

Dominion Presbyterians Prosper

Continued from page 400.

THE SABBATH DAY.

Calmly, bright and beautiful the Sabbath Day dawned, and the lovely morning lured many a one from his bed to drink in its quiet beauty. Most of the pulpits were filled by the commissioners, and many of the Sabbath schools were addressed by one or two of the visiting ministers or laymen.

The Assembly sermon was preached by Rev. Dr. Jordan, the newly-appointed professor in Queen's College. Expectation ran high, and many came to the Assembly Church. Few were away disappointed; many went home stimulated and refreshed.

Following up the line of the Moderator's sermon, Prof. Jordan chose for his text the words: "Mine eyes have seen the King," in the fifth verse of the sixth chapter of Isaiah. The vision he described as a parable of life. It gave us the keynote of this man's life. It came to him, not because of any special intellectual gift, or because he was one specially favored of God, but because he had been faithful in the use he had made of the opportunities given for developing gifts and approaching to God. There was but one great vision, as but one came to Paul, but it moulded all his future. It gave him a revelation of self, and from that hour it became impossible for him to compare his life with the lives of those about him. God was ever present in his thought, and the absolute recital of God became the criterion by which he judged himself and his conduct. Such a vision comes to every man, but many are too blind to see it. The preacher had to infer that only those who had seized the passing opportunity up to the moment of revelation could hope to profit fully by the vision vouchsafed.

Though this vision of God is necessary, if our best service is to be rendered, yet our own life is not a visionary thing. From this vision we are sent out into active service. In the vision the voice of God was heard calling: "Who will come to whom shall I send?" and the answer: "Here am I, send me." Somehow the preacher made us feel that this was the natural resultant from seeing God. And from that hour life became one of increasing activity. We would not withdraw; there was an ever-increasing presence of duty impelling us to great and still greater activity. Certainly the brightness of the light about God revealed the dark shadow of sin in the world more closely, but yet this was our world. We could not withdraw from it. We must go down into it, carrying with us some of this light, which was for the men and women in the darkness as well as for us.

The closing picture was one that would dismay were it not for what had gone before. He spoke to us of the loveliness of the life of the man to whom has been given this vision. One saw the young Isaiah, the genuine Israelite, the ardent patriot, eagerly longing for the deliverance of his people, yet so clear-eyed that he saw the folly of the plans that were being formed and followed for the deliverance of his country from impending evil. He was compelled to oppose and to denounce them. He was forced to take a course that seemed to be traitorous to his country and people. He was not, could not, be understood. His was a policy, the preacher told us, of "splendid isolation," and only the vision of God sustained him as he pursued it.

Somehow the Christian life gained dignity in our eyes as we listened, our nerves drew tense, our shoulders straightened, our head went up, as we thought of Christian life after that fashion. We thought for the vision of God that we might so live. We trembled lest it had come to us and passed.

The afternoon communion service was restful. It was very quiet, very simple. We entered the open door of God's house and gently made our way to a seat among the worshippers. None challenged us; none asked for our card of membership; none assigned us our place. Christ was there; it was His table and we knew we were welcome. We could imagine one weary of the strife and sin outside, coming in through the wide-open door, looking for a moment into the eyes of the Christ, trembling with joy as His hand was laid in benediction upon him, and then taking his seat with the other worshippers. He wasn't a commissioner, but who would challenge him? It is a beautiful custom, this mid-day, mid-Assembly communion. It seems as if the Lord were saying to us: "Come ye of rest awhile."

Rev. C. W. Gordon was the preacher in the evening. He spoke to us of the work Christ asks us to do. "Feed my sheep" was his message, and he reminded us that all the

flock was not to be found within the Christian Church and in Christian homes. Some had wandered, and were to be found outside, on the street, in the slums, in places of sin, outcasts from man, and despised even by themselves. Yet Christ found some of his sheep among these. He went down to them and rescued them. So must we. The food we give is Christ. Nothing else will satisfy, and our commission embraces nothing else. Some tell us that we must go back to Christ. Rather should we not go out to Christ. He is near us, working among those who need Him most. Out there we shall find Him, and He is calling for us.

One was struck with the sequence in all the services. The Moderator's sermon dwelt upon the presence of God in His Church; the morning service spoke of the necessity of realizing it; in the afternoon one did receive some vision of the Christ, and in the evening our work was indicated. Assembly Sunday will be long remembered.

MONDAY MORNING.

The Hymnal Committee.—The venerable figure of Dr. Clegg was missed this year, when the Assembly called for the report of the Hymnal Committee. Mr. Murray, of the Halifax Witness, gave in the report. It was an excellent showing. Royalties to the tune of over \$1,800 were reported, and the sum of \$1,200 was donated to the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund, and \$600 to the Widows' and Orphans' Fund. Rev. Alex. MacMillan announced the preparation of a small pamphlet, in which is indicated the sense in which each psalm and hymn should be sung. Copies are being sent free to ministers and choir leaders, and these will be of material assistance in the service of praise.

Quana Ladies' College.—This report has been one of repeated deficits in the past. It is an agreeable change this year. True, the debt is still there, but running expenses have been paid, and there is a comfortable balance. The appointment of Mrs. Anna Ross as "house mother," a title of her own choosing, will give increased confidence to parents who desire their daughters to have a good religious, as well as an intellectual, training in the school to which they are sent.

Brantford Ladies' College.—The sister college at Brantford is naturally jubilant over the appointment of their new principal, Rev. W. R. Cruikshank. The past year has been a good one, and the future promises better things. In speaking to the report, Principal Caven spoke of the new school for boys to be established in Toronto by the Rev. Geo. Bruce, in September. St. Andrew's College for Boys will doubtless present its first report next year to the General Assembly. The announcement of the project was warmly received.

Morrin College.—The difficulties of Morrin College proved too great for the Assembly Committee to solve, and it was agreed to appoint Dr. Hendrie, Dr. Thompson (Garnet), and Mr. W. B. McMurrich to visit the institution, consider the whole situation, and report a finding to the Assembly at Halifax next year.

The Examiners' Committee.—The supply of vacant charges is one of the great questions of the Assembly. Dr. Torrance's report of the present committee's work was the signal for some pretty straight speeches. One called the present condition of affairs "disgraceful"; another, more cautious of words, said it a "discredit," which, from his lips, is stronger than the other term from more volatile men. "Let us mend the system or end it," was a sentiment that was generally acceptable. An attempt will be made to mend it, of which we shall have more to say later.

Nesbit Academy was erected in 1888, and burned some years later. The money to build a new equip it was obtained partly from local sources at Prince Albert, where the college was situated, and partly from Ontario. When built it afforded the only means for educating the children of Protestant parents; now the public and high schools give every facility. There is no need to rebuild, and it is proposed to divert the money to the Church and Manse Building Fund, and to the local church, in the proportion of five to one. An act of Parliament has been obtained giving the permission, and the Synod of Manitoba and the Northwest asked the Assembly to ratify it, and to instruct Dr. Wardlaw, who as treasurer of the Church holds the funds of the institution in trust, to pay the same over as directed in the act. With characteristic caution the Assembly appointed a committee to look into it.

The Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund.—Mr. J. K. Macdonald is a busy man, at the head of a great company, a layman, yet he has devoted a great amount of time and energy to make the work of the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund a success. For his reward he has the unspoken thanks of many an aged

minister, and the admiration of the great majority of the men in the active service, but he has had abuse and misrepresentation from a section of the Church, sufficient to turn almost any other man away from the work. That Mr. Macdonald continues in the face of such unreasonable opposition is the highest tribute to his Christian character and unselfish devotion to the interests of the men whose life-strength has been spent in the service of Christ in our land.

The report was a good one, though it had its minor tones. One of these was the continued indifference of the ministers. Apparently many of those in active service refuse to contribute even \$4 or \$5 yearly to make the declining years of the aged minister peaceful, even though he is thereby providing for his own old age. The endowment has been practically at a standstill, too, since Mr. Burns' death, but the organization of the Presbyteries is being perfected, and, if the Century Fund canvass does not swallow it up, the endowment will probably report the balance of the \$50,000 needed by another year.

Halifax in 1907.—The meeting of the century will be held in Halifax. A cordial invitation was extended, and was as heartily accepted, and next year we shall meet down by the sea. It is fitting that the closing meeting of the century should be held where Presbyterianism had its birth in our Canada. The Reference from India.—The temper of the Assembly was admirably shown in the keen debate of the afternoon upon the reference from Indore Presbytery. The speeches were good, both in tone and in presentation of argument, those of Principal Grant, Rev. L. H. Jordan, and Principal MacVicar being exceptionally strong. Beyond a doubt the two latter contributed in no small degree to the reaching of the final judgment of the Assembly, which was that recommended by the Foreign Mission Committee. The college work is removed entirely from the control of the Presbytery of Indore, and placed under the care of the Foreign Mission Committee, which really acts as a senate and on behalf of the Assembly. In the debate the personal element was almost entirely eliminated, and the question was discussed on its merits. We were proud of our Supreme Court as we saw it shake itself so entirely from personal prejudice.

MONDAY EVENING.

Young People's Societies.—There was an heroic effort made to show that the falling off in membership in the Young People's Societies was not an element of weakness, but of strength. We are inclined to agree with the speakers. The work of the Christian Endeavor work attracted many who were merely flies upon the wheel. It is better that these should drop off. The society that has but ten members where it had twenty is stronger if these ten be workers than were twenty who were merely nominal members and stand sponsor for their weaknesses and irregularities. Better—far better—if we have got down, or are getting down, to the true membership untrammelled by those who were, at best, merely flies. We were glad to note that it is proposed to secure a consecutive study of the Scriptures. This cannot come too soon.

Augmentation East.—Two fine addresses, both from men who had been heard before in the Assembly, supported the report of Augmentation from the East. Messrs. Sutherland and Miller spoke with admirable spirit, the latter especially, presenting a strong plea for greater consideration for the men who man our weaker home fields. The east has done good work; better last year than ever before, and this in the face of increased contributions to Foreign Missions and to college work.

Augmentation West.—The Moderator was in his element when he had laid aside his gown, called the ex-Moderator to the chair, and, with his grave face breaking out into a broad smile, told us why the Western Augmentation Committee had announced that it was glad to submit its report this year. "For the people are now with us," said he, "the work has gone up all along the line; we have given you seventeen self-sustaining congregations this year, and we have taken on twenty-three others; we have kept the doors open in Quebec; we have followed our pioneers into the west, and the Church has backed us up." Then the Moderator turned prophet. He told us that the nineteenth century had been, on this continent, the era of American progress, but that the twentieth century would be the era of Canadian progress. "And we shall build better than they," said he, "for we shall take Christ in with us, and this they have not done." It was an admirable address, and carried the Assembly almost to enthusiasm. "Rev. J. A. Macdonald followed in a characteristic speech, in which, beneath what a stranger might consider vaporing, there was real strength and earnestness. But the man must be known