

POETRY.

"WEEP FOR YOURSELVES AND FOR YOUR CHILDREN."

BY MRS. SIGOURNEY.

We mourn for those who toil—
The slave who ploughs the main,
Or him who, hopeless, tills the soil
Beneath the stripe and chain;
For those who, in the world's hard race,
O'erwearied and unblest,
A host of restless phantoms chace,—
Why mourn for those who rest?

We mourn for those who sin,
Bound in the tempter's snare,
Whom syren Pleasure beckons in
To prisons of despair;
Whose hearts, by whirlwind passions torn,
Are wreck'd on folly's shore;
And why in sorrow should we mourn
For those who sin no more?

We mourn for those who weep,
Whom stern afflictions bend,
With anguish, o'er the lowly sleep,
Of lover or of friend;
But they to whom the sway
Of pain and grief is o'er,
Whose tears our God hath wiped away—
O mourn for them no more!

Ecclesiastical Intelligence.

From the United Secession Magazine.

ADDRESS TO CONGREGATIONS.

RESPECTING A NEW FUND, TO AID IN LIQUIDATING THE DEBT OF WEAK CONGREGATIONS, AND IN ERECTING PLACES OF WORSHIP. BY A COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED ASSOCIATE SYNOD.

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN.—At the last meeting of the United Associate Synod, a measure was adopted of great importance to the interests of a numerous class of the congregations under their inspection; and in introducing this measure to the consideration of the congregations generally, we deem it expedient to quote the decision of the Synod in its own words.

"The Committee appointed at last meeting to take into consideration the whole subject of the Synod Fund, gave in their Report. Of the general object of this Report the Synod cordially approved, and proceeded to consider the particular proposals for carrying this object into effect." It was then resolved:—

"1. That the Synod Fund for general purposes continue constituted as at present.

"2. That a new fund shall be instituted to aid in liquidating the debt of weak congregations, and in erecting new places of worship.

"3. That a board shall be appointed to take charge of this new fund, and judge of all applications for aid towards the objects which it contemplates—any party feeling aggrieved, having the right of appeal to the Synod.

"4. That the Board shall consist of members of the United Secession Church, but not exclusively of members of Synod, and shall meet stately, and hold extraordinary meetings when these are considered necessary.

"5. That the board shall endeavour, in affording aid, to stimulate the zeal and efforts of those applying for it; and with this design shall, as often as possible, grant such assistance, on the principle that congregations shall raise a certain proportion of the requisite amount themselves.

"6. That the Board shall send deputations of their number, when practicable, to examine into the grounds and circumstances of the more important applications.

"7. That an Address shall be published by the authority of Synod, explaining to all our congregations the nature of this fund, and strongly exhorting them to contribute for its support as God may enable them."

In compliance with the last of these resolutions, the Committee to whom it refers, beg leave to address the congregations in name of the Synod.

From the Annual Reports of the Synod, it must be known to you, that there are two funds supplied solely by your contributions, the administration of which is entrusted to the Synod. The one is the *Mission Fund*, devoted to the extending of the knowledge of the gospel in the more destitute districts of this country, and in foreign parts; and it is very gratifying to observe, that such a measure of Missionary zeal is now animating our churches, as that this fund is annually increasing, and the field of our Missionary undertakings proportionally enlarging. The contributions to the fund

for this year, amount to about £5000. The other is denominated the *Synod Fund*,—much older than the former; and is applied to the relief of weak congregations, to the assistance of aged and infirm ministers, who cannot be supported otherwise, and to the defraying of the necessary expences of our Theological Institution. This fund has never been very abundantly replenished, seldom exceeding £700, yet its supply has been constant and steady; it is administered with much frugality; and it may be questioned whether, by such slender means, happier results have often been accomplished. It will be observed that it is resolved that this fund shall remain "constituted as at present," and it is the earnest desire of this Committee, and of the Synod, that no detriment arise to it from the institution of the new fund.

Of this last, the objects are these two: "To aid in liquidating the debt of weak congregations, and in erecting places of worship."

We are very desirous that both these objects be distinctly understood, and properly appreciated. The "Synod Fund," as far as it is directed to congregations, is applied in small annual sums to assist those who are unable of themselves to support Christian ordinances, but is not employed to aid either in the liquidation of debt, or in the erection of places of worship; the new fund will be applied to these latter objects exclusively. It is not intended, however, to attempt any common effort for discharging the debts of all our congregations, and for having all our places of worship unencumbered and free. By far the larger number of our congregations are happily able to pay their debts by their own unaided exertion; in defraying these, they would be as unwilling to accept gratuitous aid from others, as they would be to receive such aid for discharging their private pecuniary obligations; and they may be left, without any suggestions from us, to manage their own affairs in their own way. The same remarks apply to the building of new churches by congregations able to pay for them. Nothing whatever will be given from the proposed fund, for either object, to bodies of people not needing charitable aid.

It is, probably, of still greater importance to remark, that it is not meant to defray from the proposed fund the whole debts of any congregation, or, in any circumstances, to erect places of worship at the expense of the fund exclusively. For purely Missionary stations, particularly in foreign and unenlightened lands, where the Gospel is unknown or resisted, the expenses attendant on the first process of evangelization must be borne, as in the first ages, by those who know, and believe the truth—by those sending the Gospel, not those to whom it is sent. In this country circumstances are widely different. The members of our smallest congregations may be as intelligent and as devoted followers of the Lord Jesus, as those of our most numerous and opulent communities; and under the influence of enlightened and Christian generosity, they may be as "willing of themselves" to do what they can for the support of Christian ordinances, and the erection of edifices for Christian worship: It were a mistaken kindness, a very ill-directed charity, that would go to supersede, in place of sustaining, those valuable and honourable efforts of Christian principle. Nothing short of necessity, in any case, can justify, either on the part of societies or individuals, dependance on the bounty of others. To reduce unnecessarily either churches or individuals, to this mendicant dependance, would, morally speaking, be far more injurious to the recipients of the bounty than to its donors. The proposed fund, we trust, we can with confidence affirm, shall never be thus misapplied. It is intended not to prevent, not to diminish, not to discourage, the exertions of the very weakest of our congregations in their own behalf, but to "aid," and by aiding, to encourage and augment them. This object, justly limited as it is, will commend itself, we are persuaded, not less to our brethren needing this aid, than to those by whom it must be furnished. It will be observed that the regulations just quoted under which the fund is to be constituted, provide the most effectual means for stimulating, in place of repressing, the exertions of the congregations whom it is intended to aid. It is provided that "the Board" of managers, to whom the fund shall be intrusted, "shall endeavour, in affording aid, to stimulate the zeal and efforts of those applying for it: and with this design shall, as often as possible, grant such assistance, on the principle that congregations shall raise a certain proportion of the requisite amount themselves."

That cases in which this assistance is urgently required exist to a considerable extent in the United Secession Church, no one acquainted with the state of our congregations can doubt. In every church, including any considerable number of congregations, there are such cases; and of the congregations connected with the Secession Church, now amounting to nearly 400, not a few of them situated in poor and thinly peopled districts, it is not wonderful that there are many such. Betwixt the various classes in a

congregation, and the various congregations in an extensive ecclesiastical association, there is an analogy. There are the extremes, the very poor, and the very wealthy, and there is a numerous middle class. And in both cases this diversity of condition exists, under the wise administration of Providence, that the fraternal sympathies of the body may be drawn forth, that there may be a Christian communion in giving and receiving, and that the strong may help the weak.

No enumeration of cases has as yet been attempted; but it may be assumed that we have many congregations needing the intended assistance, whose numbers are few; whose resources are small; who, in erecting the plainest structures for divine worship, have been under the necessity of contracting debts which they have no means of discharging, which hang upon them as a vexing encumbrance, which discourage their spirits, cramp their other efforts, and not unfrequently occasion harassing demands that render hasty and precarious appeals for aid indispensable. Let the members of our more favoured churches place themselves in the circumstances we have described, let them wisely consider the case of their poor brethren, and they will be aware of the injurious influence which such circumstances can hardly fail to produce on their minds. They know they are associated in Christian profession, and are connected by the closer ties of brotherhood in Christ Jesus, with many congregations in ease or comparative opulence, but where are the fruits of this endearing relationship, of that charity which is "the bond of perfectness," if they are left to bear their burdens unfriended and alone? We abstain, however, from enlarging on evils, which it is better to cure, than to describe or deplore? (To be Concluded.)

NEW CHURCH AT CHAPELTON.

PARISH OF GLASFORD.

The commodious and handsome place of worship, erected in this peculiarly necessitous village, was opened on Sabbath last. The Church, notwithstanding of the unpropitious state of the weather, the rain falling in torrents early in the day, was densely filled during the entire services, which were conducted in an able and most appropriate manner, in the forenoon by the Rev. Gavin Lang, minister of the parish, and in the afternoon and evening by the Rev. J. Macnaughtan of Paisley. This church, which, without galleries, contains 400 sittings, must prove a singular blessing to the locality in which it is placed. The population, whose wants it so happily supplies, amounts to about 600 persons, living at a distance of three miles from any place of worship, who are, almost without exception, in the very humblest circumstances, and have remained destitute of stated ordinances since the fitting, many years ago, of a Dissenting congregation to a more attractive neighbourhood. We can fancy nothing more gratifying to the heart of a Christian patriot, than the sight of a plain, yet tasteful village church, situated like this of Chapelton. On the one hand, across the intervening heath, Loudon hill is seen prominently in the distance, near which is the ever-memorable battle-field of Drumclog. The hills and morasses between are rich with many hallowed recollections of times perilous to the upholders of Christ's church and crown in Scotland; while, on the other hand, the slender spire of the newly-erected church, gracefully overtopping the cluster of unassuming dwellings with which it is surrounded, seems reared amidst them as a conspicuous memento that the Church of their fathers is still dear to the hearts of those, by whose direct ancestors, in many cases, the tyrants of bygone times, who persecuted to the death, seeking her destruction, were, on these very scenes, ingloriously foiled. It was truly delightful to witness the joyful surprise which seemed to beam on every countenance, on surveying, for the first time, the elegant simplicity of the interior of the new building, which certainly reflects much credit on all concerned in its erection, and especially on the minister of the parish. It is to his persevering and most strenuous exertions that the district is mainly indebted for so precious a boon; and the success with which, in a situation so poor and unpromising, these exertions have been crowned, may afford good encouragement to others similarly circumstanced to go and do likewise. If the man who plants a tree where one grew not before, be justly esteemed a benefactor to his country, how much more the minister who is instrumental in "building an altar unto the Lord," whereby "the house of God, which lieth waste," may be repaired, and multitudes of our neglected countrymen, having "God's Spirit put within them, and his laws written in their hearts," may become trees of the Lord's own planting, and grow up as willows by the water-courses. That the inhabitants of Chapelton and vicinity feel warmly interested in their new church is abundantly manifested by the fact, that the first day's collections amounted to no less than £30 3s. 6d.—a sum which will go far to liquidate the small balance of debt remaining on the building.