

the battle field is the wide waste of wickedness and unbelief which lies spread out around us, and in the most distant corners of the earth. To reclaim these, to add them piecemeal to the Church of Christ, is the warfare in which we are engaged, and in which it is to be regretted the conquests are so few and on so slight a scale. While we write the Assembly has only overtaken a part of its business; but partial as it is there is enough to fill us at once with sorrow and gladness. It is a matter for gratitude that the spirit of the Church is sound, that there is no feeling anywhere to tamper with its purity or lower its standard. The decision of the Scoonie Case is a satisfactory evidence of the widening of the popular element, while the summary dealing with Messrs. Harper and McCulloch proves that the unworthy has no place within her pale. But with all this there is a humiliating evidence that there is a lack of spiritual life, amounting almost to deadness, in regard to missionary enterprise. The Church, it is true, is consolidating itself at home, increasing in strength numerically and intellectually; but the desolate places of our Zion are not cared for, and the provision for India and for the Colonial Scheme is anything but a credit to us as a Church. What is a collection of £3000 or £4000 among 1100 parishes scattered over the face of rich and fertile Scotland! When we look at the wealth even of one great city, and contrast the ability with the result we are lost in humiliation and wonder. In the city of Glasgow alone there are at least half a dozen churches which could each give £3000 a year to missions without feeling it in the slightest degree; but they do not give, and will not give, till a larger measure of spiritual life is vouchsafed them, and we pray that that spirit may descend upon them ere long, making them in reality true soldiers of the Cross. And while upon this subject let us take home to ourselves the sober and sadening truth that that spirit of lethargy is upon our souls also. We are going in and out in a spirit of indifference, while our Church is languishing in our very midst. When we reflect, when we see what one earnest heart and one active hand can do, as in the case of a Robertson or a Macleod, surely it might serve to nerve us to greater exertions, and fill us with higher hope.

The General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland has its meetings in Edinburgh at the same time with that of the Established Church. Their financial affairs appear to be in a satisfactory condition, the very large sum of £300,000 having been realized from all sources during last year. The Australian Union case has been before them, and after a debate exhibiting much feeling and occasional bitterness, it was decided by an overwhelming majority that the decisions of former Assemblies be adhered to, that is, that the united body be the recognized body, and the dissentients, though to a certain extent acknowledged, are not to be looked on as the Free Church. This decision, though it has surprised us not a little, places, we think, the matter beyond all doubt that the policy of the Free Church is Union with all other Presbyterians abroad, though there are but feeble, if any indications, of the same feeling at home.

The proceedings of the Synod of the U. P. Church have been confined mainly to ecclesiastical business of a routine and distinctive character. We rejoice to find that that Church continues in a prosperous and efficient state, her finances having increased to the extent of £10,000 within the last three years. It is true that the great question of spiritual independence, in connection, no doubt, with the Cardross case, was brought up for discussion, and a motion was introduced repudiating in effect, in the strongest manner, the ground taken up by the Free Church in this matter, while a counter motion affirming it was also tabled. The general feeling of the Synod, however, was evidently to let the matter alone in the meantime, without affirming anything too strongly in an official manner; and in the end neither motion was adopted, but a resolution passed, leaving it so far an open question.

We observe that in the Reformed Presbyterian Synod, a serious difficulty has intruded itself which threatens to weaken the strength of the Church materially if a measure of prudence be not used, and that without much delay. This difficulty is the oath of allegiance; but as the subject is a large and interesting one we must deal with it in a separate paper.