

THE EIGHTH GENERAL SYNOD

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at Harvey Cedars was that of praise and thankfulness. There was a greater spirit of buoyancy and joyful expectancy than had been experienced at meetings in the last few years.

The fact that all the commissioners were living in one building and a great deal of time was not spent in travelling about getting meals combined to make a practical set-up. It is also helped commissioners and visitors to get better acquainted and many pertinent problems were discussed on the verandas of the conference hotel just before meals were served or in the time before the meetings began.

Most men give attention to figures and statistics as a good indication of failure and success. Although statistics do not always tell the whole story, they give a fair suggestion as to what is happening. The report of the statistician, the Rev. J. U. S. Toms, was a source of praise eventhough the figures in part covered only half a year of ministry because the time of Synod had been changed from Fall to Spring of the year and only six months had elapsed since the last report was given.

There are now 50 churches affiliated with the Synod and 16 churches not affiliated but with Bible Presbyterian pastors. Bible Presbyterian chaplains total thirteen now with the large majority of those with the Army although some have been accepted for Naval service recently. Ministers in the Synod now number 134 which is quite an increase over the handful of men who in faith stepped out to form the Bible Presbyterian Synod. Because of the changing of the time of meeting of Synod, the total communicant membership of 5501 may not be absolutely accurate but it is very close to the actual figure and very encouraging, too. There were 4785 communicant members reported in 1944 and 4430 in 1943. Only 164 members were received in 1943 but almost 500 have been received within the past year. Constituency numbers twice as much as membership. Sunday school pupils have grown proportionately with the church membership which is an encouraging sign in view of Sunday school decline in other denominations.

One of the highlights of the Synod was the report by the Rev. Stanley Al-

THE REPORT OF NATIONAL MISSIONS, NOV. 1944-APR. 1945

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| Balance | \$4,083.84 |
| Receipts | 5,203.84 |
| Total | \$9,287.68 |
| Disbursements | \$4,789.06 |
| Balance | \$4,498.62 |

len, Stated Clerk, of the encouraging developments on the West Coast. The presbytery of Southern California has been making rapid strides and anticipates increasingly optimistic reports. The Stated Clerk is now working with the National Missions committee to enter these doors now opening for the Bible Presbyterian testimony in the West.

The National Missions committee report was also provocative of praise not only because of figures but because of figures but because of facts. While finances have been a source of real encouragement yet more funds are needed to take advantage of opportunities at hand. A number of churches which have been receiving aid from the committee are now without pastors and the prayers of the Synod were requested that men might be raised up of the Lord to fill these gaps in the line of battle. With 66 churches connected with the Bible Presbyterian testimony through affiliation or because of a Bible Presbyterian pastor, yet only 26 churches gave to National missions last year.

PROBLEMS.

Whenever one makes strides, one always confronts more problems to be overcome. Such is the nature of success and blessing.

A problem which has been causing much concern and calling forth much prayer has been that of the whole subject of separation. Confusion and misunderstanding have resulted in part from discussions in print and at Synod and presbytery meetings.

The Synod which met at Greenville faced the problem and a committee was appointed to study the subject of Scriptural separation. Dr. Allan A. MacRae was the chairman and Dr. Harold S. Laird and the Rev. Clarence Laman served with him. The resolutions presented by this committee and adopted by the Synod are printed in full in this issue of THE CLARION.

An overture from Carolina presbytery had requested that the Synod to go on record as giving its witness against the use of tobacco by Christians. The committee in reporting on separation included tobacco in the list of worldly practices in its resoluten which was the same one adopted at the First General Synod. It would be well for Bible Presbyterian pastors to acquaint their people publicly with this resolution.

There was quite some discussion on the resolution concerning separation from apostasy. The resolution itself was remarkable in that it brought together what had been two lines of thought which seemed irreconcilable. The few changes in the committee's report adopted by the Synod did not involve any principle but were for the sake of clarity. The use of the word "expediency" in the report brought forth some opposition but after discussion it was not changed. Compromising leaders and groups have made much of expediency and so brought a perfectly good word into bad repute by their false use of it.

Once again the matter of financing the Synod and the transportation of commissioners thereto arose. When the committee on expenses of commissioners to Synod reported there was a deficit of \$125 but various gifts from the floor of the Synod and contributions not already sent in, brought a balance in the treasury at last. The publications committee also some financial difficulties with the Standards as revised by the Synod ready for printing but funds not in hand. It is estimated that it would cost \$3,000 to print the Standards. The need for doing this essential piece of publication was laid before the commissioners to be carried back to their home churches. The paper which was read before the St. Louis Synod meeting by the Rev. Francis A. Shaeffer, "Our System of Doctrine", was published by the committee and is available at 5c a copy.

A good part of Tuesday morning was given to the discussion of problems of child evangelism as they involve the whole "separationist" testimony. The whole tenor of the discussion showed that the Synod has the cause of child evangelism and children's work in general on its heart. A resolution was adopted which is printed in this issue of THE CLARION.

Other problems faced this year's Synod meeting, others are in the offing. The place of prayerfulness and practicality (Continued on page 5)