

## CHURCH AT HOME.

## General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

THURSDAY, MAY 29.

The Assembly met at twelve o'clock—the Moderator presiding.

The Lord High Commissioner was accompanied to the Throne Gallery by the Lord Provost, the Sheriff, the Dean of Faculty, the Solicitor-General, Colonel Macdonald of Powderhall, &c.

## ELECTING JOINT-PROCURATOR.

Mr. CHEYNE, W.S., read the report of the committee appointed to consider the duties of the Procurator.

Dr. BELL then proposed Mr. A. S. Cook, Advocate, as Joint Procurator, and Professor SWINTON seconded the nomination.

Dr. R. LEE and Dr. ROBERTSON supported the motion, and Mr. Cook was unanimously elected.

## DISPENSATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER IN PRIVATE HOUSES.

An overture was read praying the Assembly to allow the celebration of the Lord's Supper in private houses—in the houses of invalids unable to attend public worship, and under the sanction of the minister and members of the kirk session.

Colonel DUNDAS, who now brought forward this overture for the fourth time, intimated his intention on this occasion to take the mind of the Assembly on the subject. He said that the matter had been forced upon his attention from the case of two persons, one bedridden for four ten years, and another for above twenty, who had long desired the consolations of this sacrament, and who at length, in despair of receiving it in connection with the Church to which they were attached, had at length received it from the hands of an Episcopal Clergyman.

Sheriff TAIT supported the overture.

Sheriff BARCLAY did not think there was anything in the circumstances of the times that called for the General Assembly to overthrow what he looked on as one of their fundamental principles.

Mr BRUCE, advocate, was in favour of a motion for the appointment of a committee. He also gave some instances of the desire that had been expressed for the administration of the Sacrament by those who were bedridden.

Mr STEWART, Liberton, seconded the motion of Sheriff Barclay for the dismissal of the overture.

There voted for the appointment of a committee, 35. for the dismissal of the overture, 48.

The Assembly adjourned at seven o'clock the next day at eleven.

FRIDAY, MAY 30.

The Assembly met to-day at eleven o'clock—Dr. Crombie, Moderator.

## MINISTERS' WIDOWS' FUND

Dr. GRANT made a verbal report as to the Widows' Fund. He stated that the fund exhibited a surplus of £67,000, arising from the contributions of the last twelve years, and that £4000 had been laid aside during the past year.

Dr. Grant also, in the absence of Dr. Paull, Glynese, made a statement as to the supplementary fund, to the effect that it now exceeded £1500, and was sufficient to carry out the first of the two objects contemplated by it.

However, as many ministers had not subscribed who might be expected to do so, it was desirable that the operation of the fund should yet be suspended.

The reports were approved of, and the thanks of the Assembly conveyed to Doctor Grant.

## LAY ASSOCIATION.

Mr. SMITH, W. S., read the report of the Lay Association.

Dr. ROBERTSON moved that the Assembly receive the report with satisfaction, and return their thanks to the Association for the valuable assistance they had given to the schemes of the Church; and that the Assembly express its sense of the services rendered to the Church by the late justly lamented Professor Menzies, not only as Secretary to the Lay Association, but in multifarious other labours of Christian benevolence.

## REPORT OF COLONIAL COMMITTEE.

Mr. MALCOM, W. S., in behalf of Principal Macfarlan, Convener of the Colonial Committee, and in the absence of the Rev. Dr. Smith, Vice-Convener, read the report of the Committee, which was generally of a satisfactory character.

The income of the scheme last year had been £3332, and the total ordinary expenditure £2915.

Dr. BELL moved the approval of the report of the Committee, reserving the question of management, and that the Moderator return the thanks of the House to the venerable Convener and his colleagues for the diligence, fidelity, and zeal with which they had discharged their important duties.

Dr. FOWLER seconded the motion.

After some discussion the motion was agreed to, and the Moderator conveyed the thanks of the House to Principal Macfarlan, briefly noticing the debt of gratitude which was due by the Church towards him in connection with the Colonial Mission and otherwise, and expressing their gratification that he was still spared in sufficient vigour to appear amongst them.

The Assembly then adjourned till the evening.

## EVENING SEDERUNT.

The Assembly met again at eight o'clock.

## THE ASSEMBLY HALL.

Dr. R. LEE moved the approval of the proposed alterations on the Assembly Hall to be submitted to the Board of Works on being approved of by the General Assembly. These alterations have been described on previous occasions.

The motion was agreed to.

Dr. SIMPSON read the draft of an answer to the letter from the Assembly to the Scotch Synod in England; which was approved of.

## PROPOSED PRESBYTERY OF KINROSS.

A report was read from the committee appointed to consider the petition of certain ministers and elders in the county of Kinross, praying that the Assembly should disjoin the parishes in that county from different Presbyteries, and erect them into a Presbytery to be called the Presbytery of Kinross, and to be constituted one of the Presbyteries of the Synod of Fife.

After a discussion of three hours and a half, a vote was taken, when the motion to sustain the prayer of the petition and erect the proposed Presbytery, was carried by a majority of thirty-six to twenty. Mr. Robertson and others dissented.

The Assembly then adjourned at a quarter past one, till next day at eleven o'clock.

SATURDAY, MAY 31.

The Assembly met to-day at eleven o'clock—Dr. Crombie, Moderator.

## CONVENERSHIP OF INDIA MISSION.

Dr. HILL moved the appointment of Doctor Craik, Glasgow, as Convener of the India Mission Committee, in room of Dr. Macfarlane, who had resigned.

The motion was agreed to.

## THE HOME MISSION.

Dr. SIMPSON, Kirknewton, read the report of the Home Mission Committee.

Mr. R. H. MUIR, Dalmeny, after referring to the difficulties the committee had experienced from want of funds, and adverting to the great importance of this scheme to the Church, moved that the Assembly approve of the report, and request the Moderator to convey their thanks to the Convener and the committee for the ability, diligence, and zeal with which they had discharged their trust; and recommend to all the ministers and members of the Church to give this missionary enterprise increased support.

Baron Basilie RITCHIE, in seconding the adoption of the report, said that the Assembly must feel gratified to learn from the report that the ordinary revenue, which had somewhat fallen off, showed during the past year over the preceding year an increase of nearly £400 in the amount of the collections, and of 20 in the number of contributing churches, enabling the committee to expend the sum of £5000 in the different branches to which the funds were applied.

The Moderator then conveyed the thanks of the Assembly to Dr. Simpson, by whose efforts, he said, the churches that had fallen into disuse had been occupied, and the congregations that had been scattered had been gathered again, and many of them had been erected into parish churches, through the nurture received from the Home Mission Scheme.

## EDUCATION SCHEME.

Dr. COOK, Haddington, read the report of the Education Committee. It stated that, irrespective of the two normal seminaries, there were at present 120 schools on the first scheme and 45 on the second, in addition to 13 female schools—in all, 178. The sum paid by the committee in salary to the teachers during the past year have been £2777 6s. 8d.

## CONVENERSHIP OF THE COLONIAL COMMITTEE.

A letter was read from Principal Macfarlane, Convener of the Colonial Committee, expressing his desire that his name should be withdrawn from the committee.

The Moderator was appointed to answer the letter, and express the veneration and regard of the Assembly for the very reverend Principal, and their regret that he should feel it necessary to withdraw.

## OVERTURE ON EDUCATION.

The Assembly then took up the following overture, signed by Dr. Hill, Principal Tulloch, Dr. Robertson, Professor Mitchell, Dr. Arnot, and others:—

“That whereas it is a constitutional principle of the Church of Scotland, that every parish church should have in connection with it a parish school. That whereas there is no good reason why this principle should not be made applicable to the large towns as well as to the country districts: and that the fact of its not