

## CONGREGATIONAL CULTURE.

Knowledge is power. The increase of knowledge is therefore the increase of power, whether it be of good or evil. The knowledge of evil is only too easily obtained; but efforts to extend the knowledge of good are always attended with difficulty. The difficulties, however, standing in the way of this good work are both fewer and smaller than formerly, and may be removed. The means of religious instruction are becoming more and more numerous. In our day the prophetic words of Daniel appear to be receiving their fulfilment: "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Especially is religious knowledge increased by the institution and prosperous working of the many religious societies and associations of the Christian world, and in the increased number and activity of gospel messengers.

But, perhaps, there are some very important duties neglected by the Church, and some very effective means of doing good overlooked. In the midst of laudable zeal and activity in the more public and comprehensive schemes of the Church, it may be that similar zeal and activity are not displayed in promoting the religious knowledge of particular congregations and families in the Church. While we are careful and diligent in raising an abundant supply of pure water to the reservoirs, let us beware of leaving many of the homes destitute through a faulty system in laying the pipes and making the distribution. It is very refreshing to read of the prosperous working of those extensive societies, which have for their object the increased circulation of the best of all knowledge—the knowledge of God and his salvation. In London there stands, at a short distance from one another, two capacious reservoirs—the one, the House of the British and Foreign Bible Society, from which have issued during the last sixty years over 40,000,000 copies of the Word of God, in whole or in part—the other, the Depository of the Religious Tract Society, standing on the spot where Cardinal Wolsey burnt Tyndal's English Bible, along with some of the writings of Luther and other Reformers. From that Depository have gone forth 1,000,000,000 publications, all more or less fraught with the Scripture truths so tenaciously maintained by Luther and the Reformers.

Those societies have their branches and agencies in almost every part of the civilized world. But are ministers and active members of our congregations making a sufficiently close examination into the state of supply which their people are receiving from the grand reservoirs? Are they putting forth efforts enough to extend and increase the supply?

To intimate a public meeting—to welcome the Societies' agents—to pass resolutions and deliver addresses—to appoint collectors and transmit the money to the parent society—all this is very well, but it is not all that should be done. Surely we are not to suppose that the issue of Bibles is exclusively meant for foreign countries. Is it not the part of the spiritual overseers of our congregations to promote the home circulation of those cheap and excellent copies of the Word of God? Have they not a work to perform in introducing them into the homes of the poor, of the careless, and of the priest-ridden—skilfully and affectionately introducing them, in the right manner and at the proper season? And ought they not also to recommend to religious church-going people the pos-