

that the Committee had paid the greatest possible attention to this important question during the past year.

Dr. Crombie moved that the Report should be adopted, and that the thanks of the Assembly should be given by the Moderator to Dr. Cook, and that the Committee should be reappointed, and instructed to do everything in their power to promote the interests of the parish schools, and to further the improvement of the position of the schoolmasters.

Dr. Crombie's motion was unanimously agreed to, and the Committee reappointed.

JEWISH MISSION.

Professor Mitchell, of St. Andrews, then presented and read the Report on this Scheme. It gave a detailed report of the operations of their agents and missionaries employed by the Committee at their various stations in the East and in Europe. Mr. Lason had been removed from his position at Cochin, and the property of the Mission there had been handed over to Mr. Oughtersen. This Mission, the Committee suggested, should be taken charge of by the Foreign Mission Committee.

All the stations are favourably spoken of. The income of the Mission had been last year £3092 15s. 11d., being £217 1s. 10d. below that of the previous year. The expenditure was £3836 6s. 3d., or nearly £1300 beyond the income. This unfavourable result is ascribed to the expense of extending the Mission to Turkey. An appeal to the liberality of congregations of the Church to maintain the efficiency of the Mission concluded the Report.

Dr. McPherson, Aberdeen, moved the approval of the Report, and went over its statements *seriatim*. He regretted the circumstances attending Mr. Lason's removal from Cochin, but hoped that the Committee would employ his services elsewhere, as he believed he was a most faithful and zealous missionary, and one whom the Church of Scotland was fortunate in possessing. He lauded the devoted exertions of Mr. Suter, and congratulated the Assembly on the successful position of the Mission. In conclusion, he earnestly exhorted ministers to press the claims of the Mission on their congregations, hoping that next year the Committee would be able to tell a more creditable tale of the liberality of the people in its support.

The Moderator, after passing a high eulogium on the diligence and zeal of Professor Mitchell and the Committee, conveyed the thanks of the Assembly to them for the admirable and encouraging Report they had submitted to the Assembly.

The Assembly then engaged in devotional exercises, and adjourned at half-past three o'clock.

SATURDAY, May 23.

The General Assembly met again, at eleven—Dr. Robertson, Moderator—and was a considerable time occupied with routine duties.

Dr. Grant gave in a report on disputed commissions, which recommended that several commissions of Elders be rejected for irregularity of attestation.

MONDAY, MAY 25.

The Assembly met at eleven o'clock—Dr. Robertson, Moderator.

THE COLONIAL SCHEME.

Dr. Fowler, the Convener, gave in the Report of the Committee on this Scheme, the substance of which was as follows.—

Immediately after the rising of last General Assembly the Committee proceeded to fill up the vacancy which had been created in the office of their Secretary; and after the fullest deliberation, Simon S. Laurie, Esq., was appointed, at a reduced salary of £45; an appointment which had proved in every way satisfactory.

In order to obtain correct official information regarding the religious wants of our brethren in

the colonies, and to guide them in appropriating the missionaries at their disposal to the most necessitous localities, the Committee addressed circulars to all the Presbyteries of the Colonial Church. The communications which have been received in reply to these circulars have been of great practical advantage to the Committee, indeed they have formed their chief directory in all the appointments which they have made, and will be of much value in directing their future operations.

The Committee had during last year sent no fewer than twenty-two ordained ministers to the Colonial vineyard, some of them to fixed charges, where the want of religious ordinances was most pressing and others to act as missionaries in preaching the Gospel in extensive destitute districts.

The following are the names and destinations of the clergymen referred to:—

Rev. A. Ferguson, Parish of St. Luke's, Demerara; Rev. G. Harper, Parish of St. Clement's, Berbice; Rev. A. D. Murray, Charge of St. Andrew's, Georgetown; Rev. G. M'Vine, Church of St. Andrew's, Mauritius; Rev. W. M. Hutcheson, Presbytery of Montreal, Canada; Rev. W. Masson, Presbytery of Hamilton, Canada; Rev. A. Lochhead, Prince Edward's Island; Rev. J. Duncan, Do.; Rev. W. M'Laren, Do.; Rev. D. Macrae, Synod of Nova Scotia; Rev. G. Boyd, Do.; Rev. J. Muir, Do.; Rev. J. Duff, Do.; Rev. J. Christie, Do.; Rev. J. Tulloch, Do.; Rev. D. Stott, Synod of New Brunswick; Rev. W. Macrae, Do.; Rev. Thomas Johnston, Presbytery of Maitland, New South Wales; Rev. Duncan Ross, Do.; Rev. William Ross, Adelaide.

By this large addition to the number of their clergymen, their Presbyteries and Synod, comprehending the provinces of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward's Island, are not merely nominal bodies, but courts in vigorous operation, to whose decisions and counsel deference and weight are attached. Churches, which had long been closed, are re-opened, and families are again visited by messengers of salvation.

Two missionaries have been sent to Canada, and two to New Brunswick. One clergyman has been sent to a fixed charge in Mauritius, three to fixed charges in Australia, and two to fixed charges in British Guiana. To supply one of these fixed charges in British Guiana, the Committee recommended to her Majesty's Government the Rev. G. Harper, who some time ago received the presentation, and is now discharging the duties of his parish.

The Rev. Dr. Struthers, senior minister in Demerara, has resigned his charge, and accepted the retiring allowance granted by the local Legislature. The Rev. A. D. Murray, formerly his assistant, has been appointed his successor. Miss Geddes, who as teacher of a school in St. Luke's Parish, Demerara, has rendered great services to the Church, is now in this country, having suffered severely in her health. In the hope that she may yet be enabled to return to her former sphere of duty, the Committee have allowed her the sum of £40 for one year.

The Committee are fully confident that the three clergymen recently appointed to Australia may be depended upon, so that whatever union may be proposed among the Presbyterian bodies in that country, they will sacrifice neither their own position nor the interests of the Church of Scotland.

The Committee have given grants, amounting in all to upwards of £1000, to clergymen whose congregations have been hitherto unable to provide suitable salaries for them.

Grants, amounting in all to £280, have been made during last year to aid congregations in erecting suitable places of worship.

ARISTARLIA.—In obedience to the deliverance of last General Assembly, the Committee proceeded without delay to obtain accurate informa-

tion respecting negotiations which are pending in Australia with a view to the union of the different Presbyterian bodies in that country. As the clergymen of our Church in the provinces were understood to be parties to the proposed union, the Committee addressed a letter to each Presbytery and Synod embracing the following queries:—

I. What are the relations in which the Presbyterian Churches of Australia at present stand to one another?

II. Do all the ministers continue their former relation to the Church of Scotland?

III. What proposals have been made for a union of the Presbyterian Churches?

IV. Are such proposals still pending; or, if otherwise, upon what grounds have they been declined?

To these queries several replies had been received. The first reply is dated "Sydney, 5th February, 1857." It is subscribed by the Moderator and Clerk of the Presbytery of Sydney, and is therefore an official document by that reverend body:—

Sydney, N.S.W., Feb. 5, 1857.

At a meeting of the Presbytery of Sydney, held at Paramatta, January 28, 1857, *inter alia* the Clerk of the Presbytery laid upon the table a letter from the Secretary of the Colonial Committee of the Church of Scotland, 18th September, 1856, requesting the Presbytery to transmit, before the next meeting of the General Assembly, information in answer to the following inquiries:—

"1. Respecting the relations in which the Presbyterian Churches in Australia stand to one another?—There are in New South Wales four separate and distinct bodies of Presbyterians; (1.) The Synod of Australia in connection with the Established Church of Scotland; (2.) The Synod of Eastern Australia in connection with the Free Church of Scotland; (3.) The Synod of New South Wales, known as Dr. Lang's Synod; (4.) And one congregation of United Presbyterians. These four bodies have no intercommunion with each other.

2. "Whether all the ministers continue their former relation to the Church of Scotland?"—All the ministers of the Presbytery continue unchanged in their relation to the Church of Scotland.

"3. What proposals have been made for a union of the Presbyterian Churches?"—The following is a statement of the proposals which have been made anent a union:—

Copy of Basis of Union submitted by the Synod of Eastern Australia:—

"1. The two Synods, at present designated respectively 'The Synod of Australia' in connection with the Church of Scotland,' and 'The Synod of Eastern Australia,' shall be united under the designation of 'Presbyterian Church of New South Wales.'

2. "The basis of union shall be, subscription to the Westminster standards in their true and original import—viz., The Larger and Shorter Catechisms, Directory for Public Worship, the Form of Presbyterian Government agreed on by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, and the Second Book of Discipline. And, as regards the spiritual independence of Church Courts, and the right of the Christian people to elect their own office-bearers, the United Synod shall always hold and declare that the civil power has no right, on any grounds whatever, to interfere with the spiritual independence of the Church in the settlement of ministers, or in the exercise of discipline, in any way.

"3. The United Synod shall hold Christian fellowship with every evangelical and faithful Church throughout the World, adhering to the same standards, maintaining the same doctrines, government and discipline, but shall have no denominational connection with any Church now existing in the United Kingdom