

stand to the Session. Also, that the Committee consider and report on the question of female Deacons. It was not till the meeting of Synod in May, 1852, that the Committee were prepared to report, when they stated : That they were unanimously of opinion that office-bearers existed in the primitive churches, by Divine appointment, under the name of Deacons ; that, in regard to the special work which Deacons were appointed to perform, there existed a difference of opinion among the members of the Committee, which might be supposed, more or less widely, to pervade the Synod, and that, in these circumstances, they were not prepared to recommend the adoption of any new enactment, but that matters remain for the present as provided for in the Synod's Forms of Procedure. The Synod adopted this recommendation,—quoting their rule on this subject : “That when a congregation judges it proper to have Deacons ordained to serve the church, in regard to its secularities, they are intrusted with the management of the whole financial concerns, as well as the distributions made for the poor, subject always to the observance of the Rules or Constitution sanctioned by the Presbytery.”

To these it is unnecessary for us to refer. But we must express our regret that the question of the Deaconship has been left-in, what we think an unsatisfactory state, and we trust it will be resumed at some early period, and settled in a manner more worthy of so large and influential a church as the United Presbyterian, and in greater accordance with the general tenor of the word of God.

It is our opinion that our church, with all its high attainments, and philanthropic activities, has not yet reached a thorough scriptural view of the office of Deacon, and that they have confounded its duties too much with those of Committees of management for the purpose of taking care of secular affairs in the particular congregations for which they act. These managers are chosen annually, and have no place in Presbyterian government ; nor are those who are employed set apart to this department as anything peculiarly sacred. They are not connected with the Session, but are responsible to the congregation. We consider the appointment of managing Committees in congregations as one of those things which man's wisdom may dictate, and to which not only no objections can be made, but which may be found beneficial from the annual changes, as calculated to diffuse an interest in Congregational prosperity over the community at large. But at the same time we do not think that the office of Deacon necessarily interferes with the objects for which these Committees of secular management are chosen ; and we wonder much that in a church like our own, where there is so much enlightened liberality and zeal for spreading the gospel around them, and over the whole earth, it has never occurred that the scriptural office of Deacon, is of a much more elevated character than that which is usually attached to Committees of management in particular congregations.

In the Apostolic church an order of Deacons was established simply because the Apostles and first ministers were so fully engrossed in proclaiming the gospel and planting new churches, that it became impossible for them to take charge of all the financial matters,—an