

The most important event that has occurred in the history of the British Columbia Mission since their last report, is the return of the Rev. Thos. Somerville to Scotland, after five years of faithful and successful labour. The only ordained missionary now in the field is the Rev. Simon McGregor, who supplies Victoria, Craigflower and adjacent places in winter, and in summer frequently preaches also in Nanaimo, Westminster, and the mining districts. Thanks to the fostering care of the General Assembly's Colonial Committee, and the zealous services first of Mr. Somerville, and now of Mr. McGregor, the congregation of St Andrew's Church, Victoria, has steadily increased, is still prospering and will probably ere long be able to dispense with extraneous aid. There are other places in which the adherents of our Church are similarly situated as they were till lately in Victoria, and require to be cared for in the same way. If a helping hand is now extended to them they will be kept together, will grow in number, and will in time be self-sustaining; but if now left altogether to their own resources they will become discouraged, and will be lost to the Church. Hence the extreme importance of affording them sympathy and assistance at the present stage of their history, and not deferring the practical expression of our interest in them until they have fallen into a state of religious indifference, and could not welcome our offer of aid, or have connected themselves with some other denomination, and would resent our interference. At the date of the last report only \$206.50 had been received for the mission, and in compliance with the injunction of Synod your committee issued in the end of June a special circular to the congregations which had not contributed. The Convener also wrote privately to a number of ministers. These appeals were not so successful as had been hoped, and the Treasurer was able to forward to the Colonial Committee only £74 1s. 3d. sterling, for the last fiscal year, leaving a deficiency of rather more than one-fourth of the £100 stg., which the Synod engaged to contribute annually. This deficiency would not have occurred if the members of Synod had duly appreciated the claims of the mission itself, and our own obligations to the Parent Church for the liberal aid she has given, and is still giving us. The sum promised by us is not one-seventh of what she expended last year for missionary work within the bounds of our own Synod. The amount received for British Columbia this Synodical year is \$192.54—a still smaller sum was in our Treasurer's hands at the corresponding period of last year. As instructed by the Synod, your committee have considered the feasibility of taking some part in the Church of Scotland's mission to the Aborigines of India. This mission has recently been instituted, after full enquiry and deliberation, and under favourable auspices, and your Committee are strongly of opinion that the Synod should appoint an annual collection to be made for it. The much smaller Synod of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick entirely supports a missionary to the South Pacific Islands and surely our Synod if possessed of equal

zeal ought to be able to contribute, at least, as largely to a similar mission in one of the most interesting of the foreign fields. So far as is known to the committee, only one or two of our congregations at present make an annual collection for missions to the heathen. But it is reasonable to expect that many of our congregations would gladly join in the good work of spreading the gospel light in the dark places of the earth, if their attention were turned to a specific mission, and the scheme were expressly recommended by the Synod to their prayers and liberality. The Synod is aware that not one of the committees which have charge of its scheme has its headquarters within the bounds of the Presbytery of Toronto, and it is respectfully suggested to this venerable Court that the Committee on Foreign Missions be now re-constituted, and that the new members be chosen from that large and influential Presbytery.

Principal SNODGRASS moved—"That the Synod receive the report, appoint a collection to be made in all the churches within the bounds in aid of the mission to British Columbia, commend the Church of Scotland's mission to the aborigines of India to the renewed consideration of the committee and to the prayers and sympathy of our people, and appoint the committee as follows:—Rev. D. J. McDonnell, convener; Rev. James Bain, Rev. K. McLennan, Rev. J. Carmichael, Rev. W. King, Rev. Geo. Bell, Rev. James B. Muir, Rev. James Gordon, Messrs. Wm. Mitchell, Archibald McMurchy, and Geo. H. Wilson, of Toronto; and Messrs. James Wright, London and John Gibson, Scarborough. Mr. Wilson to be Treasurer.

Rev. Dr. J. NIKINS seconded the motion.

There was a considerable discussion upon this motion, the principal question being which of the three schemes spoken of in the motion should have the preference. It was thought by some that the Church was not in a position to divide the missionary efforts into three fields, and that at any rate the Manitoba mission should be first attended to.

Rev. Mr. CARMICHAEL moved—"That the words referring to the aborigines of India be expunged from the motion."

SHERIFF MACDOUGALL moved: That the Synod discharge its obligations to the British Columbia mission up to this time, inform the Church of Scotland of the desire of this Synod to withdraw its contribution to be applied in another direction, namely, to the support of a missionary to Manitoba; and that the Synod appoint one of their ministers as delegate to proceed to that new field with the view of getting information to be laid before the Synod at its first meeting, and in the interim every effort be made to obtain the services of a competent missionary, and that a sum of money sufficient to pay the expenses of such delegate be raised: and that the Indian mission be left in abeyance for the present.

After some discussion,

REV. JAMES GORDON moved that the report of the Committee on Foreign Missions now read be received and referred to a committee