

GENERAL ASSEMBLY REPORT.

Assembly Sunday.

Nearly all the pulpits in Hamilton were filled by commissioners to the General Assembly. Among others, Dr. C. W. Gordon, of Winnipeg, preached in St. Paul's; Dr. Armstrong, of Ottawa, in Erskine; Prof. Jordan and Principal Patrick in the Centenary Methodist Church; Dr. Pringle, in Erskine; Rev. R. E. Knowles, in McNab Street Church. In the Assembly Church (The Central) Rev. Dr. John Morton, of Trinidad, was the preacher in the morning, taking as his text I Corinthians, xiii. 2. He made a comparison of knowledge and love as dealt with in the text, and spoke of the comparative values of them. The possibilities and the limitations of knowledge were dealt with, and, said he, there must of necessity be mystery in science, metaphysics, and religion. But greater than knowledge, he said, was love. It was the essential thing in the Christian religion. It was greater than knowledge, and was more revealing than it. Love of God and love of man were the motives of the Christian religion, and the fruits of it. Of no other religion was this true. Dr. Morton took up a study of Mohammedanism and Hinduism. In the former there was no revelation of the love of their god. No "God is love" was taught in their religion. Their god was the sovereign, the king. God was not love but law with them, and their's was a hard religion, and cruel. In Hinduism he mentioned the burning of the widows and the throwing of the children into the Ganges, and held up these as examples that there was nothing resembling the love of God in that religion such as there was in the Christian religion. He concluded by saying that the love of truth had often been greater than the love of persons, and it was this that caused denominational rivalries and persecutions. When the time came that love of God would be placed above love of truth and of men, those rivalries and persecutions would cease. The spacious church was well filled, and special music was rendered by the choir and soloists.

In the evening, Rev. Dr. R. W. Ross, of Fort Massey Church, Halifax, preached to a large congregation.

Communion Service.

As has been customary for several years, the commissioners to the General Assembly celebrated the Lord's Supper on Sunday afternoon. There was a large attendance of commissioners and their friends. The Moderator was assisted by Rev. Alex. MacMillan, the editor of our Book of Praise, who led this part of the service. Dr. J. H. Woodside, of Franklin, Man., read the scriptural warrant; Principal MacKay, of Vancouver, "fenced the tables" in a searching meditation on "remember me;" Professor Robertson, of Knox College, led in the prayer of consecration, and the Moderator dispensed the elements. The following elders served the tables:—Messrs. J. R. Reid, of Ottawa; Walter Paul, of Montreal; G. M. Macdonnell, Kingston; Arch. MacKenzie, River John, N.S.; George Rutherford, Hamilton; and W. C. Whittaker, St. John, N.B. There is nothing so solemn at the Assembly as the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. As they stood and sang these words in closing the occasion was memorable:—

"Feast after feast thus comes and passes by;
Yet passing, points to the great feast above,
Giving sweet foretastes of the festal joy,
The lamb's great bridal feast of bliss and love."

Church Union.

HAMILTON, June 7.—The committee on this important subject laid before the Assembly to-day all the resolutions passed by the General Assembly on the subject during the past five years, and the following resolution which is the outcome of the committee's work since the 1908 meeting:—

The Assembly receive the report and learn with deep gratification that the joint committee on union have, after five years' enquiry and discussion, arrived at the conclusion that, in their judgment the organic union of the three negotiating churches is practicable.

The Assembly desire to recognize the guidance of the Spirit of God in the proceedings that have taken place, as evidenced in the harmony of the deliberations of the joint committee, the increase of mutual confidence, and the great unanimity of their conclusions as to the lines along which the negotiating churches, if they are disposed to do so, may come together in organic union.

The Assembly are profoundly thankful for the measure of success achieved in dealing with a task of such magnitude and difficulty, and they recommend that on the second Lord's Day of the month of October next, or the nearest convenient day thereto, ministers bring before their congregations the history of the negotiations, the chief proposals contained in the documents embodied in the report, the historic position of the Presbyterian Church regarding union, with other Christian Churches and the unique place occupied by the present movement in the history of Protestant Christianity.

Inasmuch as the joint committee have expressed their conviction that the voting on the question of union should take place simultaneously in the three negotiating churches, and inasmuch as the General Conference of the Methodist Church will not meet till the month of September, 1910, the Assembly agree that the judgment of the church at large on this important subject be not sought until after date.

They direct, however, that copies of the report be sent down to Presbyteries, Sessions, and Congregations for their use, in order that they may be fully informed as to the whole question, and be prepared to deal with it when it comes before them for disposal.

The Assembly suggest to the Executive of the joint committee the advisability of preparing a brief summary of the main contents of the report for popular use.

The Assembly express the hope that members of the union committee will hold themselves ready to accept the invitation from Presbyteries or Congregations desiring to receive information or explanations.

Finally, the Assembly commit the whole question to the intelligent, sympathetic and prayerful consideration of the church.

"I am laying on the table for the first time what is practically a final report," said Dr. Patrick. "It is final in this sense, that by five years' application, by the discussion of the fundamental articles of union, it has been decided that union is possible. Three difficulties, those of doctrine, polity, and the ministry, had appeared to all when union was first proposed. These had been found surmountable. The proposed articles are better than anything in the three churches." I believe in the Westminster Confession, but it was made in the seventeenth century, and we are living in the twentieth century. The Church is greater than the ministry. The ministry exists for the good of the Church, but the union will help both church and minister. It will mean no church will be without a minister, and no minister in active work without a charge. The man seeking a charge will cease to exist.

A United Church Needed.

"The Church, as it exists in Canada, is not the Church of the New Testament or that of the first century. In the first century a Christian was a Christian wherever he went. He was a member of one Church. What exists to-day with us? Several Churches living side by side—not sitting down together to the same Lord's table, at least, not regularly—sometimes excluding one from the Lord's table. The New Testament ideal is the one which these proposed articles help to realize. How can you best evangelize Canada? How can you best edify Canada? Will the results be better if these three Churches remain separate or if they unite? I am not ashamed to say that I wish the union of the Protestant Churches in Canada in view of the unrelenting energy of the Roman Catholic churches, that we may meet the efforts of that great Church with an energy as unrelenting. Let the Assembly go forward to render a service of immeasurable value to Christianity and the world."

In seconding Dr. Patrick's motion, Dr. Du Val said:—"We can not make the work of Christ go on in the best possible way, unless we have better union than we have now. We are grinding men to death, and effecting very little by their sacrifice. You are raising a memorial to the memory of Dr. Robertson, whom we loved to call the great superintendent, but we murdered him; murdered him by lack of organization which compelled him to do three men's work. We are trifling with things in almost every department. Our education can not be what it should unless we make Protestantism stand for something. In Winnipeg the strong arm of the Roman Church is reaching out and getting in its power the strategic points. We Protestants are doing something to this college and that, but we are at sixes and sevens. I say if Protestantism means anything let us say what it is."

An Alternate Resolution.

At the conclusion of Dr. Duval's address Principal MacKay, of Westminster Hall, Vancouver, presented the following alternate resolution: "That before any further steps are taken another committee be appointed to meet with similar committees from the two other negotiating churches to ascertain whether or not a plan of federation cannot be formulated; that if the labors of this committee result in formulating such a plan, it be reported to the assembly and through it sent down to Sessions and Congregations, along with that now proposed; that the other negotiating churches be assured of our desire to continue relations which already exist between the churches, and to secure that the wisest possible use be made of the manifest desire to truer fellowship in our world-wide task; that they be asked to appoint similar committees with a view to carrying out the plan suggested, and, further, that a pastoral letter be sent to all Sessions and Congregations, assuring them that nothing has so far been done which is in any way binding upon us as a church, nor will action be finally taken until the people, having had every opportunity of informing themselves of the issues at stake, have agreed, with reasonable unanimity, upon the plan to be adopted."

In presenting the resolution Prof. MacKay criticized some of the remarks of the former speakers, and referred to several well known authorities who had expressed themselves as being opposed to church union. The needs of the world should be considered before the formation of a large organization and a federal arrangement should be arrived at rather than a union. An organization such as it was proposed to form would be so large that it would be unwieldy, and would not be able to do the work that the church should do. Even if it