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THE chief among the instrumentalities used for obtaining the means necessary for the support of Gospel ordinances at home, or their extension abroad, may be ranked congregational associations. It is not the first time the advantages attending them have been referred to. But these references have been merely incidental, and introduced in discussing other topics of a similar kind. The importance of the subject, however, demands a separate notice, as it is of great consequence that congregations, struggling with pecuniary difficulties, may have the way pointed out to them by which other congregations, with no greater numbers, and with no ampler means, have easily paid their minister a proper stipend, defrayed liberally all other immediate claims upon them, beautified and adorned their church, manse and grounds, and done work of a similar kind, while at the same time they were sending abroad, through the instrumentality of the committees on the Schemes of the Church, assistance to other objects beyond those in which they were personally concerned. As we have often insisted, to be able to raise large sums, it is not necessary that a congregation should be rich, nor is it even necessary that there should be two or three rich men forming part of it. United action is required, and a feeling of individual responsibility, with a wise consideration, by each adherent, of what he or she can afford to give in the course of the year towards each particular object. A considerable share of responsibility attaches to the minister for the success or non success of what may be called extra congregational contributions, but it is not at all desirable that he should be at the head of the association, if any other judicious and business like man can be found to take the lead. The less a minister is involved in the money affairs of his congregation the better. There

is much less danger of disputes arising about stipend and matters of that kind, when the temporal affairs of the church are managed by the trustees, than when the minister is obliged to take a leading part in the discussion of ways and means to enable the congregation to fulfil its obligations. How many disputes have arisen from the financial affairs of a church being thrown upon the minister's shoulders—how much unhappiness has been caused—how many unseemly strifes and divisions—subversive of the peace of a people, and bringing discredit on religion itself, have taken place, cannot be known; but that they have been many, is undoubted. A congregation must be in a very singular position when such an answer to an enquiry regarding its affairs could be made as this, which we copy literally from the statistical return of 1860:—"Charge vacant since October. Minister managed temporalities for himself. *Temporality Committee ignorant of state of things.*" No church could thrive under such circumstances; no minister should be put in such a position, for there is no congregation, wherever situated, which could not furnish one man to act as treasurer, and a sufficient number of others to perform the duties of trustees. Direct interference of such a kind as is here shown, even although it might not be to such an extent, is altogether incompatible with the true performance of the pastoral office. Still it is not the less true that the minister does and must exercise a very important influence on the success of the efforts made by the managers. To him they should be able to come for friendly consultation; the progress and objects of the Synod Schemes should by him be clearly laid before his people; he should be able to explain, and bring before his flock, the work being done in mission fields at home and abroad, thus awakening and keeping alive a spirit of earnestness and a desire to extend their efforts beyond themselves. Nor need this