

Transactions of Public meetings.

From News of the Churches.

FREE CHURCH—MOVEMENT FOR INCREASING SUSTENTATION FUND.

In a recent number we gave some account of a movement set on foot in the Free Church, for adding 25 per cent to the Sustentation Fund, with the view of raising the equal dividend from that fund to each minister of the church to £150 per annum. At the quarterly meeting of the Commission of the General Assembly, held on the 15th November last, Dr. Buchanan, Convener of the Sustentation Fund Committee, made a very encouraging statement of the progress of this movement. We subjoin from his speech a few notices of what has been done:—

“Mention has been made elsewhere of the case of the Campbelton congregation,—a town which, from its locality, is very much out of the influences which public opinion brings to bear upon a community. We find that there, very much, I believe, because the ministers of that congregation entered heartily and intelligently into the movement, it has been most signally successful. The sum that would have been a fourth of an increase there would have been about £63; and the last account that I heard was, that before all the districts had been gone over, an increase of £110 had been obtained, that is to say, an increase not of 25 per cent, but of 50 per cent. And in the same Presbytery, I heard of the case of a congregation on the Western shore of Kintyre, viz: the congregation of Killean,—a widely scattered congregation, and one whose circumstances are certainly as poor as those of almost any Highland congregation,—I learned that in the congregation they had succeeded in obtaining an increase, not of 25 per cent., but of 70 per cent., and there also through the zeal of the minister. In regard to town congregations, I have some very pleasing testimonies to the cordiality with which the movement has been responded to among them. I have in my hands a note from the minister of one of the congregations of Dundee, a member of this Commission, Mr. Wilson, in which he says. ‘Yesternight we had our meeting of Deacons’ Court, to receive a report of the result of the visitations of the office-bearers. The result of the whole was that an increase was reported of £120, which will make our annual contribution for next year £370, with the promise of at least £400 in future. This will be nearly a third of an increase.’ I have also a letter from the minister of a congregation in Paisley, Mr. Thomson, in which he states that at the meeting of Deacons’ Court, the result as stated, exceeded all his expectation. The movement, he said, was gone into cordially. The sum raised last year was £280, and £350 was therefore required, but the returns from thirteen, out of sixteen districts, held out the prospect of an increase of £114, instead of £70, and if the remaining three districts turned out as well as he expected, the increase would be £130 instead of £70; this, too, at a time when trade was very dull, and many were out of employment. He was strongly impressed with the conviction that if ministers would only be at pains to influence their people in a kindly way, it would be easy to realise far more than it was proposed to raise. I have another letter from a medical professor in the University of Glasgow, Dr. Rainy, an esteemed office-bearer of this church,—and office-bearer in what I may call our principal congregation in Glasgow,—St. John’s. Dr. Buchanan here read the communication, which enforced the views of the reverend doctor, and,

as to what was doing in St. John’s congregation, stated, ‘We have now ascertained, with considerable correctness, in the congregation of Free St. John’s, the result of the present effort to increase the contributions to the Sustentation Fund. I am authorised by Dr. Roxburgh, and the Deacons’ Court to intimate, that they confidently expect to remit upwards of £1900 for the current financial year; and they unanimously desire that the whole of their contributions should be appropriated to the Equal Dividend Fund. The sum thus expected, even for the current year, will indicate an increase of 23½ per cent. on the sum remitted last year to the Equal Dividend Fund, and an increase of 53 per cent. on the sum remitted in 1846. The deacons give the most cheering accounts of the cordial manner in which the people in their districts have responded to this application. I hear that this is the uniform testimony of the other Deacons’ Courts in this district.’ I can truly testify,” continued Dr. Buchanan, “that the case of St. John’s is not in any way singular in Glasgow.”

Political and General Miscellany.

From the Philadelphia Banner.

BRITISH PERIODICAL LITERATURE.

Republication of the Quarterly, the Edinburgh, the North British, and the Westminster Reviews, and Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine, by Leonard Scott & Co., 79 Fulton, and 54 Gold Streets, New York.

Many of our readers are aware, we doubt not, of the circumstances under which the *Edinburgh Review* was started, by Sydney Smith, Jeffrey, and Brougham. We need not advert to the wonderful excitement which was produced in the political and literary world by the bold and unsparing articles, which appeared in the early numbers of the young giant, which, at one time, seized on the abuses and evils in civil affairs, and held them up in glowing and indignant terms before the nation; at another time most dogmatically laid down its canons of criticism with an “ex-cathedra” authority, and, so far as the literary aspirants of the day fell short, or came up to the standard, the lash or the nod of approbation was awarded. Very speedily “the *Edinburgh*” was felt to be a power in the country, and as it advocated the political views of the Whig party, it soon received all the support that Lord Holland, Lord Grey, and the heads of that party in both Houses of Parliament and the country gentry could bestow. To meet and neutralize the influence of “the *Edinburgh*,” “the *Quarterly*” was originated in London, and it forthwith appeared in all the might which the Tory party could infuse into its pages. Thus, the two great organs of the opposing parties in Great Britain entered on their career. The *Edinburgh*, which demanded Political Reform, and Catholic Emancipation, and proclaimed itself as the advocate of progress, was indebted for the brilliant and slashing articles which, at times, arrested even the attention of the Halls of Legislation, to the pens of such men as Jeffrey, Smith, Brougham, Mackintosh, Napier and Macaulay. The *Quarterly*, under the editorial care of Gifford, who was aided by Southey, Scott, Lockhart, Croker, Wordsworth, Lord Mahon, Dr. Millman, and others of equal fame, maintained a conservative position, defending the Church Establishment, opposing Catholic Emancipation, and Parliamentary Reform. Both Reviews were characterized by a