

bers shall hold membership in a local conference or association of churches which, according to our second resolution, shall hold itself responsible for the standing of its ministerial members.

The above resolutions were then taken up. Rev. Dr. Quint opened the discussion by speaking of what he called the invidious distinction made between acting and regularly installed pastors. At one time acting pastors were not allowed to vote. The fact was that to-day Dr. Noble, their entertainer, was only an acting pastor, for he had never been installed. There was in this distinction an evident unfairness, for the acting pastors of the churches did a great part of the work of the denomination. When we look at the church we find that many churches will not have installed pastors, nor is the custom of having settled or installed pastors increasing throughout the country. The safeguard against the improper admission of the persons to the pulpit was sufficiently guarded by the State or other conferences. He would have no objection to the letter "c" being placed after a minister's name to signify "council," but he objected to a distinction being made between installed and acting pastors. The old system, in fact, was no safeguard whatever, for the instalment was too often a merely formal process.

Rev. W. F. Day, said that he agreed in the main with the resolutions. He was in favor of striking out the words "and that we deem associations of churches competent to ordain men to the Congregational ministry," at the close of the second resolution. Rev. C. O. Brown, said he was prepared to vote for the resolutions as they stood. It was glory of the Congregational church that it did not receive its policy slavishly from the past. It met emergencies as they arose. Such an emergency had now arisen. There was a demand for these resolutions and the measure proposed by them on account of the custom which prevailed, and was growing, of churches employing ministers without installing them. No coterie of pastors who were installed had a right to call another pastor an acting pastor who had been installed when the church itself had employed him as their regular pastor. Dr. Sturtevant objected to the resolutions on the ground that they had a tendency to relax in one part without tightening in another. The trouble was that a church calling a man its pastor did not in itself make that man a pastor. Rev. A. W. Lloyd thought that the whole line of the resolutions was derogatory to the whole system of church fellowship, because they exalted associations and conferences above the regular old-fashioned councils of the churches. Dr. Lyman Abbott was opposed to the resolutions on the ground that they had a tendency to lessen the purity of the ministry. Ordaining and installing councils had defects, it was true, growing out of the misuse and

abuse of that system, but nevertheless that system afforded a far safer and better guaranty than an association or conference affords, as no man could pass through a council, either ordaining or installing, without a public examination. Dr. Goodwin said he was willing to get a better chart and compass than they now had, but he did not think that the resolutions would give this. The tendency of the resolutions, if adopted, would be, as he thought, to increase the number of pastors who were not installed. Dr. A. H. Ross, the originator of the policy suggested by the resolutions, said, in defense of the resolutions, that out of all the ministers in New England only fifty-one per cent. were installed, while only thirty-three per cent. of all the ministers in the land were installed. Where was the guard in respect to the remaining sixty-six per cent.? Councils were often not called to advise and examine but simply to perform the ceremony of installing. Rev. A. P. Marvin said he was opposed to the second resolution, which states that ministerial standing should be lodged in church conferences or associations, as it practically did away with installing councils. Rev. W. L. Bray was opposed to the installing council system because the system, instead of being used properly, was abused or misused. Dr. H. M. Dexter said he could not help feeling that it would be a deplorable mistake to adopt all of the resolutions. The great opposition to the conference and to the association had grown from a fear that they would attempt to legislate for the churches, and thus take away their power. He moved that the resolutions be referred to a committee of five, such committee to be appointed by the nominating committee, which was carried.

It may be well here to anticipate somewhat by stating that this subject proved the most interesting and exciting of any that came before the Council. There was a process of evolution in regard to it which was very noteworthy. Slowly, the true idea of Congregationalism seemed to dawn on the vast assemblage, and the right of the churches which had been practically ignored were asserted. It would require a large amount of space to give even the most condensed account of the debates that were had, all with the best of feeling, and with a most conspicuous desire to do the thing that was right. As Dr. Dexter remarked, "the council was eminently irenic, all discussions aiming at and tending to harmony. When there seemed to be a tendency to assert independency too strongly, it was remarked that "Independency is one-legged Congregationalism; and Congregationalism full-grown independency." It was asserted that it was the duty of the Council to have knowledge and care of the churches, just the same as it was the duty of the individual church to have knowledge and care of the individual members. It was no-