

RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

One of the most important cases that came before the Free Church General Assembly in May, was that of Professor Smith of Aberdeen, who had been charged with heretical teachings on the Pentateuch and other Biblical subjects. The case had been under discussion in the Church Courts during three years. It was finally decided that the Professor should be sent back to his professorial chair, from which he had been suspended, with an admonition, which was solemnly tendered by the Moderator. It will, no doubt, appear to very many that the decision was not such as the important interests involved would seem to demand. At the same time, it is pleasing to note that in the speeches, even of those who advocated the mildest measures, there was not a single expression of sympathy with the Professor's teachings, on which the libel was founded. It is pleasing also to note that Professor Smith himself accepted the admonition in an humble spirit. "I hope" he said, "that I am not out of place when I say that, while I thank God for the issue of this evening—an issue which I trust will be for His glory and for the maintenance of His truth—I have never been more sensible than on the present occasion of the blame that rests upon me for statements which have proved so incomplete that even at the end of three years, the opinion of this house has been so divided upon them. I feel that, in the providence of God, this is a very weighty lesson to one placed, as I am, in the position of a teacher, and I hope that by His grace, I shall not fail to learn by it."

The Mission of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Syria still continues to enjoy prosperity. At the late meeting of Synod in Philadelphia a "luminous and exceedingly interesting" report was read by Rev. Robert Sommerville, a summary of which we copy from the *Philadelphia Inquirer* :—

In view of the resignation of Dr. Beattie, Rev. W. J. Sproull had been appointed to fill the vacancy, and early in October, he and his wife sailed from New York in company with Miss Mary Carson, who has received appointment as teacher. Dr. Metheny and wife were passengers on the same steamer. The word of life has been preached regularly in Latakia, Syria. At present there are eighty-seven communicants, exclusive of Missionaries, in that place. In the boarding school are seventy pupils. There are two day schools with one hundred and sixty boys and sixty-one girls on the register. To counteract this work, the Greek bishop opened a school and forbids the people to attend the other. There were already four schools on the mountains of Lebanon, and owing to the liberality of the ladies of the Second Congregation, New York, four additional schools were opened.

There are many hopeful signs of the success of the work in Syria. There is a growing dissatisfaction of the people with their condition, and their manifest admiration for the principles of the church. Every where the kindest feelings prevail toward the Missionaries, regarding their position far ahead of Oriental sects. Another hopeful sign is the ever increasing interest of the people in the education of their children. Not less significant and encouraging is the prevalent feeling that the infidel government under which the work in Syria is conducted shall soon be overthrown. An impression among Mohammedans is that the whole world is soon to be judged for its wickedness. At no previous time has the work been so encouraging and prosperous.

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