

ly increased expense of living to which ministers are subject, and on the other hand, the enhanced price of almost every thing which our farmers have to dispose of. We could name some laborious and devoted ministers who are seriously impeded in their work by the pressure of pecuniary difficulties—difficulties occasioned solely by the scantiness of the support they receive from their people. Let congregations in entering on a new year, make a determined effort to repair past shortcomings, and to do their duty to those whom they have called to take the oversight of their souls. We have frequently of late recorded gifts from congregations to their ministers, and we rejoice to see, and to record such tokens of Christian affection and regard. They help to cheer a minister, and to strengthen the bond which unites him and his flock together. But we do confess we should rejoice more to hear of congregations augmenting the stated stipends of their ministers. This would, after all, be the best way of testifying their esteem for them personally, and their appreciation of their services:—

"The injury to the minister himself is incalculable, as it necessarily diverts much of his time and energy from the work of the ministry, to which he ought to give himself wholly. The pressing wants of his family will demand of him that he should turn his attention, in a measure at least, to some other calling, either of a literary or secular kind, that he may draw therefrom part of his support. And what must be the result? The history of the church at large supplies the answer. Passing by those devoted pioneers who have subjected themselves to the necessities of a new country, without almost another exception, every minister who has taken the charge of a school, the management of a farm, or gone into some other business, to supplement his salary, and persevered therein for any considerable time, has so distracted and secularized his mind, as to render himself unfit both for the study and the pulpit, and in the end been forced to give up the active duties of the pastor, and often of the ministry itself. How could it be otherwise? "The Lord hath ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel;" and when man attempts to contravene this law of the kingdom, he must expect nothing but failure.

And even where the minister is too conscientious to embarrass his ministry with secular pursuits, the result of an insufficient support is almost as fatal from other influences. Perhaps he labours on in hope, as many do, promising himself that next year it will be different and better, when in reality he is involving himself deeper and deeper in debt, from which he never extricates himself, and gives to a scoffing world too much reason for charging him with dishonesty, to the utter ruin of his ministerial influence, and to the reproach of the religion of Jesus. Is it right that a minister's conscientiousness and trust in God and man should be thus converted into temptations to lead him unto evil? And when the wrong is done, who is the greater criminal, the temptor or the tempted? "Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil." And even although by great effort and care these consequences may be avoided, still his mind must be distracted and his heart cast down. He cannot but feel discouraged in his work; for the suspicion will haunt his mind that his people do not feel right towards him, so that they would have more care for his comfort. He must struggle constantly to keep down hard thoughts of his people, and to avoid the feeling that he is an injured man. Under such a state of mind who can study, or preach, or pray?

A congregation, in denying their pastor a

proper remuneration for his services, are not injuring him only, but also themselves: for they are doing thus much, at least, to cherish a spirit of worldly mindedness, to stifle all feelings of gratitude to God for his blessings, and to destroy a sense of dependence upon and accountability to him in worldly affairs. A people who love not the Gospel sufficiently to lead them to get it honestly by properly remunerating him who preaches it to them, cannot expect that it would come to them in all the fulness of its power and tenderness of its love. Neither can they, because of its very cheapness, properly appreciate or enjoy its excellencies; for here, even more than elsewhere, we use without care, and spend without profit, that which we receive without cost.

"Without a liberal maintenance, the ministry must depreciate both in public esteem and in real value. Young men of talent and worth, aware of its needless hardships, are discouraged from seeking it. Avenues to usefulness, with worldly competence and respectability, are open on every hand; wealth, honour, distinction, fame, tempt them to enter; while the ministry presents the gloomy prospect of poverty, want, embarrassment, care, crippled usefulness and suffering reputation. In these circumstances, the young man of talent and enterprise must have more than the spirit of martyrdom, to determine on giving himself to the ministry. Perils by sea and land, the martyr's block and stake, the heart of generous piety can face, but not the reputation of starveling poverty and insolvency. It is true that however stunted and starved the clergy may be left to become, there will still be ministers, and candidates for the ministry; but they will not be our men of talent and enterprise, but *drones* who can 'crouch for a piece of silver and a morsel of bread.'"

In conclusion. When a people discharge their duties properly towards their pastor, they have a right to expect that he will be equally faithful in the performance of his duties toward them. But if he should fail so to do, let the sin rest with him, and retaliate not wrong for wrong by attempting to starve him out. The discipline of our church provides ample facilities for bringing unfaithful ministers to a strict account. Do your duty then to your pastor; and if you feel wronged because of his failure of duty to you, be just to yourselves, frank to him, and respectful to the church in reaching his faithlessness by lawful means."

COLLECTION FOR JEWISH AND FOREIGN MISSIONS.

Our readers will observe, from the notice on the first page, that the Annual Collection for the Foreign and Jewish Missions of the Free Church of Scotland, is to be made on the third Sabbath of January. We trust that little needs to be said for the purpose of exciting the interest of our congregations, and calling forth a liberal response to this urgent call. We have, no doubt, much to do in our own Home Mission field. But while this most important object engages our attention and calls forth our energies, we are not to turn a deaf ear to the loud calls addressed to us, on behalf of those who are sitting in darkness, and who are perishing for lack of knowledge. And, in truth, we are fully persuaded, that the more we feel interested in the benighted heathens, and the more we strive to send them the blessed message of salvation, the more spirit and vigour will there be infused into our own domestic operations, the more shall we feel a reflex influence coming back upon ourselves, and be enabled to experience the truth of the declaration, "He that watereth shall be

watered also himself." God in His providence is setting an open door before the church in our day. And He is, in a very manifest way, blessing the labours of those who have given themselves to Missionary work in foreign lands. The Missions of the Free Church, especially in India, have been signally blessed, and we may well look to them as most important and efficient means for the spiritual improvement of that extensive and populous country. Missions are in active operation at Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Nagpur and Puna. While the Gospel is preached at these places, in many instances by natives, who, after a regular training have been duly set apart to the work of the Ministry, vigorous and most effective means are at work for the education of the young. Some thousands of the young are in this way brought into contact with Bible truth. And while the seed is being sown, the dew of heaven is not withheld, for scarcely a month passes without some being admitted by baptism into the Christian Church. And, doubtless, in some other instances, which may never come under the notice of the Missionaries, the good seed is not suffered to perish, but brings forth fruit to the praise and glory of God. And, then, in regard to the various missions among the Jews, while in Hungary the missionaries have been expelled, through the intolerance of Popery, still the work is not allowed to fall to the ground, but is carried on by Bible readers, and teachers of the young, on whose self-denying labours the blessing of God manifestly rests. In other places, for instance in Constantinople, and in Amsterdam, the work is prosecuted amidst some difficulties, but still in humble dependence on the blessing of Him, who has not utterly cast off Jacob his people and Israel his inheritance.

May we be led to feel aright the responsibility that rests upon us, and to respond to the call that is addressed to us. Projects devised for the mere development of the physical resources of a country are not allowed to languish for want of funds. Men of the world go forward with their plans, in full confidence of success, notwithstanding the difficulties that may be in their way. Will it not be to the lasting shame of the church, if she does not carry out her Divine mission in the exercise of faith, and with a vigour and spirit corresponding to the importance of the object? Will it not be to our lasting disgrace if we do not catch a portion of that electric current, whose influence is felt throughout every department of the world around us?

We earnestly trust that liberal offerings will be presented in behalf of this important cause, and that earnest prayer will be daily put up to God for an abundant outpouring of the Holy Spirit's influence. Much has been done in Scotland, in the way of stirring up a Missionary spirit, by Dr. Duff, whose eloquence and energies have been unceasingly put forth in behalf of Christ's cause among the heathen. May we also be aroused, in dependence on the promised blessing, to do what in us lies for the extension of that kingdom which "is righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."