

ment. Brief addresses were delivered in the course of the evening by the Moderator of the Assembly, Revs. J. K. Smith, D.D., N. MacNish, LL.D., and other prominent and scholarly ministers. Dr. Burns, at the suggestion of an Eastern member, with the happy audacity of which but few are possessed, started a subscription for the removal of an obligation which soon falls due. In the course of a short time several of the brethren from the East voluntarily subscribed handsomely. That evening the debt was lightened by about \$1,100, and it is probable that before the Assembly is over a large addition will be made to the fund for the removal of debt on Manitoba College.

SABBATH SERVICES.

Most of the Winnipeg pulpits, as well as a number outside the city, were occupied on Sabbath by Assembly delegates. The Assembly preachers were in the morning Rev. P. McF. McLeod, of Central Church, Toronto, who delivered a suitable discourse to a good sized audience from Deut. xxii. 9-11; and in the evening the Rev. A. Mowat, of Fredericton, N.B., preached a thoughtful and suggestive discourse on "Life's Incompleteness," founded on Hebrews xi. 40. The pulpit in Selkirk Hall, where a large congregation worships regularly under the ministry of the Rev. C. B. Pitblado, was occupied in the morning by Rev. John Stewart, of Free Dennistoun Church, Glasgow, delegate from the Free Church of Scotland. The service was begun calmly and conducted reverently, but the average hearer would hardly anticipate the reserve power that would in due time make itself felt. Mr. Stewart took for his text Rev. ii. 4, 5. It was a massive discourse; rich and evangelical truth ran through it all, having all the fire but none of the weakness which some are pleased to think inseparable from what is styled evangelical preaching. Mr. Stewart's discourse from beginning to close was listened to with pleasure and profit by a congregation that filled the large hall. In the afternoon a large Sabbath school gathering was held in the same building, when Rev. Mr. Fleck and other ministers addressed the scholars. The afternoon service at Knox Church was conducted by Rev. Daniel Gordon, of Harrington, who preached an eloquent sermon in Gaelic to his fellow-countrymen. Principal MacVicar preached a masterly discourse in Selkirk Hall in the evening.

In the historic church of Kildonan services were conducted in the morning by Principal Grant, and in the afternoon by the Moderator, Dr. Burns. The descendants of the early settlers have lost none of the old time relish for the preaching of the Gospel, and certainly they are good and appreciative listeners. In Grace Church (Methodist), Rev. T. Cummings and Professor McLaren were the preachers. Professors Gregg and Scribner preached to the Congregationalists; while the Baptists enjoyed the ministrations of Rev. Messrs. Herdman and Robbins. Young Men's Christian Association meetings were addressed by Rev. Dr. Smith and others, and several members spoke at large temperance gatherings.

On the 13th inst. the morning session was occupied with the consideration of the beneficiary Schemes of the Church. These, unfortunately, do not awaken the interest and enthusiasm that some of the other Schemes evoke. It is to be regretted that the commonplace virtue of aiding the weak, the distressed and the dependent among the inmates of the manse is not much more vigorous than it is. Before these matters were taken up, however, the application of the *alumni* of Knox College, presented by Rev. R. D. Fraser, for representation on the senate, was cordially granted.

WIDOWS AND ORPHANS.

The report of the Ministers' Widows' and Orphans' Fund for the Maritime Provinces was first taken up. During the past year the receipts were \$4,880.95, and the expenditure \$3,422.03, leaving a balance of \$1,458.03 to the capital fund, which now amounts to \$69,565.35, which, with cash on hand, \$585.35, and arrears due by ministers, \$239, makes the total assets \$70,289.70. The whole amount paid to widows and orphans since the formation of the fund has been \$25,195.66. The present list of annuitants is nineteen. Rev. T. Sedgewick moved, seconded by Rev. E. Scott, the adoption of the report. The report of the Widows' and Orphans' Fund in connection with the Church of Scotland was then considered. It is in a most satisfactory condition. On motion of Rev. J. B. Muir, seconded by Rev. Mr. Carmichael, the report was adopted. The report of the Widows' and Orphans' Fund of the Western Section came next. The receipts were \$29,850.51, and the balance left on hand \$4,668.86. The condition of the fund is as follows: Debentures, par value, \$55,462.10; mortgages, \$52,565; and cash, \$4,668.86; total, 112,695.96. There was an increase in all the sources of income for the year. The committee regretted to record the death of Mr. Jas. Osborne and Mr. Donald McLellan, of Hamilton, who had died during the year. Dr. Reid moved, and Dr. Cochrane seconded the adoption of the report.

AGED AND INFIRM MINISTERS' FUND.

The report of the Committee on Aged and Infirm Ministers for the Eastern Section was read by Rev. E. Scott. The receipts were \$3,120.98, and the expenditure \$1,978.62, leaving a balance on hand of \$1,142.36. The report contained the regulations for the management of the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund, unanimously adopted by the Eastern Section of the Church.

The principal rules were that settled pastors, foreign missionaries, professors in colleges and church agents shall pay into the fund an annual rate of \$5. A minister who resigns his charge and joins another church forfeits all claim to the privileges of the fund. He shall receive back, however, upon application to the committee, half the amount of the personal rates which he paid into the fund. Should he desire to retain his connection with the fund, the Assembly may allow him, to do so on condition that he pay an annual rate of \$15, the annuity to be given him, on his becoming aged and infirm, to be in proportion to the length of his services in the Church. When a minister is allowed by the General Assembly to retire after ten years' service in this Church, he shall receive an annuity of \$150 a year, with \$5 additional for every year's service beyond ten years, up to forty years' service, if the state of the fund permit.

Rev. Dr. Middlemiss read the report of the committee for the Western Section. During the year fifty-three annuitants received from the fund an amount aggregating \$10,230. Two of these have died, and one has resumed the ministry; the present number of beneficiaries, therefore, is fifty. The income for the year was \$11,569.64, and a balance was left on hand of \$846.54. Dr. Middlemiss said the receipts were a little in advance of last year, and considerably more than for 1885, but they were yet far from satisfactory. He especially regretted the attitude assumed by a certain section of the Church, and even by some Presbyteries, toward this Scheme. Principal King paid a high tribute to Dr. Middlemiss efforts on behalf of this fund, and said that if any members of the Church made the circumstances of certain ministers who had laboured thirty, forty and fifty years, a reason for not contributing to this fund, the Church should meet it with indignation. The reports were remitted to a committee for consideration. Overtures were read from the Synod of Hamilton and London, and the Presbyteries of Brockville and Kingston, asking for the appointment of agents to canvass for this fund. The overtures were supported in brief speeches by Dr. Thompson, Rev. John Gray and Mr. James A. Young. The overtures were referred to the committee.

In the afternoon of Monday the Assembly was in a particularly industrious mood. Much business was transacted in a prompt and satisfactory manner. An overture presented by the Presbytery of Kingston created a little lively but good-humoured discussion. Its design was to bring before the Assembly for its sanction the queries issued to Presbyteries and Sessions by standing committees. Principal Grant, Rev. M. W. McLean, Dr. Reid, Professor McLaren and Dr. Smith took part in the discussion. The overture was received, and the Assembly instructed its various committees to draw up questions on their respective subjects to be submitted to the next Assembly for its consideration.

THE NEXT MEETING.

Quite a little discussion arose on proposals for the place of holding the next meeting. Principal Grant proposed Halifax, as it had been understood that two years ago Halifax was appointed, but the appointment had been fallen from two years successively. Toronto was proposed by Professor Gregg, and Kingston by Rev. D. M. Gordon. Truro, N. S., and Quebec were named by others. Rev. D. Gordon, Harrington, spoke as to the inadvisability of holding the meetings of Assembly in places so remote from convenient centres, thus increasing the expenses of commissioners, and thereby arousing a feeling of discontent among the people. After considerable discussion, seeing that, as Principal Caven expressed it, there was a sense of honour and justice in going next year to the Maritime Provinces, this feeling largely predominated, and St. Matthew's Church, Halifax, was selected by a substantial vote as the place where the Assembly of 1888 will meet, on the second Wednesday of June, at half-past seven o'clock.

HOME MISSION REPORT.

Rev. Dr. Cochrane presented the Home Mission Report for the Western Section, which comprises the Provinces of Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, the North-West Territories and British Columbia. The sub-committee on Augmentation reports itself as but fairly satisfied with the results of the past year's work. The number of the congregations on the list has been reduced from 159 to 142. The computation for future needs is that if the grants are to be continued on the present basis about \$30,000 annually will be required. In presenting the report the Rev. Dr. Cochrane referred to the past changes and progress that had taken place in the Province of Manitoba since his first

visit in 1873, and the marvellous extension of Home Mission work. The report now presented was encouraging as regards work done, much greater than ever before in the history of the Church. It was not encouraging as regards the contributions for this, one of the most important, if not the most important of all the Schemes of the Church. Instead of larger givings as larger demands were made, congregational collections for the fund were decreasing. A perusal of the report showed that during the past year many new mission fields had been occupied, more especially in the North-West and British Columbia, and that several new congregations had been put upon the augmented list. The statistics showed that there were under the care of the committee 714 mission stations, 166 augmented congregations and 189 ordained missionaries and catechists. In British Columbia the work was exceedingly encouraging. The Columbia Presbytery, erected last year, now consists of eleven members. Three of the congregations, Victoria, New Westminster and Vancouver, are now self-sustaining. In closing his address he made reference to the exceedingly critical condition of both the Home Mission and Augmentation Funds. The sum of \$47,000 had been expended on missions during the year, of which the Presbyteries had contributed only \$25,000. The sum of \$29,000 had been given to augmented congregations, of which the Presbyteries gave only \$23,000. The Reserve Funds were now nearly exhausted. Assuming that the same rate of giving was to continue during the year and the grants promised paid, there would be an indebtedness of \$20,000. He said: "You cannot impoverish the Home Mission Funds without eventually affecting the Colleges and Foreign and French Evangelization work. Is the Assembly, is the Church at large, prepared for this? I cannot imagine the Presbyterian Church in Canada going back on its past record. With serious cause for alarm, there is no cause for despair. The very fact that this year the committee has expended some \$83,000 for Missions and Augmentation (and if we add the Eastern Section, a total of nearly \$100,000) is cheering to every well-wisher of our Zion, and gives me hope that when once thoroughly alive to the momentous interests involved in the vigorous prosecution of Home Mission work, our people will cheerfully give in proportion to their ability." Dr. Cochrane concluded by moving the reception of the report. Further discussion was deferred till morning.

DEPUTY FROM THE FREE CHURCH, SCOTLAND.

The Rev. John Stewart, of Glasgow, deputy from the Free Church to the General Assembly, having been introduced by the Moderator, said:

Mr. Moderator, Fathers and Brethren,—It is impossible to listen to such a report as the one presented by Dr. Cochrane without thanking God, alike for the facts contained in it and the masterly and lucid manner in which these facts have been laid before you. Among God's gifts to any Church, not the least is that of a Convener who becomes so absorbed in his Scheme as to throw himself on it with that sort of devotedness which the French call "abandon," and the Germans "sturm," who unites in himself the skill of the financier, the enthusiasm of the missionary, the wisdom of the diplomat and the eloquence of the orator. It was my privilege, over thirty-five years ago, to hear many speeches of Dr. Cochrane, and I see that the child is the father of the man. I am commissioned by the Free Church of Scotland to congratulate you as a Church. Last year our General Assembly was solemnized, when your deputy stated that you had 873 charges and 900 stations in Canada; that your contributions for the Schemes of the Church amounted to £47,750 sterling, being one-seventh part of your whole revenue, and that your members contributed on an average £2 10s. 3d. each. These figures are so wholly satisfactory that I do not wonder that the Free Church instructed me to congratulate you. I congratulate you on your 676,165 members, as given in at the last census, and on the extent of the Dominion—so large that out of forty Great Britains or seventeen German Empires might be cut. I rejoice to find in this far North-West that Presbyterianism has taken such a firm hold of it, for Presbyterianism has all the order of Episcopacy and all the fervour of Methodism. Now is the time to lay the foundations of the religion of the land. So impressed am I by the immediate need of men and money for Manitoba and the North-West that if I could I would gladly on my return send round the fiery cross to gather the Free Church of Scotland round the standard of Canada, and, like the weird old priest of Roderick Dhu, say:

When flits the Alpine cross from man to man,
Vich Alpine summons to his clan,
Burst be the ear that fails to heed,
Falsed the foot that shuns speed;
And be the grace to him denied,
Bought by this sign for all beside.

Visions of Canada's future rise before my imagination and struggle in vain for utterance. There may be other lands whose climate is less excessive and more equable. There may be other lands where birds are of brighter plumage and flowers of fairer hue,