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Editorial Gittings.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE BELFAST COUNCIL.

MEMORIES of the Third General Council of the Presbyterian Alliance come to mind in a variety of aspects. As to its personnel: it was a grand thing to see so many representative men from all parts of the world. Many of them were men of towering intellect and world-wide fame, who have helped to mould and lead the religious thought of the age. A more important consideration is the purpose for which they were assembled. It was not to legislate, nor to formulate new dogmas. It was not even to advocate the organic unity of Presbyterian churches. It was something far better,—to manifest, amid external differences of government and practice, unity of spirit—to promote Christian fellowship and co-operation—to extend a helping hand to weak churches struggling against repression and poverty—and to stimulate each other in the promotion of evangelistic and missionary work. The following table shows, approximately, the number of delegates, and of associates invited by the Alliance to take part in its deliberations at Edinburgh, Philadelphia, and Belfast, in 1877, 1880, and 1884 respectively, and whence they came:—

DELEGATES.	<i>Edin.</i>	<i>Phila.</i>	<i>Belfast</i>
From Continent of Europe	31	6	21
Great Britain and Ireland	85	70	97
The United States of America	96	117	142
Colonies and Dependencies	37	22	26
Associates	51	40	9
Missionaries	8
Totals	300	255	303

It will be noticed that more than one

half of the delegates at the Belfast Council were from the United States, but this is not surprising when it is remembered that the number of Presbyterian ministers in that country is upwards of 10,000. For this reason it is obvious that the Americans must always exercise a controlling influence in the Alliance. At the Belfast meeting, in addition to their quota of delegates, there was a large number of Americans present, and besides the fourteen delegates appointed by our General Assembly, the following Canadians attended: Revs. R. Hamilton, of Motherwell; T. S. Chambers, of Kingston; S. Mylne, of Smiths' Falls; A. Bell, of Peterborough; G. Jamieson, of Aylmer; W. A. Wilson, of St. Marys'; A. H. Scott, of Owen's Sound, and J. Chisholm, of McIntyre; also Dr. Giekie, junior, of Toronto.

The Council was opened in St. Enoch's Church on the 24th of June at 11 a. m. Dr. Watts, the chairman of the local committee, presided. He ventured upon what very few would have attempted in the presence of such an audience—a running commentary on the portion of Scripture which he read. But he did it well, and also preached an excellent evangelical discourse from Rev. 5: 6.7. The Council having been constituted, Mr. George Junkin, the Philadelphia lawyer, was called to the chair, and surprised some of the old country members by the promptness of his rulings and the way in which he "rushed" business. By two o'clock the doquet was exhausted. In the evening the scene was transferred to the Botanic Gardens where a reception was accorded to the delegates by Sir David Taylor the respected Mayor of the town. After eloquent speeches came dainty refreshments, much handshaking, and promenading in the illuminated gardens where a military band filled the air with sweet Irish and Scottish melodies.