

time must be determined by the heavenly bodies. Our ultimate appeal is to those "bright chronometers of days and years."

So also in the construction and regulation of our congregational systems, all plans and improvements must be tried by a Divine standard. To the law and to the testimony must the final appeal be made. Fundamental principles and grand outlines are given them, to which all our systems must conform. Those churches make a great mistake that prefer expediency to truth in these matters that eagerly grasp at the fruits of expediency apparently within their reach, and turn impatiently from the necessary windings of the way of truth.

Still carrying out the analogy between clock-work and church-work, we may remark that every clock requires winding. Some must be wound up every twenty-four hours, others will go thirty-six hours; there are the old eight-day clocks, and some do without winding up for a long period. In like manner every financial system in our congregations requires a periodical winding up. Certain times should be appointed for the settlement of accounts and the payment of all outstanding arrears, so that a new period may be begun by it fresh, free, and unfettered. The period must be calculated and the winding process attended to cautiously. On the one hand; the thing may be done rashly, in a fit of passion, or in the sudden introduction of a new whim, when the machine will at once stop. But, on the other hand, many concerns which should be wound up every three months, are expected to run for a year and sometimes longer. Both clocks and churches are found to go better when wound up carefully, regularly, and with moderate frequency.

But we must draw to a close. The last remark we would make is, that clocks that are much exposed must be cleaned and oiled. The works must be taken to pieces and the brush or the feather employed.

So is it with all our church-systems. Let them be ever so good, they are greatly exposed. Things will be forgotten, mistakes will be made and repeated, bad habits will be formed, then the dust accumulates, the wheels move slowly, the clock falls behind, it requires cleaning. We must go back to our rules and constitutions, examine the books and districts, and enquire into the practice of the office-bearers.

But besides all this, and especially, we require to "oil the wheels"—to be instant in fervent and persevering prayer, to have over all "the unction of the Holy Spirit poured."

Is it the case that meetings of the temporal office-bearers of our Church are sometimes opened and closed without prayer to God for his presence and direction? If so, we need not wonder that mistakes are made, and that a want of satisfaction is experienced.

Let our deacons and trustees be men of prayer and faith themselves, and let much prayer be offered for them by our people and their pastors, and we may confidently expect great improvement in our congregational systems and finances.