

which it is in their power to give."

The question of Union was very fully and ably discussed, and a friendly and unanimous deliverance arrived at. There are now negotiations open between the following churches: Free Church, United Presbyterian Church, Reformed, Original Secession, and English Presbyterian Churches. Difficulties will arise but the prevailing conviction is that by the grace of the Head of the Church all shall be overcome. Some members of the United Presbyterian Synod expressed a fear of "swamping their voluntarism," but the wise leaders and the great bulk of the ministers and people seem pleased with what has been already accomplished and sanguine with regard to the future.

The following is an abstract of the Foreign Mission Report of the Synod:—

JAMAICA.

This mission, including the Grand Cayman, consists of twenty-six congregations. It appears from the statistics and reports that have been received, that 320 persons were admitted to the Church for the first time; that the membership on the 1st of January last year was 5626, being a decrease as compared with 1862 of 237; that there were 778 candidates, and that the sum raised for all purposes was £3935 16s. 10½d., being an average per member of 14s. This is less by £204 than the income was in 1862. All the missionaries concur in declaring that 1863 was the most trying year for the people of Jamaica that any of them had known. As the result of a severe drought, which lasted for several months, the crops of ground provisions and of coffee were scanty and bad, and this scarcity reduced to great straits those in the upland regions who depend for food and money upon the produce of their small portions of land. The abandonment of estates in the lower country threw large numbers out of employment, whilst wages, even when labour could be had, did not average more than 9d. a day. The price of imported provisions, to which all classes had to have recourse, and of cotton cloth, the chief material of dress, was very high; so that many could neither obtain sufficient food nor decent clothing. These things following the adverse year of 1862, when the country was deluged by long-continued and destructive rains, thoroughly impoverished and depressed the people. In these circumstances it is wonderful, and shows the strength of steady principle which exists in many of the congregations, that the contri-

butions of the members have averaged 14s. per head. To these material influences, which during two years have been operating against the mission, is to be added the comparative coldness with regard to Divine things which succeeded the revival excitement, and which in several congregations has led to relapse, and caused a larger number of suspensions and exclusions than for some time had occurred. The things explain satisfactorily the small diminution both in the membership and in the income which has taken place in 1863. But whilst the rule at which we should aim, and which the Divine Word warrants us to expect, is continued progress, still experience tells us that in every mission there is cloud as well as sunshine—recess as well as flow; fluctuations which teach the need of combining energy with incessant dependence on the blessing of God. And we are not to forget what has been stated, that 320 persons have during the year been added to the Church; that thousands have amidst abounding temptations been kept in the right way; that many have died in the faith of Jesus; and that the seeds of Divine truth have been widely sown both on the Sabbath and in week-day classes, which by Divine grace will yet bear fruit to the glory of God. Comparing the state of things in the mission with what it was in 1859—only four years ago—it appears that 1443 adults have been added to the membership; that, notwithstanding these numerous accessions, there are still 778 candidates; that the Sabbath classes have increased by 112 and the scholars by 850; that £897 more have been raised for income than in 1859; and that whilst in that year only £1581 went to the payment of ministers' salaries, the sum allocated to that purpose in 1863 was £2383, or an increase of £802. These details show that in membership, in Sabbath classes, and in income the mission has in these four years been enlarged to the extent of nearly one-third; and when this important and valuable fact is looked at, we cannot but accord with the opinion which the Rev. Mr. Gillies expressed in the Jamaica Synod, whilst reviewing the statistics, when he said, "I regard the condition of the denomination as exceedingly gratifying; for the most cautious judge cannot refuse to admit, speaking in general terms, that it is one of much prosperity and promise." The report then gives an account of each of the twenty-six congregations; states that there are 44 day-schools, with 3189 names on the rolls; that the theological students, two in number were, in consequence of the lamented death of the Rev. Alexander Renton, taught by the Rev. Mr. Carlisle, of Brownsville, and that the academy at Montego Bay was attended by 1 missionary students and 50 public scholars.