

ministers number 623; elders, 4540; probationers, 72; and students of divinity, 136. The income of the year, from all sources, has been £265,561. As compared with last year, there are 3 more ministers, 1 more congregation, 55 fewer elders, 15 fewer preachers, 4 more students, and 1197 more communicants. The average contribution per member, during 1867, was £1, 10s. 1d.

On the subject of the Union the following motion, proposed by Dr. Taylor and seconded by Dr. MacLeod, was agreed to unanimously; "That the Synod receive the Report of the Committee, and acknowledge, with devout gratitude to God, the spirit of brotherly kindness with which the negotiations have been conducted during the past years, the important conclusions stated in the Report, and the unanimity with which these conclusions have been arrived at, and see in the progress thus made every encouragement to go forward in the great work on which the Synod has now for several years been engaged, and therefore re-appoint the Committee under the former instructions, and commend them to the prayers of the Church." The speaking on the occasion was admirable in every respect. In compliance with the prayer of an overture from the Presbytery of London, the Court granted leave to the English Synod of the Church to hold a Conference on the subject of Union south of the Tweed with the Synod of the English Presbyterian Church.

The resignations of Dr. Somerville, Foreign Secretary, and Mr. Macgill, Home Secretary, were accepted—the former having gracefully pressed upon him a larger retiring allowance than he was disposed to accept, and the latter being elected unanimously to the vacant office of Foreign Secretary. The Home Secretaryship was afterwards filled up by the appointment of Dr. Selkirk Scott of Manchester.

Dr. M'Farlane, London, in the name of the widow of the late Dr. M'Kelvie of Balgedie, presented to the Synod the late doctor's statistical MSS. relating to the ministers, preachers, and students of the Church, along with a history of the foundation of each congregation in the body. He stated that the MSS. consisted of 1200 pages, and contained a great deal of the most valuable information.

Mr. Andrew M'Ewan, Glasgow, presented the report of the Committee on Sabbath schools, from which it appeared there are at present, in connection with the Church, 923 schools, 95,366 teachers, 75,062 scholars; 542 senior Bible classes taught by ministers, with an attendance of 16,422, and 175 senior Bible classes taught by elders, with an attendance of 3184. There are thus, in all, 96,668 children and young persons under regular

instruction. During the seven years preceding 1867, the number of Sabbath school teachers increased by no fewer than 690, and the scholars by 5059; but a marked diminution took place in the number of ministers' Bible classes, and in the attendance reported at them. The number of congregations during that period increased by 56, while the number of Ministers' Bible classes diminished by 46; and while the membership of the Church showed an increase of 11,083, the attendance at these classes showed a decrease of 4237. In commenting upon the report, he remarked that the necessity for such schools was getting every day more apparent, owing to the secular tendency of the teaching in the ordinary day schools throughout the country.

On the subject of a National System of Education, the Synod adopted a report recommending substantially three things,—first, that the elementary education provided be suitable to the children of all denominations; that scholars going beyond the elements shall not be required to attend or pay for any teaching to which their guardians object; and third, that the local boards of management shall be popularly elected.

Resolutions were passed strongly condemnatory of all religious endowments in Ireland, and in favour of the withdrawal of Government aid from every one of the Churches of that country. It was agreed to petition both Houses of Parliament in terms of the same.

Much regret was expressed that more young men were not coming forward to offer for Foreign Mission work.

Dr. Sommerville, the venerable ex-Foreign Secretary, is appointed to deliver a series of lectures on evangelistic and missionary subjects in the Theological Hall.

### General Assembly of the Free Church.

This Assembly met as usual in the Assembly Hall, Edinburgh, on the 21st May. Rev. Mr. Nixon of Montrose was elected Moderator. Mr. Wilson of Dundee was elected second Clerk, a position made vacant by the death of Dr. Clason. Rev. Mr. McGregor of Paisley was elected Professor of Systematic Theology, and Rev. Dr. Blaikie of Edinburgh, Professor of Apologetics. These vacancies were caused by the death of Dr. Bannerman and the retirement of Dr. James Buchanan.

Encouraging reports were given in with regard to the state of religion within the Church, and hopeful symptoms were noted in other communions.

The subject of union attracted great attention, and excited the deepest interest. The discussion was able and exhaustive.