

claims the great world has upon them. Still, the work goes on, and will, spite of the men whom the chairman thus describes:—

“The Earl of Chatham, with his sword drawn,  
Was waiting for Sir Richard Strachan;  
Sir Richard, longing to be at 'em,  
Was waiting for the Earl of Chatham.”

IN connection with the Scottish Congregational Union, we find what is designated “The visitation of churches,” to which we draw earnest attention, and which is thus defined: “One of the objects of the Union being to cultivate Christian affection, fraternal intercourse, and cordial co-operation in all that relates to the interests of the associated churches, the duty of the District Committee is to do all in their power to promote this important object within their respective Districts. With this view they are prepared to arrange for the visitation of those churches desiring to have friendly deputations, the members of which will be ready to attend such meetings as may be convened, and to give addresses on the distinctive principles of Congregationalism, the work of the Union and the churches, and generally to have friendly conference with the brethren of the churches in regard to everything that may affect the common interests.” There can be but one opinion as to the desirableness of close, cordial, sympathetic fraternal reation between our churches, where such desirableness is not realized the very life on which Congregational churches depend must be either wanting or sickly. It must be also manifest that system is indispensable for the successful prosecution of any object, not the object for the system, hence the wisdom, as it seems to us, of the course pursued by our Scottish brethren in, as far as may be, giving such visitation a place in their system. Two difficulties appear in the way at first sight. The first, the scattered position of our churches and relative fewness. But it is this very condition that demands strenuous effort to prevent comparative isolation from begetting selfishness and self-will, which means spiritual, and therefore, Congregational death. We are alone, then want to be let alone, till we echo the bacchanalian chorus, “I care for nobody, no not I, for nobody cares for me.” That difficulty, therefore, should be an incentive, as it certainly is an indication of need.

The other difficulty is financial. Who is to

bear the expense? Our Scottish brethren expect the church visited to bear the expense. But our churches are, many of them, too poor, and the poorest need most the manifestations of sympathy. Too poor! Not if a circus comes round that way, or a wandering minstrel company; not for social luxury and display, but too poor to provide for Christian fellowship and to preserve the very life and integrity of the denomination which affords a Christian teaching and home. Too poor! God pity the poverty-stricken and send “the riches of His grace.”

THE Salvation Army still attracts considerable attention, and opinion seems as divided as ever. There is, however, a growing disfavour evidenced on the part of men and journals who were disposed at first to suspend judgment till more was known of the work and results. That good has apparently been done is fully conceded, and where the movement has quickened or led into the churches, permanent results are to be anticipated, but the methods employed to attract (and little else is done) utterly fail in building up character in the manliness of the Gospel. The continuance of extraordinary means degenerates into clap-trap and vulgarity—each succeeding effort necessarily outbidding the former. It is pretty generally conceded that the gift of miracles was withdrawn even in the apostolic age; judging from the tendency of the human heart, they would, if continued, have been looked upon, not as seals of a ministry, but as wonders which would require to manifest themselves more strikingly as the novelty of their effects wore away. Then would have come imitations, impostures, and men would gather round, not because they sought the truth, but because their craving for wonders was gratified, “they eat of the loaves and were filled.” Christ withdrew the gift as His spirit became more manifest. The excesses of the Salvation Army, however, increase, and extravagancies multiply. One of the latest was the published marriage of Mr. Bramwell Booth, son of the General, with a Miss Soper. Married at the office of the District Registrar, they then appeared upon the platform of the great hall at Clapton, to be gazed at, prayed for, shouted over and generally advertised by five thousand people who had paid an admission fee of a shilling each for the happy