

vors to do the best he can in his circumstances.

And now, dear sir, have Presbyteries been faithful in this matter? Have they followed their brother to his new sphere of labor, and encouraged and helped and cheered him? Or has he gone forth, and was little more heard of him, until he was embarrassed, and struggling and starving? And then he and his people have occupied a place in the eyes of the church neither very desirable nor very pleasing. I ask, dear brother, would it not have been the better plan—better for both pastor and people—more delightful and accompanied with richer fruit, if the brethren in want of a pastor had stated precisely their situation, and said, we can give £70 or £80 or £90 yearly for spiritual labors. In doing this we are doing to the utmost of our ability. But we are not without hope that, provided we were to receive a little of the fostering care of the church, we would soon be able to give an adequate support. And if, in making this statement, it were found upon investigation strictly true, would there not be real pleasure in some one or two of our more able congregations taking their weaker brethren under their care for a few years? And would not our brethren be soothed and encouraged by the conviction, that they possessed the sympathy and enjoyed the fostering kindness of their christian friends in some favored locality. You know well that I would shudder at the idea, if by any such plan I should be found encouraging idleness or pauperism; no, this be far from me. My only object is to lift up the hands of our brethren, who, from their position, are sinking under their pecuniary embarrassments, and to nurse infant congregations, where there is reason to believe they will in due time become strong and self-sustaining. And if the churches will not do this, or if they cannot do it, could not our Synod attempt what is done by the Synod at home?—could not they organise a fund out of which £5 or £10 or £15 may be given for this very purpose? making it imperative that the congregations so aided shall contribute to the various schemes of the church as they can, and shall submit their temporal affairs to the inspection of their respective presbyteries. Nor do I fear that many of our churches would require this aid. Surely the very fact of knowing that they might receive assistance, were they only to make out a good case, would never encourage

any congregation that was able of itself to support the gospel, to apply for a share of what did not belong to them, and which was never designed for them,—thereby depriving some destitute and weak congregations of the needed support and encouragement. Honest poverty is, in my opinion, no disgrace to any congregation or person; but poverty caused by a want of manly effort and prudent christian economy, is both disgraceful and sinful.

### 3rd. COLPORTAGE.

Another subject which has engaged my attention is that of Colportage. This branch of Christian effort has engaged, and is at present engaging much of the attention of God's people in England, and the continent of Europe, especially in France, and in the states of America. I need not say to those at all acquainted with the subject, that this department of Christian labor has been most signally blessed of God in these countries. Fired with his mission, and resolved to glorify his master—believing with the heart and with the understanding also, the supreme value of the Word of God, which he is commissioned to disseminate—considering it a high honor to be invited to labor for God in the field of the world, and to make his followers acquainted with the Word of Life,—the colporteur goes forth in the morning, carrying in his pack numbers of copies of the precious volume, evangelical pamphlets upon some important leading truths of Christianity, and a quantity of appropriate and suitable tracts. He enters the abodes of the rich and the poor, and endeavors to dispose of his work by sale or gift, as may happen. By some well timed and reasonable truth he arrests attention, engages in simple, pious, and godly conversation, ascertains the peculiar wants of his hearers, and presents God's own Word in its suitable adaptation to the many wants of the world. Unpretending and unassuming in his appearance, the man of God bears patiently the scornings of the scornful, calmly repels the jeers of the worldling, removes the doubts of the enquiring, and ministers consolation to the disconsolate; out of the blessed volume he reads, or quotes some of the lessons of infinite wisdom and mercy and love—The burden of his mission is to lead sinners to a kind, a compassionate, and an all sufficient Saviour. The wondrous story of Emanuel's incarnation, and sorrows, and death, forms the theme of his remarks; and the book which tells of all