



DEATH OF MR JAMES MACFIE.

There will be a feeling of profound regret amongst all Dunedin readers at the announcement of the death (which occurred on the 9th May 1883) of Mr James Macfie, who was widely known and respected as "city missionary," The "city mission" was an organisation working under the direction of a committee of members of the Congregational Church, the secretary of the committee for the past 15 years being Mr J. B. Thomson, our present Mayor.

Mr Macfie came to Dunedin in 1864, and shortly afterwards was appointed missionary to carry on the work of the above organisation —a position which he held until bodily infirmities necessitated his withdrawal from it about four months ago. Until about two years ago Mr Macfie also acted as chaplain in connection with the Benevolent Institution. His work as missionary lay amongst the poorest and most wretched classes in the city; and although he met with many hindrances and repulses he never lost heart, but with his whole soul in the duty to which he devoted himself he "went about doing good," consoling, relieving, and inspiring all with whom he came in contact. He was a man of kindly, Christian character, entirely unselfish, and eminently fitted to act as counsellor and guide to the very many who sought his assistance in their distress. Mr Macfie was a native of Rothesay, but settled in Glasgow in 1834, in which city he was a member and office-bearer of the first Congregational Church.

The funeral of the late James Macfie (city missionary) took place last Saturday afternoon. A service was held in the Congregational Church, Moray place, where the coffin had been laid in front of the pulpit. Several hundred persons were present at the service, including Mr James Macfie (nephew of the deceased), the Rev. Dr Stuart, Ven. Archdeacon Edwards, Revs. Tonkinson and Arnot, his Worship the Mayor (Mr J. B. Thomson), Dr Macdonald, Captain Thomson, and Messrs J. A. Torrance, Brunton, McGill, A. Rennie, J. W. Jago, R. B. Martin, R. Gillies, B. C. Quick, Shacklock, S. H. Mirams, Forsyth, and R. Gunn.

The Rev. Dr Stuart, after reading several portions of Scripture, delivered an address, in which he referred to the many admirable qualities of the deceased, who, he said, had to the last sustained the reputation of being a true Christian. The late Mr Macfie was respected by persons of all creeds, and in his work as a city missionary he had striven to know the needs, not the creeds, of the people among whom he worked. He had been welcome everywhere, by the sick, the poor, and the sorrowful; for, though a man of staid bearing, cheerfulness was enthroned in his face and beamed from his eyes. The poor and the wretched had always found in him a kind, loving, and sympathetic friend; and having passed from a life of usefulness, he had left an example which would benefit religion and humanity if faithfully followed.

After prayer had been offered by Mr Torrance, the funeral procession left the church, the pall-bearers being the Mayor, and Messrs Jago, Forsyth, Torrance, and Shacklock. The body was interred in the Southern Cemetery, the service at the grave being conducted by the Rev. Mr Tonkinson.

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James Macfie was buried in the family plot alongside his son Daniel who had died in 1865. His wife Isabella died in 1887, and is buried alongside her husband and son. Prepared for the Historic Cemeteries Conservation Trust of New Zealand (www.cemeteries.org.nz) by Stewart Harvey.