

Principal is one thing, and may be evidence of a great mind and a useful life; but to think originally, to preach profitably, and to write vigorously for so long a time, can be no accident. Such was the retiring Moderator. The elected Moderator is also a man of ripe experience and no ordinary powers. But as Dr. Cunningham put off his armor, and Dr. Hutchison is only putting it on, we shall leave our remarks about the latter till next year.

In the Free Church General Assembly the Moderators are also men of mark. Dr. Somerville is a well-known man. He has been of late more abroad on evangelistic tours than at home in the work of the Church. He goes over the world on Revival expeditions, building on other men's foundations. He likes it better than the harder and more trying work of a Church and congregation. The Moderator whom they elected to succeed him is also a well-known man—would that I could say "well and favorably" known. He is the arch-enemy of the Church of Scotland. He is the head and front of the Free Church Disestablishment crusade. His power in the Free Church is enormous. He has been able to lead her General Assembly straight in the teeth of her "Protest and Claim of Rights." He has done so year after year by ever-increasing majorities. He has made Disestablishment the stalking-horse, and the Free Church has mounted and gone at full gallop, in obedience to his signal. He opened the Free Church Assembly by an elaborate address, in which there is virtually not a word about his pet theme. Whether he is keeping his bow unbent for the general discussion of the subject further on in the Assembly, it is impossible to say. His address was a curiosity in its way. He took up modern apostasy from the old orthodox faith, and almost apologized for those who do not believe in Church doctrines, Confessions of Faith, and such like. He drew a distinction between "what the Bible says" and "what the Bible and Church say together." He prefers the Church to sit in judgment on the Bible rather than that the Bible should be the judge of the Church. It is spiritual independence which so enraptures Dr. Rainy that he will not permit even the Bible to have too much to say when "what the Church says" is the matter under consideration.

We have mentioned several things in connection with the Church of Scotland and the other Churches. In the good "auld Kirk" everything flourishes. Our members are increasing steadily, our finances are satisfactory, and we have rest from war. Not so the state of things elsewhere. The Free Church prides

herself on her finances. More than once we have been brought into unfavorable contrast with her. She has been able to show very much higher figures in her contributions as per member than we show. And this fact has not unnaturally been used as an argument against the Church of Scotland and all State Churches whatsoever. It has been said that endowments are hostile to Christian liberality. If so, then State endowments are bad, and should be abolished. The facts of the case, however, are these:—Our people are as liberal and generous as those of dissenting Churches; but (as Norman McLeod once put it in my hearing) a man will swim further to save his life than were he only enjoying a holiday luxury. Dissenting Churches collect money like the former; we in the Church collect like the latter. It is plainly evident, however, to the careful observer, that where our organization is as complete as theirs, our results are as good: where their organization is defective as ours, their results are as low. It is a question of organization, and that only. Our organization will not compare in completeness with the F. C. Sustentation Fund, and our collections will not compare with theirs in that department. Were it absolutely necessary for the existence of the Church of Scotland that a certain sum of money should be raised, we could devise an organization as complete as theirs, and I have no doubt we would produce as satisfactory results. The danger with the Free Church, however, is this, that the strain has been too great. The originators of the Free Church and her great Scheme have died out. A new generation has grown up, animated by a less chivalric spirit, with the consequence that the Funds are shrinking whilst the members of the Church and the wealth of the country are both on the increase. For example, at the Free Church General Assembly of 1885, the total income from all sources reported was £26,028 4s. 11d., which itself was a decrease on the previous year. The next year, 1886, the revenue was £594,050 1s. 2½d.—also a decrease. This year 1887 the total revenue is £564,442 11s. 0½d., a decrease of £29,607 10s. 2d. If this state of things goes on for any length of time, the Free Church will have to give attention, not to the pulling down of the Church of Scotland, but to the preservation of her own existence. She has done good work. She has undoubtedly shown us what a Church can do. She has stimulated the Church of Scotland to greater and more sustained efforts both at home and abroad, and therefore the curtailment of her efforts would be a calamity that should not be contemplated but with alarm. She would have