

disposal of pews, or the extension of the churchyard, or the appointing of elders, how certain expenses about the church manse are to be paid, or any other question likely to arise at such a meeting, and the probability is that an unseemly quarrel will take place, during which the absurd and well known cry—"I'll never pay another cent" is heard from the lips of one or more of the disappointed minority, who will actually leave the church for so childish and paltry a cause, and go away and join another, and probably a rival or hostile congregation, to the great discouragement, and the material injury of the innocent and unoffending minister. Now why is it that such congregational meetings cannot be conducted at all times in a friendly and decorous manner, and such questions as arise discussed in a harmonious and amicable manner? Surely they could be so did those present bear in mind the sacredness of the place in which they are assembled, and the character which they have to maintain as members of the Church of Christ. I consider that censure too severe could be passed upon those who for merely not having questions settled as they would have them, or because they have had a quarrel with others at a meeting, desert their church and minister. How can such pretend to true religion in their hearts? How can they expect a blessing to descend upon them even in their worldly things? How can they look for anything but a curse?

If you would spare your pastor's feelings, then, and retain prosperity both as congregation and as individuals, endeavour as much as in you lies, to deliberate upon all those questions which may be brought forward at your congregational meetings with calmness and gentleness, always praying for, and depending upon wisdom from on high to guide and direct you in all your deliberations.

An important subject which I find is generally alluded to in these addresses is that of punctuality in the payment of stipend. I am happy to know that you are well aware of your duty in this respect, and always make it a point of honour to attend to it, so that I need not say a single word on the subject except to exhort you to strive to re-

tain your good name in this respect, and to be an example to those of our congregations who do not come up to the mark in this important duty.

But in case it should be thought that I consider you in all respects a perfect congregation, there is one point on which, for aught I know, you require to be warned as much as any congregation, and that is in your demands upon your minister's time in the way of visiting. Ministerial visitation is certainly an important part of a pastor's duty. Not to speak of the large amount of spiritual good he can do in that way, by praying with his people in their homes, reading the scriptures with them, and saying a word in season to them according as he has opportunity, it is the only way by which he can become thoroughly acquainted with them, and thereby gain their affections. But while a certain amount of pastoral visitation is thus absolutely necessary, it is most unreasonable on the part of any congregation to expect that their minister should be always on the road visiting, as many, I am led to understand, would have him do. Had ministers no other calls upon their time during the week, and required to make no preparation for that most important part of ministerial duty—the preaching of the Gospel—but had only to stand up in their pulpits for the words to flow out, like water out of a pump, as many grossly ignorant people actually believe is all that is required it might then be reasonable enough to expect such constant visiting. Those, however, who are at all acquainted with the numberless calls upon a minister's time, especially if he be at the head of a large household, how many duties he is called upon to perform for his family, for his congregation, and for the church at large; what anxiety of mind is caused him in choosing subjects that will be most appropriate and profitable to the souls of his people while preaching to them; not to speak of the time and labour required in studying those subjects, and how much of his time is required in his study to enable him to keep up with the literature of the day, so that his people may reap the benefit of these studies, that he may bring forth to them from Sabbath to Sabbath, out of