

variable life for the virtues and principles which animate the ordained and fixed relations of the family.

Brotherhood has its duties and privileges beyond our particular Church as well as within it. A brother must consider another, as well as be himself considered. The neglect of this plain and familiar maxim is the source of much weakness to our churches. To have a living interest in each other's welfare—to be loyally bound to each other's good name; and yet to be denied the natural means of expressing that interest and vindicating that name is a prodigious wrong. And yet the temper in some of our churches which would resent proffered counsel and refuse the most brotherly inquiry, clearly inflicts this wrong and cavils with this reproach. Churches joined in brotherly fellowship have a natural right to all reasonable intercommunication and mutual satisfaction as the ground of Christian confidence. But this most reasonable claim is met by unreasoning jealousy. The frankness of fellowship is turned into churlish chronic reserve. Evils that are known to wound, and even to alienate, must sometimes pass without rebuke. The purity and honour of our fellowship as churches are impaired; and those who see the evil are hindered in their efforts to overcome it. There is no defect in our divine mission. But there are instances of a narrow and selfish spirit in working out its results. The best thing is most easily abused; being so, and by the encouragement of this particular abuse of our divine principles, those who rejoice in the absence of all control by law, may make themselves as impotent to expel error and repress disorder as the Established Church itself.

I know nothing more instantly demanding our best attention than the formation amongst us, in all the constituent provincial departments of this union, of a mutual understanding as to the right and duty of brotherly conference and counsel betwixt church and church. While each should act freely and independently, it should be in the spirit of acting with and for each other. We must unite our work. We must husband our strength and resources, so that no particle of divine energy shall be wasted, or lost to the service of our common Master.

The report of the committee of the Union narrated its transactions, and adverted to the chief events of interest to the churches, during the past twelve months. We cull a few facts:—A large impression of the *Year Book*, 7,000, had been disposed of; the sale of the *Old Congregational Hymn Book* had nearly ceased, those of the *New* had been nearly 100,000, making a total of 600,000; of the abridged "cottage" edition, over 15,000 copies had been called for; the Sunday School edition was nearly ready. Some changes were recommended in the organization of the Union, all in the direction of widening the basis of representation and securing fulness and freedom of debate, so that more can take part in the discussions. On the education question, the report contained this significant paragraph:—

"The relation of the Congregational denomination to the popular education of the country, does not, to your committee, appear to be in the most satisfactory condition. They think that after the lapse of more than twenty years it may be well to review the principle which was then adopted by the Board of Education, and consider whether it should in any form be modified or still be adhered to in its entirety. If so, then a larger amount of support should be given to voluntary education by our churches than is at present accorded to it, and we should be prepared to make great sacrifices for so noble a principle. But if it should appear that altered circumstances call for a change of practice, we should not hesitate thoughtfully to approach the matter in the light of the present day. Your committee have ventured respectfully to invite the attention of the Board of Education to this subject, and they have promptly commenced inquiries, which it is hoped will result in much good."

A special report was also presented on the subject of "Union Churches," that is, churches into which Baptist and Pædo-Baptist members are admitted on equal terms, and to the pastorate of which ministers of either opinion