

may withhold or not, or as if it were a mere favor to the particular individual. But it is an act of justice. The minister is entitled to his support. "The workman is worthy of his hire." It is true he looks for his reward hereafter. His stipend is not an equivalent for his labors. But he has a right to look for the cheerful and liberal support of his flock. If this is withheld, it is scarcely to be wondered at if harassing cares check his energies, and even if the effect is felt in the diminished power of his ministrations.

One great evil which we have often seen, and which we fear is not uncommon, is that the members of a congregation take little interest in the matter of the minister's support, and think that they have done all that is required when they have paid their own contribution. Now we believe that more than this is required. No member of a congregation should consider that he is free from obligation while there is any shortcoming. The minister cannot deal with individuals on the matter of stipend. The obligation lies on the congregation as such, and as long as there is any deficiency each should feel the responsibility resting upon him. There may be various methods of raising the necessary funds. There may be the weekly offering, which has many advantages to recommend it; or there may be an annual subscription payable quarterly or half-yearly, or there may be pew rents, although the principle of pew rents we consider wrong and in many respects injurious. There may be deacons set apart for attending to the temporal interests of the congregation; or there may be managers selected from year to year by the members of the congregation. But whatever system is in operation, every member of the congregation should take an interest in the matter, and should feel himself responsible so far as his influence or ability may go, for the full implementing of the engagement of the congregation.

Every member too should do what is in his power to set forth the true standard and measure of liberality, by giving "as God hath prospered him." We have known instances of individuals making yearly additions to their means, advancing from comparative poverty to wealth, while still their annual contributions for religious objects remained the same. We have known individuals, who, when at the head of large establishments, gave no more than when they were young men in the employment of others. No doubt in such cases it may be said that there could have been no religious influence acting upon the individual. But it is also true that even christians fail to recognise, or to act upon the true principle that should regulate their giving. God in his word hath set forth the measure of christian liberality. We are to give as God hath prospered us. "Freely ye have received, freely give." Were members of churches generally to recognise their obligations in the light of such directions, they would not only feel the blessedness arising from the exercise of an enlarged liberality, but would influence others to come up to the same standard. And thus there would be no lack of means for the maintenance of ordinances, and for the extension of the gospel to the regions beyond. At the present day we find many churches taking up the subject of systematic benevolence, and adopting special means to direct the attention of the people to the matter. This is a movement from which, we doubt not, good results would flow.