

In carrying this measure into practical operation, the Committee have met with an encouraging measure of success. At the close of 1852, they had established 85 libraries, for which they received from congregations £315 14s. 10d., or £3 14s. 3d. on an average from each congregation, and disbursed from the fund £395. Since that period they have originated other 15, making in all up to the present time, 100 libraries. In 1856 there were established 119 libraries, and upwards of £750 were on hand to the credit of the Board, by means of which the benefits of the scheme would be much extended. The last report announces that 125 libraries have been formed.

Many other measures of social, moral and spiritual improvement have been devised and practised by the United Presbyterian Synod, such as the cause of Temperance, Sabbath sanctification, Sabbath schools, parental instruction, prayer meetings, &c., &c. On any particular notice of these it would be unseasonable to enter.

To conduct so many matters of difficulty and importance as those on which we have dilated, much expense is necessarily incurred. And as no Government-aid is sought, or though offered would be accepted, the successful operation of so many Christian enterprises says much for the liberality and zeal of the church at large, and for the amplitude of its resources. The Voluntary Principle in active and cheerful operation replenishes the various funds of the church by subscriptions, donations, collections, and other methods which are employed to engage the attention of the people, to excite their interest, and to warm their hearts.

The various Funds of the church are,—the Synod's General Fund, the Home Fund, the Foreign Mission Fund, the Debt-Liquidation Fund, &c.—all which are managed under appropriate regulations by Committees under the control of the Synod.

The Statistics of the Church are furnished by annual reports from the congregations, through their presbyteries, to the Synod. These statistics embrace the following general heads:—I. Membership and attendance. II. Ordinary income and expenditure. III. Instruction to the young. IV. Missionary and benevolent operations—and V. Prayer meetings and other means of usefulness.

A subject of considerable interest was introduced into the Synod in May 1855, by Overture from the Presbytery of Paisley and Greenock respecting the appointment of what are called National Fasts. The following is its tenor:—

“That the Synod of this Church, historically distinguished for its testimonies against encroachments by the civil magistracy, and looked to at present by not a few in its congregations for guidance in this matter, do issue a recommendation to ministers, elders, and members of congregations, to take action in their respective localities by the usual constitutional methods to bring the subject of national fasts under notice in the proper quarter, with a view to secure such a change in the form and phraseology of any future proclamation in-