, to report to next Assembly.

The following is the Separate Committee appointed to administer the Augmentation Fund, Western section:—The Rev. D. J. Macdonnell (convener), Dr. Warden, Dr. R. Campbell, Dr. Robertson, Dr. Laing, Dr. Laidlaw, Messrs. J. Somerville, E. Cockburn, Jas. Ballantyne, A. Findlay, W. G. Wallace, R. D. Fraser, M. McGillivray, John Hay, John Neil, Peter Wright, J. A. Macdonald, James Herdman, W. J. Clark, ministers; and W. Mortimer Clark, J. A. Patterson, Joseph Gibson, Joseph Henderson, G. T. Ferguson, A. Jardine, W. Hamilton, Jas. Tusker, George Rutherford, D. D. Wilson, William Thomson (Hamilton), J. S. Stewart (Woodstock), elders.

GREETINGS FROM AUSTRALIA.

The Rev. W. Scott Whittier conveyed the Assembly the goodwill and congratulations of the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales, which he did in a few felicitous remarks, to which a fitting response was made by the Moderator.

At the afternoon session memorials were read from the Presbyteries of Algoma and Barrie, anent the formation of a church and manse fund. The Assembly decided that the memorials be referred to the Home Mission Committee to consider the advisability of establishing such a fund for the Western section of Ontario and Quebec, lying East of Manitoba.

Dr. Moore presented the report of the Committee on Leave to Retire. The requests of the ministers were granted, Rev. G. A. Freeman of Toronto being placed on full benefit.

An overture was presented from the Hamilton Assembly anent the Assembly Fund, and the method in which it was raised, and was referred to the Finance Committee of the West to consider and report.

The Augmentation Committee for the West was struck, with Rev. D. J. Macdonnell convener.

A discussion took place as to the payment of travelling expenses on certain committees, but no action was taken by the Assembly.

Principal Caven presented a resolution on the appointment of a college professor, which was accepted.

At the evening session of the Assembly an overture from the Presbytery of Guelphe anent Rev. James Donaldson, who wanted help, was referred to the Infirm Ministers' Committee.

The Assembly reappointed the Committee on the Union of the Churches, to report at the next annual meeting.

The best plan for the filling of vacancies is a difficulty in the denomination at present. It was resolved by the Assembly, on motion of Rev. D. J. Macdonnell and Dr. Laidlaw, to appoint a committee to take certain overtures under consideration so as to secure that vacant charges shall be more