

sary to attract and command respect. This requires thought and prayer, lest plans be adopted that savour more of the world than of the Church. Mere attraction does not settle the question, but the right, the true, the good. It is possible for the favour of men to cross the boundary line, and so to lose all distinction between what is legitimate in Church objects, and what tastes strongly of the frivolous, the sensational, the theatrical. Arrangements for the Sunday School and for the development of the social element require to be under the control of Christian wisdom and law. A failure to develop wisely in these directions is sure to retard ultimately, whatever may be the immediate promise. At this point we cannot but express the opinion that the existence of a comfortable and beautiful church-building is an important element of success. To grow, we ought to keep pace with the times, and one prominent feature of our day is a marked improvement in ecclesiastical architecture. People do not now prefer an old barn to a beautiful house. Of course it should not be burdened with a load of debt, but a house built for the Lord and devoted to Him, possessing the requirements which this age demands. The existence of such a place is an argument with a community of no ordinary force; it speaks for itself, telling of an interest felt by the people who worship in it, and of vigour and willingness to advance the objects for which they are banded together: while a place out of repair, or lacking in all the elements of a refined taste, and perhaps of comfort, proclaims that those who are content with such a house of worship, when by a little exertion they could have it otherwise, deserve to be left behind in the race. There are instances in which new life and interest have sprung from a movement to arise and build.

Every Church should—*Bring a devout and enlightened spirit to the carrying out of our Church polity.* The New Testament contains rules for Christian assemblies, but through ignorance or oversight of them much damage has accrued to some Churches. Our growth has been retarded, and our very existence in some places imperilled, by a false representation of the practical working of our system. Brotherly love, mutual forbearance, and a supreme regard to the mind of Christ, would do much to produce an impression on outsiders, constraining them to say "We will go with you, for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel." Canvassing, holding caucus meetings, circulating illegitimate papers for signature, gossip, and so forth, after the manner of politicians and the world, are quite alien to the spirit of a Scriptural Congregationalism. The spirit of party ought to be cast out. No clique should dominate in the affairs of Christ's Church, while a family compact is sure to enervate and weaken the healthy action of the membership. "Do all things without murmurings and disputings." This brotherly feeling will make it a joyous service to continue steadfastly in the Apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers. A regular and faithful attendance on all the means of grace on Sabbaths and week-days will also strengthen the hands and hearts of pastor, deacons and members, producing the signs of a healthy and advancing Church.

Finally, on this branch of our subject, *the financial arrangements of every Church ought to be well considered and faithfully carried out.* The want of system and of conscientious discharge of duty in money matters have been causes of much damage to small country churches. Perhaps more trouble has sprung out of money difficulties than any other. To steer clear of shipwreck on this rock will usually only require a wise understanding of obligations, and a carefulness to abound in the grace of liberality: "Knowing the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, He became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich."

We now proceed to the wider aspect of our subject, namely, that bearing on our general position and prosperity. Now, the first question we ask under this division of our theme is WHY SHOULD WE EXIST? Pardon the supposition of non-existence. We dare not cherish the thought, although it is by no means unusual to meet the idea. Sometimes, perhaps, the wish is father to the thought. As Churches planted by Christ, we expect their preservation and extension. We exist