

MINUTES OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES IN THE PROVINCES OF BRITISH NORTH AMERICA ON THE SUBJECT OF THE UNION.

At Montreal and within St. Paul's Church there, on the 28th September, 1870, the Committees appointed on the subject of union by the Supreme Courts of the following Churches, viz.:—The Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland, the Canada Presbyterian Church, the Presbyterian Church of the Maritime Provinces in connection with the Church of Scotland, and the Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces, met according to the call of the respective Conventions of these Committees.

Present, the Rev. Dr. Cook, the Rev. Principal Snodgrass, D.D., Ministers, with the Hon. Alexander Morris, Mr. James Croil, and Mr. Neil McDougall, Elders, of the Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland; the Rev. Dr. Taylor, the Rev. Robert Ure, the Rev. Dr. Topp, Ministers, with the Hon. John McMurrich, Mr. David McKay and Mr. Thomas McRae, Elders, of the Canada Presbyterian Church; the Rev. Allan Pollock, the Rev. G. M. Grant, the Rev. Donald McRae, Ministers, with the Hon. John Robertson, the Hon. John Holmes, and Mr. James J. Bremner, Elders, of the Presbyterian Church of the Maritime Provinces in connection with the Church of Scotland; the Rev. Dr. Bayne, the Rev. James Bennett, the Rev. G. Christie, Minister, with Mr. Henry Webster, and Mr. David Laird, Elders, of the Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces.

The Rev. Dr. Cook was appointed Chairman, and the Rev. Dr. Topp, Secretary. The meeting was constituted with prayer by the Rev. Dr. Taylor.

Extract Minutes of the Supreme Courts of the various Churches appointing the Committees were read, as also the letter of the Rev. Dr. Ormiston, of Hamilton, on the ground of which, and of the sentiments expressed therein, the said action of these Churches was taken.

The Chairman opened the business by referring to the desirableness and expediency of union between the Churches represented by this meeting, inasmuch as they hold the same doctrine, and government, and discipline.

I. All present were of opinion that for many and strong reasons it was desirable to

have a union of the Presbyterian Churches within British North America, and that there was on the ground of principle no obstacle to said union, if it were accomplished on the basis of the Holy Scriptures as the supreme standard of faith and manners, with the Westminster Confession of Faith as the subordinate standard, it being understood—(1.) That full liberty of opinion in regard to the power and duty of the civil magistrate, in matters of religion, as set forth in said Confession, be allowed, and (2.) That the use of the Shorter Catechism be enjoined as an authoritative exposition of doctrine for the instruction of our people.

II. With regard to the name by which the United Church shall be known, it was proposed, and unanimously agreed to, that the name should be "The Presbyterian Church of British North America."

III. The meeting also resolved to record their opinion that the United Church should maintain fraternal relations with Presbyterian Churches holding the same doctrine and government and discipline, and that ministers and probationers should be received into the Church, subject to such regulations as the Church may from time to time adopt.

IV. It was also agreed that the general polity, laws and forms of procedure be settled by the United Church, and compiled from such rules as may have been in force in the respective Churches or from other books of Presbyterian law and order, and that in the meantime Church courts conduct their business according to the recognized principles and forms of the Presbyterian Church.

Adjourned to meet at three o'clock, and closed with prayer.

JOHN COOK, D.D.,

*Chairman.*

ALEXANDER TOPP, D.D.,

*Secretary.*

At three o'clock the same day and place, the Joint Committee met and was constituted with prayer by the Rev. Dr. Bayne.

Sederunt as before. The Rev. Dr. Cook, Chairman; the Rev. Dr. Topp, Secretary.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and sustained.

V. There was now submitted for the consideration of the meeting the question of the application of the Temporalities' Fund in the hands of the Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland. The unanimous opinion was that the vested rights of the