

The
**PRESBYTERIAN
SURVEY**

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES

MAY, 1924



The Famous Alamo, one of the show places of San Antonio, Texas



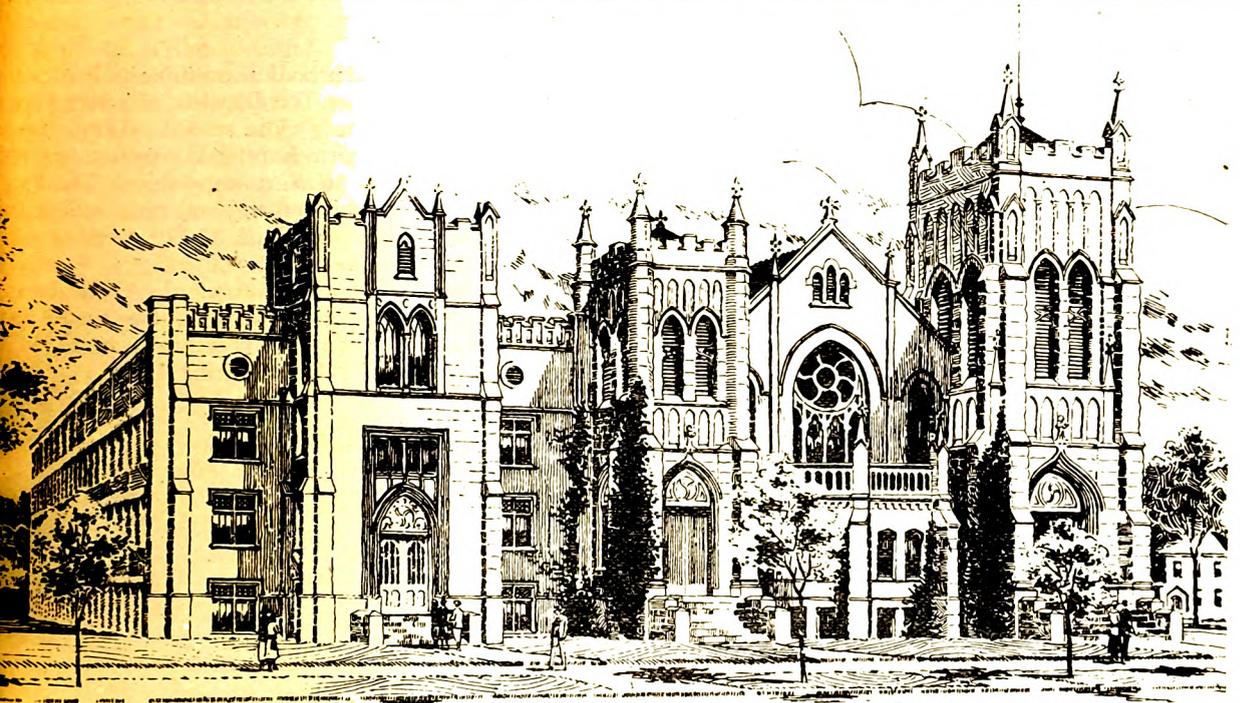
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Vol. XIV

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No.



First Church, San Antonio, Texas, where the General Assembly will convene on May 15.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY NOTES

R. E. MAGILL

The annual meeting of our General Assembly will convene on May 15, 1924, in the First Presbyterian Church, San Antonio, Texas. The Assembly has not met in Texas since 1904 and the session this year promises to be one of unusual interest. San Antonio is one of the most beautiful cities of the Lone Star State and a place that abounds in historic interest.

The Alamo with its rich associations with the early days of the Southwest will be a point of great interest to all visitors.

The First Church which is to be the host of the Assembly is one of the oldest and yet one of the most prosperous of our organizations in Texas.

Dr. P. B. Hill, the pastor, and his live membership are making careful preparations to give the Assembly a royal welcome.

A number of Ad Interim Committees are to make reports which will afford opportunity for "Much Palaver" and we trust wise conclusions will be reached.

A number of amendments to the Book of Church Order will be submitted which if adopted will clarify this very much muddled document. The suggestion is made as to a method by which they may become

legally incorporated bodies is not to be incorporated as an amendment to the Book of Church order and it is hoped no time will be wasted in discussing academic matters.

A report on a Bureau of Vacancy and Supply will be submitted and it is greatly to be desired that a plan may be worked out which will assure every church a pastor and every pastor a church. At present we have over 400 churches without pastoral oversight and about 100 ministers who do not seem to have regular work.

The committee to study conditions in our border Synods will have an interesting report and it is to be hoped that plans will be suggested which will avoid duplication of effort in this day when sixty-five per cent of America's population is still out of the evangelical churches.

The report on the problems of the country church will discuss a vital matter and should arouse us to the fact that our small town and city churches cannot grow unless we adopt intelligent and aggressive plans to reach the people in the open country. At present fifty to seventy-five per cent of the country churches are of the Baptist and Methodist persuasion with probably

A GREAT MAN WHO NEVER OVERLOOKED LITTLE THINGS

"I'm going out fishing for men" were about the last words of Dr. Armstrong, as he left his office that Saturday noon never to return. He was on his way to teach and preach the next day in a little church near Richmond. Not long was he spared to continue the work of "fishing for men" for on Sabbath evening he was stricken and in a few days was called home.

Although it was our privilege to have Dr. Armstrong with us as our Editor-in-Chief for only a short time, the inspiration he left will live with us in the years to come. As head of the editorial work, he held our admiration and love.

Although one of the busiest of men he always found time to show sympathy to those in trouble, to remember his friends in time of joy, and to lend a helping hand to those who needed it. It was typical of him that he was remembered with a Christmas message each year the

hundreds of young women who sat under him in the classroom. It was typical of him that soon after his coming to Richmond he knew by name every person who was in any way connected with the Publication Committee. Each one knew that Dr. Armstrong had a very personal interest in his or her work. It was typical of him that he noticed and endeavored to correct even the smallest obstacle that might hinder the most efficient work. Indeed he was a great man who never overlooked little things.

His criticisms were kindly and constructive, and by his encouragement and helpful suggestions he brought forth the best one had to give.

We miss his happy morning greeting; we miss his counsel and advice; we miss his words of encouragement. To his family we extend our sympathy.

S. L. V.

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA

S. H. CHESTER.

THE recent meeting of the Western Section of the Presbyterian Alliance at Newport News, Va., was of more than usual interest in many respects. The presence of Dr. McNaugher, of the United Presbyterian Church, President-elect of the forthcoming Council to be held next April at Cardiff, Wales, in which, while maintaining the well-known conservative position of his Church, he excoriated intolerant extremists of both sides in the pending controversy, and plead for a calm and fraternal discussion of the points at issue, will repay careful reading, both by those who agree and those who disagree. It will appear in our religious press.

But the matter of supreme interest at this meeting was the question brought in by the brethren from Canada, who have always constituted such a charming and delightful group in our Western Section, whether the United Church of Canada, recently formed by the merging of the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational Churches of the Dominion into one Church, would be eligible to membership in the Pan-Presbyterian Alliance. After a careful examination of the Basis of Union the Section decided unanimously that the United Church conformed in all essential respects, both doctrinally and ecclesiastically, to the idea expressed in the Basis of the Alliance of Reformed Churches Throughout the World holding the Presbyterian System.

As to doctrine, Article VI of the accepted doctrinal Statement would seem to be amply sufficient to justify the conclusion. It is as follows: "*Of the grace of God, we believe that God, out of His great love for the world, has given His only begotten Son to be the Savior of sinners, and in the Gospel freely offers His all-sufficient salvation to all men. We believe also that God, in His own good pleasure, gave to His Son a people, an innumerable multitude, chosen in Christ to holiness, grace and salvation.*"

As to Polity, the Governing bodies are the *Session* and *Presbytery*, so called in deference to the Presbyterian contingent, and exercising practically the same

powers and functions as before the Union; the *Conference*, so called in deference to the Methodist contingent, but practically identical in powers and functions with our Synod; and the *Council*, so called in deference to the Congregationalists, but corresponding almost exactly to our Assembly.

There are some exchanges of functions in minor details between these governing bodies as compared with our system of Courts, but none, so far as I can see, in which any matter of principle is involved. For instance, the ordination of ministers is by the "Conference" (corresponding to our Synod) but only the recommendation of the Presbytery. The "Council" meets biennially, a custom in which its example might possibly be followed with advantage by our Assembly.

This union is the result of negotiations extending over twenty years, requiring much patience and mutual forbearance and some mutual concessions; but always conducted in the most fraternal spirit. The difficulties were nothing like so great as a similar movement in this country would involve, for the reason that when John Wesley invaded Canada he had drifted much farther from the Prelatical views of the Church of England than when Methodism was planted in this country, and the doctrinal position of Canadian Methodism was always strongly flavored with Calvinism.

Numerically the Methodist and Presbyterian bodies entering the union are nearly equal, being about 293,000 and 288,000 respectively. The Congregationalists number only a little over 10,000.

The final vote on the union in the Presbyterian Church was, by Presbyteries, fifty-three approving and thirteen disapproving. The adoption of the final plan of union by the Assembly was by a vote of 427 to 129.

It is thought that there will probably be a small minority in both the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches that will perpetuate the old organizations, but we are glad to learn that it is the purpose of the United Church to treat these minorities not only fairly but

magnanimously in all cases where property interests are involved. If this is done and the larger body gives itself heart and soul to the great Home Missionary work for the sake of which the union was formed, and abstains from all acrimonious controversy, it will probably not be long before the dissenting elements will be reconciled and return to the fellowship of those with whom they have so long been associated in the bonds of a common work.

PROTESTANTS IN CENTRAL EUROPE FACE STARVATION

In Central Europe, where Calvinism has such a large number of followers, conditions have been going from bad to worse for many months. Reports from those who have studied the situation show conditions to be acutely alarming at this time. It is to be regretted the Presbyterians of America are not in a larger measure aiding these stricken brethren of their faith.

The Southern Presbyterian Church obligated itself to rebuild the Protestant Church at Campini, France, and the Assembly of 1923 asked for \$75,000 for this and other relief work in Central Europe. At the suggestion of the Stewardship Committee, a date in July was fixed for presenting this cause. The offering was less than \$10,000, and at this writing indications are that when the General Assembly meets in May it will not have reached the twenty thousand mark. Have Southern Presbyterians failed those of their own faith in a time of dire need? The facts speak for themselves.

Catholics on the other hand, with unlimited means and men have gone in and "possessed the land." They have established seven hundred schools and churches, while two hundred Protestant Churches have been closed for lack of support.

At the meeting of the Council of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches held in Philadelphia in March, a representative of this body gave some harrowing facts regarding conditions as he found them on a recent trip to Central Europe. He told of one of the ablest professors in the University of Hungary, a man of national reputation, who was working for a salary of \$5 a month. He had not bought a suit of underwear for three years nor a suit of clothes for five years.

Pastors have been forced to do other work for their support, and attend their pastoral work only in the evening or Sunday, undernourished and exhausted as they are. Many are unable to do their parish work because of lack of food and clothes.

It is no longer a question merely of supporting the churches. The problem is how to save those who have been the supporters of the evangelical institutions in the past—the great middle class, which includes preachers, doctors, professors, nurses, etc.

MEXICO'S OUTSTANDING PROBLEM

REV. W. T. THIRKIELD, Bishop of the Mexico Methodist Episcopal Church, says in an article which appeared in the January issue of the "Mexico," a magazine giving financial, commercial, and mineral news, that the outstanding problems of Mexico are the agrarian and the ecclesiastical. One hundred

men own 100,000,000 acres; 5,600 people own square miles, and 7,000 families out of 3,000,000 practically all the soil in Mexico. Obregon, Rev. Thirkield says, is meeting this with a system of land distribution among the peons. Obregon and the leader not opposed to religion, but to the church, because church, as Prof. Edwin A. Ross has said, is "adversely against agrarian reforms." The church stands against autocracy.

In this same article the Bishop gives the following interesting report of the work as done by the Episcopal Church in Mexico:

The doors are well open to the Evangelical movement. In our Methodist Episcopal academies and day schools we have 5,000 students in training on broad lines of leadership as ministers, teachers and social workers. Our single central church on Gante street, in the heart of the business district, has in three years increased from 800 to 1,500 members, and their giving for support of the church has advanced from 2,500 pesos to 13,800 pesos.

They are supporting a pastor, assistant pastor, a school and social workers. We are just building the unit of our social center on Actecas avenue, surrounded by tens of thousands of needy people. This is the effort of this kind to provide for the social needs of people here. There is a dispensary, ministering to thousands of women and children, a day nursery for babies, forty-five children in the kindergarten, and good attendance at night schools. The final unit, a beautiful church of Spanish design, surmounted by an intricate cross seven feet high, is just being completed.

THE APPEAL OF ARABIA

The National Geographic Society with headquarters at Washington, D. C., sends out the following interesting bulletin:

The death of the Sultan of Nejd, Emir of all central Arabia, raises the question whether the stringent exclusion policy of this region may be changed.

Arabia has been figuring in world affairs since the curtain rose on the first act in history, and yet it is large areas about which we know practically nothing.

In this huge land, save for the little strip of the Euphrates Land and Syria, Mohammedanism holds undisputed sway.

Tremendous desert wastes are not alone responsible for the fact that the outside world is ignorant of Nejd in the heart of Arabia. That country—if the vast area over which the Nejdian nomads roam may be called a country—has one of the most effective exclusion laws known; the exclusion law of the sword. These people do not care to go into the outside world and they have taken the stand that they want no visitors from Western traders, diplomats, military experts, missionaries. They are especially adamant against visitors from non-Moslems. They are blood-thirsty fanatics on the subject of religious simplicity. As Wahabism is perhaps better known to the world than as Nejdism for the former name they owe to their religious exclusions.

Blue laws have never taken on so deep a tinge as in the land of the Wahabis. To drink or