

bold man who would affirm them to be less than the evils incidental to liberty." "Disorder in our churches, disability of our ministers, and tyranny of influential and wealthy individuals are comparatively rare. The minister who is most faithful to God, and the most fearless of man, is the most honoured." "It is but a shallow philosophy that would limit moral freedom because it is sometimes abused, or that would train men to its use by depriving them of it." "The true remedy for Church disorder is to be sought, not in retributive or repressive law, but in higher moral feeling, in the acquisition of greater self-control, in the grace which will enable us to 'submit ourselves one to another in the fear of God.'"

2. The irregular formation of Churches. "Our very principle of Congregational independence enables any dozen individuals who may so choose to designate themselves an Independent Church. Neither have we any legislative power to disfranchise churches that have dwindled down into inability." "Few things are the causes of greater embarrassment than the unwise sanction which personal good nature too often gives to these cases." "Let but churches and ministers resolve that in all such matters they will *give no individual sanction without the concurrence of the fellowship to which they belong; and let each association feel that it belongs to it as such to pronounce on each case.*" Three remedies were suggested for the evils resulting from the existence of a multitude of weak Churches, with "mendicant" pastors—the affiliation of the smaller Churches to larger; the uniting of small adjoining Churches under one pastor, his ministry being supplemented by occasional preachers; and their becoming missionary stations, contented to have a missionary agent, and come under missionary regulations. And it was suggested that county associations, charitable societies, and influential ministers, should use all their moral influence to secure the adoption of such remedies.

3. The supply and character of ministers—a subject much discussed at present. A strong plea was made for a thoroughly educated ministry—"Our holiest names are our most learned, Howe and Owen, Charnock and Goodwin, Watts and Doddridge." The preaching of laymen was advocated, but not to the exclusion of a ministry. "With this unrestricted provision for the exercise of every gift of Church-members, it becomes proportionately momentous that every pastor should receive a wise and liberal culture." Yet it seems that of 1,738 ministers in England, 450 had had no known specific education for their work. It was strongly urged that those who prove themselves to have mistakenly entered the ministry be kindly assisted to retire from it. "No mistake can be more injurious than to hold to a virtual theory of the indelibility of orders." "He who, having tried it, has failed, may, without the slightest discredit, confess his failure, his misconception of the sphere for which God really has endowed him." It is no true help of a brother to attempt vainly to sustain him in a failure. "Very strenuous efforts should be made to keep a firm hold of the more gifted of our students, so as to prevent their premature and suicidal settlement." "Our chief difficulty is to find men for our best positions." "One great reason why our own more educated and more gifted young men do not more largely give themselves to our ministry may be, that ministerial success is necessarily problematical, inasmuch as personal qualification is the only possibility of success; and this can only be tested by experience. A conference of the managers of the various Colleges was proposed to take up the whole question of ministerial education. "The injurious facility with which ordi-