

and 35 gave nothing at all. These facts can not be regarded as fully satisfactory; and indeed would have been very serious, had it not been for a state of things, much to be deplored in our Church, viz.: the vacancy of a good many of the congregations, once on the list of settled augmented charges. The burden of supplementing their own liberality so as to pay for the supply they have enjoyed, rendered by missionaries placed over them for a year or more, or by a succession of itinerant ministers has fallen upon the Home Mission Fund; which, in consequence, has gone considerably into debt. Had these all been drawing from the Augmentation Fund, as in a perfectly healthy state they would do, the receipts would not have been sufficient, by at least \$2000, to meet the demands of the scheme. Therefore, although the balance in favor of the Fund has gone up to over \$4000—at which figure it ought to be kept as a comfortable working balance—it is really not a matter of congratulation, since it proceeds not from an overflowing stream of liberality falling into the treasury; but from a diminished outlet, caused by the withdrawal from the beneficent influence of the scheme, of some of the needy places it once gladdened. Only 42 congregations, as compared with 50 the previous year, received aid from the Fund calling for a disbursement of \$7064, nearly \$300 less than the previous year. There is a gratifying increase of \$689 in local contributions to stipend; but there is no case, this year, of a congregation abandoning aid from the Fund, and assuming the full salary of its minister. We can only point to 11, as yet, who have grown into sufficient strength, by the aid of the Fund, to walk without this financial support. At the April meeting of the Committee, there were 55 applications for assistance; and 46 of them were promised aid to the amount of \$7810, while 9 of them were deferred, either because they were vacant or for want of sufficient information to enable the Committee to deal with them intelligently. The permission of Assembly is asked for the Committee to treat all these, and any new cases that may come up, according to the rules. There are four congregations, that do not qualify, on the list passed by the Committee; but they are all, in the opinion of the Committee, deserving of recognition, and the Assembly is asked to sanction the grants to them, as well as to the others.

Drop in the Sun. The Sustentation Fund receipts this year have been so much decreased that the Free Church has found it necessary to reduce the grants in the case of 600 ministers to the extent of £10 each, and in the case of several hundreds to £5 each.

Another Movement for Union. The Free and United Presbyterian Churches are taking practical steps for union, and so far the harmony and good feeling which ought to exist between kindred religious bodies have not been disturbed by the ever watchful opposition. What the future will bring forth none can tell, but there are predictions of bitter hostility to incorporation with the U. P's. on a basis of Voluntaryism.

Instrumental Music in Church. The question of instrumental music in church agitated the Irish General Assembly considerably. In 1886 a truce was entered into between the "liberty men" and the anti-organ section, that, for the sake of unity and peace of the church, no discussion should be indulged in on the merits of the question by the General Assembly. It

seems some of the anti's become restive under the restriction and a committee reported against the congregation of Howth for using a harmonium. The report provoked a long and warm debate ending however without practical result. The brethren in Ireland are still far from a frame of mind that will tolerate instrumental music for general use in their church.

The Day of Iama. A letter from the aged Dr. W. A. Booth contains the following pithy sentences: "I have been an observer of most of the church controversies of the last sixty-five years. They have had their day, and are almost forgotten. Finneyism, Puseyism, and Bushnellism, and many others have disturbed and gone. What there was of good in either of them remains. So we may regard Briggsism. Dr. Briggs' influence has diminished of late, and he has largely ceased to be a factor in the present controversy, and his ism will soon take its place with the others."

The Lapsed Masses. The never failing cry about the lapsed masses is again heard throughout the length and breadth of the Old Land. The reports of the Synods and Assemblies emphasized it. There are some who describe this plaint as a perpetual whine, and who regard the complainers as pessimists. There are lapsed masses, non-church goers, in every community and the church that does not recognize the fact and her duty in the premises is unfaithful to her charge. The question is one of great importance, and it is well that the Old Country churches are not contented to sit with folded arms while thousands around and among them are perishing for the bread of life.

Charge of Garbling The Truth. says:—Rev. James Johnstone the Sacred Books. has been convicted Prof. Max Muller of the grossest dishonesty in editing "The Sacred Books of the East." He charges and proves that the Professor has omitted large portions without the slightest intimation that these had been left out, and, therefore, making a total false impression as to the character of these books. "When challenged, the Professor frankly admitted that he had left out portions for the very sufficient reasons, that if he had translated them as they exist in the originals, he would have been persecuted for publishing obscene literature." Yet these are the books lauded to the skies at the Parliament of Religions amid the clapping of white-handed American women.

A Wall From Belgium. A wail comes from Pastor A. Brocher, of Brussels; for the present condition of his country, which he says is given almost entirely over to Roman Catholicism. Morality is very low, drinking and other forms of vice being extremely prevalent among all classes. The work of evangelizing Belgium had been begun by Swiss missionaries in the sixteenth century, but the work had languished and nearly disappeared, when fifty-five years ago it had been recommenced. At that time there were only four Protestant places of worship in Belgium, and these were mostly attended by foreigners. At the present day they have twenty-nine churches fully equipped in every way for carrying out the evangelisation of the country. To each of these churches are attached out stations, where Divine worship is regularly conducted. Colporteurs they also have for going over the country selling literature and holding meetings whenever possible. By these and other means an effort is being made to spread the Gospel among the people.