

GENERAL ASSEMBLY REPORT.

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Church Union.

The Church union discussion began with the reading of overtures from a number of Presbyteries conveying opinions for or against the union.

Principal Patrick presented a resolution of which he had given notice on Saturday, expressing satisfaction that the proposed union appeared practicable. The question, he said, had been one of organic union and the negotiations had been carried on on that basis alone. For the first time the report of the joint committee of the Methodist, Congregational and Presbyterian Churches was brought in, embodying the deliberate judgment of the union committee as a whole. Union would affect congregational liberty very little, and eldership practically the same. The itinerary of the ministry would not be rigidly applied, nor would the permanent pastorate. The probationer would disappear, as would "candidating." The speaker dealt at some length with various phases of the subject, including doctrine, polity, ministry, administration and law. The motion asked the committee to go on and complete its labors. He knew not how long that might take, but it should not require more than twelve months. At the end of that period they might be able to lay on the table of the Assembly the basis of union. The committee looked to the judgment of the people for support. Principal Patrick cherished union as an ideal of a national Protestant Church.

The resolution was seconded by Rev. Dr. Murray, Halifax, citing the success of previous unions within the Presbyterian Church in Canada, and the progress of similar negotiations in Corea, China, India, Africa and Australia.

Dr. Campbell, Montreal, led the Opposition, proposing the amendment previously mentioned, deprecating the efforts towards organic union. He praised the work of the joint committee, but expressed the belief that logic was not in favor of the union. The churches had already reached the stage of union and unity that had been in the mind of Jesus Christ. People had not responded to the appeal for union, indicating an attitude of timidity and fear, and he apprehended heartburning and trouble when the question went down into the arena. It would not heal the wounds in the body of Christ, but create further divisions. The movement involved compromise and departure from time-honored methods.

Principal McKay, Vancouver, seconded the amendment, and cited the experience of the recent service in Scotland as a reason for opposing the present movement. He believed in co-operation and federal union. The people had not had an opportunity to consider the subject thoroughly. He feared the proposal of Dr. Patrick would divide the Church.

Dr. Milligan, Toronto, gave a powerful address at the evening sederunt, in which he declared that the time was assuredly not ripe for organic union. He pleaded to postpone the decision, and let the committee go on with the work. It might take ten or fifteen years, but the time would be well spent.

The discussion was continued by Rev. Mr. Stewart, London; Rev. William Farquharson, Dr. Bryce, and others.

A vote was taken late in the evening and the resolution of Dr. Patrick carried by 156 to 32. The motion records the pleasure of the assembly at the progress made, and learn with great pleasure that the proposed union appears to be practicable. It also suggests that the report be sent down to the pre-byteries, sessions and congregations for information and suggestions.

Future Relation of Queen's to Church.

Principal Patrick, of Manitoba Col-

lege, introduced the subject by presenting the resolution adopted by the special committee which had been appointed to consider the subject. The burden of his remarks was that circumstances had greatly changed since 1903, when the Assembly unanimously decided to continue the present form of connection with the Church. The action of Mr. Andrew Carnegie in providing a fund for retiring allowances for college professors and the restriction of his beneficence to colleges not controlled by denominations, rendered it imperative that Queen's should cease to be denominational or should provide in some other way for adequate retiring allowances. Unless this were done the inevitable result would be that she would be able neither to obtain nor to keep the best class of professors. He also pointed out that the Ontario Government would not, and indeed could not, give aid to denominational institutions. He concluded his remarks by moving the following resolution:

"The Assembly record their gratification at the rapid progress of Queen's University, and their desire for its increasing prosperity. The Assembly, while ready to retain the existing relation between the Church and the University, are nevertheless of opinion that the question of the character of that relation should be determined by the trustees of the University as the body ultimately responsible for its welfare and financial support. They therefore authorize the trustees, after consultation with benefactors and graduates, to take such action in regard to the relation between the Church and the University as they judge to be best in its interests. Should the trustees decide in favor of a change of relationship they shall be required to make provision for the existence and maintenance of the theological faculty in a manner satisfactory to the Church. The committee learns, with gratification, of the progress made in the attempt to raise \$300,000 of additional endowment for the faculty of arts, and hopes, whether or not a change be made in the relations between the Church and the University, a movement of such importance to the University will be brought to an early and a successful close. The Assembly feel assured, if the existing relationship be modified, the authorities of Queen's will consult their subscribers as to the destination of the sums they have contributed. The General Assembly, in view of the urgency of the case, resolve to appoint a commission, to be named by the moderator, with Assembly powers, first, to give effect, if necessary, to any decision of trustees in altering the present relation between the University and the Church, and, second, in giving this consent, to see that adequate provision is made for the maintenance of the theological faculty in full efficiency, and with such a form of government as will secure to the General Assembly due control over its affairs.

Principal McLaren seconded the resolution. He hardly thought that the report would be satisfactory to all, but it was as good a report, he considered, as could be presented. When the Presbyterian Church of Canada was first organized, Queen's College was by an overwhelming vote taken into the Church, but at present no Church should burden itself with a large university teaching applied science and other such studies. The responsibility in any question of separation should lie with the trustees. Personally, he hoped that the Church would not stand in the way of the University.

Opposed by an Elder.

G. M. Macdonnell, K.C., Kingston, was unable to acquiesce in the report. His vital objection was that the church was forever barred from deciding upon the retention of separation of the university. He thought that the church should decide, not the trustees. Going into the history of the scheme for nationalization of the university, he

pointed out that the scheme was first started because their support of the institution did not come from the church. The church decided later that it did not want to part with Queen's, and proved more generous in its support. He failed to see where there were any extraordinary circumstances now warranting the re-opening of the question. He did not propose to divide the house on the subject, but he proposed to let it be known that all the Queen's graduates did not agree in the nationalization scheme. He did not agree that it was necessary to have the church take over the full responsibility, or have none at all. In the past the church had not had the full responsibility, but had stood behind the university. Could it not remain that way? In case of a union of churches, the Presbyterian church should retain Queen's to have more to add to the common stock. Queen's should prove a strong force in the Christianizing of Western Canada, should the churches join. For the argument of Christianizing the West appeared to him, to be the only good one on the side of union.

A Graduate Speaks.

The Rev. Dr. Gandier said the amendment reaffirmed the finding of the Assembly of 1903 which held that the university should remain in its historic relation to the church. The amendment also affirmed that the collection for the \$500,000 at that time undertaken should be continued to completion. As one of the trustees, he said they were then in some difficulty, and they deemed it best to secure the opinion of the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, from which the university drew its funds and its moral force. He thought there had been a breaking of faith with the Presbyterian people. He understood that contributors to the fund could have their money back, but that was a poor reward for what the church had done in the time of the university's need in 1903. It looked perilous as if now that the university had got as much money as it could from the church it proposed to seek another source. The university wished to give up the connection with a great church in order to get on the pension fund of an American millionaire. He understood the temptation of the university. Money seemed omnipotent in these days. It seemed to enable men to do anything. But he believed that many of the American institutions now endowed with millions by their magnates were morally more powerful in the days of their poverty. It was undoubtedly a great temptation but he wanted the General Assembly to help them to resist it.

Committee Not Statesmen.

Professor Dyde seconded Dr. R. Campbell's amendment to the amendment in order that he might speak from the platform. The amendment to the amendment did not express his mind exactly but it and the amendment did more closely than did the report of the committee.

He could not forgive the committee for not putting their finger on the pulse of the assembly. He said if the report of the committee was accepted Queen's University was separated. It was about as sure as the sun would rise tomorrow. At any rate no one would get on the platform and oppose the report of the committee who was for separation. He accused the committee of not having given proper consideration to one side of the question. They had divided the assembly. He believed that if the assembly decided unanimously the trustees would take their finding. He also thought that some definite recommendation should be made regarding the retiring allowances of professors.