

### The Synods and Assemblies.

THE SYNOD OF THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH met in Edinburgh on the second Monday of May. Much important business was transacted. The statistics of the Church, a matter to which the United Presbyterians pay a very commendable attention, were fully reported upon. The number of congregations had increased during the year from 597 to 599. The number of members was returned as 177,905; of baptisms, 11,624; of Sabbath School teachers, 9753; of students at the Theological Hall, 139. The total income for all purposes, home and foreign, including £36,000 of bequest from the late John Henderson, Esq., of Park, was £318,853. In the Foreign Mission stations in Jamaica, Trinidad, Old Calabar, Caffreland, Rajpootana, in India, and Ningpo, in China, there was an educated agency of 199 persons. From the large balance in hand, and in prospect from legacies, amounting to £44,000, it was resolved that ten new missionaries should be sent without delay to the foreign field.—£9801 had been raised for the augmentation of stipends throughout the church, with the happy result of raising the minimum stipend to £157, exclusive of manse. 72 congregations, however, had as yet not completely accepted the Committee's offer, but four years ago there were 307 such congregations. Of the 72 only twenty were under the former minimum stipend of £120. On Union the discussion was of the same calm, and temperate, and brotherly nature that has hitherto marked the discussion of this great question in the United Presbyterian Synod. A resolution substantially the same as that adopted in our own Synod was unanimously agreed to—that the report be published for the information of the Church.

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FREE CHURCH met in Edinburgh the week after the United Presbyterian Synod. Sir Henry Wellwood Moncreiff, Bart., of ancestral fame, and noted, himself, for his profound acquaintance with Scottish Church History lore, and for his tact and sagacity in the management of ecclesiastical matters, both in his own denomination and as Clerk in the Union Committee, occupied the moderator's chair. The Reports submitted were generally of a cheering character.—The total income for the past year was £421,636—being an increase of £26,081 on the previous year. The discussion of the Union question occupied two long sittings, and resulted in a motion for the publication of the Report to the world, against another for dismissing the Committee, and sisting in the meantime all further procedure in the matter, being carried by a majority of 429 against 89. One of the best

speeches, and a speech well worthy of separate publication, was that of Dr. Wylie, in favour of publishing the Report. With great force he pointed out what the opponents of the present union movement too readily overlook, that the "Statement of Principles held by the negotiating Churches in common," drawn up by the Joint Committee, really embodies the truth taught in the Word of God on the subject of the duty of nations and their rulers to Christ. The Sustentation Fund again reported an increase. Its income was £132,123, a larger sum than that of last year by £813. 740 ministers had received the equal dividend of £150, against 728 last year.

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH met at the same time as the Free Church, under the moderatorship of Dr. Norman Macleod. Patronage took the place of Union in the Free Church, and was the subject of a discussion about equal length, and a motion in favour of its removal was carried against one that deprecated the discussion of the subject as unwise and inexpedient, by a majority of 193 against 88. It is refreshing to see more correct views in regard to the rights of the Christian people spreading where, some years ago, we could have little expected them. We fail, however, to find in the speeches of the majority, the question of anti-patronage advocated as it used to be by Dr. William Cunningham and his friends before the Disruption. It is merely sought for on the ground of expediency, and as likely to please the mass of their adherents, rather than as the birthright of every Christian man, without which he is treated as of the nature of goods and chattels, at the disposal of an official utterly unknown in Apostolic times—a patron. Such a line of argument will utterly fail in conciliating the thinking Christian people either in the Establishment or out of it. It is much more likely to send their intelligent adherents into one or other of the Free Churches outside. Dr. Macleod's address at the close of the Assembly is of the nature of a manifesto in favour of his denomination retaining the emoluments of an Established Church. As might be expected, its pleadings are able, but they will not reconcile the great body of his countrymen to the keeping up, out of national resources, an institution that does not fulfil the ends of a Christian Church better than any of the Free Churches in the land. Indeed, the speech has much the air of a man of the world, who sees the dissolution of the tie between the Established Church and the State as inevitable in the not very distant future, and wishes to prepare his country friends for what will surely come to pass whether they wish it or not.—*R. P. Magazine.*