

Dr. MacRae Interviewed by Jim Neher

2-5-79

You asked about how pivotal Dr. Machen was in the division, and ^{not} as I mentioned last time, he gathered around him a group who thought very highly of his strong stand for the Scripture. He had a name and a reputation. He could not be talked about by them as just some ignoramus or as a country pastor. ^{As} They were apt to speak of even the pastor of a big church if he took a strong stand.

Perhaps I should mention that two or three years before the division in the church there was a committee appointed by the General Assembly to study the reasons for ~~dispension, or division~~ within the church. They appointed a committee of about 12 people, and about 10 of them were people who were very definitely on the side of the modernists or at least on the side of those who did not want to give any strong fundamentalist stand whatever. Two of them were very godly preachers-- men who were pastors of large churches and men known for their grand evangelical testimony. Then they had meetings during the year and the ~~1~~ other 10 succeeded in persuading these 2 that they could write a report that would ~~smooth~~ sort of smooth over everything -- the church was moving nicely; look at the wonderful work you're doing in your churches, and that's the kind of work we're all trying to do, and these crazy extremists are getting unnecessarily excited, etc. I don't know about their private talks, but I would gather from the results that something like that happened, because the modernists were steadily getting more people into presbyterians and into churches. They had many seminaries who were changing people into modernists while we had comparatively few--- Princeton was really the only one that was still out and out in the Presbyterian church. I think ~~some~~ of the other ones had changed ~~in~~ comparatively recently before that, within