

The grand difficulty at present is to secure the proper management of the pecuniary affairs of our stations. And the uncertainties connected with the existing system of supply render this an impossibility. When a moderately efficient laborer is sent to a station for six months or a year, there is generally not much difficulty in obtaining somewhat liberal contributions. But how is it now? In many cases a congregation applies for a missionary for six months and gets up a subscription for his support. The missionary does not come. They get a few Sabbaths from ministers of the presbytery, and perhaps one or two more from some stray minister or probationer. It is found impossible to collect the subscription, and all the supply given is so much debt incurred. If people could be got to subscribe according to their ability, and pay all the same, whether they receive six, three or one month's supply, it would be all very well; but while human nature remains as it is, this uncertainty on the part both of presbyteries and stations as to the amount of supply, renders prosperous finances an impossibility. And our observation has entirely deceived us if this is not one of the most ordinary causes of pecuniary embarrassment.

3. Another clamant evil of the existing system is, that it tends inevitably to the hasty and premature settlement of ministers.

Congregations see no way of deliverance from the harassing uncertainty as to supply, but by calling a minister. Probationers observing that the church makes no provision for the permanent employment of any of her laborers, except as pastors, are naturally anxious for a speedy settlement. And if they do not get a call in a year or two, they begin to feel a little nervous of their reputation, and quite prepared to welcome any call the presbytery can bring itself to sustain.

The first year such settlements may seem to prosper. The second, a number of the mixed multitude cease to pay, and there is a deficiency in the stipend. The third, it is greater still. Then come presbyterial committees, visitations, &c., &c. The people, conscious that they have not used their minister very handsomely, begin to look about for some excuse. It is soon discovered that the minister's sermons are not what they should be, or that he is not diligent in visiting. He is too reserved, or he is too familiar. He is not prudent, or he is altogether too worldly-minded. The inevitable separation follows. And a good minister leaves his first charge discouraged in his work, soured in spirit, and injured in reputation. The result on the people is not less pernicious. They lose their self-respect; are torn by factions; piety declines; and they become gloomy, soured and careless. And after they have gone through this process once or twice more, with the necessary interregnum, they are ready for almost anything. Then perchance some obliging neighbors offer them a bribe of fifty pounds *per annum*, indiscriminate baptism, and a discipline sufficiently liberal to meet the tastes of all comers, and so they end their unhappy career.

4. Another evil incident to our present system is its tendency to lower the standard of collegiate education among ministers.

When the only class of laborers employed in preaching the gospel are men who either have gone or are going through a regular collegiate course, presbyteries, seeing multitudes perishing at their door for lack of the bread of life, are not likely to be very strict with any man who promises to be a useful