

Our Contributors.

THE RELATION OF QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY TO THE CHURCH

The following is the speech by Principal Grant to the General Assembly on June 14, 1892, in closing the debate on his motion to receive and adopt the report of Queen's College and University, and the action of the Assembly. —

After expressing his regret that he would be obliged to trespass on the time of the Assembly on account of misapprehensions in some minds, he proceeded as follows: —

The motion which I have submitted is the same in substance as that which every General Assembly since 1875 has passed. Mr. Clark has moved the following amendment: "That the report of Queen's College be received and that a committee be named by the Moderator to examine into the whole relations of Queen's College to the Presbyterian Church in Canada, and, after conference with the trustees of Queen's College, to recommend some scheme whereby the appointment, control and removal of professors in the theological faculty of Queen's College, and also the direction and regulation of teaching of the theological department of that college, shall be vested in the General Assembly as fully and to the same extent as they now are vested in it in the cases of Knox and Montreal colleges, said committee to report to next General Assembly."

Let me call attention to three points connected with this amendment. First, in effect it condemns the action of every General Assembly since the Union. Mr. Clark does not deny this. His language is explicit. He has said that the action of all previous General Assemblies in this matter was "a solemn farce," and in his speech last Saturday, that it was "absurd," and even "perfectly absurd." He declared, too, that he desired to use courteous language. Admitting the desire, one can hardly help asking, what would courteous language be? Clearly, if this Assembly adopts the amendment it endorses the attack that has been made on the action of all previous assemblies. It is scarcely possible to conceive that we will do this, for we know that if we do not respect ourselves other people will not respect us. Secondly, the amendment proposes to appoint a committee charged to recommend a scheme to next General Assembly, involving not so much a change in the relations of Queen's to the Church as a definite change in the constitution of the University itself, a change that the Assembly has never once discussed and that has never been considered by the authorities of Queen's. The house has not been even asked to consider what the change would involve, and yet it is so revolutionary that it is simple truth to say that if it had been pressed as a condition of union there would have been no union. Every one knew in 1874 that the authorities of Queen's would have been well pleased had the united Church assumed the responsibility of the whole University, but no one dreamed of proposing to divide the University into two and to have the Principal and other professors in the theological department appointed by one body, and the professors in the other faculties appointed by another body. That would amount to a change in the constitution of the University that no one who understands University life would advocate lightly or adopt without mature consideration. Thirdly, Mr. Clark admits that his amendment is "illogical." That ought to be its sufficient condemnation. He declares that the Assembly has no power to deal with our report and therefore that it is illogical to move that it be received. He entirely forgets that this is a union Church and — as I showed on Saturday — that the relations of the various Colleges to the Assembly is distinctly set forth by acts of Parliament. He should read section 7 of the Act of Parliament which preceded the union. Here it is, in part: —

"As soon as the said union takes place the corporation of Knox College shall stand in the same relation to the Presbyterian Church of Canada in which it now stands to the C. P. Church. And the corporation of Queen's College shall in like manner stand in the same relation to the Presbyterian Church of Canada in which it now stands to the Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland, and all the powers, rights and privileges hitherto exercised and enjoyed by the ministers and members of the Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland as corporators of the said College and by the Synod of the said Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland, in virtue of their relations respectively to Queen's College at Kingston, shall be exercised and enjoyed by the ministers and members of the Presbyterian Church in Canada and by the Supreme Court of the said Presbyterian Church in Canada; provided always that the said united Church shall not be required to elect trustees for any Arts department in Queen's College aforesaid."

The Act goes on to treat of the Presbyterian College of Montreal and the corporation of Morrin College in the same way. Language cannot be more explicit. One of the rights and privileges of the Supreme Court of the Church was to deal with the annual report of Queen's. That right was not taken away, and therefore it remains. Apart from the one exception named in the Act, this Assembly then is to take the same interest in Queen's that the old Synod took. The amendment is certainly "illogical." Either the Assembly is free to deal with our report or it is not. If it is, Mr. Clark admits that he has no case. If it is not, how can he contend that the Assembly has power to deal with the Constitution of Queen's? The amendment then is admittedly "illogical." I have shown that it is also opposed to the unbroken practice of the General Assembly since the union and to the act of union, and that it has been moved without consideration of the views of the authorities of Queen's, without thought of the constitution and historical position of Queen's and without giving the Assembly any time to consider the questions and issues involved.

I might rest here, but as misleading statements have been made, it is necessary to give a little more light.

I pointed out on Saturday that Mr. Clark's method of action was contrary to Presbyterian order. I wish now to show that our action has always been in accordance with our forms of procedure.

The legislation of 1874, modifying the character of Queen's, was effected by authority of the Kirk prior to the union. There was a minority in the C. P. Church opposed to undertaking responsibility for and the support of the University. There was a strong sentiment in another of the negotiating Churches in sympathy with the minority. So strong was the feeling that the well-known proviso that I have quoted was inserted in the basis of union. Professor McLaren was right in telling us that the minority in the C. P. Church was small. But Dr. Laing drew his attention to the real point at issue when he pointed out that the old Kirk Synod was certainly not responsible for that proviso, but that it was inserted in deference to the feelings that existed in the negotiating Churches. Our union was to be a union of peace. Not a preparation for civil war. Professor McLaren is inclined to think that the University and the Kirk should not have sought for the legislation of 1874. He does not attach the importance to the Act of 1889 that Mr. Clark does, for he rightly sees that it was simply another step along the line taken in 1874. Now the only point in which that first legislation modified the charter was by giving the graduates a voice in the management of the University, and I do not believe that university men anywhere or any considerable number of fair minded laymen would agree with him that it was wrong or unwise to give any representation to the graduates.

Professor McLaren rose to say that he had not meant to deny the right of representation to the graduates, and Principal Grant resumed: —

I am very glad to hear this. It is well to know that we are at one on this point; for the principle of representation is at the basis of Presbyterianism, and to refuse it to the children of the university when they had become an important body and were doing more for their *Alma Mater* than any one else, would have been unworthy of our Church. Not in that way will generous youth be attracted to either Church or university. The best minds are drawn to the Church that acts out the highest principles, and they are repelled from a Church that seeks only its own sectarian ends or glory. If some legislation of the kind had not been given prior to the union, I, for one, would have pleaded for it immediately after the union.

The great point however that we all are agreed on is that the legislation of 1874 was obtained openly and constitutionally, that the negotiating Churches knew of it, and that no opposition to it was made from any quarter whatsoever.

What was the object of the act of 1874? It was officially stated that it was "to increase the efficiency and extend the usefulness of the College." That was the precise object that the Bill of 1889 contemplated, and Mr. Clark admits that the legislation of 1889 was well calculated to secure the object. It was good legislation, he says; good for Queen's as a great institution of learning; but, he adds, "we as Presbyterians cannot look at it from that point of view." Now if an enemy of the Church had used such an expression we would have accused him of labelling Presbyterianism. As Mr. Clark has used it, I shall only point out to him that in 1874, "we as Presbyterians" did look at it from that point of view, and I shall prove too, that the General Assembly in 1885 and 1889 also looked at it from the same point of view. The only answer that Mr. Clark can possibly make to these historical facts is the plea of the famous jurist who complained that he had never in the course of his long life met men so obstinate as his eleven colleagues.

So much for the legislation of 1874. Now, in 1885 further legislation was needed to promote the object that was contemplated in 1874. This was not at all wonderful. Toronto University gets new legislation almost every year. It is simply one of the results of growth. We do not ask for legislation so frequently because we wish to give the organism time to grow. Before coming to the Assembly in 1885 the trustees discussed fully the changes that were needed. As the amendment proposes to disfranchise these trustees in part, I may point out how carefully they do their work. The Principal prepares a draft report and the secretary sends a proof of that, with a programme of the business to be transacted, to every trustee at least ten days before the annual meeting. Travelling expenses are paid, that all may be induced to attend. The trustees come prepared to do their work, and the report to the Assembly is gone over clause by clause and all necessary additions and subtractions are made. I have been on many committees appointed by this Assembly, but never on one that does its business with the same care, thoroughness and conscientiousness as that shown by the board that has been attacked. Dr. Campbell, of Montreal, as he explained on Saturday, was opposed to the changes contemplated in 1885, and they were therefore all the more carefully considered by the trustees. In our report to the Assembly for that year you will find a section as follows: —

IV.—FURTHER LEGISLATURE.

"One of the provisions of the charter of Queen's is to the effect that professors not in the theological department shall subscribe such a formula declaratory of their belief in the Confession of Faith as the Synod may prescribe."

"This provision has been in abeyance since the union; and as the trustees intend to apply to the proper authorities for an Act amending the Act of 35 Vic. Cap. 76, in the direction of further defining and extending the power of the University Council, they propose that the provision be abrogated."

In presenting this report I spoke briefly on each section. Referring to the two paragraphs just quoted, Mr. Milligan has correctly stated that I took the position that tests thought necessary fifty years ago were now anachronisms; and also that by "extending the power" of the University Council it was meant that it should have some representation on the governing board. Such an extension followed legitimately from the legislation of 1874, which created the Council. One-half of the members of the Council were elected by the graduates and belonged to different denominations. They had proved themselves worthy of the trust reposed in them, and it was only right to give to such a Council the power of electing from their own number some to represent them on the Board of Trustees. What action did the Assembly of 1885 take on this report? No question was asked with regard to Section IV., but a question was asked with regard to the merits of Section V., which dealt with what was then a burning question in Ontario—University Confederation, a scheme into which, we informed the Assembly, that we had declined to enter. This having been satisfactorily answered, a motion to adopt the report was offered by Mr. Milligan, and seconded by Hon. David Laird. Mr. Clark moved in amendment that it be received, and took the same ground that he holds still, that the Assembly had no power to deal with our report. I remember very well how this motion was received. Mr. Laird remarked that it was too late to take such ground, as it should have been taken immediately after the union. Mr. Macdonnell exclaimed that Mr. Clark might just as well move to abolish the union! The Assembly divided, and Mr. Clark's amendment was defeated by an overwhelming majority. Not well, this action was taken by Mr. Clark before the legislation of 1889 was obtained, though that is the ground that he now alleges to be his excuse for moving in the matter. He asked no question then about the legislation we proposed to get. He found no fault with it; he made no complaint that our report was too brief. Dr. Campbell has told you how keenly he felt because no one in the Assembly apparently sympathized with his views. He then said to me: "I see that the Assembly takes no interest whatever in Queen's, when no one cares even to ask a question on so important a matter." My answer was to the effect that he misunderstood the Assembly; that the great majority were friendly, but that it did not follow that they should oppose legislation which the trustees considered necessary to increase the efficiency and extend the usefulness of the College.

The report of 1885 was adopted, but we delayed taking action until we had fully considered other suggested improvements. In 1889 we went to Parliament for an Act which was so brief that it was quoted in full in many newspapers, and which you will find in the *Presbyterian Review* of last Thursday. The two points on which we had reported to the Assembly of 1885, it was seen when the Bill was being drawn, involved two others; first, that the five additional trustees appointed by the Council need not be Presbyterians, and therefore, of course, they could not be asked to sign the Confession of Faith; secondly, that it would be best to abolish this requirement in the case of the other trustees, seeing that it had been in abeyance as far back as could be remembered. In olden times you are aware that great importance was attached to subscription of formulas. The oftener they were signed the greater the obligation was felt to be. A man could hardly enter on the duties of a hog-reeve unless he first took the commission and signed some formula. That sort of thing is now felt by all but peculiarly constituted men to be an absurdity. But note, the obligation of the charter that twenty seven trustees must be Presbyterian ministers, elders or members in full communion remained in force. There must thus be still on the Board of Queen's twelve ministers who have signed the Confession and fifteen elders or members in full communion. In fact all that was done was to bring our law into conformity with our own practice, and with the practice that obtains in every other Board of the Church! When we went to Parliament for our Act the question of jurisdiction led to its getting the widest pub-

licity. Some able constitutional lawyers maintained that we should have gone to the Provincial Legislature instead of to Parliament. But while this point was discussed with the greatest keenness, no one objected to a single clause on its merits. Not a few members of the House of Commons were leading members of Assembly, and none of them made any objection. No man who took the slightest interest in Queen's could be ignorant of the measure, and though we were then collecting our endowment, no one made it an excuse for not giving!

What accordingly was the nature of our report to the Assembly in 1889? I quote the Section bearing on the matter: —

LEGISLATION.

"The report for 1885 contained the following paragraphs. These having been given as quoted above, the report proceeded: 'Although the Assembly adopted the report, no action was taken in the premises by the Board. It was considered wise to delay so that the new Act might embrace all the amendments that might be considered necessary for some time. Last year, however, it was decided to ask for legislation on the two points referred to in the report of 1885, and also to obtain power to hold real estate in any province of the Dominion. Having been obliged in 1882 to go to Parliament for protection from litigation threatened on the ground that the legislation obtained at the time of the union was *ultra vires* of a Provincial Legislature, the Board went on this occasion direct to Parliament, and though the question of jurisdiction was debated, the Act was passed. Instead of abrogating the test referred to, the new Act declares that professors shall sign such formula as the Board of Trustees may prescribe.'

Remember that this Act was well known; and that as we study to make our reports brief we particularly alluded only to the change that had been made as to the formula to be signed by the professors, because in that matter we had made an addition to the proposal in our report of 1885. In that we proved ourselves to be more zealous for orthodoxy than the Assembly had shown itself to be. This report of 1889 was presented by Professor Ross, and the deliverance on it, moved by Dr. Thompson, of Sarنيا, and seconded by Dr. Laird, reads as follows: "That the Assembly receive the report of Queen's College . . . approve of the legislation referred to," etc. The deliverance was adopted unanimously.

I would now ask the Assembly or any member of it to indicate what step that should have been taken was omitted. Besides, every year since, the Council has publicly elected its representatives. Great interest is taken in the election. A biographical sketch of the gentleman elected is given in every newspaper. Yet in 1892 an elder of the Church accuses us of having concealed from the Church what was and is proclaimed from the housetops!

I might rest here and leave the matter to your judgment, but it may be well to discuss the Act of 1889 on its merits, even at this late day.

Our Church is Canadian and historical; it must adapt its institutions to the needs of Canada; and it must preserve the best traditions and the loftiest spirit of all the Churches that compose its grand unity. We remembered this in seeking for the new legislation. Our aim was to strengthen the University as a seat of learning, always keeping in view the object for which it was established, that it should be religious and not merely secular in tone. What is the historical position of our Church? It is national rather than sectarian, and it has therefore always sought the fullest and freest educational development. The Church in Canada has been true to that ideal. The origin of Queen's is a proof of this. Though our people in Ontario sixty years ago were in deep poverty, they resolved to establish a University on the model of Edinburgh, because the only university then in Ontario was sectarian. They made the basis of this University as wide as it possibly could then be, by making every member of the Church a corporator. It was thus, as much as possible, a people's University to begin with. There were no graduates, and it would be long before there would be graduates enough to entitle them to a share in the management, but, as Dr. Machar said at the first public meeting held fifty-three years ago: "It was a matter of necessity that the control of such an institution should be in the hands of some trustworthy and responsible body." With regard also to the election of professors, the founders did not entrust it to the Synod. The Synod indeed was far above any vulgar desire for patronage. They felt that a large public body was not the one best calculated to decide on such matters, and therefore they gave the patronage to a carefully-selected body of trustees. They also gave very large powers, as regards educational questions, to the professors or Senate. They made the University, as far as possible, self governing.

From the first, Queen's had the advantage of the representative principle. The congregations of the Church sent up names of lay men whom they thought most suitable to be trustees, and from that leet the Synod made its annual election.

At the union it was found that this could not be insisted on, and also that the time had come to recognize the graduates. Accordingly the Council was created, and that step succeeded so well that in 1885 it was felt that another should be taken, and that the Council should elect five of its members as trustees in addition to the original twenty-seven. It was involved in this change that five men who need not be Presbyterians should take part in electing professors of theology, and to some men this seems extraordinary. It did not seem so to us, and for these reasons: First, the Church that the Moderator yesterday very properly styled the mother of us all, the Church of Scotland, while always clear on the point that professors of theology should sign her standards, has never taken the position that the General Assembly should have the patronage of the chairs. In Edinburgh University this patronage was exercised till recently by the Town Council. The court that now appoints has still, Mr. Gray informs me, a majority nominated by the Town Council. Not one of the members is necessarily a Presbyterian. If we are to judge by results, the method is as satisfactory as the modern method adopted by the Free Church. We, however, have not followed the Free Church method in any of our colleges, though some people fancy that we have. With us the Boards really appoint and the Assembly has only a nominal power. In the Free Church the Presbyteries invariably nominate and the Assembly selects from those who are nominated. The method followed in Queen's gives more real power to the General Assembly than that which is followed by Knox and Montreal. We appoint in April, after having obtained leave from the previous General Assembly, and so the Assembly that meets in June following has two months in which to consider the claims of the person appointed, and therefore full time, should there ever be need of doing so, to prepare a motion of disapproval. In the other colleges five minutes may be all that is allowed us in which to consider the name recommended by the Board, and while, theoretically, every member of Assembly has the right to object or to submit another name, I would like to see any one rise and do so. The name may be submitted to us not even in the annual report of the Board, but in a supplementary report, indicating clearly that the Board itself has considered the name very hurriedly. Now I do not criticize this method. If it suits sister colleges and the Church, well and good. But when a gentleman tells us that "it is an inalienable right of the Assembly to appoint its professors of theology," I am tempted to enquire whether the appointment can be made only by this method or what is the witness that history bears to the supposed "inalienable right?" Secondly, the principle of representation is Presbyterian, and therefore when there are hundreds of graduates most closely interested in the welfare of the University, it would be inconsistent to refuse them representation. To suppose that they might not act with perfect loyalty to