

duty to give, rather than enlarged and scriptural views of the movement, of which they form a part, constitutes, too frequently, the spring of benevolence.—

Benevolence is the feeling of the heart, its manifestation; and, entitled it to this purified character, it could be the result of conviction, founded on careful enquiry. As the effect of knowledge, it is cheerful and continuous, otherwise, it is reluctant and desultory; and, too often, regulated by prejudices and dislikes, which form no part of the divine injunction.

These views have been suggested to the Board by the almost total absence of system characterising the Church, a want, which, in its increasing evils, will continue to be felt till an adequate remedy be provided. Instead of some well defined plan, thoroughly wrought, embracing every movement, and directing activity where the greatest necessity exists, each Pastor or Congregation is left to give, or to direct energies in that particular course which peculiar views may suggest. The increase of Christian benevolence is matter of deep thankfulness. But the Board feel satisfied, that the time has arrived, when present modes of action should be supplanted by well digested and comprehensive regulations; and this, they feel satisfied, might be easily accomplished. The evils of existing procedure are too distinct to require illustration.

The views which, heretofore, the Board have urged upon the Synod, they would again urge, as the most efficient and safe, namely, while earnestly extending the gospel abroad, to aim at its universality at home,—putting home operations, whether in extending or consolidating the Church, upon the best possible footing.

This view, the Board are happy to find, is awakening attention in the U. P. Church in Scotland, and other British churches. More interest in home operations, and in their reacting influence, is advocated, and a large share of Funds to give them efficiency, as not only due to the Church herself, but as a wise arrangement in reference to success and extension of effort in foreign fields.

In referring to the spirit of benevolence, the Board would remark, that giving should not be the result of constant pleading, too frequently met by reluctance.—This state of matters is neither creditable to a Church nor calculated to secure

success. Painful on the one side, and irritating on the other, it produces limited contributions, and ensures but limited operations. Besides, too, there is the absence of that cheerfulness in giving, which in the divine view, enters so largely into the value of the gift. To lay a proper foundation, the privilege, the blessedness, as well as the obligation, to give, should be enforced, together with the rich returns to the world and the church, arising from systematic procedure, as stated above.

The Board have not understood aright, either the encouragements to activity presented by the Redeemer, or the nature and extent of that interest in His cause now pervading the Church, if their confidence in the possession of means, sufficient for every want, be ill-founded; more especially, if proper steps be taken to instruct the church in the importance and relation of the different schemes of the Synod, pursuing, though they do, different courses, yet all terminating in one point.

It is with reluctance that the Board have to remark, that the state of their operations has compelled them to resort to the system of pleading. A measure of success has attended this appeal; still, the Board are of opinion, that, to a considerable extent, this has been rather an answer to *their appeal*, than the fulfilment of a duty which should be as cheerfully and punctually discharged, as the payment of a Pastor's stipend. Obligation to support the schemes of the Church has not, hitherto, occupied the commanding position of as absolute a right as any other divine injunction. This Christians feel, and it influences their givings in small contributions—satisfying their conscience under a low standard of duty—falling short of requisite liberality.

Giving but once a year is another evil arising from want of just views of commanded liberality. Congregations, if they contribute once a year, seem to think that duty is done; whereas, the necessities of the Church should regulate both the amount and frequency of giving; and, where necessity exists, it should be met by the abundance of the church. Congregations, thus instructed, will not hear of want with indifference, much less with the feeling that they have done all they could. Readiness of mind will be followed by liberality in action.

The Board are clearly of opinion, that it is as much a duty to secure the schemes of the church from pecuniary difficulties,