

risen Redeemer ascended up on high, "he gave gifts unto men—some pastors and teachers for the perfecting of saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Believers, while listening to the exposition and applications of divine truth from their lips; or when seated at the table of the Lord, have you not often said with Peter "It is good for us to be here"—or with David "We have loved the habitation of thy house." Now then while you recognize with gratitude your obligation to your beloved Redeemer for the institution of the Gospel Ministry, see that you honour his appointment, by liberally sustaining those who, according to his ordinance, labour among you in holy things. Ministers who are conscious that they have endeavoured to be faithful, may make the appeal of Paul. "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we reap your carnal things?"—Were it necessary for the conversions of the heathen, or the poor and wretched, ministers might be willing partly to support themselves by the labour of their hands. But the followers of Christ, when living in peace and affluence, cannot without incurring and casting dishonour on Christ, leave His ministers to struggle with poverty. And although ministers in a Christ-like spirit of devotedness, may endeavour to sustain themselves by secular employments, it is a great hindrance to their usefulness and efficiency in a work which requires their whole time and strength—namely, the advancement of the truth and kingdom of God on earth, which every true minister of Christ has at heart as the chief object of his life. If Christians disapprove of ministers engaging in secular employment, then let them enable them to "live by the altar" according to the ordinance of God. He has made special provision for the support of the ministry, equally under the Old and the New dispensation. On this topic, both Moses and Paul dwell with fulness, the Spirit thus plainly indicating that the cause of God would have to contend against that carnal selfishness which causes many professors to withhold from God, that which he justly claims as his portion of the increase, which his blessing has given.

There are many reasons why the ministers of the gospel should be liberally sustained—a few of these we will briefly specify.

(1.) The sacred duty of charity to the poor is one to which the minister is above all others called. Acts of kindness to the poor and the destitute may open the heart of many to receive from his lips the message of mercy to the sin-sick soul, and be instrumental in leading to the conversion of the sinner. If, on the other hand, he is compelled to "harden his heart or shut his hand from his poor brother," it may occasion prejudice against the message as well as the messenger of God; and may thus cause a poor brother to stumble and fall, through the want of liberality on the part of the members of the church.—Job xxix. 11.

(2.) Ministers are commanded to "use hospitality without grudging." But if they are not liberally sustained, they cannot obey this injunction without trampling on another, namely, "Owe no man anything." Indeed this injunction of hospitality implies the duty of liberality on the part of the people, and such liberality was shown in the early Christian Church, so that the ministers of Christ were enabled to be examples of generous hospitality. But how stands the case with many now. Often with the strictest economy which accords with a sacred regard to the discharge of the duties of their office, and meeting manfully the many claims which that office entails, they cannot pay their way, unless by neglecting some of those duties enjoined in the word, or expected in connection with their office.

(3.) Ministers must show an example of liberality in supporting the public schemes of

the Church. In contributing to the Bible, Missionary, and Tract Societies, the minister has often to take the lead. But this he cannot do without having the means put under his control.

(4.) In general intelligence, variety, and extent of information, the minister should be qualified to take his place in the front ranks of society, in order to guide public opinion on all moral questions. This the Protestant minister cannot do without the means of keeping up an intimate acquaintance with the current literature of the day. Besides, in the present age of general reading and intelligence, the ministrations of the pulpit should not fall behind the age, which they must do, unless the minister be amply supplied with a choice selection of the many admirable works which have lately appeared on the exposition and illustration of scripture. A very little expense to each member, a congregation may thus get the benefit of many valuable works, which cost years of toil to the authors, and much additional labour to their own pastor.

(5.) Ministers should be well supplied with religious periodicals, that they may be informed of the great Christian movements of the age, and not expose themselves to the contempt of others, by their ignorance of the events of the day.

(6.) A minister's dress and habits should correspond with his education and position, for he daily encounters men, who are not slow to find fault with any defect in this department, and to charge that upon penuriousness or low character, which may be the result of prudence or necessity. Some may point the finger with scorn, and say such a minister does not dress as a gentleman, when it is because his people will not enable him to do so.

(7.) The travelling expenses of ministers must be considerable. Besides attendance on Church Courts, the expenses of which should be met by the public treasury of each congregation—they have other expenses in visiting the scattered members of their flock, and improving opportunities of advancing the cause of God in their neighbourhood. They should be able to see each other when necessary, for mutual consultation and encouragement in the work of the Lord. I know a case in which the want of funds prevented ministers from carrying out an arrangement to meet monthly for mutual improvement, which might have told on the spiritual advancement of their flock. They should also have the means to enjoy a little relaxation every summer, and to take an occasional tour for health and information. The benefit of such a tour will more than repay the necessary outlay to the people, in the renovated health and greater freshness and variety in the minister's discourses, and the increased vigour, constancy and power of his public and private ministrations.

(8.) Then it appears that a very large portion of the salary of our ministers is required to discharge the duties peculiar to their office, and their personal and family expenses have to be met out of the remainder; thus they are often left with far less for this purpose than the generality of mechanics; though from their position in society requiring more. It should also be remembered that with the same education, energy and mental labour, they could generally obtain a much larger income in other professions. At a recent meeting of the Scottish Congregational Union at Aberdeen, Dr. Alexander of Edinburgh, said—"I am ready without any beating about the bush to say that we are all underpaid for what we do." He then describes a conversation with a merchant asked him what he received as salary;—and then what work he and other ministers had to do. Dr. Alexander told him he had to compose as much as would make two 8vo vols,

annually, as much as a literary man, who did nothing else—that he had as much speaking as a lawyer in good health—as much visiting as a surgeon in ordinary practice—and lastly, as much correspondence as the great merchant. "Well" replied the merchant "they may say as much as they please about ministers getting too much for their work, but none of us could do half your work for four times your pay."

(9.) The health of ministers often suffers through anxiety about their pecuniary affairs, and in consequence their minds are unfitted for labour, and their public ministrations are rendered less effective and acceptable. A writer in the *Free Church Record* says,—"Look at the man as we have seen him, oppressed with worldly cares, and crushed it may be by obligations, perhaps by anxieties about bread, professions, and an education for his children. Is this the man whom you expect to appear in the pulpit with calm mien, and with no other burden on his breast, but the care of souls; and no other anxiety but how he should speak in God's name, so as best to win immortal souls to the cross of Christ? If there be a profession, which above all others, requires freedom from worldly distractions, so far as immunity can be obtained from them in this world—it is just the profession of the ministry, and if this do not be secured, it will so far tell upon the services of the minister; his spirit will be weighed down—his brain will be become wearied and worn out, and his heart will be broken—his sermons will either be insipid, or else they will have only a freshness caught from his own peculiar experience, and not adapted to the circumstances and wants of the people. The pulpit work becomes deteriorated—the acceptability of the minister, and the hold which he has of the affections of his charge—weakened." The number of those who have been thus crushed, and their usefulness destroyed, will be known only at the great day of accounts. The people thus bring on themselves the guilt of hindering, instead of aiding the usefulness of those who have dedicated themselves to the service of Christ, and expose themselves to the displeasure of Him who has said "For as much as ye did not to these, ye did it not to me." A late writer in *Hall's Journal of Health*, under the caption, "Clerical Health," describes the Rev. Henry Melville, of London, as a stout healthy old man, who is still able to write out his sermons in full, every week, besides Tuesday Evening lectures, 277 of which he has published in six years. Besides, he is chaplain to the Queen, &c. These offices involve a large amount of labour, and yield a large income. The writer says—"this is the secret of a healthy and hard-working and enduring old age;" to be employed in a work which is our meat and drink, with a handsome compensation for the same.

Thus the worker is relieved of all care, all solicitude, of that heart-shrivelling, brain-wasting, and soul-destroying anxiety, which attends a high and honorable sense of pecuniary obligation.

A minister in debt, or stinted for means to supply his daily necessities, labours with a mountain weight upon him; and no wonder that many of them sink into invalidism, if not into an early grave. "He studied too hard" is the verdict of the people. He died of want is the verdict of truth,—want of that liberal and sufficient support which would have enabled him to labour with a cheerful heart, and a singleness of purpose, which are essential to high success in any calling. "It is a burning shame, and a living disgrace to Church members of all denominations, that such a niggardly provision is made for those learned, talented, and self-denying men, who are the salt of the earth, and without whose personal labours, in introducing the people into the knowledge of social, domestic, and civil duties—duties to