

from debt. The total income of the Hall Fund was £4,131, with a balance of £477 over expenditure. Subsequently a prolonged discussion took place as to some proposed changes in the curriculum, and in the end it was agreed by a majority that the whole matter be referred back to the committee.

On Tuesday evening a public meeting of the Union was held in Augustine Church, Rev. G. McHardy, Kirkcaldy, chairman. Mr. McHardy delivered an address on "The Work of the Church, and the Wants of Our Time." One marked feature of our time was, he said, the prevailing unsettlement of theological opinion. This state of things must be faced, not mourned over; and the first imperative obligation resting on the Church now was to make clear as day that it was not enlisted on the side of any hard and fast theological system which it had a vested interest in maintaining, but that it was enlisted solely on the side of the truth; and that it existed and worked entirely for the sake of cheering man's life and elevating his soul. As to social restlessness and dissatisfaction, which was another marked feature of our time, he was of opinion that this was rather evidence of progress and promise of better things to come, and the Church's duty was, as far as possible, to guide that restlessness and infuse into it a higher tone. A third feature of our time was the deep craving for religious unity. This could never be attained till the Church declined all formal alliance with the State, and trusted to the strength of its own spiritual resources. Mr. McHardy then spoke of the isolated position of the working-classes as another marked feature of our time; and, in conclusion, alluded to the distinctive features of Congregationalism and its advantages.

At the Deacons' and Delegates' breakfast on Wednesday morning a report was submitted on the conference between lay office-bearers of the Congregational and Evangelical Unions, and the committee was encouraged to prosecute their good work in preparing the way for union. Meetings were held during the forenoon in connection with the Chapel Building Society and Supplementary Stipend Fund. The business meeting of the Union was afterwards held in Augustine church. The yearly report alluded to the deaths since last annual meeting of two ministers, to the changes which had taken place in the pastorate of churches aided by the Union, and to the distribution of the funds for 1886-7.

The grants recommended from the Ordinary Fund amounted to £1,038; Special Purpose Fund, £75; and New Churches Organisation Fund £90.

In addition to our notes in the last issue regarding the North-west territories, we would give these, as indicating the growing importance of those districts, and the necessity of our watchfulness in view of future mission work. From the census noted we find that there is already invested, in the three territories named, in various industrial pursuits, \$771,451; \$180,917 have been paid in wages, for the purchase of raw material \$518,423, while the total value of articles produced was \$1,029,235. To invested capital there appears to have been twenty-five per cent. added. This in what a short

time ago was a desolation. Emigrants, we learn, are already entering, and it is our earnest hope that ere long, in some neglected field, the name Congregational will be seen over more than one church entrance.

AMONG the questions which will be before us at our annual meeting, the financial will rightly occupy a foremost place. There are one or two suggestions we would make. Let us understand our positions as stewards of God's manifold gifts. If the work we have on hand is needed in light of the great eternity stretching on before us, then it is not self-denial, but simple joy to forego luxuries to the end that the great work may be done. Heb. x. 34. Our second reflection is this. *We should meet this question ourselves.* No Congregational church should go round hat in hand to the politician, who gives that he may not lose a vote, to the business man, appealing to his interest that a customer may be retained. The church should depend upon itself, not upon the world, for the sinews of war. We do not say that we should play the Pharisee and divert freewill offerings because we do not endorse the source; nor that appeals may not be made to brethren. We do say that our business is to develop our own resources, and set our faces as a flint against all attempts to bribe or force the world or other denominations to do our work. We want to develop and maintain a spirit of manly independence, which, without upishness, maintains becoming dignity, and scorns to use unworthy motives that the treasury of the Lord may be filled.

THE Freewill Baptist Year Book has come to our hand. We are glad to have before us information regarding this body, so closely akin to our own. Their position in the United States appears, *mutatis mutandis*, to be very similar to our own. 1,490 churches are reported throughout the Union; 1,262 ordained pastors; a net increase to the membership during the past year of 1,178; and a total membership of 77,827, being an average to each church of 52.23.

For foreign missions the sum of \$11,495 was raised, for home work \$11,938; for educational purposes \$3,442. We are glad to make better acquaintance with this body of fellow Christians, and only trust that in the good providence of God their principle of open communion may,