

REPORT OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY. (Concluded from Page 5.)

nels. Why not submit this question to the people? If they were sure the people would say "Yes," give them the opportunity to say that "Yes," and the committee would have a mandate to discuss. If negotiations were to be stopped, were it not better to stop them before it was too late; if they were to be carried on, were it not better to carry them on backed by the mandate of the people.

Dr. Barclay then moved his amendment to the amendment: "That presbyteries, congregations and sessions be asked to fully consider and express their judgment upon this whole question," and hoped that this would be acceptable to Dr. Patrick and the mover of the amendment.

Dr. C. W. Gordon seconded Dr. Barclay's motion.

Rev. John Mackay here withdrew his amendment.

Dr. T. Wardlaw Taylor, of New Westminster, said he believed it was the duty of every man who thought it impossible to secure union to stand back and leave others to do what they could, giving them untrammelled liberty and awaiting to see what they would gain—or lose.

Dr. Somerville, of Toronto, said there were 300,000 people coming into Canada this year, and these numbers would grow every year. It was obvious that the churches should be in a position to work amongst them without the overlapping and rivalry that existed in many places in the west. It was absurd that, with the scarcity of men and money, there should be two ministers of rival churches laboring amongst communities of less than thirty families.

Dr. Duval, Winnipeg, urged the consideration of the question in a little more Christian spirit than some of the speakers had shown. The Assembly must avoid the mistake of forcing this union.

Principal MacLaren, Toronto, said the matter must not be unduly hastened. He did not think they could wisely rush into a union with other denominations which they highly esteemed and loved at the expense of disunion among themselves. (Applause.)

The Rev. J. Knox Wright, of Vancouver, said the question at issue was really whether they should send to presbyteries, sessions and congregations a document asking for their suggestions for the perfection of it. It meant asking congregations, sessions and presbyteries to give suggestions upon a certain thing concerning which their consent had never been asked and upon which they had never given judgment, as to whether it should go through. The only consistent thing they could do as a representative and not an autocratic body was to send it to the presbyteries and congregations to find out if they were in favor of continuing the negotiations for union, and if so, to give suggestions for improvements as to the basis of union.

The Rev. Duncan Campbell, of Kamloops, B.C., spoke on the subject from the point of view of a frontier missionary, and he said too much importance had been made of the rivalry and overlapping of the different churches in the home mission field. "The membership of the church," he added, "is spending more money in tobacco than in home mission work. We should be able to send men out on this work two by two, for the greatest hardship on these men is the isolation. If there is any crowding, it is in the theological colleges and not in the missions."

The Rev. J. A. Corine, Oak Lake, Man., said if they had an abundance of men and money they could send men into the home mission field two by two.

As it was, this could not be done. He opposed sending the committee's report down to the people because it was not yet complete.

The Rev. K. C. McLeod, Ponoka, Alta., said the matter ought to be disposed of by the Assembly. "Many ministers," he added, "will, I know, take this matter to their congregations with a personal bias, and we all know how they influence their congregations, so the voice that will come back to us will not be the voice of the people, but the voice of prejudiced ministers. I therefore counsel delay, and that matters be left alone until they create an atmosphere which will carry us along to a successful conclusion."

Dr. Campbell, of Victoria, B.C., declared that the Assembly, instead of criticizing the committee, should thank it for the work it had so well done. If there were to be any union it must be brought about by the people. He regarded it as most unfortunate that there should be so much disagreement amongst the delegates while discussing this matter of union, and counselled deliberate action, as it would be a calamity if they were to make a formal union with other churches, and leave a large part of their own people out of it, to continue the Presbyterian Church in Canada, as had happened in Scotland.

Principal Patrick Closes the Debate.

Principal Patrick closed the discussion with a masterly speech. He said he wanted to effect a union with every Protestant church from the Atlantic to the Pacific, believing that Canada's religious destinies could only be worked out by a union of the churches. The time for argument had not yet arrived, because the committee was still preparing its case, and it should not be discussed on its merits until it was complete. As sensible men, they must see that to submit a fragmentary report to the people would be injudicious. When they appealed to the people it must be in orderly and constitutional style, when they could place all the facts before them. The committee welcomed all the criticism levelled at it, even though some of it was ungenerous and unjust. Three proposals had been made. One by the committee, and two amendments. To the first amendment he was absolutely opposed. To understand it properly it must be interpreted in the light of the speeches in its support. (Applause.) It raised the primary issue of whether or not this church shall continue to prosecute negotiations with the Methodist and Congregational churches. That was not the language used—much more definite language was employed three years ago. But its meaning was the same—practically meaning the discharge of this committee. It was here explained that the amendment had been withdrawn, but the moderator said he had not understood that. In any case the sanction of the assembly must be given. This was accorded, and so Dr. Barclay's amendment stood alone. Principal Patrick said he thought its movers as heartily in support of union as himself. (Applause.) Therefore, he did not wish the matter put before the assembly in such a way as to misrepresent the judgment of that body before the Presbyterian church and the people of Canada. As to the proposed union itself, the very first question it raised was on what terms it was to be accomplished. No one could say whether it was desirable or not until they knew that. But it was undesirable that the negotiations should be complicated by any lack of unanimity in this church and assembly on the point especially after three assemblies had endorsed the principle. They did not wish to finally commit the assembly at this stage, but that the committee should be able to fortify itself with all the advice and experience it could collect from the

people themselves. Then, in two years hence, the committee could report to the assembly that its labors were completed and that the basis of an honorable and satisfactory union had been accomplished. Then they could ask the assembly to approve of it and refer it to the presbyteries and congregations for their approval. In conclusion, Dr. Patrick said he hoped some means could be devised of reconciling the motion and second amendment, so that a unanimous vote could be arrived at. He hoped all would vote for what they considered was wisest and best in the interests, not merely of their common Presbyterianism, but of their common Canadian Christianity. (Applause.)

The vote was then taken on Dr. Barclay's amendment when it was defeated by 124 to 60.

The main motion to adopt the committee's report was accepted by 137 to 11 votes.

Sabbath Observance.

On resuming in the afternoon, after some routine business was settled, Mr. J. A. Patterson, K.C., Toronto, then addressed the meeting on Sabbath observance, which he characterized as one of the most important questions of the day.

The laws of Sabbath observance, he said, are consistent with liberty, in that they are the laws for the welfare of humanity, for the protection of home, for the harmonization of capital and labor. They are the laws of national self-preservation. Unless the civil laws on the subject rested on the Book of books, they stood on a poor foundation. When the history of modern miracles is written, the story of our Lord's Day Act will be written first as the greatest. We had Sir Wilfrid Laurier and others who were not Presbyterians, the man with the dinner pail, and the man of books, all helped us to pass this great act. They must not think they had done all they could, but must gather themselves together for greater effort. Civil law had now made people idle; the churches must now come in and say that 'Now you are idle, come in and worship the Lord.' He read the recommendations of the committee as follows: 'That the Assembly commend the work of the Lord's Day Alliance, expresses its appreciation of the work done by the secretaries of the Alliance to preserve the Sabbath as a sacred heritage, and urges on pastors and people the necessity of advancing the interests of Sabbath observance, and presses for a special Sunday for the advocacy of Sabbath observance.' The report was received and its recommendations adopted.

Sabbath School Work.

The report on Sabbath Schools was presented by the Rev. I. C. Robertson, general secretary, in the absence of the convener, the Rev. Dr. J. Neil, Toronto. He expressed regret that Dr. Neil was not present, because, first, the convener had looked forward to this meeting on account of the encouraging nature of the report on Sunday school work, and, secondly, because, after serving eight years as convener, he felt he must retire, and he desired to give his closing statement personally. Dr. Neil had rendered very good work to the church as convener of the Sabbath school committee, and the speaker asked leave to acknowledge the great kindness and helpfulness he had shown to him personally as general secretary during the past two years. Mr. Robertson spoke of the value of the Sunday school as an agency to introduce family worship in the home, and then referred with satisfaction to the facts that the increase in the Sabbath schools in 1906 was 1,000 over any preceding year, and that over seven thousand in the Sabbath schools were reported as having come into full

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