

CO-OPERATION IN FOREIGN MISSIONS.

EXTRACT OF PROCEEDINGS OF CONFERENCE
HELD AT EDINBURGH, OCTOBER 6TH, 1886.

A Conference of Representatives of the Mission Boards or Committees of the Presbyterian Churches of the United Kingdom, invited by the European Branch of the Foreign Mission Committee of the General Presbyterian Alliance, was held in College Buildings, Castle Terrace, Edinburgh, on Wednesday, October 6, 1886, at 11 a. m. The object of the Conference was to ascertain the views of the various Churches on certain questions bearing on union and co-operation in Foreign Mission Work, remitted to the Committee by the Council held at Belfast in June 1884.

There were present, leading men from all the Presbyterian Churches of Britain, and after full conference on all the points remitted by the Council, the following Resolutions were unanimously agreed to.

1. It is in the highest degree desirable that Mission Churches should be encouraged to become independent of the home Churches *i.e.* self-supporting and self-governing self-government naturally following upon self-support.

2. It is desirable that Churches organized under Presbyterian order, and holding the Reformed faith, should be placed under a Presbytery within territorial boundaries suitable for effective government; and that such Presbytery, wherever constituted, should as far as practicable, include all the Presbyterian Churches within the bounds, by whatever branches of the European or American Churches originated.

3. In the incipient stages of the native Church, it is most desirable that the foreign missionaries should be associated with the Presbytery, either as advisers only, or as assessor members with votes.

4. It is undesirable that Presbyteries of native churches should be represented in Supreme Courts at home, the development and full organisation of independent native churches being what is to be aimed at, whether these are founded by a single foreign Church or by two or more such Churches.

MOTTO.

No service in itself is small;
None great, though earth it fill;
But that is small that seeks its own,
And great that seeks God's will.

One of the "signs of the times" that does not promise well for the future is the lessening of real home life, more particularly in villages and towns. In former days, and more especially in the country, when the days' work was done the family circle was gathered at home. The evenings were re-unions. The hearthstone was the centre of the family life and, when scattered, the young looked back to early home life. The family gathering in the evening and on Sabbath was always the foreground of memory. The tendency at the present day is to more of outward, social, and less of family, life. Even in the country, the multiplication of Societies of one kind and another takes the young people out from home and tends to break up the home life. But it is more especially in towns that this public life prevails. The days' work done, the evening meal partaken of, the prevailing custom is to "dress and go out" to meeting, societies, social calls, or if there is no special object in view, so strong is the force of habit that people will go out even if it be to spend the time in shops or on the street. One of the greatest blessings that could come to modern society would be the family life of the "Home Society." It would bind families together, keep the young from temptation, and would promote physical, mental, moral, and spiritual health.

The formation of a strong company in England to build a railroad past the Livingstone Falls in Africa removes the last doubt of the early and large development of the Upper Congo Valley, and promises the speedy removal of the greatest difficulty in the establishment of missions in the interior.

When the wind blows hardest the traveller girds his cloak to him the closest; and when temptations are the most violent we cling the more to Christ lest we fall; and Christ holds us with the stronger grip that we may not falter. "I have prayed for thee."—*Francis Robert.*

Protestant missions in Japan were commenced in 1859. There are now over 10,000 communicants, besides the nominal Christian population. The number of churches is over one hundred and forty. Mission work is making marvellous progress.