

American Presbyterian and Genesee Evangelist

THURSDAY, MAY 24, 1890.

D. C. HOUGHTON, JOHN W. MEARS, EDITORS.

THE ASSEMBLY AT PITTSBURGH.

SATURDAY AND MONDAY.

Our full report is continued up to Friday of last week. On Saturday the Trustees of the Church Extension Fund and the Presbyterians House were elected and the discussion on the Standing Committee's Report on Home Missions was resumed.

On Monday the Report of the Standing Committee on Home Missions recommending a Conference with the New England Associations with a view to an amicable dissolution of partnership was again debated and by prayer by Dr. Wisner, unanimously adopted.

The Report on Church Extension urging the Permanent Committee to prosecute the work with all the energy they can command. It was adopted.

The Report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Missions was under consideration at the adjournment on Monday.

Communications and other matters have necessarily been deferred.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Pittsburgh, May 24, 1890. What is "THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY?" and "What does it do?" are questions which, I do not doubt, many of your readers would find it hard to answer. Were they here they would see an assemblage of about two hundred gentlemen, who (if all were present) would be one-half ministers and one-half laymen. These are representatives of the Presbyteries, and are elected annually for this purpose, the Presbytery being the body consisting of the churches and ministers embraced in a given locality.

The time occupied in the discussion was not lost. It brought out many facts and views that will be of value, and tend to a better judgment as to the adjustment of the whole matter so as to promote unity without injuring efficiency in this important branch of church work.

The report of the Commission raised at the last General Assembly to ascertain, by a thorough investigation, the facts in the case, and to procure such other information as may be in their power to enable them to report to the Presbytery and to the General Assembly on the subject of the proposed merger of the Home Missionary Society with the United Domestic Missionary Society.

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Church. The warm fraternal feeling manifested by these brethren, and their statements of the condition of the bodies from which they came, strengthened and quickened the sympathy which we have felt for them. Our Reformed brethren have been brought into contact with the Assembly by the meeting of their Synod in Allegheny city contemporaneously with the Assembly. The intercourse thus had brought us nearer together. Their very kind expressions of good will will not be forgotten by us.

On Monday evening, Professor Huntington delivered an address, of a very *hear-able* character, before the Presbyterian Historical Society, on the relations of Episcopacy to our Revolutionary Struggle. On Tuesday, Rev. J. Ambrose Wright, of Chicago, preached a fitting and suggestive sermon on Denominationalism. On Wednesday evening, a Foreign Missionary meeting was held. But your report will tell these things.

We are all most nobly entertained by the good people here, not only of our own churches, but by our Old School friends abundantly, as also by others. Dr. Kendall and his people omit nothing desirable for our entertainment. Pittsburgh is a place of much interest, but Assembly business leaves little time for other matters.

Yours, CLERICUS.

Pittsburgh, May 26th, 1890.

As your report will show to your readers, the difficulties met with in the attempt to give unity to the educational movements of the denomination formed the leading topic of discussion in the General Assembly for three days. It became as length abundantly manifest that the whole matter was in a condition in which speeches would not mend difficulties. Whilst the work of education itself was in a prosperous condition, the position of the Assembly's Committee and its secretary, Mr. Mills, was one of complete embarrassment.

The efforts of the body in this direction had clustered themselves by local subdivision around natural centres, viz.: the Union Theological Seminary at New York, the Philadelphia Education Society, the Auburn Seminary, and Lane Seminary at Cincinnati, leaving only the corners and interstices open to the General Committee. How to drop the present organizations, and lay hold upon a central comprehensive system, the more it was argued the more it did not appear. At last, upon motion of Mr. Field (of the *Evangelist*), the matter was referred to the Permanent Committee on Education, (located at New York), with the addition of one gentleman each from Philadelphia, Auburn and Cincinnati, to consider the subject, and report to the Assembly of next year.

This proposal offers much hope of a result under circumstances of so much complication and delicacy than can be found in the discussions of a large Assembly. The persons appointed by the Moderator to confer with the Committee, were Mr. Barnes, Professor Huntington, of Auburn, and Professor Allen, of Lane Seminary.

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(Continued from first page.) acknowledge no potentate or prelate to control us; that all political communities are bound to conform to his law; that if human laws come in conflict with divine laws, we are bound to obey God rather than man. This reverend gentleman made a most touching and admirable address, and was listened to with great attention.

Rev. Wm. A. Passavant, of the Ev. Lutheran Church, was then introduced from that body. Mr. Passavant gave a sketch of the rise, progress and faith of the Lutheran Church. He said, that they were neither Calvinists, Methodists, nor Romish, but Lutherans. In the United States, there are 26 Synods in the United States, and 75,000 in the 18 disconnected Synods. Their ministers, number 1200. They have raised \$425,000 this year for benevolent purposes. There are 30,000, Lutheran in Europe. Mr. Passavant was listened to with the most intense interest.

An invitation was extended from the Oakland people, to the General Assembly, to spend the afternoon there. The invitation was accepted for Saturday.

Rev. Dr. Stearns, of Newark, read the report from the General Association of New Hampshire.

SIXTH DAY—WEDNESDAY.

PITTSBURGH, May 23rd.—After half an hour spent in devotional exercises, the Assembly proceeded to business. Minutes read and approved. A communication from Rev. George F. Wiswell, delegate to the General Conference at Maine, at their meeting held in Portland, June last, was read; the Conference was composed of fourteen local conferences, 160 ministers, 248 churches, and 20,000 members. He was cordially received. Little was said on the subject of home missions, and a desire was manifested to continue the correspondence.

Rev. Dr. Dodd, delegate from the General Conference of Massachusetts, was introduced to the Assembly. After conveying to the Assembly the views of his Synod, and the position of his Synod in regard to the subject of the body he represented, he stated that the Congregational churches of Massachusetts were never more united and vigorous than at present. The institutions, colleges, and academies were well filled, and an unusually large number of promising young men were in them, looking to the ministry. The churches number 80,000 members and 600 ministers. On the subject of Home Missions, the Congregationalists desire to co-operate with the Assembly on the same principles that have guided the unity and action of the past. The society is dear to them, and they are still willing to co-operate with the Assembly without looking specially to denominational results.

Another matter disposed of on Friday, the 25th, was the Publication Cause. The report of the Standing Committee was taken from the docket, and after a short discussion adopted. The main feature in the report is the determination that an effort shall now be made to put this enterprise upon a better foundation by the addition of \$25,000 to its capital. Although this sum will not put our committee upon the same level as that held by the older Societies and Boards, Union and Denominational, it is sufficiently large to make the institution a permanent one. It is probably as large an amount as could be raised this year without unduly pressing our giving people, unless some large-hearted men should feel disposed to give it a strong impulse. The past services of the friends of the cause in Philadelphia were fully recognized. It was evident that the conviction of the necessity of the use of the Press by us, as a denomination, is widely felt. There was little disposition manifested to debate the subject.

The last act of Friday, and the one probably most deeply interesting to the Assembly and the Church at large, was the presentation by Dr. Patterson, of Chicago, of the report upon the Home Missionary question. It was very brief, and, we think, satisfactory. It expressed approbation of the special report by Dr. Stearns, recognized the embarrassments resulting from an attempt to retain in co-operation elements that have ceased to harmonize, expressed the belief that the difficulties would rather increase than diminish; and recommended that a committee of ten be appointed to request the appointment of a like committee of ten, two from each of the five Congregational bodies with which we are in correspondence, that by mutual conference a just and amicable result may be obtained. The committee of the Assembly to report next year, and in the meanwhile churches and individuals to give through such channels as their judgment approved.

If our New England brethren will meet the problem in the good faith and Christian spirit in which it is made, a solution of this difficult problem honorable to Christian integrity and favorable to the spread of the gospel may be attained. The Assembly has no wish for any other settlement of the subject. The delegates from New England who met the Assembly, expressed the conviction that in their belief the time for an amicable separation had come. If this be so, we trust that it will not be found impracticable to discover a fair and equitable decision as to the duties of the parties.

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The report then went on to lay down from the early reports of the society the principles on which it was intended to act, and the importance of holding to them now, was set forth. The Executive committee it was understood was not to interfere in the least degree with the relations of the auxiliary, to its particular field, bounds, and the missionaries therein were to have their credentials from their auxiliary society. The more recent movements of the Assembly in relation to the matter were then detailed; the altered position of the auxiliary and parent societies set forth at length. Denominational societies have sprung up which the society has assumed the task of suppressing. In 1857 a new rule was adopted relative to slaveholding. The General Assembly had taken strong ground on that question, and there were very many of the most thoroughly anti-slavery men who did not recognize the right of an irresponsible committee to interfere with or dictate in this matter in its relation to the church. The report then proceeded to a full exposition of the causes and progress of our trouble between the Presbyterian and the society, which Presbytery as it appears has acted independently in its field of labor in the Southern region of Illinois.

On motion, the order of the day was postponed, in order that the report on Home Missions might be accepted and referred.

On motion it was referred to a committee of fifteen.

Rev. R. W. Patterson, J. Little, H. A. Nelson, S. T. Seelye, J. B. Brainerd, D. H. Allen, W. M. H. H. Starns, Elders: J. B. Pinneo, Isaac Ashmead, S. Wood, G. E. Delavan, T. Farham, C. L. Latimer, Isaac N. Mason.

The order of the day, the hearing of the Report on the Standing Committee on Education, on the Reports on the Synods of Albany, Genesee, Seneca, Ontario, West Virginia, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, West Pennsylvania, and Michigan were read and adopted.

The report of the Synod of Ohio was in the hands of the Synod. It was read and adopted. The Synod of Ohio was in the hands of the Synod. It was read and adopted. The Synod of Ohio was in the hands of the Synod. It was read and adopted.

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than the smallest size now published, in order to bring it within the reach of a greater number of people, and that the retail price be not more than thirty cents. A favorable answer is recommended.

The term of office of the following members of the Publication Committee, expires during the session of the present General Assembly, viz.: Rev. John Jenkins, D. D., Rev. J. G. Burkes, Charles Wurts, M. D., Samuel C. Perkins, Esq., and Hon. Wm. Strong.

They recommended that these gentlemen be re-elected in the committee for the term of three years.

SEVENTH DAY—THURSDAY.

After the usual devotional exercises, the Assembly proceeded to business. The minutes were read and approved.

Dr. Wood, from Prudential Committee of the American Board of Foreign Missions, was introduced to the Assembly. He alluded to the relations existing between the Board and the Assembly, and denied that the Prudential Committee was capable of acting to the detriment of the General Assembly, or that any one in the Executive Board designed to exert any influence upon denominational work.

He explained the feelings of the Board upon the question of separation. They do not seek to promote or hinder the connection already established, and which has continued so long; it is not their business to dictate where the connection shall be severed, they desire it above all things. But they contemplate severance upon two conditions, as the more expedient alternative. They are these—First, if the Presbyterian Church can carry on the work of foreign missions, it is to be better promoted by an exclusive denominational policy.

Secondly—if there is withholding of confidence in the sincerity and uprightiness in the management, on the part of the Executive Administration of the Board, the Board must have free action in the discharge of their foreign work, though it may be impossible to explain to the churches at large all the motives or causes leading to these changes. He illustrated this by his own missionary experience and that of others. The missions were divided into two classes—extending and non-extending. These among the Indians in this country, the Greek—the Gaboon at present, South Africa and the Sandwich Islands, belong to the latter class, and the remainder in Turkey, Nubia, India, etc., belong to the former.

From the Doctor's statements we learn that the best care taken to keep down and reduce the expenses at home, the Board have found it necessary to diminish the appropriations for 1891, for the foreign work about \$20,000. The debt which the Board labored under at the commencement of the year, it is expected will be provided for by the next year's income.

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Mr. Mills answered several of the objections made by Dr. Brainerd. The society was organized. We have always had a treasury.

Rev. Dr. Sherwood, Secretary of the Education Committee of Synod of New York and New Jersey took the floor. The field of our New Jersey embraces about one-half the church.

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