

# THE LAW OF THE TITHE,

AND OF THE

6

# FREE - WILL OFFERING.

BY THE

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Avara mens hominum decimarum largitati non consentit.—*Alcuin.*

Væ tibi, flumen moris humani, quis resistet tibi? quamdiu non sicca-beris?—*Augustine.*

Veritas est, cui præscribere non potest, nec spatium temporum, nec patrociniatio personarum, nec privilegium regnorum.—*Tertullian.*

Adversus veritatem, nulla valet consuetudo, nulla temporum præscrip-tio.—*Voetius.*

Cry aloud, spare not; lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgressions, and the house of Israel their sins.—*Isaiah.*

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## THE LAW OF THE TITHE, AND OF THE FREE-WILL OFFERING.

Jesus Christ, upon whose shoulders the government is; whose name is called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace; of the increase of whose government and peace there shall be no end; sitteth upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and justice, from henceforth, even forever. A mighty king, he has the infinite One for his confederate, heaven for his throne, earth for his footstool, and the universe for his inheritance. His royal sceptre is owned and honored in all worlds; many crowns encircle his august brow; his countenance outshines the sun; his glittering vesture hath inscribed upon it his majestic title, *King of kings and Lord of lords*; his omnipotent sword is girded upon his thigh, and his enemies shall lick the dust. The great design and end of this vast empire is the Church, the greatest of God's creations, the heart and centre of all dispensations, whose influences will be felt throughout all worlds, for eternity. "Christ is Head over *all* things to the Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." Upon the stability, progress, and triumph of this kingdom, depend the welfare of the universe, and the glory of God. That its maintenance should be a contingency, that it should have no fixed revenues, or that a certain and permanent method of support should not be prescribed by him, who "sitteth upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it, even for ever," would seem to be inexplicable indeed; and not in keeping with the character of that Great King, who is jealous of his glory, and who will preserve in the minds and hearts of his subjects a deep sense of their dependence upon, and subjection to him, and to all the ordinances of his kingdom; and who characterises as an abomination the devices of men in the worship and government of God. And yet, a difference of opinion exists as to there being a uniform mode of support, unchanged through all the changing dispensations of the kingdom of God.

Three theories obtain respecting the right method of sustentation of the New Testament Church and Ministry:

1. *Alms*—This opinion was introduced by the Waldenses, in consequence of the abuses that prevailed in the Romish Church; and is still held by them: one-third of their contributions being given to their ministers, one-third to their missionaries, and one-third to the poor.

2. *Competent Maintenance*.—This opinion is held by the Church of Rome, as Bellarmine declares. It originated with Popery. The Man of Sin having grown to such an incorrigible pride and license, as to usurp all rights, and do all things after his own pleasure, being beyond the control of prince or emperor, began to change the ordinance of tithes, first by exemptions, then by appropriations, transferring them from one to another. In the schism between Popes Alexander III., and Victor IV., the former prevailed by force and perfidy. Of him it is testified: “Cistercienses, Hospitalarios et Templarios decimarum solutione exemit.” Before his day, John XV., who became Pope, A. D. 985, gave the like privilege to St. Benet’s Monks at Casinum, as Leo Marsican affirms in these words: “Hoc ultra Johannem Duodecimum, etc., in suo privilegio auctoritate Apostolica addidit, nulli Episcopo licere ab ullo ex populis monasterio subjectis, vel a quibuslibet ubique terrarum ad se pertinentibus Ecclesiis, decimas vinorum seu oblationes defunctorum qualibet occasione percipere.” To uphold these sacrileges and usurpations, the Popish canonists were first corrupted; who, ignoring the first and chief end of tithes, viz., *a tribute due to God*; and insisting only upon the second consideration, viz., *that of being a maintenance due to ministers*; gave to the Pope, as sovereign disposer of the revenues of the Church, power to alienate, commute and appropriate them, as he thought fit. As long as tithes were owned to be *jure divino*, the Pope’s alienations might be disputed. Therefore, the Schoolmen framed the convenient distinction, *that the divine and moral law extended only to a competency for the ministry, but as to the determinate quantity of a tenth, this was only of ecclesiastical institution*. Thus, Aquinas: “Pertinet autem ad jus naturale ut homo ex rebus sibi datis a Deo aliquid exhibeat ad ejus honorem; sed quod

talibus personis exhibeatur, aut de primis fructibus, aut in tali quantitate, hoc quidem fuit in veteri lege jure divino determinatum; *in nova autem lege definitur per determinationem ecclesiæ, ex qua homines obligantur ut primitias solvant secundum consuetudinem patriæ, et indigentiam ministrorum ecclesiæ.*" Summa. Quæst. LXXXVI. "Sic ergo patet quod ad solutionem decimarum homines tenentur partim quidem ex jure naturali, partim etiam ex institutione Ecclesiæ; quæ tamen, pensatis opportunitatibus temporum et personarum, posset aliam partem determinare solvendam." "Ad secundum dicendum quod præceptum de solutione decimarum, quantum ad id quod erat morale, datum est in Evangelio a Domino, ubi dicit Matth. x. 10: "Dignus est operarius mercede sua"; et etiam ab Apostolo, ut patet 1 Cor. ix. *Sed determinatio certæ partis est reservata ordinationi Ecclesiæ.*" Summa. Quæst. LXXXVII. So also, Peter Dens, whose "Theology" is the Text-Book of Rome: "Quo jure Decimæ debentur Ministris?"

III. R. Distinguendo: si considerentur Decimæ quoad substantiam, id est, in quantum præstant necessariam vitæ sustentationem Ministris Ecclesiæ, in tantum debentur jure naturali et divino. Illud docet Apostolus ad Cor. 9, v. 14: "Deus ordinavit iis, qui Evangelium annuntiant, de Evangelio vivere": probat idem ex ratione dicens: "quis militat suis stipendiis unquam?" etc.

IV. Si Decimæ accipiantur secundum quotam illam seu dicimam partem, eatenus debentur jure solum Ecclesiastico juxta consuetudinem receptam; quomodo in hac patria manipulus non nisi undecimus dari solet; alibi minor.

V. Objiciuntur varii Canones asserentes Decimas jure divino deberi: sed respondetur quod illi Canones intelligantur de Decimis secundum substantiam; vel quod illa determinatio Ecclesiasticæ decimæ partis habeat fundamentum in jure divino L. V.; quæ Lex jam cessat." Theologia, Tom. IV., Quæstio VI., N. 71.

So, likewise, Bellarmine: "Facile enim doceri potest, esse de jure naturæ et divino, quod aliquid solvant laici sacerdotibus, et preterea de jure ecclesiastico, ut in quod solvitur, sit pars decima." "Deus, ussit decimas Levitis dari, quæ quidem præcepta licet non obligent Christianos, ut judicialia erant, obligant tamen quatenus moralia, id est, quod pars aliqua fructuum sit

sacerdotibus danda." "Quartus error est multorum Canonistarum, qui contendunt decimas, etiam quoad determinationem quantitatis, esse de jure divino, nec posse ulla humana lege aut consuetudine aliam statui quantitatem." "Præceptum Legis Veteris, quoad illam determinationem, non erat morale, nec proprie cæremoniale, sed judiciale, ut Alexander docet, et B. Thomas, quos omnes Theologi sequuntur." De Controversiis, Tom. II., Lib. 1, Cap. XXV., Ed. 1601.

3. *Tithes*.—This is the unanimous judgment of the Fathers, and the voice of the Church uncontradicted for more than a thousand years.

We shall show that the 1st and 2d theories are groundless, and that the 3d only is scriptural.

1. That *Alms* are not the proper support of the Ministry the Apostle shows: "Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard and eateth not of the fruit thereof? Or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?" 1 Cor. ix. 7. If the soldier, the shepherd, the husbandman, may claim their wages, not as matter of charity, but as matter of justice, so too may the minister claim his maintenance as his due. To deny his maintenance, is injustice. But if injustice, then he has a right and part in the goods of the people. For justice gives to every man his own, and not that of another. Whence, it is evident that a minister has a right and part in the goods of his people. To take this, therefore, is not to take alms, but to take his own. Again: The laborer is worthy of his wages. No one would say that the beggar is worthy of alms. Now, if the laborer be worthy of his wages, then he may justly challenge it, not beg it as alms. For if wages, it is due by justice. But alms are not due by justice; otherwise, there would be no difference between justice and charity. Therefore, if alms, not wages; if wages, not alms.

2. The theory of *Competent Maintenance* receives no countenance from Scripture, either by positive precept, or by necessary inference. The passage which tells us, that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel, recognises the same proportion as due to ministers under both the Old and New Testaments. This "competent maintenance"—which is only alms after all—

is something very different from the ordinary maintenance of ministers, for it was never practised in any age. In the patriarchal age, tithes were paid. In the Mosaic age, tithes were paid. In the apostolic age, more than the tithe was paid. If this competent maintenance be ordained by God, then it is tithes; if by man, it is not God's ordinance, and the sooner the inventions of men are abandoned by the Church of God, the better.

3. The only remaining theory is the scriptural one, that tithes are appointed by God to be the support of his Church and ministry in every age. We shall show this, and first, that tithes are not of Levitical origin, not Ceremonial, not Judicial, but Moral, and so binding on every age and observed by every people.

(1.) Tithes are not of Levitical origin, but were instituted long before, even from the beginning. The Levitical law itself shows that they did not originate with it, for in its very first mention of them, it shows the ground of the institution to be of such nature, that it cannot be temporary or local, but must be permanent and universal. The words are these: "All the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, *is the Lord's: it is holy unto the Lord.* And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, *the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord.*" Lev. xxvii. 30, 32. In these words, there is neither institution\* nor assignation, but a simple declaration of the Lord's universal right. This proposition, "All tithes are the Lord's," is in no way Levitical, but contains a perpetual truth. The words, "Holy to the Lord," interpret the former, and show in what sense "tithes are the Lord's," not only in respect of a general duty, or in respect of his power, but because the immediate right to tithes is not in man, but in God only, for that which is holy to the Lord is separate from man, and man's use. In such things, man has no right whatever. Therefore, if a man keep

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\*Nullus ita etiam ritus, aut ceremoniæ, quibus æque ac vocibus homines inter se loquuntur, aliquid significat, nisi postquam notum est ac usitatum, ut tali ritu talis res significetur. Quocirca res ipsa docet, aliquam institutionem debuisse præcedere, uti sacrificiorum, ita hujus, ut ita loquar, mercedis sacrificantibus debitæ." Fabricius, Tractatus Philologico—Theologicus de Sacerdotio Christi.

tithes from the Lord, this is a clear case of theft, usurpation, and sacrilege. Whatever is consecrated to God, is ever after execrable for man to touch. And this is the meaning of the word *cherem*, which is used in Lev. xxvii. 28, and in Joshua vi. 17, which word includes both consecration to God and execration upon man. Tithes being consecrated to God both before and after the Levitical law, must, of necessity, bring this execration upon all that turn them from their consecrated use.

The assignation of tithes to the Levites is a distinct thing, and is found in a different place, viz., Numbers xviii. 21: "Behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation." The reason of this assignation is given: their service at the Tabernacle. This assignation is Levitical, and continues so long as the service of the Levites continues: when this ceases, tithes shall no more be Levi's, but tithes shall be the Lord's. Thus, the assignation to Levi pre-supposes the perpetual right of tithes to belong to the Lord—a right which none can challenge. They are his, not in the same general sense in which all the beasts of the forest, and the cattle upon a thousand hills are his, and in which the earth is his, and the fulness thereof is his, for, in that sense, the nine parts are his, as well as the tenth; but in a special sense they are his. He has an immediate right and property in tithes, distinct from the respects of duty, power, and providence, in which all things else are his.

(2.) Tithes are not Ceremonial, whether we consider the ceremonies before, or under, the Levitical law. Sacrifices were in use before the law. But between tithes and sacrifices a difference exists as to property and design. Sacrifices became the Lord's, when offered to him, but not before. Till then, man had the right in that which he sacrificed. But in tithes, man has no right, because all tithes are the Lord's. In sacrificing, man offered of his own to God, which, if not offered, continued his own. But in paying tithes, man gives nothing of his own to God, but only renders to God that which always was his. In not sacrificing, godliness is violated; but in not paying tithes, both godliness and justice are contemned. Now, a ceremony

consists, not in giving to God what is his, but in giving to God what is ours. If men give to God honor and praise and glory, this is no ceremony; they but give him what was ever his right. But when through rites and ceremonies they honor him, they give him both what was his and what was theirs. Tithes and ceremonies differ also as to design. The end of ceremonies is to signify something; the end of sacrifices was to signify the Great Sacrifice upon Calvary. But the end of tithes is the maintenance of God's Church and ministry; and this shows that tithes are no ceremony. The same thing was shown when Levi paid tithes in Abraham. For, that cannot be a Levitical ceremony, which is contrary to a Levitical ordinance. But for Levi to pay tithes, is contrary to a Levitical ordinance, which requires that tithes should be paid to Levi. Therefore, when Levi paid tithes in Abraham, he paid them not as a Levitical ceremony.

(3.) Tithes are not Judicial. This opinion was first broached by the schoolman, Alexander Hales, and subsequently held by Thomas Aquinas, ("whom all theologians, follow," says Bellarmine,) whence it came to be the accepted doctrine in the Church of Rome, that Tithes are Judicials. But it is evident that the patriarch Jacob did not so consider them, for he offered tithes *in a vow* to the Lord, which is proper for things moral, or things ceremonial, (such as draw to some moral duty,) but not for things judicial. The reason is, vows are a part of God's worship, but what is judicial belongs not to the worship of God, but to the civil government of men. No holy things are judicials. But tithes are holy things—separated from common use to the Lord. Therefore, tithes are not judicials.

(4.) The last proposition, which is the scriptural one, is, that tithes are moral, by divine institution. The sanctifying of a seventh day, and the sanctifying of tithes, are things moral, by divine institution. Why the *tenth* should have been chosen—whether, as some have thought, because it is the completion of all single numbers, and the first number of *increase*—we may not be able to determine. But that it was chosen by God to be peculiarly his own, his portion in man's substance, is clearly taught in the Scriptures. And the moral uses of this appointment are indispensable to man. And the moral benefits it con-



fers are inestimable by man. There is no one in whom fallen man is so indisposed to trust, as in *his God*. Faith in God was a principle lost by the fall. To live upon God, is not now natural to man, but to live upon the creature, is. Idolatry is now rooted in his very nature. Entire dependence upon the creature has taken the place of entire dependence upon God, and the creature has now become his god. Hence, faith in God is now a supernatural principle, restored only by the almighty power of the Spirit. And for the maintenance of it, amid the constant tendencies of the old nature to an idolatrous trust in, and worship of, the creature, constant discipline by the providence of God, with constant supplies of his grace, is necessary. Therefore, God, in his all-wise dispensations, has required from us continual proofs of our dependence upon him, even as to our subsistence and the necessaries of life. Thus he commanded Abram to quit his country, and his father's house, and to travel into a strange land, where he gave him none inheritance, no, not so much as to set his foot on, but made him depend wholly upon his providence to support him. And so, he and his descendants, Isaac, Jacob, and the twelve patriarchs, lived as strangers and pilgrims upon the earth. Thus, too, the children of Israel were led through a waste and barren wilderness, where, for forty years, God fed them with manna from heaven, and brought water out of the flinty rock, that he might make them know that "man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live." To keep them continually dependent upon him, sufficient manna for one day only was given. And they who, whether from covetousness, or distrust of God, or prudent thrift, kept of it till the next day, found that it did not profit them, for it bred worms and stank. (And so, our Lord has instructed us, as the Israelites in respect to their daily manna, to pray for no more than the bread of one day: "Give us this day our daily bread;" and to trust him for the morrow.) Thus, too, when the Israelites were settled in Canaan, several statutes were given them, the design of which was to signify their absolute dependence upon God, and to evince their perfect trust in him. Thus, thrice every year, all the males throughout the nation were commanded to go

up to Jerusalem to attend the solemn feasts there; thus leaving all their frontiers unguarded and exposed to the attacks of the hostile nations around them; which were aware of this regulation and of the times of these feasts. But, for their security, God commands them to depend wholly upon his promise: "Neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God, thrice in the year." Ex. xxiv. 24. Here God promises, not only that none shall invade their land, but that none shall even *desire* to do it at those times, though all the rest of the year they were at war with them! And agreeably to this promise, it happened, that whilst this regulation was observed, they were never invaded. Again: Every seventh year was to be a Sabbath. They were neither to plough nor sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself. And to the inquiry, "What shall we eat the seventh year?" God's answer was: "I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years. And ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat yet of old fruit until the ninth year; until her fruits come in, ye shall eat of the old store." And if they should take God at his word, and trust in his promises, then does God assure them of a double blessing: complete protection from all their enemies, and full supply of all their wants: "Wherefore, ye shall do my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; and ye shall dwell in the land in safety. And the land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat your fill, and dwell therein in safety." Lev. xxv. But if they would not trust God, then he threatens that second causes wherein they trusted should not help them, and that he, who commands all the courses of nature, would by his providence signally punish them. And if they should neglect to keep the Sabbatical year, then God threatens that he would banish them from the land, which should then enjoy its Sabbaths and have the rest he had appointed it: "Then shall the land enjoy her Sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest and enjoy her Sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate, it shall rest; because it did not rest in your Sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it." "The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her Sabbaths, while she lieth desolate."

late without them: and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity; because, even because they despised my judgments, and because their soul abhorred my statutes." Lev. xxvi. How signally was this threatening fulfilled upon the Jews! For 490 years they failed to observe the Sabbatical year. Thus, seventy Sabbatical years were neglected by them. And for seventy years were they kept captive in Babylon! as it is written: "To fulfil the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah," (by whom God had threatened the same) "until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths; for as long as she lay desolate, she kept the Sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years." 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21. These statutes given to God's ancient people, were designed to accomplish the same ends which God aims at in all his people in every age: drawing them off from the creature, and drawing them up to him; drawing them from trusting in and worshipping of idols, to trusting in, and worshipping of, the living God. To prevent their relapse into idolatry, to which they are ever prone, constant restraints are necessary, and constant mementoes are furnished of their constant dependence upon God, and their constant obligations to him. A *life of faith* requires the *constant exercise of faith*. And so God disciplines us with regard to our substance, as well as our time, and reserves to himself, at the least, one-tenth of our substance, and one-seventh of our time. Unbelief is the root of covetousness; faith, the root of obedience and charity; and Sabbaths and tithes are the discipline of faith. The objection urged by many to the tithe, "that it is too much to give to God," proceeds from distrust of God, and dependence upon means. But God will have us know that our worldly prosperity is more to be attained by the observance of his commands, than by our endeavors, or skill; and that it is his blessing only which giveth increase and maketh means effectual. This was wonderfully exemplified in the insensible multiplication of a few loaves and fishes by the blessing of Christ, by which thousands were fed. And it is that same blessing that, in every thing, giveth increase; though men perceive it not, but deem all to be the effect of their own industry and skill, and so they *sacrifice to their net*, as though by it their portion was fat, and their meat plenteous.

This fearful sin of *distrusting God* has brought after it his terrible judgments. Thus he punished the Israelites for murmuring for want of water in the wilderness, even when they were ready to perish. Their sin was "the limiting the Holy One of Israel," and their punishment was grievous. Again, when this people were discouraged, notwithstanding the command and the promises of God, from entering the land of Canaan, by reason of the evil report of the spies, the heavy curse was passed upon them, that all of that generation—the two believing and courageous spies excepted—should perish in the wilderness. And for this sin Moses fasted and prayed as long as for the idolatry of the golden calf, even forty days; to show that the sin of distrust of God is as heinous as that of idolatry itself. And doubtless this is the reason why covetousness is called idolatry; for the covetous man trusts in his riches, and trust being the highest act of worship, consequently, we make that our god wherein we trust. What happened to the Israelites, the Apostle tells us, "happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." 1 Cor. x. 11.

It has been well said: "Of all the principalities in hell, there is none like *Mammon*, who dares rival God to his face; there is none who has rebelled with that success, and made such havoc of the souls of men."

To counteract these dominant principles of our fallen nature, unbelief, covetousness and idolatry, God has mercifully instituted for man's good, as well as his own glory, the ordinance of the tithe: An ordinance binding upon man, as man, and observed from the first, and in every age, and by every people. The acceptance of Abel's sacrifice of the firstlings of the flock, showed that God had enjoined upon the family of Adam the offering of *the first* of whatever was possessed, and that the command, "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase," was observed from the beginning. For Abel's offering was the offering of "faith." And faith requires a divine command for its foundation. That Abel's offering was a tenth is exceedingly probable, from the fact, that this was the proportion established in the patriarchal age; and

also from the absence of any record of the first institution of the ordinance; which institution must have preceded the first mention of its observance.

This first mention we have in Gen. xiv. 20, where Abram gave Melchizedek "tithes of all." Respecting which, the Apostle says, (Heb. vii. 4): "Consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils," (as our version has it). Had it been a *free gift* from Abram, it would have proved his greatness above Melchizedek's, for the giver is greater than the receiver. But when anything is paid as a *tribute*, it proves the receiver to be greater than the payer. Therefore, unless Abram paid tithes to Melchizedek as a tribute due to him, the Apostle's argument is not only inconclusive, but it proves the contrary of what he affirmed. But that Melchizedek, who as priest blessed Abram, was in his official character superior to him, is evident from the words of the Apostle: "Without all contradiction, the less is blessed of the better." The Greek word is worthy of notice: 'Melchizedek *tithed Abram*,' *i. e.*, put him under tithe, or exacted it as his due. That he did this as priest, and not as king, (as some teach,) is evident, for what tribute did Abram owe him as king of Salem? And how did Levi, in Abram, pay tithes to the king of Salem? Did this make Abram's posterity, the nation of the Jews, subjects to a foreign king? And why should Levi be said to pay tithes, more than any other of the posterity of Abram? If kings exacted a tenth, by way of tax, (as the Confederate Government did,) this is not *the tithe of God*, which could be given only into the hands of priests. The Apostle's argument points exclusively to Melchizedek's priesthood, the superiority of which over Aaron's he evinces. He shows that our Saviour is a priest of this order. He does not say that Christ was a king, but a priest, after the order of Melchizedek. Abram's prompt payment of tithes shows that it was understood before that age that tithes were due to the priests. For otherwise, Abram could not have paid them under that notion; which the Apostle says he did. Dr. Murphy, in his Commentary on Genesis, well observes: "We have here all the indications of a stated order of sacred rights, in which a costly service, with a fixed official, is main-

tained at the public expense, according to a definite rate of contribution. This act of Abram, though recorded last, may have taken place at the commencement of the interview. At all events, it renders it extremely probable that a sacrifice had been offered to God through the intervention of Melchizedek, before he brought forth the bread and wine of the accepted feast."

That Abram paid tithes of all his property, and not of the spoils, is evident from what the Apostle, in Heb. vii. 9, says: "Levi also who receiveth tithes, paid tithes in Abraham." Then, such tithes as Levi received, such tithes he paid in Abram.

But, 1. Levi did not receive tithes only of the spoils. Therefore, he did not pay tithes only of the spoils. If Abram paid tithes only of the spoils to Melchizedek, why compare this one action only, to the Levitical tithes which were paid every year? And how could Melchizedek's priesthood be superior to Levi's, if the latter received tithes of all men and of all things, and the former of one person only, and but once, and of spoils only?

2. Levi did not receive tithes of the spoils.\* Therefore, if Levi did not pay other tithes, he did not pay any. And so, it would not be true that Levi paid tithes in Abram; for, he could not have paid tithes of spoils, which, *as Levi*, he never received nor paid.

3. Abram did not pay any tithes of the spoils. (1.) It is said, that Abram lift up his hand to the Most High God, possessor of

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\*He had "no part nor inheritance with the people." "Spoils" are not mentioned among their portion according to law. And were never given, as Jewish writers unaniously agree, except in the case of Midian, where God's vengeance was executed upon a land that was not theirs. In the land of Sihon, Og, and others, which God made over to them, they gave not to priests and Levites anything thereof. Dr. Owen observes: "Spoils were not tithable by law. For if the places taken or destroyed in war were anathematized, as Jericho was, and also Amalek, no portion was to be reserved, under a pretence of sacrifice, or any other sacred use; as Saul found to his cost. And if they were not anathematized, all the spoils were left entirely unto the people that went to war, without any sacred decimation. So the Reubenites and the Gadites, at their return over Jordan into their own land, carried their rich spoils and cattle with them, no tithe being mentioned (Josh. xxii. 8), although there is no question but many of them offered their free-will offerings at the tabernacle. And when God would have a sacred portion out of the spoils, as he would have in the wil-

heaven and earth, that he would not take so much as a thread or a shoe-latchet of that which was taken; which he yielded to the king of Sodom, after distributing to Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre, his confederates, their portion. He would not account any part thereof his own, much less would he lay claim to the portion of his confederates, which he must have done if he paid tithes of *all* the spoils. Calvin justly observes: "Since it is improbable that he should have been liberal with other persons' goods, and should have given away a tenth part of the prey, of which he had resolved not to touch even a thread, I rather conjecture that these tithes were taken out of his own property." (2.) The word translated *spoils*, ἀκροθίνων signifies *the top of the heap, i. e., the best or choicest parts*; hence, 1st. *The first fruits of the produce of the ground*, which were taken from the top of the heap, and offered to God. 2d. And, in after times, a second sense: *The choicest of the spoils of war.* (Ἀκροθίνα, *primitiæ*, quasi, τὰ ἄκρα θίνος, *summitates acervi: quod primitiæ ex summo acervo sive summitate acervi excerpti soleant. Proprie autem primitiæ frugum, secundum quosdam. Item pro primitiis manubiarum quæ diis offeruntur.*" Scapula. "Ἀκροθίνων, *proprie, 1. Summitas acervi frumenti. 2. Primitiæ frugum, quæ Deo offerebantur. 3. Ἀπαρχαί dicuntur primitiæ quælibet omnium aliarum rerum, quæ Diis dantur, maxime predæ et spoliiorum.*" Schleusner. "Ἀκροθίνα. *It denotes that which lies on the top of the heap of corn (θῆς), the finest of the wheat; and then (impro-*

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derness out of those that were taken from the Midianites, to manifest that they fell not under the law of tithes, he took not the tenth part, but one portion of five hundred from the soldiers, and one of fifty from the people. (Num. xxxi. 28-30.) Wherefore, the giving of the tenth of the spoils was not from the obligation of any law, but was an act of *free-will* and choice in the offerer. But yet there was so great an equity herein also, namely, that God should have an acknowledgment in the fruits of those successes which he gave in war, that out of the spoils of his and his people's enemies, David made his provision for the building of the temple. And the captains of the host that went against Midian, after a tribute was raised for the Lord out of the spoils, according unto the proportions mentioned, when they found the goodness of God in the preservation of their soldiers, whereof there was not one lost, they made a new voluntary oblation unto God out of these spoils. (Num. xxxi. 48-50.)"

perly, according to the scholiast to Euripides,) the chief or finest portions of the spoils of war which were dedicated to the Deity." Delitzsch.) The translating the Apostle's word, *spoils*, is a late device. It was not so understood in former times. Jerome translates it, "De precipuis." Isidorus calls it "Decimas substantiæ." Clemens Alexandrinus exhorts a believer to present an ἀκροθίνιον to God. No one would understand that *spoils* were meant here. Mr. Selden admits that it also signifies *first-fruits*, or the chiefest parts sacred to the gods among the Gentiles. The word signifies, *the best of a man's goods*. And Abraham did what Abel did, viz., offered the best of his goods to God. And the probability is strong that Abraham did this every year. For he had as much reason to show his gratitude and obedience to God, one year as another. Nor would distance of place be any hindrance to the performance of his duty. For Abraham dwelt at Hebron, over against Sodom, and Melchizedek dwelt at Jerusalem, (which, according to Josephus, was Salem,) both being in what was subsequently the tribe of Judah, and not far apart; and the reverential spirit which characterised the father of the faithful would prompt him to the regular acknowledgment of his obligations to the God of the covenant, his shield and exceeding great reward, and to the due support of the ministry of Melchizedek, priest of the Most High God. He was a most extraordinary and wonderful priest: priest, not of one age, not of one nation, not of one religious society, but of all ages, of all nations, priest of the Universal Church, priest of the whole world; without predecessor, without successor, "made like unto the Son of God, he abideth a priest continually." He was the type of Christ, *the representative of the Christian dispensation*, even before the Jewish came into being. To him, Abraham paid tithes before he became a Jew. And in Abraham, Levi also paid tithes. Thus, the Patriarchal Church, in Abraham, and the Jewish Church, in Levi, unitedly paid tithes to the Christian Church, in Melchizedek. Thus, Gentiles and Jews were, in a figure, one in Christ, even then. Melchizedek already possessed the land, Canaan, which was Abraham's only in promise; and was officiating at Jerusalem, as prophet, priest, and king. Thus, Christ, through his representative, already held the land of



promise, long anterior to Joshua; and discharged his mediatorial offices in Jerusalem: "In Salem also is his tabernacle," Ps. lxxvi. 2—the symbol of the gospel rest and kingdom, and of the higher rest and kingdom of heaven, into both of which believing Jews and Gentiles enter, and are blessed by Christ, as kings and priests forever. To this extraordinary priest, Abraham and Levi paid "tithes of all" their estate. The priesthood of Melchizedek has never ceased, but "abideth continually," being *fulfilled* in Christ's. And as tithes were paid to Melchizedek, a perpetual priest, only as the type of Christ, so, it follows, they are due to the great Antitype continually. Thus says the Apostle: "And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth." Heb. vii. 8. But how does Melchizedek still live as a priest, and receive tithes, save in Christ? And therefore *Christ, who liveth, still receiveth tithes*. If tithes are to be paid to him that liveth forever, they are ever to be paid; so that as before the law they were paid to Christ, so too, after the law, they are to be paid to Christ, who liveth forever. If Christ *receiveth* tithes, then he has not abrogated them; then he has confirmed them, not only negatively, by not forbidding them, but positively by approving the payment of them, and himself now in heaven ever living to receive them. It is a gross mistake to suppose, as some do, that the Apostle, in these words: "The priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law," Heb. vii. 12, intimates the abrogation of the law of the tithe. The Apostle shows that the rites and ceremonies peculiar to the Levitical economy cease, being fulfilled in Christ. Aaron yields to Jesus, who is a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek; and the priesthood of Melchizedek is not changed, but abideth forever, and to this priesthood tithes forever belong. "The mutation of the priesthood indispensably requireth the change of the law, *i. e.*, the legal dispensation of the covenant of grace, and the bringing in, with another priesthood, a better hope; even the covenant of grace in the gospel dispensation of it." Pool. There had been a change, though no abrogation of the law, respecting the payment of the tithe, when the children of Israel came out of Egypt. Previously, they had been paid

to the first-born; afterwards, to the tribe of Levi. Now, again, a change is made, and they are paid, and to be forever paid to an unchangeable priest, even Jesus, priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek. "Seeing our Lord remaineth forever a priest, after the order of Melchizedek, why should not tithes belong unto him, and in him, to those who, in his stead, exhort us to be reconciled to his Father?" Assembly's Annotations.

Other examples are given of the observance, in the patriarchal age, of the universal law of the tithe. Jacob vowed a tenth to the Lord: "Tithing, I will tithe it to thee," Gen. xxviii. 22; importing frequency and exactness in making this payment. Since God gave him the increase, not of one year only, but of every year, and he had vowed to give unto God the tenth of all that he should give unto him, therefore the yearly reception of new gifts bound him to acknowledge them by a yearly tithing. "Cum autem loquatur de *omni quod Deus sibi daturus esset*, et quicquid deinde quoque in Canaane acquireret, Dei quoque munus esset, vix ambigerem, eum hoc pietatis exercitium et in posterum continuasse, et decimam redituum partem annuatim eidem fini impendisse. Idque tanto magis, quo magis talia pietatis officia non ad unum tempus debent esse restricta, et ipse hoc cum aliis, perpetuo sine dubio duraturis, conjunxit, ut, quod Jehova sibi *futurus in Deum, et lapis ille in locum publici conventus et cultus*, quamdiu ipse nempe in hujus loci vicinia degeret. Ad alletum quod spectat, sine dubio decimatio hæc Deo facienda in eo sita fuit, ut decimam illam partem cultui et gloria Dei, et secundum ejus voluntatem, pie impenderet. Quod facile patet fieri potuisse, partim Deum sacrificiis pie colendo, partim sumtus ad promovendum cultum publicum quocunque et jam modo id fieri posset." Ikenius. *Dissertationes Philologico—Theologicæ.*

It is a weak objection, that the tithe could not have been obligatory, as, if so, it would not have been the matter of a vow. It was a usual thing to vow the performance of necessary duties; as when good men vowed to watch over their words, and to keep God's law. Thus, Hannah vowed her first-born to the Lord,—which was however due to him before by express law. (Ex. xiii.

12.) The people were bound to serve the Lord in the time of Asa, no less than at other times, yet they made a covenant, and swore to serve the Lord. David was bound, without oath or vow, to keep the righteous judgments of the Lord, yet he bound himself thus: "I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments." "Thy vows are upon me, O God; I will render praises unto thee, for thou hast delivered my soul from death." So, Jacob vowed the Lord should be his God, on the same condition on which he vowed to give tithes. The previous obligation did not, in the one case, render unnecessary the vow, and why should it in the other? Chrysostom considers Jacob's vow to be a striking manifestation of his faith, as it was made upon the *promise* of God simply, not upon its fulfilment, showing how confident he was of the performance.

Abraham gave tithes, in acknowledgment of God as "possessor of heaven and earth," and Jacob, as "giver of all that he had." The reason being not ceremonial, peculiar to one nation, but moral, shows that the duty is obligatory on all. And so, we find that the obligation of the tithe was universally acknowledged by Gentile nations. The Carthaginians, a colony of Phœnicians, brought this custom with them from Tyre, to which city they were accustomed to send their tithes by one clothed in purple and priestly robes. Diodorus Siculus relates, that becoming rich, they neglected to send to Hercules of Tyre *the tithe of all their profits*, as they were formerly wont to do, until their misfortunes led them to repent, and to send it as before. The ancient Grecians observed this rite. The learned grammarian, Didymus of Alexandria, testifies to the universal custom of tithing by the Grecians. He says that *δεκατεύουσι*, to pay the tithe, was *καθιερουν*, to sanctify, to consecrate to a divine use: *ἐπειδὴ περ ἔθος ἦν Ἑλληνικόν τὰς δεκάτας τῶν περιγινομένων τοῖς θεοῖς καθιερουν*: it was a Grecian custom to consecrate the tenth of their increase to the gods.

Xenophon relates that Agesilaus made so profitable a war in lesser Asia, that in two years' time he sent to the god at Delphos a tithe worth more than one hundred talents. Xenophon himself, with his captains, after their expedition into Asia, consecrated the tithe of their gains to Apollo and Diana, built a

temple to the goddess, and supported the worship with tithes. And near the temple, he set up a pillar with this inscription: *Ground sacred to Diana. Whosoever possesseth it, let him pay the tithe of his yearly increase, and out of the remainder maintain the temple. If he neglect this, the goddess will require it.* Cræsus, to prevent the spoiling of Sardis by the victorious troops of Cyrus, induced the latter to publish among his soldiers, "that the tithe of the city must necessarily be given to Jupiter;" whereupon, they dared not touch a single thing!—a striking proof that the conviction of the sacredness of tithes was so deeply rooted in men's minds, as to stay the hands of victorious soldiers from pillaging a rich and noble city! Porphyry affirms that it was a very ancient Attic law, "That all the inhabitants of Attica should worship the gods according to their estates, with first-fruits and offerings of wine every year." The same author relates, quoting from Hesiod, one of the oldest poets, that the gods had utterly destroyed an atheistical people called *Thoes*, because they paid no first-fruits as they ought to have done. By "first-fruits," Porphyry shows that he means tithes. So also do Dionysius Halicarnascensis, Maximus Tyrius, Pliny, Philo Judæus, and many other writers, civil and ecclesiastical, designate tithes by "first-fruits." Mr. Selden confesses that the first-fruits were paid in the proportion of a tenth part, so that "first-fruits" and "tithes" became synonymous. The Romans also observed this practice. Paulus Diaconus, quoting from Festus, says: "The ancient Romans offered every sort of tithe to their gods." Diodorus Siculus says that Lucullus, the richest Roman of his time, taking account of his large estate, offered all the tithes to the gods. The Pelasgi being punished with a barren year for the neglect of this duty, removed the judgment by vowing the tenth of all profits to the gods, as Dionysius of Halicarnassus states. Pliny states that the Arabians paid tithes of frankincense to the god Sabis, and that the Ethiopians paid tithes of cinnamon to their god, Assabinus; and this they observed so strictly, that it was not lawful for the merchants to buy or sell any of their goods, until the priests had first taken out the tenth for their gods. Mr. Selden, unfair and unscrupulous as he is, is constrained to admit, that "the Gen-

tiles were very devout in giving of their *yearly* increase to the honor of their deities."

Here, then, we have the universal recognition by the nations of the obligation of the tithe. In the language of the learned Montacutius: "Instances are mentioned in history of some nations which did not offer sacrifices; but in the annals of all times, none are found which did not pay tithes."

We come now to the consideration of tithes under the Levitical dispensation. Previous to the giving of the law from Mt. Sinai, the first-born in every household was the priest of the family. At the giving of the law, a change was made, and the tribe of Levi substituted for the first-born. Num. iii. 40-45. As there was a change in the priesthood, so also in the payment of tithes. From this time they were expressly set apart for the support of the Levites: "And the Lord spake unto Aaron, thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part amongst them; I am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel. And behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation." Num. xviii. 20, 21. A tithe of this tithe was due from the Levites to the priests, Num. xviii. 25-28, who, ordinarily, bore the proportion of a fourth to the other classes of the Levites. This priestly tithe is never called the second tithe, but *the tithe of the tithe*. Besides the Levitical tithe, there was a second, and a third tithe. The second, of corn, wine, oil, herds and flocks, was expended in sacrifices, to be eaten "before the Lord, in the place which he shall choose to place his name there." This was to be taken to Jerusalem in kind, or, if too far, it was turned into money and laid out at Jerusalem, for oxen, sheep, wine, or for whatever else they pleased. Deut. xiv. 22-27.\* The third tithe was levied every

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\*"Let those that live as remote as the bounds of the land which the Hebrews shall possess, come to that city where the temple shall be, and this three times in a year, that they may give thanks to God for his former benefits, and may entreat him for those they shall want hereafter; and let them by this means maintain a friendly correspondence with one another by such meetings and feastings together; for it is a good thing for those

third year, and appropriated to the support of the poor. Deut. xiv. 28, 29. The two first tithes, the Levitical and the festival, are admitted by all writers. But the third, the poor tithe, is disputed as a distinct tithe. Some, as Scaliger and others, make the poor man's tithe the same as the first, but appropriated every third year to the poor. Many, both Jewish and Christian antiquaries, as Maimonides, Selden, Ainsworth, and others, think that the tithe for the poor was the same with the second, or festival tithe, which was given every third year to the poor. Thus, both these contend that there were but two tithes. A careful examination of their reasons has led us to regard them as inconclusive, and to agree with those Jewish and Christian theologians, Rabbi Hiskuni, Rabbi Bechai, Spencer, Comber, and others, that there were three distinct tithes, and that the third year is called "the year of tithing," Deut. xxvi. 12, because in that year a new tithe, above and besides the others, was paid together with them. This opinion is supported by the authority of Josephus, who represents Moses as saying: "Besides those two tithes which, I have already said you are to pay every year, the one for the Levites, the other for the festivals, you are to bring every third year a third tithe to be distributed to those that want, to women also that are widows, and to children that are orphans." Antiq., Book IV., Chap. VIII. In accordance with this, Tobit speaks expressly of a third tithe, saying, *καὶ τὴν τρίτην ἐδίδον οἷς καθήκει*, and *the third tithe I gave to those to whom it belonged*. Tobit i. 7. The second tithe, only, was redeemable. The first, that due to God, and by him given to the Levites, was incapable of commutation or redemption. Abarbanel rightly observes on Lev. xxvii. 31: "Non debent hæc intelligi de decima prima, quippe quæ Levitarum est, et redimi nequit, sed de secunda quam Hierosolymam deferunt." If the second tithe was redeemed, it could only be by "adding thereto a fifth part,"

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that are of the same stock, and under the same institution of laws, not to be unacquainted with each other; which acquaintance will be maintained by thus conversing together, and by seeing and talking with one another, and so renewing the memorial of this union; for if they do not thus converse together continually, they will appear like mere strangers to one another." Josephus. Antiq., Book IV., Chap. VIII., §7.

Lev. xxvii—a fifth of the estimated value was to be added to the amount, in case of redemption. And this was done, as Abulensis says: “Ne Judæi sæpius tentarent redimere, adeoque retinerent decimas.”

As the Mosaic law does not define what things are subject to this tithe, but simply says that it is to consist of both vegetables and animals, (Lev. xxvii. 32. 33,) the Jewish canons enacted that, as to the produce of the land, “whatsoever is esculent, though still kept in the field and derives its growth from the soil, is tithable; or whatsoever may be eaten from the commencement to the completion of its growth, though left in the field to increase in size, is tithable, whether small or great; and whatsoever cannot be eaten at the beginning, but can only be eaten at the end of its growth, is not tithable till it is ripe for food.” (Mishna.) It will be seen that this definition embraces even the smallest kitchen herbs and aromatic plants; and that it explains our Lord’s remark, that tithe was paid of mint, dill, and cummin, which he however did not condemn, but, on the contrary, said “these things ought ye not to leave undone.” “This is the general rule about tithes: Whatsoever serves for food, whatsoever is kept, (that is, which is not of common right,) and whatsoever grows out of the earth, shall be tithed.” Lightfoot.

Over and above the tithes, and the forty-eight cities for them to dwell in—thirteen of which were set apart for the priests—and lands, which were a thirtieth part of the land of Canaan, the Levitical ministry had many emoluments and perquisites pertaining to them, which greatly increased their revenue. Maimonides reckons them up in this order: 1. The flesh of the sin-offerings, whether fowls or beasts. (Lev. vi. 25, 26.) 2. The flesh of the trespass-offerings, (Lev. vii. 6); both which are reckoned as part of the priests’ maintenance, by Ezekiel. (xliv. 28, 29.) 3. The peace-offerings of the congregation. (Lev. xxiii. 19, 20.) 4. The remainder of the *omer*, or sheaf-offering, which was yearly made at the Passover. (Lev. xxiii. 10, 11.) 5. The remnant of every meat-offering that was offered unto the Lord. (Lev. vi. 16.) 6. The two loaves that were offered at the feast of Pentecost. (Lev. xxiii. 17.) 7. The shew-bread, consisting of twelve loaves set before the Lord in the temple on every Sabbath, and after-

wards on the Sabbath taken away, and divided among the priests that officiated. (Lev. xxix. 9.) 8. The leper's log of oil. (Lev. xiv. 10, 11.) 9. The wave-breast and heave-shoulder of the peace-offerings. (Lev. vii. 31, 34.) 10. The heave-offering of the sacrifice of thanksgiving. (Lev. vii. 12, 14.) 11. The heave-offering of the Nazarites' ram. (Num. vi. 17-20.) 12. The firstlings of the clean beasts. (Num. xviii. 18.) 13. The *biccurim*, or first-fruits of *un-wrought produce*, which were brought to Jerusalem every Pentecost, and there divided among the priests. (Num. xviii. 13.) They were of wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, and dates; and this offering contained about the fiftieth part of such produce of the land. 14. The *trumah*, or great heave-offering, which contained about the fiftieth part of the *wrought produce* of the fruits of the earth. (Num. xviii. 12.) Of both these, the Hebrew doctors say, that a *good eye* (*i. e.*, a liberal man,) gives a fortieth part; an *evil eye* (*i. e.*, a niggard,) gives a sixtieth part; and so, the medium, the fiftieth part, may be computed to be that which was given for the whole. 15. The cake, which every man annually offered of the first of his dough. (Num. xv. 20.) 16. The first of the fleece of the flock. (Deut. xviii. 4,) which was, like the *biccurim* and the *trumah*, about a fiftieth part of the whole. 17. The shoulder, the two cheeks, and the maw, of every beast that was killed for common use; for the text, Deut. xviii. 3, cannot be understood of sacrificing, as our version has it, but should be translated: "And this shall be the priests', due from the people, that kill any beast, whether it be ox or sheep," etc. And the constant sense of the Jews, as well as their practice, was agreeable thereto. (The same interpretation is given by the learned Henry Ainsworth: "*Slay a slaughter, i. e.*, kill any beast for common food. The original word generally signifieth no more than to kill a beast, as is noted on Gen. xxxi. 54; and in special, to kill for sacrifice unto God. But the large meaning is here to be chosen; for it agreeth not with the former laws in Leviticus touching sacrifices, that the priests should have the cheeks, etc., and the general exposition of the Hebrews is, that this is meant of common meats.") 18. The redemption of the



first-born, (Num. xviii. 6,) which was the price of five shekels of the sanctuary for every first-born son, (of the mother, not of the father,) to be paid as soon as the child was a month old; which came to about two dollars and fifty cents. 19. The firstlings of the ass, which was to be redeemed with a lamb. (Ex. xxiv. 20; Num. xviii. 25.) 20. The restitution of that which was stolen from the stranger, or the proselyte, who being dead, or gone out of the land, had left no kinsman behind that might receive it. 21. The devoted things, (Num. 18. 4,) such as were devoted to no specified sacred use. The skins of the sacrifices which were offered at the temple, (Lev. vii. 8,) and every week divided among the officiating priests, and which were of considerable value.

Besides all these, the share which the Levitical ministry had in the second tithes, and in the third tithes, must also be taken into account.

The following table presents a view of the amount of income annually paid by every Jew; not including, however, the free-will offerings, and several other offerings specified above:

An entire crop, supposed to yield,	-	-	-	-	Ephahs, 6,000
Deduct, 1st. The corner unreaped,	-	-	-	100	
2d. The Bicurim,	-	-	-	59	
3d. The Trumah,	-	-	-	116	
				<u>275</u>	
These deducted, there remain	-	-	-	-	5,725
Deduct, 1st. The Levites tithe,	-	-	-	572	
2d. Tithe for feasts,	-	-	-	515	
				<u>1,087</u>	
Deduction for first and second tithes,	-	-	-	-	4,638
Which deducted out of 5,725, leave	-	-	-	-	
Deduct, every third year, tithe for the poor,	-	-	-	463	
Leaving for the husbandman,	-	-	-	-	4,175

So that the *entire* yearly contribution of the Jew must have exceeded one-third of his income.

Such then was the provision made by God for the support of the Levites,\* the ordinances of religion, and the poor.

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\*When first appointed, the Levites were 8,580, the 30<sup>th</sup> part of the people. Under David, they were 33,000, (from 30 years upward.) 187<sup>th</sup>

“They that suppose,” says Lightfoot, “that the tithes under the law were paid only at the temple, and to maintain the priests in the ceremonious worship there, and, upon this conceit, look upon them only as Levitical, are far deceived; for as some were indeed paid at the temple upon such an account, so others, and that the greatest part, were paid to the priests and Levites in their forty-eight universities, (Josh. xxi,) to maintain them whilst they were studying there, to enable them for the ministry, and to teach the people, for which they were designed, (Deut. xxxiii. 10; Mal. ii. 7,); and when they were dispersed through the land, into the several synagogues to be ministers in them, tithes were also paid for their maintenance there.”

Hooker, in his Ecclesiastical Polity, well observes: “Touching the quantity of this general sacred tribute: whereby it cometh to pass, that the meanest and the very poorest among men, yielding unto God as much in proportion as the greatest, and many times in affection more, have this as a sensible token always assuring their minds, that in his sight, from whom all good is expected, they are concerning acceptation, protection, divine privileges and preëminences whatsoever, equals and peers with them unto whom they are otherwise in earthly respects inferiors; being furthermore well assured that the top, as it were, thus presented to God, is neither lost, nor unfruitfully bestowed, but doth sanctify to them again the whole mass, and that he by receiving a little undertaketh to bless all. In which consider-

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part of the people. At that time, the Israelites numbered about 2,414,200; to which add, for the mixed multitude, 100,000, and, for the tribe of Levi, about 45,000; making the total, 2,559,200. On the return from Babylon, the Levites numbered 4,620; of these, 4,289 were priests, and 331 Levites. Of the 24 courses of the priests, there were then only 4 remaining; the rest being extinct, or remaining in the land of their captivity. Jewish writers say that the 4 families which returned, divided themselves into 24 courses as before, and also took the same names they had, when settled by King David—such as Joarib and Abia, etc., although none of their posterity were in being then. In the time of Christ, these 4 grew to be 5,000 in each family, 20,000 in all. The Levites probably were as many.

ation, the Jews were accustomed to make their tithes *the hedge of their riches*. Albeit, a hedge doth only fence and preserve that which is contained; whereas, their tithes and offerings did more, because they procured increase of the heap, out of which they were taken. God demandeth no such debt for his own need, but for their only benefit that owe it. Wherefore, detaining the same, they hurt not him whom they wrong; and themselves, whom they think they relieve, they wound; except men will haply affirm, that God did by fair speeches and large promises delude the world in saying: 'Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house, that there may be meat in my house,' (deal truly, defraud not God of his due, but bring all,) 'and prove if I will not open unto you the windows of heaven, and pour down upon you an immeasurable blessing.'"

The views of the following renowned Jewish theologians reflect faithfully the national sentiment. Maimonides says: "Qui fructus suos comedit necdum decimatos, is divinitus infligendæ morti est obnoxius." "Qui non decimatos fructus suos comedit, perinde est, ac si morticina et discerpta comederet." Jarchi, commenting on Num. v. 10: "And every man's hallowed things shall be his: whatsoever any man giveth the priest, it shall be his," says: "He that detains the tithe, so that it is not given in the due season thereof, in the end his land shall yield him but the tithe of that it used to yield, agreeable with that sentence of St. Austin: 'Si tu decimam non dederis, tu ad decimam revoceris.'" Rabbi Bechai thus comments on Deut. xiv. 23: "If thou pay the tithe, it is thy corn; if not, it is my corn. If thou pay the tithe, it is thy wine; if not, it is my wine. For it is said in Hosea ii. 9: 'Therefore I will return, and take away my corn in the time thereof, and my wine in the season thereof.'" In his comment on Deut. iv., he illustrates by a parable: "A certain rich man had land, which yearly bare him a thousand measures of corn, whereof he duly paid an hundred for the tithe. At his death, he gave his land to his son, with a charge to do the like in tithing, as he had done before him, which he did the first year after his father's death; for the land brought forth a thousand measures as before, and he gave an hundred

thereof for the tithe. But the second year, he, having an evil eye, began to think with himself, that the tithe was a great matter, and therefore he forbade the laying out of it. The next year after, the increase of that field was much diminished, and it afforded but an hundred measures in all, in regard whereof he was exceedingly grieved and discontented. His neighbors therefore, hearing of this, came unto him, clothed in white raiment, to make merry with him, and to comfort him; to whom he said: 'It seems to me that you solace yourselves and rejoice at my loss.' But they answered him: 'Should we be grieved for thee, that hast brought all this evil upon thyself? Wherefore, then, didst thou not set forth thy tithe duly, as thou shouldest have done? Consider how, that when the land came first into thy hand, thou was the husbandman, or owner thereof, and God Almighty the priest; for the tithe was his part to dispose of. But now, forasmuch as thou hast not set forth his part unto him, God is become the householder and owner of the ground, and thou the priest; for thy field doth not yield as it yielded before, a thousand measures, but he hath set apart for thee an hundredth measure. And this is that which is written: 'And every man's hallowed things shall be his;' that is to say, when he divideth not as he ought, he shall have nothing himself, but the holy things, that is, the tithe. And for this cause our wise men affirm, he that withholdeth his tithe, in the end it will come to pass, that he himself shall have nothing but the tithe; as it is written: 'Ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath, and the seed of a homer shall yield an ephah,' (Isa. v. 10.)—that is, the tithe, for an ephah is the tenth part of an homer.'" Again, on Malachi iii., he says: "Although it be unlawful to prove or tempt the Lord; for a man must not say, 'I will perform such a commandment, to the end I may prosper in riches,' for it is written: 'Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God;' yet there is an exception for payment of tithes and works of mercy in this text. And for proof of a blessing following the performance of this command, Ralbag refers to 2 Chron. xxxi. 10: 'Since the people began to bring the offering into the house of the Lord, we have eaten and have been satisfied, and there is left an

abundance, for the Lord hath blessed his people, and this abundance that is left.' ”

Some have supposed that the obligation of the tithe was temporary only, because the institution in which it was embodied partook of a typical character. But, 1. This is to overlook the fact that the tithe did not originate in the Levitical economy, but was appointed long anterior to it, even from the beginning, and was universally observed both by the Patriarchal Church, and by Gentile nations. 2. The fact of an obligation—as Mr. Thorburn justly observes—being embodied in an institution of a typical character, merely proves that the form of it was designed to undergo a change. The Sabbath, public worship, prayer, was enjoined under the Mosaic dispensation, as well as tithes. If the temporary character of that dispensation has dissolved the obligation of the latter, why not also that of the former? If the proportion of the tithe for the New Testament ministry be too great, as some say, then it must be because of the superiority of the Levitical priesthood in one or all of these respects: 1. The Work. 2. Qualifications. 3. Dignity. 4. Expenses. 5. Number of Officers. 6. Others besides ministers provided for. 7. Or, that the ancient regulation is unsuitable, because there are preferable methods of support now. 1. As to *the Work*. The priests were required to travel to Jerusalem, to engage in the service of the temple. But there were twenty-four courses, and each served but a week at a time, and were required to be at Jerusalem only twice in the year, and were well provided for while there. These courses were sub-divided into seven classes, each class served its day; so that no priest served more than two days in a year, excepting at the greater festivals, when all appeared. At home, they officiated on Sabbath in the synagogue, and instructed the people in the knowledge of the law during the week. And if ample provision was made for them, for the efficient discharge of these duties, much more is it due to the gospel ministry, whose field is the world, and not one land only; and who are required to be able ministers of the New Testament, approving themselves as the ministers of God, “in labors, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by

long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the Word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left;" defending the Word of God against the assaults of infidelity in its protean forms, especially against philosophy and science, falsely so-called; and, as pastors, watching over and ruling the flock of Christ, as they that must give account. 2. As to *Qualifications*. It is true that of priests were required not only natural, but also intellectual and spiritual qualifications; but these in a higher degree are demanded of the gospel ministry, as the work devolved on them plainly shows. 3. As to *Dignity*, the Levitical ministry is far excelled by the gospel ministry. "If the ministration of condemnation be glorious, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious, had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which was done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious." And must a ministry of superior dignity yield to one that is inferior, as to the provision made for its support? God supported the Jewish Church in the wilderness by a miraculous agency. But when he had secured to his people the possession of the Promised Land, he caused, by his express authority, his visible Church to be supported through the instrumentality of human means. In like manner, God supported the Christian Church for a certain period by his supernatural power, to show that the Christian dispensation was of God, not of man. But when he saw meet to withdraw his miraculous agency from the Christian Church, he caused it to be supported by the same human means, and on the old, established principle. 4. As to *Expenses*. These were far less under the Old Testament, than under the New. All priests were provided for from infancy; their education provided for; their expenses incurred by their journeys, and otherwise, all provided for. It is different with the candidate for the Christian ministry. The previous expenses, and frequently the subsequent expenses, of living, and education, are all borne by himself. The objects, too, for which offerings are required under the present dispensation, involve more

expense than did the maintenance of the temple worship. An injunction is also upon the ministers of the gospel, to be "given to hospitality." The greater expenses, then, of the Christian ministry call for, at least, as ample provision for their support, as was required by the Levitical priesthood. 5. *Number of Officers.* Under King David, the Israelites exceeded two and a half millions. The Levites varied from 22,300 at their institution, to 38,000 in David's time. Average of priests, 8,000. Giving thus 1 Levite to 66 Israelites. The population of the world is estimated to be 1,381,000,000. (Professor Schem's statistical tables.) The entire evangelical, Protestant ministry of the world number, probably, about 60,000. Protestant missionaries, about 7,600; of whom about 4,000 are ordained ministers; in all, about 6,000 preachers. Deducting these 6,000 missionaries from 60,000 ministers, leaves 54,000 ministers for the 381,000,000 of Europe and America; or 1 minister to 6,055 souls. Whilst 6,000 ministers are assigned to the 1,000,000,000 of Asia, Africa, and the isles of the sea; or 1 minister to 166,666 souls! And *thus* does the Church obey the command of her divine Lord: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature!" No wonder, that her insulted king has poured his curse, instead of his blessing, upon her! The great end for which the Christian Church is constituted is, in the name and stead of her ascended Head, to act unceasingly the part of an evangelist to all the world. And this is the appointed condition of her success. An evangelistic Church is a flourishing Church; and a Church which drops the evangelistic character, speedily lapses into superannuation and decay. The cessation of its activity is the cessation of its prosperity. If it ceases to be evangelistic, it will ere long cease to be evangelical, and then it ceases to be a Church of God. Not to advance is to recede, and to continue to recede, until it becomes extinct. Let the aggressive feature vanish, and the conservative feature will one day vanish too, for there will be nothing left to conserve. If, instead of extending the triumphs of Protestant Christianity over the realms of Paganism, she cast aside her weapons of aggressive warfare, and settle down in inglorious

ease, to enjoy the conquests she has won, what will be the consequence? Her active energy, denied a suitable outlet in aggressive efforts beyond her domain, will find ample vent for itself in fomenting intestine discords and divisions within her borders. She becomes a poor, torpid, shrunken, shrivelled, distracted thing. And the cause of it, is the blight and mildew of Jehovah's displeasure, on account of a neglected and unfaithful stewardship. Dishonoring her high commission, she is dishonored by her Head. Not active abroad, she suffers at home. And so it has happened, that sending forth a shamefully inadequate supply of ministers abroad, she makes a shamefully inadequate provision for the great majority of her ministers at home. Requiring a far greater number of ministers, proportionably, than did the Levitical Church, she makes, absolutely, far less provision for the few she has, than it did. Dr. Chalmers well observes: "There might important lessons be drawn from the largeness of the proportion which God here commanded, (Ex. xiii. 1-7,) both of the people and the animals, for his own special use and service; or for being set apart in some way or other to himself. The first-born bear a ratio to the whole, approaching to the tithe which he also claimed of the fruits of the earth, or even to the seventh, which he specified as his own share of our time—not a large proportion, certainly, when measured by his own absolute rights—for he is Lord of all, both of ourselves, and of all that belongs to us—but large, when measured by the natural inclination of man to consecrate what he has unto God. Look at the encroachments ever making on the Sabbath, so as to abridge the really consecrated time; or at the miserable allowance which either the voluntary, or even the national, system would make for the support of religion, so as to abridge the consecrated wealth; or at the wholly inadequate number set apart and maintained for ecclesiastical services, so as very greatly to abridge the consecrated persons." "Chalmers's Daily Scripture Readings."

The remarks of Dr. John M. Mason are worthy of all consideration: "The primitive churches never permitted themselves to suffer for want of laborers. Their spiritual advancement was



in their eyes infinitely more valuable than all the pelf which the maintenance of their ministers required. Look over the Acts of the Apostles, and be astonished at the abundance of help which the churches then enjoyed. *Our* economical plan is to make the pastor do the work which was anciently done by three or four, and the very natural consequence follows, the work is badly done, or the workman is sacrificed. The conclusion is almost self-evident: if congregations will stint themselves in workmen, they must have their work spoiled; and if the work be done at all, they must kill the mind or body of the workman; and sometimes both. Let them not deceive themselves. If they impose hardships which God never commanded, they must expect to go without his blessing."

6. *Others besides Ministers* provided for. But this obtains in the New Testament Church, as well as in the Old. Elders that rule well, are to be "counted worthy of double honor," or a double portion, or maintenance. The obligation to provide for faithful elders and faithful deacons was recognised by the primitive and by the Reformed Churches; but "the poverty of the Church being such, there is no maintenance or benefice annexed to these offices," was the plea, as Pardovan's Collections state, why the obligation was not met. The right, however, of these officers to such maintenance, was unquestioned. Calvin, in his comment on 1 Tim. v. 17, says: "We may learn from this, that there were at that time two kinds of elders; for all were not ordained to teach. The words plainly mean that there were some who 'ruled well' and honorably, but who did not hold the office of teachers. . . . But, in order to show that he does not recommend masks, he adds, 'who rule *well*;' that is, who faithfully and laboriously discharge their office. For, granting that a person should a hundred times obtain a place, and though he should boast of his title; yet, if he do not also perform his duty, *he will have no right to demand that he shall be supported at the expense of the Church.*" The Church of Scotland, in her *First Book of Discipline*, recognised the obligation and fulfilled it: "As for the church-rents in general, we desire that order be admitted and maintained amongst us, that may stand with the

sincerity of God's Word, and practice of the purity of the Church of Christ. To wit., that, as was before spoken, the whole rent and patrimony of the Church, excepting the small patronages before mentioned, may be divided into four portions; one thereof to be assigned to the pastor for his entertainment and hospitality; *another to the elders, deacons, and other officers of the Church*, such as clerks of assemblies, takers up of the psalms, beadles, and keepers of the church, so far as is necessary; joining therewith also the doctors of schools, to help the ancient foundations where need requires; the third portion to be bestowed upon the poor members of the faithful, and on hospitals; the fourth for reparation of the churches, and other extraordinary charges as are profitable for the Church, and also for the common weal, if need require." Chap. XII., §12. In like manner, the Reformed Church of France, the Church of Holland, and the Churches of the Reformation, generally acknowledge the right of elders and deacons to proper maintenance. Dr. King of Scotland gives the following just view of the passage in Timothy: "Faithful elders are so far identified, as they all rule well; and so far they differ as only some labor in the Word and doctrine. The Apostle claims a sufficient pecuniary acknowledgment for elders who rule well. But let it be observed that he does not claim it for all of them equally. He requires it especially for them who labor in the Word and doctrine. If any simply ruled well, they were to get liberal remuneration; but if any, in addition to ruling well, also labored in the Word and doctrine, they were to receive a *specially* ample salary, since they devoted themselves more entirely to the Church—spending and being spent for its sake." Did the same spirit animate the Church now, which characterised the primitive Churches—whose "spiritual advancement was in their eyes infinitely more valuable than all the pelf which the maintenance of their officers required"—what marvellous progress would she not make, in seeking first the prosperity of that kingdom, on whose welfare depends the welfare of the world! But that spirit of covetousness which leads her to defraud the teaching elder of his due, leads her to defraud also the ruling elder and the deacon of

their due. The consequence is, she is cursed with a *cheap* eldership: (as well as, to a great extent, with a *cheap* ministry,) men, for the most part without training, without qualification, ignorant of the nature, the constitution, and the administration of that kingdom in which they are rulers! raised to the elevated office, and bearing the honored title of "pastors," "presbyters," and "bishop"! for such are the ruling elders of the Scriptures. How many look upon their office as a mere human appointment, whose duties they may discharge only as inclination prompts or leisure permits! How general is the notion, that by serving the communion-table, (a duty which does not belong to them,) by attending upon the meetings of session, and occasionally on other ecclesiastical bodies, they have exhausted the duties of their office! How large a number are found treating as a sinecure, and exposing to the contempt of the Church and the world, the highest office on earth, to which they have been called, if called at all, by the Holy Ghost! And for which aggravated guilt, both they and the entire Church are responsible to God. Of those who are concerned for the maintenance of their "rights," how few are there who understand the just metes and bounds thereof; whilst the majority of such, in their ignorance and conceit, assume it to be their vocation to take oversight of the minister, instead of the flock, and are as willing to discharge the duty of the Presbytery in this respect, as they are to neglect their own. But sticklers for rights must also be equally sticklers for duties. For it is idle for any to dream that their rights will be respected whilst their duties are trampled under foot. Faithful elders are incalculable blessings to the Church. The diligent discharge of their duties will do more than aught beside to recommend the symmetry, the beauty and the power of the Presbyterianism of the Scriptures. The gratitude of the Church will be forever due to those who open, and widen, and deepen the channels for those streams of living water which gladden the city of God. Angels contemplate their radiant career with admiration; and Jesus, from his illustrious throne, looks down upon them with delight; and when the chief Shepherd shall appear, he will confer upon them a crown of life.

But if the Church is worthy to receive these ascension-gifts of her divine Head, she will show her appreciation of the same, by joyfully according to them that "double honor" which the Scriptures require:

We have now shown that in no respect was the Levitical priesthood superior to the Christian ministry, and entitled to a larger measure of support, whether as to work, qualifications, dignity, expenses, number, and others besides ministers provided for. But it may be said, that the ancient regulation would be unsuitable now, because of preferable methods of support. What are these? Voluntary offerings? Or pew-rents, or tax upon worshippers? As to the first they have proved a failure—and proved to be such by the accumulated experience of the past. Facts, indisputable facts, have settled that point—and their name is *legion*. How many Christians contribute, what every Jew did, more than one-third of their income? To what disreputable expedients do "Christian" men and women resort—fairs, tableaux, even lotteries—to build a house of God, or to eke out a miserable pittance to a half-starved minister of God, called a "salary!" The victims of voluntaryism are numbered by thousands and tens of thousands—a Babel monument, "whose top would reach unto heaven." As to the second method, the pew-rent system, it is not only unauthorised by, but inconsistent with, the principles of the gospel. That gospel was especially designed for the benefit of the poor. "Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" But the pew-rent system leads to the disparagement of that very class who are the special objects of the divine regard. For "if there come into your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment," it leads to its being said to him "that weareth the gay clothing, sit thou here in a good place; and to the poor, stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool." This system has interposed an unholy barrier to the ordinances of religion, by banishing thousands and tens of thousands

of the poor from the house of God; and thereby preventing the permanent, the crowning demonstration of the divine origin of Christianity from being given: "*To the poor the gospel is preached.*" It is one chief cause of the enormous spiritual destitution which exists throughout the land, and of the moral and spiritual evils which prevail among the lower classes of the community. This system is also inconsistent with the honor of the great Head of the Church. As it has been well remarked: "When church-funds are raised by pew-rents, which are like licenses to worship and to hear the gospel; or are raised by collections which rise and fall in amount in proportion to the eloquence of popular preachers; or are raised by subscriptions which are not unfrequently extorted from unwilling contributors, by the energy and personal influence of zealous collectors, the Lord's dignity in the matter is compromised, his honor is wounded by the mistakes of his friends."

It cannot, then, be shown, that the ancient regulation of the tithe has been superseded by preferable methods of sustentation now; for, as we have seen, there is no comparison, but contrast only, between these devices of man, and the institution of God. As there is no evidence, then, that tithes were ever intended to cease—as all the presumptions are in favor of their continuance—it is just to conclude that they were designed to be of perpetual and universal obligation. Mr. Gladstone, in the spirit of Bishop Butler, justly observes: "To constitute a moral obligation, it is not necessary that we should have a positive command. Probable evidence is binding as well as demonstrative; nay, it constitutes the greatest portion of the subject-matter of duty; and so a dim view of religious truth entails an obligation to follow it, as real and valid as that which results from a clear and full comprehension—as real and valid, although it be true that different degrees of guilt are incurred by the disregard of the one or the other." Dr. Owen's forcible words deserve to be considered: "To oppose that order of things God has established by his providence, agreeably to his Word seems to be a fighting against God and his Anointed. The payment of tithes: 1, Before the

law; with 2, The like usage among all nations living according to the light of nature; 3, Their establishment under the law; 4, The express relation in gospel appointment unto that establishment (1 Cor. ix. 13, 14,) do make that kind of payment so far pleadable, that no man without being able to satisfy that plea, can, with any pretence of a good conscience, consent to their taking away."

The perpetuity and universality of the obligation of the tithe, *as due to God*—to Christ, the Priest, after the order of Melchizedek—has already been *demonstrated* from the patriarchal economy, as explained by the inspired Apostle. Under the Mosaic economy, Christ bestowed the tithe, and much more than the tithe, upon the Levitical Church and ministry. The Levitical economy, of itself, furnishes a strong probability, as we have shown, that the tithe, and much more than the tithe, should be paid to the Christian Church and ministry. Nay, that the claims of the latter far transcend its own. Such also is the decision of the Master himself: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break of these least commandments, *and shall teach men so*, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness **SHALL EXCEED** the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, *ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.*" The Christianity of the New Testament, instead of relaxing or diminishing the claims of the Christianity of the Old Testament, enlarges and strengthens the same. And is it not equitable, that obligation keep pace with privilege? Shall the New Testament far surpass the Old, in every thing—save in the important grace of giving? Are Christ's kings and priests to sit upon their own thrones, and present their offerings to themselves—converting Christian liberty into carnal license? Is there to be no progressive conformity to God? Shall not every succeeding dispen-

sation of Christianity be marked by increased nearness to God, and the sentiment of every Christian be:

“Still, all my song shall be,  
Nearer my God to thee, nearer to thee;”

until the dispensation of glory finds all perfectly united to him, and God is all and in all? What! can a *Christian* complain—can a *man* complain—that the best and the most of his substance should be given to God? Is it allowable among men, for servants and stewards to give to the master the less, and keep the greater? And is it unreasonable, that man should give to that great Being, for whom he was made, and in whom he lives, and by whom he was redeemed, the greater portion, and receive from him the lesser? Hear the law of the new dispensation: “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.” (Not that the loving one another, was the new commandment, for that was as old as the race itself; but the loving one another “as I have loved you”—love manifesting itself *in the form of sacrifice*, leading them to lay down their lives for others; making Christ’s love the model and standard of their own. Formerly, they were to “love their neighbor as themselves;” now, they are to “esteem others *better* than themselves.”) “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.” “Hereby perceive we the love of God, that he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?” “Freely ye have received, freely give.” “If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?” “I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” “For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live

unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again." "None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, *we are the Lord's.*" "*Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.*"

Do these Scriptures permit a Christian to give less—not less than the tenth, simply, but less than what the Jew gave, *the third* of his income? The presumption being, as already shown, against them, the burden of proof rests on those who deny the obligations of the Christian to be as extensive as those of the Jew. It has been attempted to parry the force of the argument by the vain pleas: That Christ himself, when on earth, never received tithes: and that he directed the Twelve that they should carry neither gold nor silver, but to depend on being provided with meat and drink, from house to house, (Matt. x., Luke x.,) by those whose hearts' were opened by their ministry; and that this was the law laid down for his disciples for all time. As to the first plea, it is evident that Christ, *as a Jew*, could not be a priest, to receive tithes, for he was not of the tribe of Levi, to whom alone tithes belonged; being given by Christ himself as the Head of their theocracy. As to the second plea, it is equally evident, that the Twelve were sent forth, as Jews, to their brethren the Jews, to announce the new dispensation of the kingdom of heaven. They had, as yet, no recognised official position; not until the day of Pentecost, when being endued with power from on high, they stood forth as the Apostles of Christ to witness unto him. In the meantime, it was by a special interposition of his providence that he effected their support. But in the evening before he was betrayed, Jesus said, referring to these former instructions: "But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip;" showing that it was not intended by the former charge to debar his ministers from their appointed maintenance. The trivial objection we will dismiss, with the answer of Calvin: "We must not think therein a



standing law prescribed to all ministers, while the Lord is commanding the first preachers of his doctrine what they were to do for a while; which piece of ignorance hath so far deceived many, that they would reduce all ministers without distinction to this rule."

So far was Christ from giving any deliverance repealing the ancient law established by himself, that we find him, whilst reproving the Pharisees for omitting the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith, *commending the scrupulousness with which they paid their tithes*: "*these ye ought not to leave undone.*" And more than this, he enjoined upon his disciples, that *their righteousness should exceed the righteousness of Scribes and Pharisees*. But if Christians consecrate only a tenth of their income to God, so far from exceeding, they fall far short of the righteousness of Scribes and Pharisees, who gave annually more than a third of their income to God. Again: It has been supposed from the fact that a community of goods obtained in the infant Church in Jerusalem, and from the absence of any mention of the tithe, that this ordinance was no longer observed. But it is not said that Jews who had become Christians ceased to attend to this duty, and no one may impute it to them. If they brought in their incomes for a time, it must have been after separating the Lord's tenth at least, for Jewish Christians could not lawfully give that to the Apostles. It belonged by God's gift to the Levites as long as the temple was permitted to remain, and their services were required, accordingly, there. The Apostle, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, says: "*Levi also who receiveth tithes*"—the present tense;—showing that up to this time, the destruction of the temple and the overthrow of the Levitical priesthood, had not taken place, (which did not indeed occur for six years afterwards.) Only by a special revelation could tithes have been transferred from the Levitical priesthood to the Christian ministry—which was subsequently given. (1 Cor. ix. 9–14.) In the meantime, in the interval during which the Church was gliding from the old dispensation into the new, the Apostles offered no unnecessary violence to the prejudices of Christian Jews, where no sacrifice of

Christian truth or principle was involved, but patiently instructed the disciples respecting the transition of the Church from a lower to a higher and more spiritual and glorious economy, as the Epistle to the Hebrews evinces; continuing however to frequent the temple, until, it having fully served its purpose, the time came for its complete and permanent removal by providence. Further: There is no mention of having all things common, except at Jerusalem, and that for a time only, for soon all were scattered thence. This was done by Jews only, who, on embracing the gospel, were informed that the destruction of their city and nation was at hand. And therefore they sold their estates beforehand, and put them to this use, so far at least as there was need; which was also necessary to be done both for the support of the gospel in Judea, and for the dissemination of it among the Gentiles. But this was not designed as a precedent, or an example for after times, nor was it ever proposed as such to the churches by the Apostles. The collections subsequently made among the brethren in different places for the suffering saints in Jerusalem, show that each man was retaining the use of his property. For, every man was expected to give as God had prospered him (1 Cor. xvi. 2); not each congregation called on to contribute out of a common treasury. It is true, that in Church history we find Justin Martyr, Irenæus, and Tertullian, speaking of Christians having all things common, but this was during periods of persecution, when many were destitute, and the resources of all were required to supply the necessities of each. But, for what purpose do any bring forward the supposed expansion of the rule, from giving a tenth to the giving of all, as an objection to the perpetual obligation of the law of the tithe? Are those who urge this objection, sincere? Then, are they willing to lay down at the feet of church-officers all that they receive?

Whilst such zeal and liberality continued, what reason was there to urge Christians to give a tenth, who gave a great deal more? Mr. Selden himself confesses this: "So liberal in the beginning of Christianity was the devotion of believers, that

their bounty to the evangelical priesthood far exceeded what the tenth could have been." It had been little to the purpose, indeed, to have had tithes of annual increase paid, while that most bountiful devotion of good Christians continued in frequent offerings, both of lands and goods, to such large value." And this, too, after paying to the Levitical ministry their due. Neander observes: "The first Christian community constituted one family, and the force of the newly-awakened feeling of Christian brotherhood, the feeling of a common grace of salvation so powerfully outweighed all other personal and ordinary feelings, that it brought every other consideration in subjection to this new and important relation." The observations of Baumgarten are worthy of consideration: "The common participation in the Holy Spirit, which within the circle of the faithful, must have created a feeling of family in the highest sense, would, and necessarily did, cause not only human selfishness, but even the divinely ordained principle of property to yield to a true and actual community of possession. A condition of want was within this circle an inequality not to be borne, and, naturally, least of all by those who had tangible possessions, such as houses and lands. With these, under the influence of the feeling of common brotherhood, it became, as it were, an inner necessity to remove such a striking and offensive inequality, by relieving those who were in want. Not for a moment, that thereby the external disparity was externally and mechanically got rid of—but on every occasion, it is said: "they parted to all according as every man had need." One would have thought that these words did intimate clearly enough the degree to which this external equalisation has been carried; but Baur and Zeller absolutely persist that what is meant is, that in the community at Jerusalem all rights of property were, in the strict sense of the word, abolished. He, however, who asserts that *ὑσσι* must be understood as implying that even every father of a family, who possessed a house or a field for the necessary maintenance of his family, is to be included among these *κτῆτορες*, and who thus designedly fortifies himself against the inference to be drawn

from other passages of the same author which explains the word *ὑποσχομαι*—the object of such a person cannot be to furnish a commentary, but rather to produce a mystification.”

We come now to consider the New Testament law for the support of the gospel ministry, as contained in 1 Cor. ix. 13, 14: “Do ye not know that they who minister about holy things, live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel.” The altar had a large revenue. Tithes and other offerings *belonged* to it. And the priests did partake with it, did live of it, as matter of right. Else there had been no certain, settled maintenance. But there are no priests now, under the New Testament. Hence the propriety of the necessity of a New Testament statute for ministers of the gospel. And here we have the ordinance. *The Lord hath ordained.* What? *That they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel.* (Ἐκ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου. “Ἐκ,” *from, out of, out of the gospel’s treasury.*) How? *Even so—οὕτω, in the same way:* “Ad hunc modum.” Scapula. “Hoc modo, ad hunc modum, hac ratione.” Schleusner. “In the same or like manner.” Parkhurst. *In the same way as priests lived of the altar.\**

What revenue then has the gospel? A revenue similar to that of the temple. Else, it is not “even so,” as the Apostle makes the comparison. But the revenue of the temple consisted, in the first place, of tithes and other offerings, and, in the second place, of free-will offerings. Now, if the gospel has none but

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\*“Οὕτω καὶ ὁ Κύριος δίδωσι τοῖς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον καταγγέλλουσιν, ἐκ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ζῆν. Those who so interpret these words as if *εὐαγγελίου*, in the last place, were taken in no other sense than it was in the first, namely, to note the function or calling of ministers, (as if the sense were no other but that the ministers of the gospel, whose calling it is to preach the gospel, should get their living by their calling of preaching the gospel,) make St. Paul the author of a lame and inconsequent similitude, whose *apodosis* answers not to his *protasis*. For what an *οὕτω*, what an “even so,” or analogy, would this be? The Levites lived of the holy portion or revenue of the temple, as their *ὄψωνιον*, or wages; even so the ministers

the last, how is it "even so" as the temple? If the gospel has nothing as *of right*, which it can *claim*, how is it "even so" as the temple? If the priests of the temple were sure of a tenth, and much more, and the ministers of the gospel not sure of a hundredth or thousandth part, or of any part at all, how is their provision "even so" as that of the priests of the temple? Did the Lord "ordain" that every man should pay what he pleased? But law that imposes no obligation is not law. Then, the "Lord's ordaining" amounts to nothing—*as'it has practically amounted to nothing in the case of hundreds of half-starved, and starved-to-death, ministers of the gospel.* The Lord, then, ordained tithes to the altar, and nothing to the gospel. What comparison then betwixt the altar and the gospel? The same as betwixt *tithes* and *nothing!* How then did the Lord ordain a maintenance for the ministers of the gospel, **EVEN SO** as for the ministers of the altar? There is no coherence, no comparison, no argument, no good sense, to be made out of this passage, unless we admit that the Lord has "ordained" *tithes* under the gospel as well as under the law. In the Apostle's days, there was no dispute as to whether tithes were to be paid. *Nor could there be any, at any time; for, to Christ, the priest after the order of Melchizedek, tithes were ever to be paid, for he ever liveth to receive them.* The only dispute that could be, was, *To whom shall they be paid?* To the priests of the temple, so long as there was a temple, and a service. But after that, to whom? That same Apostle who so plainly affirmed, and powerfully demonstrated the abrogation of the Mosaic economy, as a typical institute, **IS DIRECTED BY THE**

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of the gospel must live by their calling and function. The priests were maintained out of the share they had of the offerings of the altar; even just so the ministers of the gospel must live by their function of preaching the gospel. May not any one see that the apodosis answers not the protasis? For that speaks of the wages, this of the service for which wages is due. Well, therefore, as in the protasis the wages was compared with the work, so must it be in the apodosis too; and *ἐκ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ζῆν* must here express the wages, as *τὸ εὐαγγέλιον καταγγέλλουσιν* doth the work.' Mede's Works, Book 1, Discourse 21.

SPIRIT TO PROCLAIM TO ALL AGES AND GENERATIONS OF MEN THE UNIVERSAL AND PERPETUAL ORDINANCE OF THE ENTHRONED SAVIOUR, THAT WHAT FORMERLY BELONGED TO THE ALTAR, NOW AND FOREVER BELONGED TO THE GOSPEL; AND AS THE FORMER SUPPORTED ITS PRIESTS BY TITHES AND OFFERINGS, EVEN SO—IN THE SAME WAY—THE LATTER SHOULD SUPPORT ITS MINISTERS FOREVER.

Other Scriptures support this one. In Galatians, vi, 6, Christians are enjoined to give to their pastors a portion of all their goods: "Let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teacheth all good things;" or, as Beza properly renders it, "*In all his goods:*" *Ἐν πᾶσι ἀγαθοῖς*. Id est, quævis pro facultatum et necessitatis ratione. Neque enim vult Paulus dari omnia, sed omnibus modis gratos esse discipulos. Est autem Hebræa constructio cum præpositione מִן, (min,) quasi dicas ex omnibus bonis suis; sicut in vernaculo sermone dicimus, *De tous ses biens*." "The reasoning of the Apostle is as follows: As spiritual teachers communicate to their flocks a share of all their spiritual treasures, so ought their flocks to communicate to them a share of all their temporal treasures: As there is a full communication of spiritual benefits on the one hand, so ought there to be a liberal communication of temporal benefits on the other; *Ἐν πᾶσι ἀγαθοῖς*, *in omnibus bonis*, in all his goods. Has the member of a Christian Church reaped largely of the fruits of the field, let him impart largely to his spiritual instructor. Has he been successful in commerce, let him not be unmindful of him who daily offers prayers on his behalf, and whose life is devoted to seek his spiritual well-being. Has Providence unexpectedly blessed him with an increase of temporal wealth, let him communicate a share of it to him who has obtained for him those treasures which never perish, and which will not make to themselves wings and fly away. They knew that the law enjoined that those who served at the altar should receive, as the reward for their service, a tenth of all increase; and was it to be supposed that the gospel required that a less ample remuneration should be given to those who ministered in holy things? It might require them to give more, but

assuredly it could not possibly require them to give less." Thornburn. In his sermons on Deuteronomy, Calvin says: "God hath done us the honor to make us all Levites, according to this saying, that when God shall have restored his people, those which were Levites before shall then become priests, and all the common people shall become Levites. And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord out of all nations. . . . And I will also take of them for priests and for Levites, saith the Lord. For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain." Isa., lxvi, 20, 22. And this belongeth to the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ." The Apostle enforces the duty by a very solemn consideration: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked;" "That is," says Luther, "He doth not suffer himself to be mocked in his ministers; for he saith, 'He that despiseth you, despiseth me.' Also, he saith unto Samuel, 'They have not rejected thee, but me.'" Therefore, O ye mockers, although God defer his punishment for a season, yet when he seeth time, he will find you out, and will punish this contempt of his word and bitter hatred which ye bear against his ministers. Therefore ye deceive not God, but yourselves, and ye shall not laugh at God, but he will laugh at you. *Be not deceived.* Do not suppose that all is well without the substantial outward evidence of the existence of gratitude; *God is not mocked* by the mere empty expression of thanks; *for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, by expending all his means on his personal gratification, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit, by contributing liberally for the support of the Christian ministry, shall of the Spirit, through the instrumentality of their labors and prayers, reap life everlasting.*" Thornburn. "Satan can abide nothing less than the light of the gospel. Therefore, when he seeth that it beginneth to shine, then doth he rage and goeth about with all main and might to quench it. And this he attempteth two manner of ways. First, by lying spirits and force of tyrants; and then by poverty and famine. But because he could not hitherto oppress the gospel

in this country (praised be God) by heretics and tyrants; therefore he attempteth to bring it to pass the other way, that is, by withdrawing the livings of the ministers of the Word, to the end that they being oppressed with poverty and necessity, should forsake the ministry, and so the miserable people being destitute of the Word of God, should become in time as savage as wild beasts. . . . But they shall feel it, ere it be long, what calamities will follow this unthankfulness; for they shall lose both temporal and spiritual things; for this sin must needs be grievously punished." Luther.

In 1 Tim. 5. 17, we have another recognition of the principle, that as tithes are ever due to Christ, so it is his will that they be now devoted to the support of the Church and church officers: "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the Word and doctrine." *Double honor* was an equivalent expression for *double portion*. Double portion was assigned by the law to the first-born, to whom it belonged to act as priest of the family. This honor was transferred, first, to the Levite, and now to gospel-officers, as we see here. "Δίπλης τιμῆς ἀξιόσθωσαν: Let them be accounted (saith the Apostle) worthy of, or let them be deigned double honor. That by honor here, is meant *honorarium stipendium*, or a tribute of maintenance, is manifest by the following words which the apostle brings to enforce it: 'For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn; and, The laborer is worthy of his hire.' Who does not see what these proofs infer? The first of them he alleges also in the same argument, 1 Cor. ix. 9, where he adds: 'Doth God take care for oxen? or saith he it altogether for our sakes? (ours, namely, who preach the gospel). For our sakes no doubt this is written: that he who plougheth should plough in hope, and he that thresheth in hope, should be partaker of his hope.' The case is plain: 'Tis an Hebrew notion. To bring honor, that is, to pay tribute, or bring a present; as Apoc. xxi. 26, Οἰσουσί τὴν δόξαν καὶ τὴν τιμὴν τῶν ἐθνῶν εἰς αὐτήν: They shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it, to wit, the New Jerusalem. But what is meant by *double honor*? Some (as among the fathers,



S. Ambrose,) will have this honor to be the honor of maintenance and honor of reverence: But because the apostle's proofs here infer only maintenance, I take it to be meant in this place only of it; and as for *double*, there seems to be an allusion to the right of the first-born, to whom at first the office of priesthood belonged in their families, and into whose room the Levites were taken, and whom the presbyters of the gospel now succeed; as, therefore, they had a double portion among their brethren, in like manner should the presbyters of the gospel be counted worthy of double honor." Mede's Works, Book I., Discourse 19.

But "the presbyters of the gospel" are of two sorts: One that rule only; the other that preach as well as rule; as this passage shows. It shows, too, that both sorts, in the faithful discharge of their duties, are worthy of "double honor;" "especially" are those elders worthy of it, that preach as well as rule. Calvin, in his sermons upon this Epistle, (and in his sermons he expresses himself much more freely and fully than he does in his Commentaries,) says: "We have to mark here that St. Paul setteth down two kind of governors of the Church. He setteth down them that travail in the Word, and them that are to think upon the manners, and to watch over and have an eye to dissoluteness and lewd behaviour, as may be used, to the end there may be some polity, and the people not dissolute and out of frame. These are the two kinds of elders that St. Paul setteth down here: he calleth them all *elders* or *ancients*. . . . So, then, it followeth that there were elders which were not preachers, who had no office to teach nor to preach the Word of God. They must notwithstanding employ themselves to do that, that is their calling and office. And to what end served they? They had an eye to men's behaviour, to warn them that did amiss, and not to suffer public offences, to the end they might have authority, as men appointed in the behoof of the whole Church. And seeing it is so, which of us dareth now to attempt anything against *the order of the Holy Ghost*? And yet we see the devilish boldness that reigneth, that men make as great account of what is alleged out of the Holy Scripture, as if one should allege a tale out of Esop's Fables. This is the Christianity that

we use—which is a horrible monster. All they that go against this ordinance have no more religion than dogs. If they were Turks or Jews, it were not so much to be marvelled at. But they are worse than brute beasts. If we would examine our Consistory that we have, alas! how far are we from this so great perfection as was observed in the apostles' times! And yet there are some (as we see) that are angry at it; yea, the very shadow only of that which they know proceedeth from God, tormenteth them, as the devil shall be tormented, and shall make men more mad when God displayeth his virtue. And so there needeth nothing but this little shadow to vex the wicked and household enemies of God with all. I call them household enemies that make profession of the gospel, and show themselves more against it than Papists are." Speaking of the stinted support given, and that reluctantly, even to them that labor in Word and doctrine, he says: "The devil used this subtlety at the beginning; he went about to famish the good shepherds, to the end they might leave off, and there might be very few who would employ themselves to preach the Word of God. True it is, that as to the Baal-sacrificing priests among the Papists; it costeth them nothing to nourish them: this vermin shall be very well entertained: every man will take pains to nourish these idle bellies. And yet, to whom, notwithstanding, is this offered, but to the devil? But thus mad is the world. Yet, if there be any question to nourish them that preach the Word of God, they that have charge to maintain them, think their guts are plucked out of their bellies, and there is no other talk but to cut it off; and Satan has always his instruments that go about nothing but to take away the maintenance from ministers, to the end that therewithal the Church may have no spiritual food."

Had the ordinance of the tithe been faithfully observed in that day, the condition of the Church and of society would have been vastly different from what it was, and there would have been no occasion for the complaints of Luther and Calvin. But, the apostate Church of Rome, some three centuries before the Reformation, had succeeded, as we saw, in pulling down one of the main pillars of the kingdom of God, the doctrine of the

*Divine Right of the Tithe*, and in substituting for it the conveniently flexible and accommodating doctrine of *Competent Maintenance*; of which, anything, or nothing, could be made, as it pleased the powers that be, whether Pope or people; and under which system of "Competent Maintenance" the Church of God hath groaned and wailed, and sent an army of martyrs, unwept, unhonored, and unsung, from their secret and prolonged torture, up to the throne of God, from before the days of Luther and Calvin, even until now. Retribution came at last upon the Romish Church, at the Reformation. She had taught the doctrine that tithes, not being of divine right, could be alienated—for her own use; and the State was not slow to learn the lesson, and to appropriate her ill-gotten revenues to its own use. Thus, the State came to sustain the same relation to the Church of God, in this particular, that the Romish apostasy had done before, viz., that of a robber, wresting from her those tithes which God had devoted to her support. The effect upon society was disastrous. Incalculable evils resulted, which continue to afflict the world to this day. The observations of the historian, Alison, deserve to be pondered by every patriot: "The great sin of the Reformation was the confiscation of so large a portion of the property of the Church for the aggrandisement of temporal ambition, and the enriching of the nobility who had taken a part in the struggle. When that great convulsion broke out, nearly a third of the whole landed estates in the countries which it embraced was in the hands of the regular or parochial clergy of the Roman Catholic Church. What a noble fund was this for the moral and religious instruction of the people, for the promulgation of truth, the healing of sickness, the assuaging of suffering! Had it been kept together, and set apart for such sacred purposes, what incalculable and never-ending blessings would it have conferred upon society! Expanding and increasing with the growth of population, the augmentation of wealth, the swell of pauperism, it would have kept the instruction and fortunes of the poor abreast of the progress and fortunes of society, and prevented, in a great measure, that fatal effect, so well known in Great Britain in subsequent times, of the National

Church falling behind the wants of the inhabitants, and a mass of civilised heathenism arising in the very heart of a Christian land. Almost all the social evils under which Great Britain is now laboring, may be traced to this fatal and most iniquitous spoliation, under the mask of religion, of the patrimony of the poor, on occasion of the Reformation. But for that robbery, the State would have been possessed of lands amply sufficient to have extended its religious instruction for any possible increase of the people; to have superseded the necessity of any assessment for parochial relief or general instruction; and to have provided, without burdening any one, for the whole spiritual and temporal wants of the community. When we reflect upon the magnitude of the injustice committed by the temporal nobility in the seizure at that period of so large a portion of the funds of the Church, and observe how completely all the evils which now threaten the social system in Great Britain would have been obviated if that noble patrimony had still been preserved for the poor, it is impossible to avoid feeling that we too are subject to the same just dispensation which has doomed France to oriental slavery for the enormous sins of its Revolution; and that, if our punishment is not equally severe, it is only because the confiscation of the Reformation was not so complete, nor the inroads on property so irretrievable. This is but another example of the all-important truth, which a right consideration of history so uniformly demonstrates, that communities and nations are subject to moral laws; and that although inconsiderable deviations from rectitude may be overlooked as unavoidable to humanity, yet outrageous sin and irreparable evil never fail to bring upon their authors condign punishment even in this world. Individuals have souls to receive retribution in a future state of existence, but nations have no immortality; and that just retribution which, in the former case, is often postponed, in appearance at least, to another world, in the latter is brought down with unerring certainty upon the third and fourth generation." History of Europe, Chapter 78.

We have now considered the New Testament testimony to the duty of sustaining the Church and its officers by the tithes of

the gospel. The passage in 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2, has been supposed by some to imply that a *new law* exists for the Church now, different from the old law, and superseding it, viz., *the law of voluntary offerings on every Lord's-day*. This is just the old Romish theory of *Competent Maintenance*, with the new addition, that the instalments thereof are to be paid every Sunday. That giving *by system* will accomplish far more than giving without system, is evident to all. And therefore the system of "weekly contributions," which is now adopted by many churches, has accomplished far more than was done by the former irregular, occasional, mode. But does this system meet the necessities of the Church of God? Or can it do it? We all know by painful experience that it does not; and we see enough of it to know that it *cannot* do it. That free-will offerings have their place in the Word of God, and in the Church of God, is true, as we shall see. But to found the support of the kingdom of God, exclusively, upon a *system of free-will offerings*, is contrary to all analogy, contrary to the history of the Church, and especially is it so, under the new dispensation, when the Church requires enlarged revenues, in order to fulfil its vastly enlarged mission; its field being as extensive as the world.

It is objected by some, that it is inconsistent with the spirit of Christianity, and the freedom of sons, to prescribe a tenth, or any fixed portion of, our substance, as due to God. In answer to this objection, these things are to be considered :

1. The tithe, and the free-will offering, *together*, make up the complement of man's obligations, privilege, and duty, in the matter of giving unto God, under the gospel, in all its Dispensations, Patriarchal, Levitical, and New Testament. Not the tithe *or* the free-will offering, but the tithe *and* the free-will offering.

2. The tithe and the free-will offering represent distinct principles, and so the one can never take the place of the other. The tithe represents God's sovereignty and proprietorship, and shows that man is the subject of a kingdom. The free-will offering expresses the love of the subject for his King, and his grateful thanks for all the blessings of his kingdom. The former is *God-*

*ward*, the latter *manward*; and the two naturally harmonise in expressing the authority of God, and the love of man. The tithe being God's, and not ours; also, representing God's sovereign proprietorship, and man's dependence; cannot admit of commutation or substitution, by the free-will offering, but is as invariable as the principle it represents, and continues unchanged amid all the changing dispensations of the kingdom of God. No other offering can take its place. It stands alone. It is fixed, immutable. But the free-will offering is variable, not only in respect of one's resources, but also in respect of that dispensation of the gospel under which he lives. The New Testament Christian is bound to proportionably surpass the Old Testament Christian in the number and value of his free-will offerings, according to the superiority of the present dispensation in privilege and blessing. These voluntary offerings are unlimited, and afford the utmost scope for the fullest expression of the grateful love and generous devotion of a redeemed soul, who has been consciously made, under Christ, a king and a priest to God forever.

3. The divine sovereignty being a fundamental principle, underlying every economy, nature, providence, and grace, must find fit expression in each; and it is impossible that its representative ordinances in the kingdom of grace should be inconsistent with the spiritual character of its purest and most elevated dispensation. On the contrary, positive institutions have ever been ordained by God, as not only representing, but developing, man's highest moral affections: The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, the Sabbath, the rites of Sacrifice, Circumcision, the Passover, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper. So that in no age of the world, did God ever accept of moral obedience only, without the observance of some positive institution, as the test of that obedience, and the rule of acceptance or rejection of the worshipper. It deserves to be considered, how necessary, positive precepts are for developing the highest graces of the Christian. The exhibitions of sovereign authority afforded by these are indispensable for the conservation, education and elevation of Christian character, the nurture and development of Christian prin-

ciples, and the free exercise of all Christian affections. Without the hedge of positive institutions, the garden of the Lord would bear few fruits, and would soon run to waste. Without the Sabbath, private and social worship would decline. Without the tithe, comparatively few free-will offerings are laid upon God's altar. But the faithful observance of the universal law of the tithe, and the recognition of Jehovah's rights therein, God honors and rewards by increase of substance, and by larger measures of the graces of the Spirit, and by a clearer consciousness of the freedom of sonship, so that the Christian is led to abound more and more in loving contributions to the cause of that Redeemer who has bought him with his blood.

The *motive* power within—the new Spirit implanted in the breast—is not only not inconsistent with, but demands, the *regulative* power of instituted ordinances: otherwise, the love of the Christian would be no more than blind impulse. The former is not chilled, nor checked, but simply directed, by the latter. The Spirit of God, who enjoined the ordinance, is the author of the new spirit within the man, and he has established the connexion between the two, so that it is in the sphere of instituted ordinances that Christian life finds its nurture, development, and perfection.

4. "Christian life," and "Christian spirit," are, by many, improperly restricted to the present dispensation. But the Scriptures set forth the essential identity of the Christian life, whether under the Old Testament Gospel, or under the New. We fall into great mistakes, unless the Scriptural idea of the Christian life be kept steadily in view, viz., that it does not distinguish between the Jew and the Christian, but between the believer and the unbeliever, between the carnal and the spiritual man, whether he be Jew or Gentile. The prerogative of spiritual life was as truly, though not as fully, liberty, in the time of Moses as in the days of Paul. The Jewish was not a "carnal dispensation." It represented Christ. He was the head and the soul of the whole economy. The visible pointed to the invisible, the material to the spiritual. The dispensation was spiritual; though not in equal degree to that which succeeded it. Its

“elements” were the elements of spiritual truth, which imparted to it all its value. Under it, the decalogue, that summary of the moral law, was given. Under it, the saving influences of the Spirit were communicated to a vast multitude, which now compose the Church of the first-born in heaven. It began with the illustrious “father of the faithful,” and it ended with the illustrious “messenger of the covenant.” Its nature, its end, its results, its qualifications, its privileges, its ordinances, its sacraments, its precepts, its sanction, and its discipline, were spiritual. It required “truth in the inward parts.” “And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, and his statutes which I command thee this day for thy good? Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the Lord thy God’s, the earth also with all that therein is. Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you, above all people, as it is this day. Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart and be no more stiff-necked. For the Lord your God is God of gods, a great God, mighty and terrible, who regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward.” Dr. Graves well says: “Nothing is more cautiously guarded against in the Mosaic code, than resting in mere outward observances; nothing was more expressly and forcibly required, than internal devotion and practical piety. The Jew was called on ‘to love his God with all his heart, and all his soul, and all his might.’ ‘The words which I command thee this day,’ says the Legislator, ‘shall be *in thine heart*: and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, and talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.’ Could anything be more remote from mere outward observance, than that heart-felt and habitual reverence for the divine commands here required? How opposite to mere ceremonious obedience, is that which is enjoined in such precepts as these: ‘Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.’ ‘If ye will obey



my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.'” Dr. Hodge justly observes: “With the Christian, it is said, every day is holy, and one day is not more holy than another. It is not true, however, that the New Testament requires greater consecration to God than the Old. The Gospel has many advantages over the Mosaic dispensation; but that is not one of them. It was of old, even from the beginning, required of all men that they should love God with all the heart, with all the mind, and with all the strength; and their neighbor as themselves. More than this, the Gospel demands of no man. If it consists with the spirituality of the Church that believers should not neglect the assembling themselves together; and that they should have a stated ministry, sacramental rights, and the power of excommunication, and all this by divine appointment; then it is hard to see why the consecration of one day in seven to the service of God, should be inconsistent with its spiritual character. So long as we are in the body, religion cannot be exclusively a matter of the heart. It must have its institutions and ordinances; and any attempt to dispense with these would be as unreasonable and as futile as for the soul, in this our present state of existence, to attempt to do without the body.”

5. The objection we are considering lies equally against *the Sabbath*, as against the tithe. Why not object, (as some indeed do,) that it is inconsistent with the spirit of Christianity and the freedom of sons, to prescribe *a seventh of our time* as due to God; that such a hard, legal precept does not accord with the genius of the present dispensation: for, “we are not under *law*, but under *grace*,” and so deny the divine obligation of the fourth commandment, and base its observance upon expediency alone? The same misapplied Scripture that supports the one conceit, supports the other.

But, further, it is a misconception of the passage in Corinthians, to derive from it a warrant for *any system at all*. Let us consider it: “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.

Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." Here it is plain that the collection is ordered for one object only: "*the saints*;" as we elsewhere learn, *for the suffering saints at Jerusalem*. And the collection is to be made *on one of the Sabbaths*, (κατὰ μίαν σαββάτων.) Here, then, was an exigency to be met, a case of suffering to be relieved by a special collection, which was afterwards to be taken to Jerusalem. And when that end was accomplished, the direction ceased. To make this passage furnish a law for all Christendom, for the support of the Church, its interests, and its officers, to the end of time, is to put our own meaning into it, and a great deal of it, and not to take out of it the meaning of the Holy Ghost. Calvin observes, on this passage: "Luke relates (Acts xi. 28) that the prediction of Agabus, foretelling that there there would be a famine under Claudius Cæsar, gave occasion for alms being collected by the saints, with the view of affording help to the brethren in Jerusalem. For though the prophet had foretold that this calamity would be generally prevalent almost throughout the world, yet as they were more heavily oppressed with penury at Jerusalem, and as all the Gentile churches were bound, if they would not be held guilty of very great ingratitude, to afford aid to that place from which they had received the gospel, every one, consequently, forgetful of self, resolved to afford relief to Jerusalem. That the pressure of want was felt heavily at Jerusalem, appears from the Epistle to the Galatians, (ii. 10), where Paul relates, that he had been charged by the apostles to stir up the Gentiles to afford help. Now the apostles would never have given such a charge, had they not been constrained by necessity. Further, this passage is an evidence of the truth of what Paul states there also—that he had been careful to exhort the Gentiles to afford help in such a case of necessity. Now, however, he prescribes the method of relief; and that the Corinthians may accede to it the more readily, he mentions that he had already prescribed it to the churches of Galatia; for they would necessarily be the more influenced by example, as we are wont to feel a natural

backwardness to anything that is not ordinarily practised. Now follows the method by which he designed to cut off all hindrances and impediments. *On one of the Sabbaths.* The end is this: that they may have their alms ready in time. He, therefore, exhorts them not to wait until he came, as anything that is done suddenly, and in a bustle, is not done well, but to contribute on the Sabbath what might seem good, and according as every one's ability might enable—that is, on the day on which they held their sacred assemblies. The clause rendered *on one of the Sabbaths*, Chrysostom explains to mean, *the first Sabbath*. In this I do not agree with him; for Paul means rather that they should contribute, one on one Sabbath, and another on another; or even each of them every Sabbath, if they chose. *Treasuring up, according as he has prospered.* He calls every one to consider his ability: 'Let every one, according as God hath blessed him, lay out upon the poor from his increase.' "

Dr. Gill comments on this passage thus: "Upon some one first day of the week, or more, if there was a necessity for it, until the collection was finished; though the Syriac and Arabic versions render it *every first day*; but this is not the apostle's intention, that a collection should be made every first day, but only on some one day, or as long as it was necessary; for at the close of the verse he gives this reason for it, "that there be no gatherings when I come;" whereas, if this collection was to have been every first day, and to have been always continued, it must have been when he was present, as well as when absent; but this was only designed for a certain time and on a certain account."

A consideration of this passage, then, shows that so far from superseding the law of the tithe—which this very Epistle had previously shown to be still binding—it furnishes no other "law" to the Church, than the general law of ministering to suffering saints as often as their necessities require.

The examination of both the Old Testament and New Testament Scriptures conducts us now to this conclusion: That the ministry are immediately dependent upon God, and not upon the people for their support. They do not live upon the people.

They live upon God. They live upon the Lord's portion, not upon the people's. For tithes never belonged to the people, and so they could not give what never belonged to them. They belonged always to God. And so he demands of the people that they render unto him the things that are God's. Not to do this, is theft and robbery. Hence, he charges it upon the people: "Ye have robbed me in tithes and offerings." When his tithes and offerings are paid unto him, then he gives these to his ministers; so that it is the Lord's money, and not the people's money, that supports the Lord's Church and the Lord's ministers. "All the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's: it is holy unto the Lord." "The tithes of the children of Israel, which they offer as a heave-offering unto the Lord, *I have given to the Levites to inherit.*" Tithes are the Lord's portion. *He* gives them to his ministers. They receive them *from him, not from the people*; showing that they are his servants, not the servants of the people, and as an honorable Master *he* maketh honorable provision for them—not leaving them to be provided for by others. Thus the ministry are benefitted, by realising that it is unto God, not unto men, or unto themselves, they are to look; and thus are they preserved from all temptation to degrade themselves, by courting the rich and influential, and by hunting after popularity. The case of a pastor depending for subsistence on the free-will offerings of his flock, is nowhere recorded in Scripture. Even before tithes could be allotted to the primitive ministry, by reason of the continuance of the Temple and its service, they preferred to be sustained by the contributions of brethren at a distance, rather than by those of their respective flocks; being persuaded that such independence was essential alike to their own comfort, and the Church's edification.

Calvin, in commenting on Lev. xxvii. 30, says: "In these words, God shows that, in assigning the tithes to the Levites, he ceded his own rights, inasmuch as they were a kind of royal revenue; and thus he bars all complaint, since otherwise the other tribes might have murmured on being unduly burdened. He therefore appoints the priests as his receivers, to collect in

his name what could not be refused without impious and sacrilegious fraudulency." And on Deut. xviii. 1: "If it were disagreeable to the people that their revenue should be tithed, God came as it were between, and declaring that it was his property in his right as King, appointed the Levites to be his stewards and collectors for receiving it. There was then no ground for any one to raise a dispute, unless he chose professedly to rob God." Dr. Mayer justly remarks: "Neither saith he, that they should live upon those to whom they preach as depending upon alms, as the Anabaptists would have it, but upon the gospel. For so saith Theophylact well here: "The Lord hath so ordained, making laws conformable to the Old Testament, that, as it was said before, he that serveth about the altar must live of the altar; so here, he that preacheth must live, not of the disciples' wealth, but of the gospel, lest haply they should be proud that gave means unto him. These means then ought not to be alms, or a benevolence, but a certain set maintenance affixed to the ministry, which whilst the minister receiveth he may be beholden to no man, such as is the tithe of the increase of the fruits of the earth. For that these are the fittest means, appeareth by the Lord's own ordinance, allotting these to the Levitical priesthood, and though now there be a change of the service, yet there is no need to change the means of maintenance, but rather to set up the same order in all places, seeing whatever else may be devised, there will be inevitable inconveniences."

The divine method of Sustentation is calculated to keep alive in the minds of ministers a lively sense of their immediate dependence upon God, and immediate responsibility to him, as engaged, appointed, and paid by him. The natural effect of this is to lead them, not to be proud, but humble; not careless, but diligent; not carnal, but spiritual. Some think that an established, ample provision for the ministry would present a temptation to enter it, and to continue in it, from unworthy motives. But it is the love of money, not the amount, which corrupts the heart. The man after God's own heart was a man of wealth, and a mighty king. A provision appointed by God will not have the effect of turning his ministers away from God.

It leads them to realise the dignity and responsibility of their ministry, and the necessity of being faithful in the service of him who knows the thoughts, feelings, and motives of the heart, and who cannot be deceived by specious pretences. On the contrary, if ministers be looking to men, regarding themselves as in their power, then are they slaves in heart, and are of little use in the service of God; the debased humility, thence arising, being as great a hindrance to spiritual growth as vanity or pride. Whereas, their immediate dependence upon the Lord's treasury for support, makes them feel that they are free of all men, whilst servants unto all, and thus facilitates the impartial fulfilment of all their ministrations. The Rev. Thos. Binney, of London, (Congregationalist,) utters a truth, which has been realised in the experience of many a minister: "With the consciousness of a minister, as 'their servant for Christ's sake,' many are disposed to think him such for their own, and to occasion disorder by unreasonable demands on his time, attention, and docility. The freedom from priestly domination, laid as the basis of the system, will excite at times such a feeling of independence, as will expand into something like *popular tyranny*." To affirm that an independent ministry will be idle, or indifferent to the interests or affections of the people, is just to attribute the superior zeal and activity of the dependant ministry to the sordid and selfish motive of the love of money and their own worldly interest. So that the tendency to produce secularity, hypocrisy, and a mean connivance with the errors and the prejudices of the people, lies on the side, not of the tithe system, but of the voluntary system. If he who knows the frailty of our frame, saw it to be wise and necessary, in establishing his Church, to set his ministers free from the undue influence of the fear or favor of the people to whom they were to minister, it must be necessary still. If it was to secure the independent and unfettered administration of the ordinances of the Jewish Church, that God gave to the Levites a certain, fixed portion of property, the same reasons hold equally good for a similar provision for the Christian ministry. If in the case of civil rulers

it was considered important that they should be freed, as far as possible, from all temptation to pervert judgment; surely in the case of spiritual rulers, it is not less important that they should be freed from all temptation to handle the Word of God deceitfully, to do anything by partiality, to have respect unto the rich, and to despise the poor. The tithe-supported ministry can go forth and labor with a warm and generous interest to win souls to Christ, unalloyed with any selfish feeling of anxiety or care about their own worldly interest, for, in multiplying the number of those who lay up treasure in heaven, they add nothing to their own treasure on earth, and are thus set free from allurements to avarice and ambition. It may be said, that the trials resulting to the ministry, from inadequate support, are an advantage to it, as securing its purity, humility, etc. In the same way, persecution may be deemed an advantage to the Church; yet, none the less on that account does the Church pray to be delivered and defended from persecution. "Let us not hear of self-denial, spiritual-mindedness, and a heroic indifference to worldly things, as characteristic of the true minister of Christ. Self-denial does not mean starving. The spirituality of the father will not stop the cravings of his children when they cry for food; nor is there any heroism in preferring tatters and a hovel to decent clothing and lodging, when they may be had. It is very convenient, no doubt, for men who are adding house to house, field to field, thousand to thousand, to harangue in a religious style, on the necessity of a minister's imitating his Master, "who had not where to lay his head;" when the practical inference from all this is in favor of their own pockets. They are wonderfully concerned for spirituality and self-denial to be practised by their ministers; but as to their *own* share of these virtues; as to *their* parting with a pittance of *their* self to render him comfortable; why, that is another affair. It is one of the most wicked forms of hypocrisy to plead for the cultivation of a minister's heavenly-mindedness, by way of apology for cheating him out of his bread. The sin of the neglect complained of is not equally gross in all. In some,

it proceeds from thoughtlessness; in others, from incapacity to make a right estimate; but in most it is the fruit of downright covetousness." (Dr. Mason).

But it has been repeatedly asserted that the wealth which was poured into the Christian Church in the days of Constantine was the grand means of her corruption, and thus proved to be the greatest curse that had ever befallen her. And the pathetic, doleful apostrophe of Dante (*Inferno*, Canto 19,) continues to be repeated every generation, and with as much positiveness as if it were founded in truth!

" Ah Constantine! of how much ill was cause,  
Not thy conversion, but those rich domains  
That the first wealthy Pope received of thee."  
(*"Ahi, Constantin, di quanto mal fu matre,  
Non la tua conversion, ma quella dote  
Che da te prese il primo ricco patre!"*)

The extravagant, rash assertions of Dr. Wardlaw express the views of too many, who impose upon poor Constantine a burden heavier than he deserves to bear. "During the first three centuries," says he, "as every one knows, Christianity was not only unsupported by any of the civil powers of the world—it had to struggle, with hardly any intermission, against their determined and ferocious opposition. Instead of any secular temptations then existing to the profession of it, the very profession, from the circumstances in which it was made, was a satisfactory pledge of sincerity. Yet, during that period, when left to its own native energies and self-recommending excellence, to the zeal of those devoted friends, who loved not their lives unto the death, and to the accompanying agency of the Divine Spirit, the conquests of the truth were wide and wonderful. In this its early history, therefore, we have surely a fair specimen of what it might have continued to do, had it been allowed thus to go forward on its own resources." "The avowal of faith in Christ had previously been the way to proscription, imprisonment, and the cruelest forms of death: it now became the path to preferment and honor—the necessary qualification for imperial favor, and for the secular dignities and emoluments that waited on its



smile." "There was a a bribe held out to enter the Church." "It is needless to say what was the *immediate* and deplorable effect of this change. It was like opening a flood-gate, that had kept back the tide of corruption, and giving it a free influx; so that hypocrisy and worldliness entered in full inundation." "The hindrance to the development of this anomalous power, (the man of sin,) this strange and wicked mystery, was taken out of the way when the emperor and empire of Rome ceased to be pagan, and became (in the language of courtesy) Christian. It was then that every barrier to the progress of corruption was thrown down; and by its gradual, or rather rapid and accelerating increase, the anti-Christian Pope succeeded to the Christian Emperor; and thus, from an event which has too often been boasted of as one of the most splendid triumphs of Christianity, and most signal manifestations of divine favor to the Church, were introduced the terrors of papal tyranny, and all the ignorance and superstition, the degradation and misery and thralldom, of the dark ages." (Sermon on Civil Establishment of Christianity).

These are strong assertions—exceeding strong; let us see whether they are supported by proof as strong, or by any proof at all. Let Ecclesiastical History test the justice of the charge. Its testimony is, that very gross corruptions, both in doctrine, practice, and government, defaced the Church during the first three centuries.

*In the First Century*, heresies and immoralities abounded even in apostolic times. John declared, "even now are there many anti-Christ's." Paul, writing to the Philippians, complained: "All seek their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ's." And he affirmed that, even in his day, "the mystery of iniquity (the Papacy) doth already work." Peter speaks of members of the Church "denying the Lord that bought them, and through covetousness, with feigned words, making merchandise of you." Jude warns against "ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." The Corinthian Church was rebuked by Paul for tolerating a member guilty of incest, and for disgrace-

ful abuses, such as marked the pagan religious feasts, attending the celebration of the Lord's Supper. John Newton remarks on these enormities: "I apprehend that these instances of disorder cannot be paralleled by the most irregular proceedings in our time, amongst any people that hold the principles which I am at present engaged to vindicate." Milner, in his Church History, reviewing the history of the Church of Jerusalem, draws the following conclusion: "It appears how naturally the human heart departs from the faith of Christ before it is aware. The penetrating and zealous spirit of Paul was employed by the Divine goodness to uphold still the standard of truth. Many, no doubt, received benefit from his example; *but the glory of this Church was on the decline.*" But this declension was not confined to them, as is evinced by the Epistles to the seven churches of Asia. Doddridge, an Independent, observes: "The anti-Christian spirit began to work in the Christian Church then, in the pride and ambition of some ministers, the factious temper of many Christians, the corruption of many Christian doctrines, the imposing unauthorised ceremonies, the worship of angels, etc., *of all which things the Papacy availed itself, for acquiring and exercising its iniquitous dominion.*" In this age arose the Ebionites, denying the divinity of Christ; the Gnostics, denying his humanity; and the Nicolaitanes, "avowed and most abominable Antinomians." Mosheim, reviewing the characters and principles of the Christians of the first century, says: "The lives and manners of the Christians in this century are highly celebrated by most authors, and recommended to succeeding generations as unspotted models of piety and virtue; and if these encomiums be confined to the greatest part of those who embraced Christianity in the *infancy* of the Church, they are certainly distributed with justice. But many run into extremes upon this head; and estimating the lives and manners of all by the illustrious examples of some eminent saints, or the sublime precepts and exhortations of certain pious doctors, fondly imagine that every appearance of vice and disorder was banished from the first Christian societies. The greatest of those authors who have written concerning the innocence and sanctity of the

primitive Christians, have fallen into this agreeable error ; *and a gross error indeed it is, as the strongest testimonies too evidently prove.*" Now, if such corruptions prevailed so very early, and to such extent, then the corruptions of the period nearly three hundred years later, were not more than were to be expected from the gradual working of the causes of deterioration among the greatly increased numbers of the Christian Church, amid the general disorders of the Roman empire. If, under apostolic instruction, in an age of miracles, and under the uncommon outpouring of the Spirit of God, before the ardor of a first love could be cold ; under the scourge of persecution also, while the sword of death was suspended over their heads, so great corruptions took place ; then is it not very great perversion, or very great ignorance, of scriptural and historical testimony, to trace all the corruptions that accumulated through the progressive darkness and successive revolutions of a thousand years, to the supposed endowment of the Christian Church by Constantine ?

*Respecting the Second Century*, Milner truly says : "The same opposition to the Deity of Christ, or his manhood, and the same insidious methods of depreciating or abusing the doctrines of grace, continued in the second century, which had begun in the first, with this difference, that that they were now *multiplied, varied, complicated, and refined, by endless subtleties, and fancies*, in which the poverty of taste and genius, so common in a period when letters are declining, discovers itself no less than the Christian doctrine." "Though it be more common to represent the *most sensible* decay of godliness as commencing a century later, to me it seems already begun."

The doctrine of purgatory and of prayer for the dead sprung out of the mixture of human philosophy with the gospel. "Plato's notion, that only the souls of heroes and eminent persons ascend directly to the mansions of bliss, the Platonic Christians improved as a commentary upon the declarations of Christ, and imagined that only the souls of martyrs ascended directly to heaven, while the rest were shut up in some obscure place till Christ's second coming, or at least till they should be sufficiently purified from sin ; and hence they reckoned prayer

for them useful, if not necessary. This notion, further enlarged by men's carnal fancy, became a fertile source of unspeakable error and superstition." "The intercessory letters of noted confessors, or of persons appointed to martyrdom, often procured an indulgence for scandalous persons, which consisted merely in an abatement of some part of their ecclesiastical penance. *On this foundation, the Papal pretences to remit the proper guilt of sin, and free from divine punishments were afterwards built.*" "Scarce one article of religion was left uncorrupted by some one or other of the sects." (Brown's History of the Christian Church).

In the first two centuries, we have the worship of angels, of the images of Christ, and of the apostles, the reverence of the martyrs, the institution of the monks, the doctrines of purgatory, extreme unction, transubstantiation, and of human merit, the ambition and worldliness of the clergy, especially of the Romish bishop, fully developed—and though strenuously resisted by the truly righteous, yet gaining rapid and increasing strength, and bearing down all restraints. It has been justly affirmed, "that vastly greater corruptions of every kind prevailed in the Christian Church during the two first centuries, than have prevailed in the Reformed Church of Scotland during the nearly three hundred years of her existence." (Dr. James Gibson).

We proceed to consider the state of the Church in *the Third Century*: "During this *whole* century, the work of God, in purity and power, had been tending to decay. Notwithstanding this decline both of zeal and of principle, notwithstanding this scarcity of evangelical graces and fruits, still Christian worship was constantly attended, and the number of nominal converts was increasing; but the faith of Christ itself appeared now an ordinary business; and here *terminated*, or nearly so, as far as appears, that great first effusion of the Spirit of God, which began at the day of Pentecost. *Human depravity* effected throughout a general decay of godliness, and one generation of men elapsed, with very slender proofs of the spiritual presence of Christ with his Church." (Milner). The corrupting, disorganising, and demoralising causes in operation, were so nu-

merous and powerful, that the wonder is, not merely that Christianity had such great success, but that it existed at all. The statement of Dr. Wardlaw is not supported by facts: "The avowal of faith in Christ had previously (before the time of Constantine) been the way to proscription, confiscation, imprisonment, and the cruelest forms of death; it now became the path to preferment and honor." It did so, because Christianity had gradually acquired the ascendancy, and could no longer be neglected. It was not the result of the sudden and momentary sunshine of imperial favor. Neither is it true, that Christianity experienced, through Constantine, a sudden transition from proscription to preferment. "It is certain," says Mosheim, "that the rights and privileges of Christians were multiplied in this century much more than many are apt to imagine. In the army, at court, and indeed in all the orders of the nation, there was a considerable number of Christians who lived entirely unmolested; and what is still more, the profession of Christianity *was no obstacle to public preferment under most of the emperors that lived in this century.* It is true, as we have seen, that the progress of corruption was, from the first, steadily increasing, but, as Isaac Taylor justly observes: "The very same evils, far from being called into existence by the breath of imperial favor, had reached a bold height even while the martyrs were still bleeding!" The true cause of this corruption has been assigned by the historian of the Revolutions of Italy, Carlo Denina: "The sacredness of religion being mingled with the passions *inseparable from humanity*, and to which commonly the great majority of mortals are subject, Christians very frequently *professed the faith of Christ, and practised pagan manners.*"

We proceed now to ascertain what Constantine did for the Church, and what he did not do. His first act in favor of the Christians, while he himself was still pagan, was the famous edict of Milan, A. D. 313; in which not only a free toleration was given to the Christians, and to all, to adopt and follow what religion they pleased, but, "it was enacted that the places of worship and *public lands* which had been confiscated, should be

restored to the Church without dispute, without delay, and without expense." (Gibbon). The words of the imperial edict preserved by Eusebius, are, "that license be denied to none at all of following or choosing the observances or religion of the Christians; and that free power be granted to every one to apply his mind to that religion which he judgeth most congruous and agreeable to himself." In a second edict, he commands the restoration of the churches, promising indemnification out of the imperial liberality to those who might have purchased them: "Inasmuch as the said Christians are known to have had possession, not only of those places wherein they usually assembled themselves, but of others also, which did not particularly and apart belong to any private persons among them, but were the right of a society of them, you shall give order that all these places, according to the aforesaid law, be, without all manner of hesitancy, restored to the said Christians; that is, to every society and assembly of them." Another edict says: "Take care that all estates which did formerly belong to the right of the said churches (whether gardens, houses, or whatever else,) be immediately restored to them again." (DuPin). These extracts prove, 1. That the Church had public property in churches, and even in public lands, before the time of Constantine. 2. That, at this time, he gave no State endowment, and in commanding restitution, he simply performed an act of justice. 3. That all religions were equally tolerated. Another edict (313) *continues* the immunity of ecclesiastics, whom the heretics had caused to be charged with public taxes, contrary to the privileges which had been granted them—granting to Christians a privilege common to other teachers of religion. In the year 319, he confirmed that edict by another. In 330, an edict of a similar kind was promulgated in favor of the Jews. In 321, an edict for the due observance of the Sabbath was published, of which Eusebius says: "To those who had embraced the divinely-inspired faith, he allowed time and leisure for a free exercise of themselves, *according to the usage and order of God's Church*, to the end they might without impediment be present at the performance of the prayers." He commanded his heathen soldiers

to pray on Sabbath, and gave them a form of prayer which is addressed to the Supreme God, but makes no reference to Christianity. Another edict, the same year, *permits* all sorts of persons to leave their goods by testament to the Church. Eusebius, in his Life of Constantine, shows that what is called an establishment of the Church, is simply a declaration, by the emperor, of God's great blessings to himself; his obligations to promote God's cause; his declaration of liberty, protection, and deliverance from bondage and tyranny, to the Christians; the granting to the Church, "*if none of their kindred be left,*" the confiscated goods of martyrs, on the principle that the martyrs would themselves unquestionably have thus disposed of them to the Church which they loved to the death; the restoration of their possessions to the churches; an *exhortation* to worship God, and a letter against idolatry. The 56th chapter is headed: "How he *prays* that all persons may be Christians, *but forces nobody.*" This prayer contains the following sentence: "*Let those who withdraw themselves, have their temples of lies, since they desire them.*" In all this there is no Church Endowment, nor even Church Establishment. Gifts to the clergy, and to the people, after the fashion of the Roman emperors, were no doubt liberally bestowed by Constantine. "But," says Eusebius, "his princely magnanimity bestowed other and surpassing great favors upon the people that were strangers to our religion, and upon all nations." It does not appear, then, that Constantine did more than any "nursing father," of equal wealth and power, might, on the voluntary principle, be expected to do; nay, it does not appear that he did as much, in proportion, as some private Christians in modern times.

As to the pretended donation by Constantine to the Bishop of Rome, and his successors, of the sovereignty of that city, and of the provinces of the Western Empire, DuPin, a Romanist, pronounces it a forgery of the eleventh century, and that on evidence that cannot be questioned. "So great, however, was the influence of this forgery, that it continued to be received as the current belief for many centuries, and thus passed into the popular language of Europe, to an extent from which it has not

yet recovered." We have quoted the lament of Dante over it, and not long after Dante's time, "in the beginning of the fifteenth century, Laurentius Valla, who rescued literature from the grave, and restored to Italy the splendor of her ancient eloquence, wrote against the pretended donation of Constantine." (M'Crie's History of the Reformation in Italy).

No man of learning believes that such a gift was bestowed, yet still the delusion attaches to the name of Constantine; "and even the historians who furnish the very facts that disprove it, still speak in terms that would seem to give it credit. Hence much of the misapprehension that prevails upon this subject."

From the evidence adduced, are derived the following conclusions: "That vast corruptions existed previously to the time of Constantine: That almost every corruption in doctrine and practice that afterwards disfigured the Church, not only existed, but reached a bold height, previously to the Emperor's conversion: That in reality he never endowed the Church: That its wealth was acquired by voluntary contributions: That even the Imperial gifts were of this description, and that Constantine, on becoming a Christian, could hardly have done less in favor of the Church than he did: That whatever evils now existed, sprung from the voluntary principle, not from the connection of Church and State." \*

Contrast with the denunciations poured upon Constantine by ignorant writers, the glowing description by Eusebius of the happy condition of the Church under that Emperor: "A bright and glorious day, no cloud overshadowing it, did enlighten with rays of heavenly light, the churches of Christ over all the earth; and among all Christians there was an inexpressible joy, and a kind of celestial gladness." This illustrious achievement of divine grace and divine providence is celebrated in the 12th chapter of the Apocalypse, as the casting down of the dragon, amid the loud rejoicings of the heavenly host: "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the

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\* See the masterly essay of the late Dr. James Gibson, of Scotland, on "The Real Origin of Romish and Priestly Domination."



power of his Christ, for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of his testimony, and they loved not their lives unto death." "From Eusebius down to the present day, this prophecy has been applied, by a general consent of the best writers, to the triumph of Christianity over heathenism in the Roman Empire, which took place in the days of Constantine. . . . This is the change which many now regard as the fatal cause of all its reverses and corruptions, like a Trojan horse, fraught with ruin, admitted within the citadel of the faith. In their eyes it would be a time for weeping and mourning, and bitter lamentation. But how does it appear in the sight of the heavenly company before the throne? It is the signal for a sudden burst of triumphant thanksgiving! Loud voices are heard at once in heaven, to celebrate the triumph of the gospel, and the fruit of the martyrs' patient sufferings, in this earnest of the full and final victory of the truth of God. "Now is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ!" What contrast can be more entire than the aspect which this event assumes, weighed in the balance of modern theories, and the light in which it dawns on the blessed and glorified spirits of heaven! . . . It was not because this heavenly company were more ignorant than modern theorists, of those giant evils that were shortly to prevail, the corruption that would infest the visible Church, the renewed growth of apostasy, the bitter malice of Satan, and the woe to alight on the inhabitants of the earth and the sea, that they rejoice so freely; but because their zeal and love make them exult in this direct acknowledgment of the power and majesty of their Lord, and their spiritual wisdom enables them to distinguish between the triumph of the gospel, and the fresh and deeper machinations of Satan to neutralise its effects, and "out of good still to find means of evil." They contemplate the change, as it is in its own nature, tried by the laws of eternal truth and righteousness; and not as read in the mirror of a deceptive expediency; which might equally, because of the sin and misery that have prevailed for six thousand years, charge the morning stars

with folly, when they "sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." . . . They know that the sphere of the powers of darkness is now limited, though their activity may be increased, and can therefore exult in the outward progress of the Redeemer's kingdom. "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ." An ordinance of God, long usurped by the adversary, is now rescued from direct subjection to his power, and can no longer be turned, so openly as before, against the people of Christ. The idol-gods of lust and hate are driven from their thrones, and the Saviour, the Son of God, is publicly owned and exalted in the sight of the nations. How can the dwellers in heaven fail to rejoice at this signal triumph? They see in it the evident fruit of the martyrs' sufferings, a full proof of the invincible might of patient meekness, and of the prevailing efficacy of the blood of the Lamb. They see the standard of the Cross floating high above the rejected and degraded emblems of heathen idolatry, and the glorious promise fulfilled: "Thus saith the Lord to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers—kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the Lord that is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee." The Holy One of Israel has now begun to fulfil his faithful covenant to the Son of his love, and how can the dwellers in heaven fail to exult and shout for joy? This is indeed the high prerogative of those blessed spirits, to see the triumphs of divine power and grace in their original and native beauty unsoiled by any taint from the after sins and follies of men, which may seem to bring dishonor, even on the most precious gifts of God to our earthly vision. Their songs of thanksgiving are a continual rebuke to our cold and unbelieving philosophy, when we pause to weigh the consequences, and reckon up all possible results of evil, before we will praise our God, with joyful hearts, for the sweet dews and blessed sunshine of heaven." (Canon Birks.)

So far from being regarded as a calamity, the fulfilment of the glorious prediction, that Jesus Christ shall be acknowledged Prince of the kings of earth, should be hailed with exultation

by every Christian and every patriot. Sanctified power, sanctified honor, sanctified wealth, is what the Church needs, and what God has promised. The time will come when God will be no longer robbed by churches and by nations, in tithes and offerings. The question is not, Can the Church's *existence* be maintained without the tithe-system? For the life of the Church is indestructible: in the hottest fires of persecution, it is written in glorious characters upon her forehead: *Nec tamen consumebatur*. But the question is: Can the Church accomplish its *mission* without this system. Can its influence be brought to bear with power and effect not only upon the whole population of its own land, but upon the whole world, without it? Assuredly not. The Church cannot prove a praise and a blessing in all the earth, until the nations bring their riches and honor and glory into her. The Solomonic or Millennial age of the Church will be characterised by a combination of unexampled temporal and spiritual prosperity, by the culmination of a blended physical and moral magnificence and grandeur, when she shall shine forth, clear as the sun, fair as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners. That is her evident mission and destiny. And to that end, do all antecedent providences respecting her gravitate and tend. On her welfare depends the welfare of the world. "They who dream of advancing the secular interests of a nation, by robbing the sanctuary, will find that the golden vessels taken from the temple will not enrich the people, but that, like another stolen wedge of gold, it will prove the accursed thing in the camp. An invisible hand writes the fearful sentence on that nation's front: *Thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting.*" Dr. Owen well says: "No man hath any ground to reckon, that he can settle what he hath unto himself or his, where this chief rent unto God is left unpaid. He will, at one time or other, make a re-entry upon the whole, take the forfeiture of it, and turn the ungrateful tenant out of possession. And, among other things, this makes so many estates, industriously gotten; so speedily moulder away as we see they do in the world." The payment of the tithe is not to be regarded as an imposition, but as a high privilege, and a pledge by which God has obliged himself to pro-

vide for us, and to return us ten times as much even in this world, besides the end of our faith, which is *heaven*. Ponder the generous challenge of our covenant-God: "Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of Hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of Hosts." Hence, our tithe is called the *bread of our soul*. And God threatens it as a heavy judgment, that we shall not be permitted to pay our tithe to him: "They shall not offer wine-offerings to the Lord—their bread for their soul shall not come into the house of the Lord." Hosea 9. 4. The payment of the tithe secures God's blessing to the remaining nine parts, so that they shall be more valuable to the possessor than the whole would have been: *for if the first-fruits are holy, the lump is also holy*; the bulk is sanctified, protected and blessed by the blessing of God. Tithes are to be paid, not only of the product of the ground, but also, of the product of man's labor upon it. We are not allowed to separate the charges from the profits, and pay tithe only of the clear gain. For the product of man's labor being as much God's blessing, as the product of the ground, it is just and reasonable that he have his tribute from the one as well as from the other. God is jealous of his rights, and does not allow us to use our portion until we have first separated his own. "And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the self-same day that ye have brought an offering unto your God: *it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations, in all your dwellings.*" Lev. 23. 14. "Thus speak unto the Levites and say unto them, when ye take of the children of Israel the tithes, which I have given you from them for your inheritance, then ye shall offer up a heave-offering of it for the Lord, even a tenth part of the tithe. Thus ye also shall offer a heave-offering unto the Lord of all your

tithes which ye receive of the children of Israel; and ye shall give thereof the Lord's heave-offering to Aaron the priest. Therefore, thou shalt say unto them, when ye have heaved the best thereof from it, then," (and not before,) "it shall be counted as the increase of the threshing-floor, and as the increase of the wine-press"—(*i. e.*, to be eaten and made use of.) "And ye shall bear no sin by reason of it, when ye have heaved from it the best of it"—(*i. e.*, it would be a sin to eat of it, without first offering to God his due, viz., the tenth, v. 26.) "Neither shall ye pollute the holy things of the children of Israel, lest ye die." Num. xviii. 26, 28, 30, 32.

It was a sin even unto death, in the Levites, if they eat any of the tithes which the people gave unto them, before they had offered of the tithe of their tithe to God; which he gave to the priest, and was called the heave-offering of the Levites. Thus, our using any part before we have offered to God his part, is a polluting of the whole, as to us. For, it is sanctified to us, by our offering the tenth to God. *Till then, the whole is hallowed to God, and it is sacrilege to touch any part of it, till God's part be first taken from it.* And he that uses aught, before he has given to God his tenth, *steals it*, and robs all therest of God's blessing. And tries, if he can, to grow rich, whether God will, or not; which, if God permit, it is for his greater judgment. And God can exact it from him, or his posterity: upon whom we entail God's curse when we deprive God of his due. Even among the Gentile nations it was esteemed the greatest profanation and impiety to touch any part of one's goods, the whole being reputed as sacred to the gods, till by the offering of the tenth, the remainder was released, as sanctified, to the use of the owners. And this conviction was so general, as to occasion that proverbial description of a wicked person, *'Αθῦρα ἐσθίειν*, eating of that which had not been sanctified by the gods, having had their part first taken out of it. Calvin says, truly: "Idolators can find in their hearts to maintain their priests, and they spare no cost; but as for them that serve God purely, there is commonly no account made of them, as hath been seen in all times. We see how God himself complaineth that he was

defrauded both of his first-fruits and also of his offerings, and of all the residue which he had appointed to himself in his law. But if a man had inquired how the heathen behaved themselves towards their idols, he should have found that they were willing to spend the most part of their substance in their superstitions." (Sermons on Deuteronomy).

Let us never forget, that God has respect, not only to the *quantity*, but to the *quality* also, of our offerings, and requires the *best*; else, we not only forfeit his blessing, but secure his curse, for the contempt shown him. "Ye brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick; thus ye brought an offering: should I accept this of your hand? saith the Lord. *But cursed be the deceiver*, who hath in his flock a male, and voweth and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing: for I am a great King, saith the Lord of Hosts; and my name is dreadful among the heathen." Mark these solemn words, ye that think to deceive, or blind the eyes of God, as if he took no notice of your impious insults! The commands of Scripture are numerous, and cannot escape the observation of any, that whatever was offered to the Lord was *to be without blemish*; otherwise, it would be *an abomination to the Lord*. Deut. xvii. 1. "Ye shall bear no sin by reason of it, when ye have heaved from it *the best* of it." Num. xviii. 32.

The obligation of the tithe was universally acknowledged by the early Christian Fathers. Thus *Irenæus*: "We ought to offer to God the first-fruits of his creatures, as Moses says, Thou shalt not appear empty before the Lord." "They (the Jews) on this account consecrated their tithes to God; but those who have been made partakers of the liberty of the gospel, consecrate their all to God, cheerfully and freely giving whatever they possess, because they have a better hope, even the widow and the poor casting their all into the treasury of the Lord." "Instead of, Thou shalt not commit adultery, our Lord forbids us even to lust; instead of, Thou shalt not kill, he forbids us even to be angry; and instead of paying tithes, he commands us to sell all, and give to the poor; and not only to love our neighbors, but even our enemies. All which commands plainly

show that he came not to destroy, but to fulfil the law; not to diminish, but to increase and enlarge our obligations.”\*

*Origen*: “No one can justly and legitimately use either the fruits of the ground, or the produce of cattle, who has not offered first-fruits to God, that is, to the priests. And this law, like some others, I think it necessary should be observed, even according to the letter. For it is fit and profitable to offer first-fruits to the priests of the gospel also, for *so hath the Lord ordained that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel*. And that we may be further taught by God’s own words that these things are to be observed according to the letter, let us add what the Lord says in the gospels: Wo to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, who tithe mint; that is, ye pay tithe of mint, dill, and cummin, and omit the greater things of the law. Hypocrites, these things it behoved to be done, and not to have left those undone. But if you say, that he spoke these things to the Pharisees, not to the disciples, then hear him again saying to the disciples: Unless your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. What, then, he would have done by the Pharisees, much more abundantly would he have fulfilled by his disciples; but what he would not have done by the disciples, he would not command the Pharisees to do.”†

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\* “Offerre igitur oportet Deo primitias ejus creaturæ sicut et Moyses ait non apparebis vacuus ante conspectum Domini Dei tui.” “Et propter hoc illi quidem decimas suorum habebant consecratos: qui autem perceperunt libertatem omnia quæ sunt ipsorum ad dominicos decernunt usus, hilariter et libere dantes ea, non quæ sunt minora utpote majorem spem habentes; vidua illa et paupere hic totum victum suum mittente gazophilacium Dei.” “Et propter hoc Dominus pro eo quod est, non mæchaberis, nec concupiscere præcepit: et pro eo quod est, non occides, neque irasci quidem: et pro eo quod est decimare, omnia quæ sunt pauperibus dividere; et non tantum proximos sed etiam inimicos diligere. Hæc autem omnia, quemadmodum prædiximus, non dissolventis erant legem, sed adimplentis et extendentis, et dilatantis in nobis.” *Adversus Hæreses, Lib. 4, Cap. 34 and 27.*

† “Et hoc est quod docemur ex lege quia nemo licite nec legitime utatur fructibus quos terra produxit, nec animantibus quæ pecudum protulit partus nisi ex singulis quibusque, Deo primitiæ, id est sacerdotibus, offerantur.

*Cyprian* blames the men of his day for the cooling of their love, and shows how far they had fallen short of the zeal of primitive Christians: "They then sold their houses and lands, and laying up for themselves treasures in heaven, they offered the price to the apostles, to be distributed for the use of the poor; but now we do not even give tithes of our patrimony, and when God commands us to sell, we purchase and amass."\*

*Gregory Nazianzen*: "It is just and pious to consecrate the first-fruits of the barn-floor and wine-press to God, because both we, and all we have, proceed from him." (Epist. 80).

*Hilary* says that our Lord told the Pharisees they ought to pay tithes according to the law, "because it was useful in order to those things which were to be settled afterwards by that pattern." (Explan. in Matth).

*Chrysostom*: "Abraham, in paying tithes to Melchizedec, is still an instructor to all, to express much gratitude, and to bring in the first of what God gives." "O what a shame is this, that what was no great matter among the Jews, should be pretended

Hanc ergo legem observari, etiam secundum literam, sicut et alia nonnulla, necessarium puto. Decet enim et utile est etiam sacerdotibus Evangelii offerri primitias, *ita enim et Dominus disposuit, ut qui Evangelium annunciant, de Evangelio vivant, et qui altari deserviunt, de altari participent.* Et ad huc ut amplius hæc observanda etiam secundum literam, ipsius Dei vocibus doceamur addemus ad hæc: Dominus dicit in Evangeliiis: Væ vobis, Scribæ et Pharisei hypocritæ qui decimatis mentham, hoc est decimam datis menthæ et cymini et anethi, et præteritis quæ majora sunt legis. Hypocritæ, hæc oportet fieri et illa non omitti. Quod sidicas quia hæc ad Phariseos dicebat, non ad discipulos, audi iterum ipsum dicentem ad discipulos: Nisi abundaverit justitia vestra plus quam Phariseorum et Scribarum non intrabitis in regnum cælorum. Quod ergo vult a Phariseis multo magis et majore cum abundantia vult a discipulis impleri; quod atem fieri a discipulis non vult nec Phariseis imperat faciendum." In Numeros, Homilia II.

\*"Domos tunc et fundos venundabant, et thesauros sibi in cælo reponentes, distribuenda in usus indigentium pretia apostolis offerebant. At nunc de patrimonio nec decimas damus, et cum vendere jubeat Dominus, eminus potius et ægemus." De Unitate Ecclesiæ.



to be so among Christians! If there was danger then in omitting tithes, think how great it must be now.”\*

*Ambrose*: “It is not enough that we bear the name, if we do not the works of Christians: the Lord commands our tithes to be paid every year from all fruits, cattle, etc. And it is also written: ‘Give tithes of all your labor and of all your flocks, and I will open the windows of heaven and will multiply your crops, and ye shall have an abundant vintage, and health shall be in all your dwellings. But if ye will not give your tithes, saith the Lord, I will send upon you hail, and hoar-frost, and storms, and I will destroy all your labor: Nine parts he has given for your own use, and if you do not give tithes, you will be reduced to a tenth.’ “Whoso remembers he hath not faithfully paid his tithes, let him now amend what he has omitted. What is it to pay tithes faithfully, but that you never offer the worst nor the least to God, either of your corn, wine, or of the fruit of your trees, or of your cattle, or of your garden, your merchandise, or your hunting? Of all the substance which God hath given a man, he hath reserved a tenth part to himself, and, therefore, it is not lawful to retain that which God has set apart for himself. He has given to you nine parts, but he has reserved the tenth to himself; and if you give not the tenth part to him, he will take away from you the nine parts. If any one recollects that he has taken anything from any one unjustly, let him make amends by restoring that which he has unjustly taken away. For whoever is not willing to give those tithes to God which he has kept back, and the individual who is not desirous to restore that which he has unjustly taken away from him, fears not God, and is ignorant what true repentance and confes-

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\*“Μελχισεδέκ, καὶ δεκάτην αὐτῷ ἀφώρισεν ἀπὸ τοιούτων ὧν ἐπέφερετε, ἐντεῦθεν ἤδη διδάσκαλος ἅπασι γινόμενος, πολλὴν ἐπίδεικνυσθαι ἐγγνωμοσύνην, καὶ τὰς ἀπαρχὰς προσάγειν τῶν παρα τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν παρασχεθέντων.” Tom. I., Hom. 35. “Πόσης αἰσχύνῃς τοῦτο γέμει, εἰ ὃ ἐπὶ τῶν Ἰουδαίων οὐκ ἦν θαυμασμοῦ, τοῦτο ἐπὶ τῶν χριστιανῶν θαυμάσιον τὸν γεγονεν. εἰ τέτε κινδῶνος ἦν τὸ δεκάτας ἀπολιπεῖν ἐν νόμῳ ὅσον ἔστι νόμῳ;” Tom. II., Ad Eph. Hom. IV.

sion mean."\* *Jerome*: "Know ye not that they who labor in the temple, eat of the things of the temple? And that they who serve the altar, partake with the altar? As among the Jews, according to Old Testament usage, so now he confirms this example, by claiming anew the same things." "If our Lord, in others, is visited in prison, and tended when sick, and, when hungry and thirsty, receives food and drink, why may he not also, in his ministers, receive tithes, and, if withheld, be himself deprived of his own part." "If I be the Lord's portion, and a part of his inheritance, and have no part among the other tribes, but, as a priest and Levite, live of tithes, and, serving the altar, am sustained by the altar, having food and raiment, with these will I be content, and, naked, follow the naked cross."†

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\* "Non nobis sufficit quod nomen Christianum præferamus, si opera Christiana non facimus: decimas nostras annis singulis de cunctis frugibus, pecoribus, etc., præcipit erogandas Dominus Scriptum quoque est: Date decimas de omni labore vestro, et de omnibus pecoribus vestris, et ego aperiam vobis cataractas cæli, et multiplicabuntur messes, et vindemiæ vestræ erunt vobis in abundantiam; insuper et sanitates in domibus vestris. At si non dederitis decimas, dicit Dominus, mittam grandinem, et pruina, et tempestates super vos et tollam omnem laborem vestrum. Novem partes vobis tributæ sunt, sed qui decimas dare noluistis, ad solam decimam revertetis." De Futuro Universali Judicio.

† "Quicumque recognoscit in se quod fideliter non dedit decimas suas, modo emendet quod minus fecit. Quid est fideliter decimas dare, nisi ut nec pejus, nec minus aliquando Deo offerat aut de grano suo aut de vino suo, aut de fructibus arborum aut de pecoribus, aut de horto, aut de negotiis, aut de venatione sua? Quia de omni substantia quam Deus homini donat decimam partem sibi servavit. Tibi dedit novem partes, sibi vero reservavit decimam partem; et si tu non dederis Deo decimam partem, Deus tollet a te novem partes. Item si quis recognoscit in se quod ab aliquo tulit aliquod injuste, emendet, reddendo quod injuste tulit. Nam qui non vult Deo reddere decimas quas retinuit, et homo non studet reddere, quod injuste ab eo abstulit, non timet adhuc Deum; et ignorat quid sit vera penitentia veraque confessio." Post primam Dominic. Quadrag.

† "Nescitis, quoniam qui in sacrario operantur, quæ de sacrario sunt, edunt? Et qui altari deserviunt, cum altario participant?" Apud Judæos secundum consuetudinem veteris Testamenti, etiam hoc exemplum, eadem repetendo, confirmat." In Epis. I Cor. "Si enim per alios visitatur in

*Augustine.* "God, who has given us the whole, has thought it meet to ask in return the tenth from us, not assuredly for his benefit, but for our own. For thus he hath promised by his prophet, saying: 'Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour out upon you an abundant blessing.'" "If you have not tithes of the produce of the earth, like the husbandman, whatever be the source whence you derive your livelihood, it is of God, and tithes ought to be paid to him from whatever be your occupation, whether war, or merchandise, or some handicraft trade. Tithes are required as a debt, and whoever refuses to pay them invades what belongs to another; and as many poor as die of hunger in the place where he dwells, who pays no tithes, so many murders shall he answer for at God's tribunal, who reserves to his own use that which God gave to the poor; so that he who would procure either pardon of sins or reward, let him give tithes, *and out of the nine parts endeavor to give alms*; in such a manner, however, that what remains after living moderately may not be expended in luxurious indulgence, but may be laid up in the heavenly treasury by means of alms to the poor." "Take some part out of your profits; if you will, a tenth, though that is a small portion. For it is said, the Pharisees gave tithes: thus, *I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess*; and what saith the Lord? *Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.* They whose righteousness you are required to exceed, gave a tenth, but you do not give a thousandth part. And how then can you excel those whom you do not even equal?" "*Render, it is said, to Cæsar the things*

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carcere, et ægrotus suscipitur, et esuriens sitiensque cibum accipit atque potatur, cur non in ministris suis ipse decimas accipiat, et si non dentur parte sua ipse privetur." In Malachiam. "Si autem ego pars Domini sum, et funiculus hæreditatis ejus, nec accipio partem inter ceteras tribus, sed quasi Levita et sacerdos vivo de decimis, et altari serviens, altaris oblatione sustentor, habens victum et vestitum, his contentus ero, et nudam cruce[m] nudus sequar." Epist. 2, ad Nepotianum.

which are Cæsar's, and to God the things which are God's. Our forefathers, on this account, abounded in all plenty, because they gave tithes to God and tribute to Cæsar; but since devotion to God is decreased, the taxes of the State are raised upon us. We would not let God share in our tithes, and now all is taken from us. The exchequer devours what we would not give to Christ."\*

But the warnings of Augustine were in vain. And so, the retributive providence of a jealous God let loose upon the guilty nations and churches, early in the fifth century, like an impetuous torrent, the Goths and Vandals, who totally ruined many

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\*"Deus enim qui dignatus est totum dare decimam a nobis dignatur repetere, non sibi, sed nobis sine dubio profuturam, sic enim per prophetam ipse promisit, dicens: *Inferte, inquit, omnem decimam in horreum meum ut sit cibus in domo mea, et probate me in hoc dicit Dominus, si non aperuero vobis cataractas cæli, et dederò vobis fructum usque in abundantiam.*

Quod si decimas non habes fructuum terrenorum, quod habet agricola, quodcumque te pascit ingenium, Dei est, et inde decimas expetit unde vivis; de militia, de negotio, et de artificio redde decimas.

Decimæ enim ex debito requiruntur, et qui eas dare noluerit, res alienas invasit; et quanti pauperes in locis ubi ipse habitat, illo decimas non dante, fame mortui fuerint tantorum homicidiorum reus ante tribunal æterni iudicis apparebit, quia a Domino pauperibus delegatum suis usibus reservavit. Qui ergo sibi aut præmium comparare, aut peccatorum desiderat indulgentiam promereri, reddat decimam, et de novem partibus studeat eleemosynam dare pauperibus; ita tamen ut quicquid excepto victu medioeri, et vestitu rationabili super fuerit, non luxuriæ reservetur, sed et in thesauro cælesti per eleemosynam pauperum reponatur." Ser. 219. De Reddendis Decimis.

"Exime aliquam partem reddituum tuorum. Decimas vis? Decimas exime, quanquam parum sit. Dictum est enim, quia Pharisei decimas dabant, *Jejuno bis in Sabato, decimas do omnium quæ possideo*; et quid ait Dominus, *Nisi abundaverit justitia vestra plusquam Scribarum et Pharisæorum non intrabitis in regnum cælorum.* Et ille super quem debet superare justitia tua decimas dat, tu autem nec millesimam das. Quomodo superabis eum cui non æquaris?" In Psalmum cxlvi.

"Redde, dictum est, *Cæsari quæ sunt Cæsaris, et Deo quæ sunt Dei*; majores nostri ideo copiis omnibus abundabant, quia Deo decimas dabant, et Cæsari censum reddebant. Modo autem quia discessit devotio Dei, accessit inductio fisci. Nolumus partiri cum Deo decimas, modo autem totum tollitur. Hoc tollit fiscus, quod non accipit Christus." Hom. 48.

churches, and among them sacked Hippo, in Africa, immediately after the death of Augustine, who was bishop of that city.

We proceed now to furnish some, of the many, testimonies to the obligation of the tithe, given by the Councils of the Christian Church.

• The *Apostolic Canons*, consisting of eighty-five laws for the government of the Christian Church, though not the work of the apostles, yet, as universally conceded, are of great antiquity, being a collection of the canons of several churches enacted before those made by the Council of Nice.

These Canons, after prohibiting the bringing any other fruits to the altar, except such as were useful for the sacrament, direct, (3d and 4th canons,) that the first-fruits of other things be sent to the bishop's house, for the use of the bishop and presbyters; and that the bishops and presbyters shall distribute them to the deacons and other clergy: "Offerri non liceat aliquid ad altare præter novas spicas, et uvas et oleum ad luminaria, et thymiana, idest, incensum tempore quo sancta celebratur oblatio." "Omnium aliorum primitiæ Episcopo et Presbyteris domum mittantur, non super altare. Manifestum est autem quod Episcopus et Presbyteri inter Diaconos et reliquos clericos eas dividunt."

*The Council of Ancyra* (A. D. 314) designates the offering of first-fruits as the Lord's part (το Κυριακον,) and forbids the alienation thereof.

*The Council of Gangra* (A. D. 324) which condemned the Eustathian heretics for taking to themselves and their own party, as saints, the ecclesiastical offerings of fruits, which of old were given to the Church, pronounces an anathema against all who gave or received them out of the Church, without the consent of the bishop, or the individual appointed by him as his deputy: "Ἐἰ τις καρποφορίας ἐκκλησιαστικὰς ἐθέλοι λαμβάνειν, ἢ δίδόναι ἔξω τῆς ἐκκλησίας, παρὰ γνώμην τοῦ Ἐπισκοποῦ, ἢ τοῦ ἐγκειρισμένου τὰ τοιαῦτα, καὶ μὴ μετὰ γνώμης αὐτοῦ ἐθέλοι πράττειν, ἀνάθεμα ἐστω."

*The First Council of Orleans*, (A. D. 511,) after declaring that

other offerings shall belong exclusively to the bishop, enacts, in accordance with the custom which prevailed in the Church of Rome, that every year the fourth part; or every fourth year the whole of the tithes, shall be given to him: "De his, quæ pa-

rochiis in terris, vineis, mancipiis, atque peculiis quicumque fideles obtulerint, antiquorum canonum statuta serventur, ut omnia in Episcopi potestate consistant. De his tamen, quæ in altario accesserint, tertia fideliter episcopis deferatur, duæ clericis Decimæ autem, secundum quosdam, singulis annis tertia pars, aut in tertio tota; sed tamen nos sequentes Romanos, singulis annis quartam partem, aut in quarto anno, totam Episcopi recipiant." *The Second Council of Mascon*, (A. D. 585,) designing the rectifying disorders, and removing corruptions, passed the following decree: "Omnes igitur reliquas fidei sanctæ Catholicæ causas quas temporis longitudine cognovimus deterioratas fuisse, oportet nos ad statum pristinum revocare; ne nobis simus adversarii, dum ea, quæ cognoscimus ad nostri ordinis qualitatem pertinere, aut non corrigimus, aut (quod nefas est,) silentio præterimus. Leges itaque divinæ, consulentes sacerdotibus ac ministris ecclesiarum pro hereditatis (*vel. hereditaria*) portione omni populo præceperunt decimas fructuum suorum locis sacris præstare, ut nullo labore impediti per res illegitimas (*al. horis legitimis*) spiritualibus possint vacare ministeriis. Quas leges Christianorum congeries longis temporibus, custodivit intemeratas. Nunc autem paulatim prævaricatores legum pene Christiani, omnes ostenduntur, dum ea quæ divinitus sancita sunt, adimplere negligunt. Unde statuimus ac decernimus, ut mos antiquus a fidelibus reparetur; et decimas ecclesiasticas famulantibus ceremoniis populus omnis inferat, quas sacerdotes aut in pauperum usum, aut in captivorum redemptionem prærogantes (*al. quibus prærogatis*) suis orationibus pacem populo ac salutem impetrent. Siquis autem contumax nostris statutis saluberrimis fuerit, a membris ecclesiæ omni tempore separetur." *The First Council of Seville* (A. D. 590) decreed that rich and poor do rightly offer all the first fruits and tithes, as well of cattle, as of fruits, unto their churches: "Omnes primitias et decimas tam de pecoribus quam de frugibus, dives simul et pauper ecclesiis suis recte offerant, dicit enim Dominus per prophetam, Decimas omnes inferte in horreum; omnis rusticus et artifex quisque de omnibus negotiis justam decimationem faciat; si quis autem omnia non decimaverit, prædo Dei est et fur et latro, et male-

dicta quæ intulit Dominus Caino non recte dividenti congeruntur." *The Fourth Council of Toledo* (A. D. 633) decreed that the bishops shall have the third part, as well of oblations of tithes, as tribute of fruits: "Juxta priorum autoritatem Conciliorum tam de oblationibus quam de decimis, tributis ac frugibus tertiam consequantur." *The Council of Friuli* (A. D. 791) asserted the perpetual obligation of tithes in the following explicit and impressive terms: "De decimis vero vel primitiis salvis scilicet allegoricarum rerum mysteriis sacramentis, nihil melius puto docere, quam quod scriptum est in Malachia propheta, dicente Domino: Inferte omnem decimam in horreum meum ut sit cibus in domo mea, et probate me in hoc, dicit dominus, si non aperuero vobis cataractas cæli, et effudero vobis benedictionem usque ad abundantiam, et increpabo pro vobis devorantem et non corrumpet fructum terræ vestræ, nec erit sterilis vinea in agro, dicit Dominus exercituum, et beatos vos dicent omnes gentes. Sed quia indignatio et ira Dei manet super gentem vel populum, qui hoc Domini preceptum toto corde et bona voluntate non adimplet, super præmiserat, diceus: Si affiget homo Deum, quid vos configitis me? Et dixistis in quo configimus te? In decimis et primitiis vestris. In penuria vos maledicti estis et me vos configitis gens tota. Qua de re quis non alacri et læto pectore offerat Deo ut possit illam promeri benedictionem, de qua dicit: Effundam super vos benedictionem meam usque ad abundantiam? Vel quis non timeat vel contremiscat illam maledictionem, quam minatur nolentibus offerre: Vos maledicti estis, et me vos configitis gens tota? Et si forte nobis non creditis, vel nos despiciamus, quia homines sumus, credite ergo Domino dicenti, qui mentiri non potest, qui utrumque promisit et maledictionem in hoc seculo et in futuro nolentibus obedire ejus mandatis, et benedictionem, et abundantiam, et salutem animæ et corporum, bona voluntate obtemperantibus ejus imperiis, et in præsentī seculo se daturum, et in futuro. Non enim exigit Deus a te quæ non habes, nec pensat quantum tribuas; sed in quantum habes, simplici corde de suis, non de tuis donis, da Domino. Quia omne quod sumus, vivimus et habemus, ejus est, et de ipsius benignitatis suscepimus manu. Considerat namque qua

mente et non quantum in ejus sacrificium offeras, qui potens est, et in præsentī seculo centuplum, et in futuro vitam tribuere sempiternam, qui vivit et regnat cum Patre et Spiritu Sancto et nunc et semper per cuncta secula seculorum. Amen."

Numerous decrees of subsequent Councils show the same sentiments to be universally entertained throughout the Church; and the language in which they are couched, proves that the injunction respecting tithes was no innovation, no enforcement of a new and previously unknown or unrecognised obligation, but one which must have been acknowledged in all previous ages of the Church. Such expressions, for instance, as: "Dicimus et firmiter præcipimus secundum divinas leges, non ab hominibus sed ab ipso Deo institutas." "Decimas Deus in signum universalis dominii sibi reddi præcipit, suas esse decimas et primitias asseverans." "In signum universalis dominii, quasi quodam titulo speciali, sibi Dominus decimas reservavit." "Decimare cogantur ecclesiis quibus de jure debentur." "Decimationem proventus priori ecclesiæ legitime assignatam." "Locus ubi decimæ antiquitus fuerint constitutæ." "Decimæ quæ singulis dantur ecclesiis." "Res dominicæ et dominica." "Substantia et Dei census." "Patrimonia pauperum." "Tributa egentium animarum." "Stipendia pauperum, hospitem, peregrinorum;" with many others of a similar nature, prove that the obligation was recognised in the Christian Church from the earliest ages, and acknowledged to rest, not upon the authority of ecclesiastical canons, but upon the sure basis of the Word of God.

This is shown also by the examination which, at this period, it was usual for penitents to undergo: "Hast thou at any time neglected to pay thy tithes to God, which God himself ordained to be given? Or if thou hast done so, or consented to the defrauding of the Church therein, first restore to God fourfold the tenth of all kinds of possessions, as well personal as prædial."

So universal was the acknowledgment of the divine origin and perpetual obligation of tithes, that only one writer was found, Leutardus, a Frenchman, who lived about A. D. 1000, who had the effrontery to deny it: "decimas dare dicebat omnimodis esse superfluum et inane." But he gained no converts, and his



opinion was condemned by the Church as a doctrine no less base than damnable; in consequence of which, he felt so mortified, that life became an intolerable burden, and in a fit of despair he drowned himself.

We have already seen how the Romish Church, the Mother of Abominations, laid its sacrilegious hand upon the tithes of God, alienated them from their divinely-appointed objects, and appropriated them to her own aggrandizement, whereby she hastened her full development as the Man of Sin, speaking great words against the Most High, and thinking to change times and laws, opposing and exalting himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Corrupt practice needed fit justification by corrupt doctrine, and so the divine obligation of the tithe was, at length, annulled, under the teachings of schoolmen and canonists, who contended that, not the tenth, nor any other definite proportion, but "competent maintenance" only, was due to the ministers of God. These sentiments were advanced in England by one William Russel, a Franciscan friar, for the purpose of benefitting the mendicant orders at the expense of the parochial clergy. His opinions were condemned by a Provincial Council held in London, A. D. 1425, at which the Archbishop of Canterbury presided; and letters were written on the occasion by the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, which manifest the sentiments of the English Church on the subject of tithes. The University of Cambridge, having first stated the scriptural grounds of the perpetual obligation of tithes, thus proceeds: "*Cernitis nunc, patres eximii, quam valide quamque stabiliter et supra petram ipsam fundatur præstatio decimarum, quarum utique fundamentum incassum licet, seu si non aliter, incendia jactans, suffodere, et magna ex parte subvertere nititur quidam Francisci privignus, qui ex Hebræorum spoliis Ægyptios ditare desiderans, et quod apud Malachiam extat, in decimis Deum ipsum configere non veritus, stulte asseruit, stultiusque defendit: 'Decimas personales de jure divino ecclesiæ ministris nequaquam deberi; sed ubi consuetudo contraria non fuerit, in pauperum ac alios pios usus per ipsos ad*

libitum laicos posse solvi.' Quam siquidem sententiam una cum ejus assertore nuper unanimi nos consensu condemnasse meminimus. Sed non sufficit Helizai zelum habentibus unicus sagittæ tractus, nisi usque ad consummationem funditus Syria jaculetur. Ut ergo morem geramus, dicimus et tenemus, ipsas personales decimas, sicut et prædiales, ex divinæ legis præcepto, ministris ecclesiæ, curam animarum gerentibus, debitas esse; nec aliquam consuetudinem etiam contrariam ab obligatione eas reddendi solvere posse; cum talis obligatio super utroque jure, naturali scilicet ac divino, firmiter sit fundata."

A similar rebuke was administered by the University of Oxford to the teachings of the Franciscan friar: "Dicimus et firmiter concipimus quod decimæ personales tam ex præcepto juris divini quam sanctorum patrum traditionibus, sub auctoritate ecclesiæ cum concordi juris judicio debentur ecclesiis et earum ministris, curam habentibus animarum, et sacramenta ministrantibus sub auctoritate ecclesiæ. Magna namque est sacrosanctæ ecclesiæ auctoritas, extra quam fides plane perpendit nullam posse provenire salutem fidelibus. Ne illic ergo resideat spiritus pestilens, aut opinio carrumpens, ubi locus quæritur fidei orthodoxæ, verba per adversarium præmissæ nostræ sententiæ prædicata, quæ etiam sub avaritiæ subtili fuco deprehendimus palliata, reprobamus, et tanquam erronea at hæretica declaramus, quorum demens tenor cum reprobo sensu sic sequitur, catholica damnatione merito fulminandus: "Decimæ personales non cadunt sub præcepto divino, saltem ut solvantur parochiali curato; quare licet vestrum unicuique, nisi consuetudo in contrarium fuerit ipsas in pios usus pauperum dispensare." Et iterum: "Personales decimæ sub divino non cadunt præcepto, neque jure debentur, ubi solutionis non est consuetudo." Quicumque hanc sententiam tenuerit, et pertinaciter defenderit, apud reputationem nostram hæreticus est censendus; et quia a sana ecclesiæ doctrina est divisus, a corpore ejusdem ecclesiæ velut membrum putridum est merito præscindendus."

The following touching, eloquent and powerful appeal of this venerable University is as seasonable now, as when it was first uttered: "O honorabiles patres et Domini! O universitates

catholicæ et quicumque fideles! scrutamini scripturas, canones inspicite, ac eorum naturales concipite rationes. Quam proditorium est, tributum negare altissimo! Quam inhumanum a laborantibus subtrahere debitum! Quam grave schismatis exemplum, auctoritati ecclesiæ publice et pertinaciter resistere, ac etiam justitiæ obvium contra præcepta canonum res alienas invadere! Nimis cruenta et sacrilega est hæc avaritia, quæ antiquissimi juris decimale debitum solum consuetudini ascribit, et in dubium revocat ut laborantium victum injuste exhauriat. Quid ministris ecclesiæ, ad eorum honestam sustentationem firmum persisteret, si decimæ possent ad libitum conferri, et jus decimandi ex debito non esset? O utinam aut resipiscant et ad ecclesiæ gremium redeant, qui tanto facinori favere conantur; aut asperrimis censuris, ne simplices inficiant, mordaciter feriantur. Sic unanimes in vera doctrina ecclesiæ permaneamus, ut ad eum tendere valeamus, de quo canit propheta: "Quærite Dominum et confirmamini, quærite faciem ejus semper." Sic lætetur cor quærentium Dominum, hic in via, quatenus ipsum quærentibus dignetur esse merces in patria. Amen." (Wilkins' Concilia Magnæ Britanniæ, Vol. 3.

Thus we have shown that the law of the tithe was binding upon the Patriarchal Church, upon the Gentile world, upon the Jewish Church,\* and is binding upon the Christian Church, and

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\*To say, with some, that the Jewish tithe was a *national tax*, or that it embraced the support of the State, as well as that of the Church, is, 1. To overlook the fact already demonstrated, that the character of the tithe, as "holy unto the Lord," a religious ordinance, binding upon man as man, universally, was established ages before the Jewish economy came into being; that it entered into that economy with its character unchanged, and that it came out of that economy with its indelible character unchanged, because unchangeable; and so recognised by Christ when on earth, who did not *then* come as a Lawgiver, for he had beforehand discharged his work in that capacity. The moral law, in all ages of the world, has been administered by Christ, who gave it. It was he who communicated with the patriarchs. It was he, "the Angel of the Lord," as the martyr Stephen said, who appeared to Moses in the burning-bush, and who spake to Moses on Sinai, and gave him "the lively oracles": 2. To confound the Jewish Church and State—a common, but gross error. The Church

so acknowledged by the Christian Fathers, and by the Councils of the Church. It is a sad thing that the faith of Jews and heathen should exceed ours! It was a proverb among the Jews: "*Pay tithes and be rich.*" Again: "*He that spoils the priest's goods, doth also spoil his own goods.*" And the heathen made the same observation, that they who paid most to God did receive most from him. They saw God's judgments upon them for not giving him his tenth; they repented, and restored the tithe, and were delivered. But we Christians remain the only incurable infidels! And refuse to pay to God that which, by a universal decree, he hath reserved to himself from the beginning! The remarks of Mr. Ruskin are worthy of serious consideration: "The form which the infidelity of England, especially, has taken, is one hitherto unheard of in human history. No nation ever before declared boldly, by print and by word of mouth, that its religion was good for show, but would not work. Over and over again it has happened, that nations have denied their gods, but they have denied them bravely. The Greeks, in their decline, jested at their religion, and frittered it away in flatteries and fine arts; the French refused theirs fiercely, tore down their altars, and broke their carven images. The question about God

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was not the nation, nor the nation the Church. Each had its distinct rulers, courts, laws, subjects, revenues, penalties, and duration. Moses and his successors were the rulers in the State. Aaron and his successors were the rulers in the Church. The Church had her courts of the synagogue, and ecclesiastical Sanhedrim; the State those of the gate, and the civil Sanhedrim. Pre-existent ecclesiastical laws, and the ceremonial laws, were those of the Church; the judicial, those of the State. The revenues of the Church were, as we have seen, tithes and offerings; the revenues of the Crown were, presents given voluntarily, (1 Sam. x. 27); the produce of the royal flocks, (1 Sam. xxi. 7, 8, 2 Chron. xxxii. 28, 29); the royal demesnes, vineyards, and olive gardens, (1 Chron. xxvii. 26-28); the most precious of the spoils of conquered nations, (1 Kings iv. 21, 2 Chron. xxvii. 5); the tribute imposed upon conquered nations; the tribute imposed upon merchants who passed through their territories, (1 Kings x. 15); the excise, or tax on articles of consumption; the toll, (Ezra iv. 14, 19, 20); a tithe, which was paid by other nations to their kings, and which Samuel forewarned them that their king would exact of

with both these nations was still, even in their decline, fairly put, though falsely answered: 'Either there is or is not a Supreme Ruler; we consider it, declare there is not, and proceed accordingly.' But we English have put the matter in an entirely new light: 'There is a Supreme Ruler, no question of it, only he cannot rule. His orders won't work. He will be quite satisfied with euphonious and respectful repetition of them. Execution would be too dangerous under existing circumstances, which he certainly never contemplated.' I had no conception of the absolute darkness which has covered the national mind in this respect, until I began to come into collision with persons engaged in the study of economical and political questions. The entire naiveté and undisturbed imbecility with which I found them declare that the laws of the devil were the only practicable ones, and that the laws of God were merely a form of poetical language, passed all that I had ever before heard or read of mortal infidelity. I knew the fool had said in his heart, *There is no God*; but to hear him say clearly out with his lips, 'There is a foolish God,' was something which my art-studies had not prepared me for. The French had, indeed, for a considerable time, hinted much of the meaning in the delicate and compas-

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them, when they foolishly chose the more expensive and burdensome monarchical form of government, instead of the far lighter and easier form, the republican, (1 Sam. viii. 15; The treasures of the Lord's house, and the treasures of the king's house, were distinct, (2 Kings xviii. 15, 2 Chron. xii. 9).

Civil and ecclesiastical privileges were not necessarily extended to the same persons. Proselytes might be members of the Church, without participating in the privileges of the State; whilst, on the other hand, scandalous offenders against the ceremonial and the moral law, permitted to enjoy civil rights, were nevertheless debarred the fellowship of the Church. The distinction was marked, too, in respect of penalties. Those of the Church were purely ecclesiastical, as casting out of the synagogue; those of the State extended to fine and to death. The distinction, too, in respect to duration, was equally marked. The Jewish State ended when it became a Roman province; the Jewish Church subsisted and retained its ecclesiastical character, down to the destruction of the Temple, and the dispersion of the people among all nations.

sionate blasphemy of their phrase, 'le bon Dieu,' but had never ventured to put it into more precise terms." If it is God's command that we should honor him with our substance, and with the first-fruits of all our increase, in the appointed proportion, and we plead inability to do it, what is this but saying, "*There is a foolish God?*" How will the heathen, who in all ages have made conscience of paying tithes, rise up in the judgment and condemn us, who resist not only the universal tradition which they had, but also the positive commands of the law and the gospel, and the usages of the primitive and universal Church of Christ, and oppose to all these the modern corruptions of the Romish apostasy, making tithes eleemosynary and alienable! We will not *trust* God, and so we provoke him to convince us by his awful judgments. May he open our eyes and enlarge our hearts, that with a sincere repentance for all our sins, we may likewise restore his tithes and learn to *trust in him!* That he may yet repent for all the evil he has brought upon us, and with which he still threatens us, and may leave a blessing behind him, even a meat-offering and a drink-offering unto the Lord our God; that there may be meat in his house, and thereby plenty in our's. May his judgments have this happy effect with us, to *make us search and try our ways*, to examine seriously this matter of tithes, and to turn again to the Lord in this, as well as in every other breach of God's commands. The providence of God with trumpet-voice summons us to this duty. For when God's judgments are upon the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. Let God's witnesses raise their voice aloud, and show to the people their transgressions, and to the house of Jacob their sins. Never till the obligation be acknowledged, can existing evils be removed, or threatened judgments averted, or promised blessings bestowed. "Various may be the ways in which God may manifest his displeasure. He may blow upon the fruits of the field, so that the harvest instead of furnishing an abundant supply for man and beast, may be 'a heap'—a day of grief, and of desperate sorrow; or, he may send a famine, 'not a famine of bread and a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord;' or, worse than

either or both, many may run to and fro, and knowledge everywhere be increased, and yet no spiritual blessing follow. The heavens may be stayed from their dew, and the earth from yielding her fruit; whilst there is a superabundance of the means of grace, iniquity may run down our streets, and cover our country like a mighty stream." For this sad condition of Zion, and the sadder prospect before her, let ministers and church-courts consider how far *they* are responsible.

"There has been, on this subject, an absurd squeamishness in those whom the Lord has authorised to 'live by the gospel.' They have borne and forborne; they have submitted to every species of sacrifice rather than disoblige their people; and their only reward has been an accumulation of injuries and cold-blooded contempt. It is time for them to claim their due in a modest but manly tone; and throw the fearful responsibility of expelling an enlightened ministry from the Church upon those who are able, but not willing, to support it honorably. We say an 'enlightened' ministry. For we have no conception that niggardly provision will soon strip her of every thing in the shape of a minister. You cannot place the pecuniary recompense so low, as that it shall not be an object for somebody. Fix your salaries at fifty dollars a year, and you shall not want candidates. But then they will be *fifty-dollar-men*. All genius, all learning, all high character, all capacity for extensive usefulness, will be swept away; and rudeness, ignorance, impudence and vulgarity, will become the religious directors of the nation. The man is blind who does not see matters fast hastening to this issue in the United States. In the meantime, such ministers as are better qualified for their stations, are not only decreasing in proportion to the population, but with few exceptions are prohibited from cultivating the powers which they possess. Remote from literary society; without libraries; without leisure to use what books they have; distracted with anxiety for their immediate subsistence; doomed to the plough or some other secular business, to keep themselves fed and clothed, their intellect becomes enfeebled; their acquisitions are dissipated; their ministry grows barren; their people indifferent; and the solid-in-

terests of 'Christianity are gradually, but effectually, undermined. Let the churches be warned. They have long slept on the edge of a precipice; the ground is caving in below them; and still they are not aware. Not a place of any importance is to be filled without the utmost difficulty. The search must be made from Dan to Beersheba; often, very often, unsuccessfully; and when successful, it is only enriching one Church by the robbery of another.

"The population of our country is increasing with unexampled rapidity; very incompetent means are used to furnish an efficient ministry; and the people themselves are throwing the most fatal discouragement in the way. All denominations seem to be engaged in a practical conspiracy to starve Christianity out of the land. Let them tremble at their deeds; let their loins be loosed, and their knees smite together, at the bare possibility that they *may succeed*." (Dr. Mason).

### THE LAW OF THE FREE-WILL OFFERING.

These offerings are made *to God*: "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, speak unto the children of Israel, that they *bring me* an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take *my offering*. And this is the offering which ye shall take of them; gold, and silver, and brass, etc." (Ex. xxv. 1, 2, 3.) "Speak unto Aaron, and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel, and say unto them, whatsoever he be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers in Israel, that will offer his oblation for all his vows, and for all his free-will offerings which they will *offer unto the Lord* for a burnt offering. Ye shall offer at your own will a male without blemish, of the beeves, of the sheep, or of the goats. *But whatsoever hath a blemish, that shall ye not offer: for it shall not be acceptable for you.* Ye shall not offer unto the Lord that which is bruised or crushed or broken or cut." (Lev. xxii. 18, 19, 24). "Besides the Sabbaths of the Lord, and beside your gifts, and beside all your vows, and beside all your free-will offerings, which ye *give unto the Lord*." (Lev. xxiii. 38). "The free-will offering *for the*



*house of God* that is in Jerusalem." (Ezra. i. 4). "Every one that willingly offered a free-will offering unto the Lord." (Ezra. iii. 5). "The silver and the gold are a free-will offering unto the Lord God of your fathers." (Ezra. viii. 28). "And Kore the son of Imnah the Levite, the porter toward the east, was over *the free-will offerings of God*, to distribute the oblations of the Lord, and the most holy things." (2 Chron. xxxi. 14). Free-will offerings, then, are not *alms*, contributions to the poor, but *offerings unto God*, a part of his sacred worship, as well as the service of the sanctuary.

Free-will offerings are *obligatory*: "And thou shalt keep the feast of weeks unto the Lord thy God, with a tribute of a free-will-offering of thine hand *which thou shalt give* unto the Lord thy God, according as the Lord thy God hath blessed thee. They shall not appear before the Lord empty; every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which he hath given thee." (Deut. xvi. 10, 16, 17). It is not optional with us to present these offerings, or not. We are bound to do so. But the amount is left to each one's conscience and heart—hence, they are termed *free-will offerings*. Yet, even for these a general rule is prescribed: "*According as the Lord thy God hath blessed thee.*" So that one may sin, by short comings in this, as in other duties; by offerings that are shamefully disproportioned to the gifts which God has poured into his hand. Thus, the Lord complains of his people, that they robbed him, not only in tithes, but *in offerings also*. These offerings are no substitutes for tithes, as we have seen, but over and above them, and both are commanded: "Unto the place which the Lord your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come: And thither ye shall bring your burnt-offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and heave-offerings of your hand, and your vows, and your free-will offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and of your flocks." The conjoint obligation of the tithe and the free-will offering is a wise and equitable arrangement of the divine government. It has been objected that the law of the tithe would bear unequally upon the rich and

the poor; it being too small a proportion for the former and too great for the latter. But the objection of inequality is entirely removed by the concurrent law of the free-will offering. The union of the two departments; the one with its fixed, the other with its varying, proportions; harmonizes man's natural and circumstantial obligations; and promotes, in the highest degree, man's spiritual and temporal interests. 'Render unto God the things that are God's,' is a command which it is man's interest, as well as duty to obey. The poorest are not released from the obligation. Poverty that brings no gifts to the altar is accursed of God. The Saviour commended the act of the poor widow who cast "*all her living*" into the treasury of the Lord. Her gift was not a contribution to the poor, an alms, for the chests in the temple were not for that object, and it is expressly said, (Luke xxi. 4), that these gifts cast into the treasury were "the offerings of God." The widow's two mites were a free-will offering, for the tithe was positively required, and might be exacted, if not paid. Over and above her tithe, this poor widow brought, what then constituted "her all," as a free-will offering, and cast her two mites, equal to half a cent, into one of the chests that belonged to the temple. These chests, as described by Maimonides and other Jewish writers, were placed in the Court of the women, were commonly called by the Jews, *Shopheroth*, or *Trumpets*, because trumpet-shaped, narrow below and broad above, and were thirteen in number: One for the payment of the past year's half shekel (which each Israelite paid for the redemption of his life. Ex. xxx. 13); one for the payment of the present year's half shekel; one for the price of the two turtle doves or pigeons, one of which was for a burnt-offering, the other for a sin-offering; (the contributors to this chest, Jewish writers state, were chiefly women); one was for a burnt-offering only, of birds; one was for money to buy wood for the altar; one was for frankincense; one was for gold for the mercy-seat; one was for the surplus money of a sin-offering; one was for the surplus money of a trespass-offering; one was for the surplus of an offering of birds by men and women that had issues, and by women after childbirth; one was for the surplus of a Nazarite's

offering; one was for the surplus of a leper's trespass-offering; and one was for money for the sacrifice of cattle. On each chest was written the object of the contribution, thus: "*Old Shekel*," "*New Shekel*," *Turtles*," etc. Into one, or two, of these chests, did this widow cast her two mites, "all her living." What strong trust in God, and what great love to him did this act evince! How will that poor widow's offering rise in judgement against those who have not the heart to give even what is due, and think a tenth too much, when it is commanded! How much richer is she now than they! Her offering, unnoticed as she supposed, was marked by the eye of God, and recorded in the book of God, and will be celebrated in the kingdom of God forever! Those two mites have brought millions to the altar, which have been instrumental in the salvation of thousands in many lands and all ages, and her works continue to this day, and will continue forever, to follow her! For that act done in secret, what a reward will God bestow upon her openly, when he shall point her to a multitude around his throne, saying: "Here are the children whom I gave to thee!" May many be led, in her spirit, to follow her example! And thus follow the injunction of the Master: "Make to yourselves friends by the mammon of unrighteousness; that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." What glorious uses to which to put the mammon of unrighteousness! What rich rewards of grace! What friends to make to ourselves! Ready to welcome us to the gates of the celestial city! And everlasting friends! In everlasting habitations! "A wonderful thing it is to take a cold shilling into my hand, and turn that cold piece of metal into a friend, who, when the Lord shall lift up my head on that day, will be there to receive me, and bid me welcome to the land of rest!"

" Thus thy works may pass before,  
 Waiting thee—a blessed store—  
 In their number, weight, and measure,  
 Laid up in enduring treasure."

By an extraordinary providence, did God sustain the Apostolic Church, at first, through the free-will offerings of the people,

so long as the temple and the Levitical ministry continued, to whom the tithes by law were due. This extraordinary providence was consequent upon an extraordinary outpouring of the Spirit, so that "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. And with great power gave the Apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the Apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need."

The obligation both of the tithe and of the free-will offering was acknowledged and fulfilled by the Apostolic Church, and should be, by the Church in every age, and by all men, everywhere, throughout the world. For, as to the tithe, God always reserved this to himself—it was never our own; to appropriate it then, is direct theft and robbery; and as for the free-will offering, this too is commanded by God, and by either our own purpose, or act, under the prompting of the Spirit, is solemnly set apart to God, is no more our own, and to take it back is to be guilty of the same crime of "lying unto the Holy Ghost," that caused the instant and awful death of Ananias and Sapphira. The terrible judgment that fell upon this guilty pair, occurring on the threshold of the New Testament Church, was designed as a beacon to point out to the Church, in all ages, the rock on which they split—a perpetual warning to Christians of all ages to beware of a sin, to which the heart of fallen man is so powerfully disposed, and of whose enormity God has given such convincing proof, by the fearful expression of his wrath which instantly accompanied it. The sin of Ananias has often been repeated since, and is fearfully prevalent in the Church now, yet no such *visible* display of divine displeasure is given now. Like other transgressions, this is now left to follow the general principle of the divine administration, and to find its reward in the retributions of eternity. But this one signal instance is enough

to admonish us of the utter abhorrence in which God holds this sin, and constitutes a perpetual testimony to the guilt and the danger of "lying unto the Holy Ghost." To the Holy Spirit are we indebted for every holy impulse and every holy purpose, and on every occasion where Christian principle triumphs over the selfishness and covetousness of corrupt human nature, indubitable evidence is afforded of his gracious presence and effectual working *there*; for whatever may be the instrument employed—however able and persuasive may be the advocacy, under which we consent to do our duty, whether it be to send the gospel to the heathen, to sustain the Church at home, to endow religious institutions or in any way to contribute to the advancement of Christ's kingdom on earth:—it is *the Spirit alone* who awakens the conscience, and incites to the performance of actions acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Under his influence, the purpose is formed, the inward act of consecration takes place. To him, the solemn promise is virtually made, whether a pledge be given before men or not. And then, subsequently, to ignore all this, in the hours of returning worldliness, and of dimmer manifestation; to question the obligations voluntarily assumed, to complain that the act was done under excitement, or that the case was overstated, or that the subject was not fully understood, etc., is just to resist the gracious influences of the Spirit, to violate the promise made, and so to be chargeable with the awful crime of "lying unto the Holy Ghost." How many professors of religion, how many churches, are guilty of this God-provoking sin! And mark the consequences: Judicial strokes upon the Spirit, secret wounds inflicted upon the soul, the highest expression of divine displeasure; blinding, hardening, deadening blows, falling thick and heavy from the hand, of an angry God! How many churches throughout our land, disciples of Ananias and Sapphira, blighted and dead, dreary monuments of divine indignation, melancholy witnesses to the guilt and danger of "lying unto the Holy Ghost!"

How hard it is to convince men that by "robbing God" they are also robbing themselves! And that by adding to the Lord's treasury, they are also adding to their own! How easy would

it be for each one to have in his house a separate treasury for religious objects: the treasury of the Lord, into which should be cast the tenth of all incomes, great or small, and, in addition to this, a free-will offering, or an equivalent "promise-to-pay," as the Lord has prospered him; and also, the alms-chest, or treasury of the poor. If this "treasury of the Lord" were kept in every family, how great would be the gain, by system and order, in the satisfaction to mind and conscience! No more complaints of "so many demands," "such an unsuitable time for applications," "not prepared to contribute now," etc., etc. *There stands the treasury-box, containing the Lord's money, and not your's*; and when the Lord by his providence calls for his own, all that is necessary is just to contribute out of it to the various objects of the Church, according to their respective claims. And now will any be persuaded to make trial of this divinely-appointed plan, and learn by experience, as many have done, its value and blessedness? Or, will they treat these as idle words, and consider the directions of an All-wise God as visionary and impracticable, and so continue to act in the future as they have done in all the past? Shall we come up to God's requirements, or shall we dream on, and think to bring God down to our usages, and expect, at the same time, to secure his blessing? It is the mark of a Christian to have faith in God's Word—in other words, to credit God with knowing more and better than we do. God's claims upon the Jewish people were numerous and heavy, and yet *no community on earth ever compared with the Jewish in prosperity and wealth*. Godliness is profitable for the life that now is, as well as for that which is to come. Faith in God, obedience to God—this is honor, prosperity and enduring wealth. Unbelief, disobedience—this is poverty and deep disgrace! Professor Max Müller, writing to a minister on the subject of systematic and proportionate giving, says: "It is surprising that when there is so much profession of religious sincerity, a special society should be organised to impress upon people the duty of giving a tenth part of their income towards charitable purposes. Can there be a lower and a simpler test of the sincerity of religious professions? And yet, if one thinks what this world of ours

would be, if at least this minimum of Christianity were a reality, one feels that you are right in preaching this simple duty in season and out of season, until people see that without fulfilling it, every other profession of religion is a mere sham. I can hardly trust myself to think of what the result would be, if not to give away a tenth part of one's income were considered as 'not respectable,' were looked upon at least in the same light as not going to church. Think that *one* penny in the pound yields one million and a half, that the tenth part of a pound is two shillings or twenty-four pence, and you have thirty-six millions a year in England alone for the poor and needy. You will not rest till people begin to see that to give openly is less selfish than to give secretly, nay till the giving of one-tenth of one's income becomes the general fashion, so that a young man at Oxford would as soon think of walking down High street without his hat, as profess to be a Christian, and not fulfil so humble a part of his duty."

### THE LAW OF ALMS-GIVING.

Generous provision was made by the God of Israel for the poor. The gleanings of the field and the unrea ped corner, amounting to about one-sixtieth of the produce, were theirs: "Thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the Lord your God." (Lev. xix. 10). "When ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and unto the stranger: I am the Lord your God." (Lev. xxiii. 22). Besides this, they participated in the second tithe, or festival tithe, and every third year a tithe was levied for their especial benefit. Then too, were the regulations for their benefit connected with the Sabbatical year: "The seventh year thou shalt let it rest and lie still; that the poor of thy people may eat." (Ex. xxiii. 11). Also, the cancelling of their debts, (Deut. xv. 1-2), and the restoration of *Hebrew* servants

to freedom (Ex. xxi. 2; Deut. xv. 12); (but *bond-slaves*, taken from the heathen, *were never emancipated, but were slaves for life*, Lev. xxv. 44-46); and the regulations respecting the year of Jubilee, when every one's possessions, forfeited by debt, were all restored. Numerous commands also testified the profound solicitude felt by God in behalf the poor: "If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother: But thou *shalt open thine hand wide unto him*, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth. *Thou shalt surely give him, and thy heart shall not be grieved when thou giveth unto him*: because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto. For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore, I command thee, saying: *Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.*" (Deut. xv. 7, 11). "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." (Zeph. iii. 12). So too, said the Saviour: "The poor ye have with you always." The condition of poverty must always exist in this world, that it may always illustrate that condition to which the Lord of all descended. For it is Christianity which governs society and controls the providence of God. The poor shall never cease out of the land, because the Lord Jesus Christ, the head of society and the Lord of providence, was himself the poorest of the poor, and Christ's providence casts society into the mould of Christ's cross, and so always illustrates and subserves it; for society and providence are just the mirrors in which the cross of Christ is reflected. And by this consideration are Christians urged to liberality: "As ye abound in everything, see that ye abound in this grace also. Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." (2 Cor. viii. 7, 9). The voluntary poverty of Christ was the foundation of his mediatorial riches and glory, and of our own. Because he humbled himself, and



'became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, the father hath highly exalted him, and given him the name which is above every name. The cross of Calvary is the pillar of his throne. And thus, the cordial recognition of our indebtedness to that poverty which has made Christ Lord of all, and us, kings with him, by means of substantial gifts, from Christian motives, to the poor, whom he has left as his representatives on earth, is a testimonial of our redemption, an act of worship, a sacrifice of praise, a thank-offering to God for his unspeakable gift, commemorating continually the offering up of the poor bond-slave of Calvary, and the stupendous salvation that was thereby accomplished. And so, our Lord regards such loving, Christ-like ministering to the poor, as ministering to him, and from his judgment-throne will so declare it; an evidence of that justifying faith through which we were united to him forever, and became possessors of his righteousness and of his kingdom: "Come, ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Verily, I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Our contributions to the poor are not to take the place of our offerings to God. True, every good act we do, yea, every act of our life, may be counted an act of worship, *for whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we are commanded to do all to the glory of God.* But all these acts are distinguished from acts of direct worship, which are to be regulated by the positive directions of Scripture, and from which we must not depart. That specified portion of our substance which God has reserved as a part of his worship, must not be confounded with that unspecified portion which he has reserved as his bounty to the poor. The Jews paid God's tithe to the priests, not to the poor. They paid a second tithe to the poor: and this was an act of charity. If we give to the poor out of God's tenth, we give what is none of our own; we rob God to pay man, and commit a sacrilege for

the sake of charity. Therefore, we are to give to the poor out of our own nine parts.

Alms-giving is not optional, but obligatory; but the proportion of our income to be devoted thus, after the separation of the tithe and the free-will offerings, God has left to be determined by the analogy of faith, and the circumstances in which his providence has placed us. That proportion is far greater than is generally bestowed. In the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament, alms-giving is contemplated as a *system*, involving regular and large contributions: as such, it is observed by very few now. The Master's injunction is: "Give alms of such things as ye have: and behold all things are clean unto you," (Luke xi. 41); that is, lawful to be used:—an allusion to the regulation respecting the first-fruits, tithes, and free-will offerings; by giving which to the Lord, all the remainder was secured, sanctified, and made clean. "Christ, according to his custom, withdraws the Pharisees from ceremonies to charity, declaring that it is not water, but liberality, that cleanses both men and food. By these words he does not disparage the grace of God, or reject the ceremonies of the law as vain and useless; but addresses his discourse to those who feel confident that God will be amused by mere signs. 'It is the lawful use alone, he says, that sanctifies food. But food is rightly and properly used by those who supply from their abundance the necessities of the poor. It would therefore be better to give alms out of what you have, than to be careful about washing hands and cups, and to neglect the poor.' Christ does not here inform us by what price we must purchase the forgiveness of sins, but says that those persons eat their bread with cleanness, who bestow a part of it on the poor." (Calvin). "*Give alms*, which comes from a word that signifies *to cleanse*; and *all shall be clean to you*: your wealth shall be purged and blessed, and your mind cleansed also." (Hammond). "Christ here instructs us, that our temporal enjoyments are unclean, *i. e.*, unlawful to be used by us, till we have sanctified them by some act of charity; and this is the frequent import of the word *καθαρός*, *clean*, when it relates to meats, as Acts x. 14, 15; xi. 8, 9; Rom. xiv. 20; Tit. i. 15. And

suitable to this, is God's command concerning the tithe of the third year, that it should be given 'to the stranger, the orphan, the widow, that God might bless the land.' (Deut. xxiv. 13, 14). So that till this were done, they were not to expect from him a blessing on their substance." (Whitby). How few are they who regard alms-giving as a duty of such prime consequence, that until it be discharged, there can be, before God, no lawful use of any of our treasure! The importance of this duty is again exhibited by the command of the Master: "Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth." (Luke xii. 33). Instead of giving, occasionally, a mere superfluity, that is never missed, the Master requires of us that, rather than this duty be neglected, we should, if we have it not otherwise, *sell what we have and give alms*. "The command to sell possessions must not be literally interpreted, as if a Christian were not at liberty to retain anything for himself. He only intended to shew, that we must not be satisfied with bestowing upon the poor what we can easily spare, but that we must not refuse to part with our estates, if their revenue does not supply the wants of the poor. His meaning is: 'Let your liberality go so far as to lessen your patrimony, and dispose of your lands.'" (Calvin). "Spiritual prudence makes men, from being mercenary, even though they have not the most abundant supply of goods, to become liberal, and disposed to sell in order to have wherewith to give, especially when the exigency requires it." (Bengel). Let these injunctions of our Master be pondered by all men, especially by those on whom his providence has conferred a momentous stewardship, corresponding with the vast resources he has entrusted to them. Their charities may fill the wide world with applauses, and may be perpetually paraded before the public view, for public admiration, and yet they may be regarded in heaven as withholding more than is meet—yea, as being unfaithful stewards that have wasted their Lord's goods, and robbed God in tithes and offerings, and the poor in alms. "Be just before you are generous," is a proverb they need to be reminded of. They have no right to

place ought to the score of generosity, who are sadly wanting on the score of justice. Do not the teachings of God's word, which we have been considering throughout this discussion, shew, both by express precept and by implication, that a conscientious person cannot give less, not simply than one-tenth, but, than one-third of his income to the kingdom of God; and, of the remainder, not less than one-tenth to the poor, "especially to them who are of the household of faith?" Did not our Lord commend Zaccheus, who gave one-half of his goods to the poor? Did he not require the young ruler to sell all his estate, and give to the poor, and then to come and follow him? Had there been any injustice in this command, would Jesus have given it? Not that he gave here any general direction about the disposal of riches, except the general direction to lay them at the feet of him who gave them, and to part with whatever his providence called for, even were it all. And if in *any* case, he should call for all, he is able to provide, and will, for him who obeys the call, as he would have done for the young ruler, had he obeyed his Master. To those who complain of the above proportions, as too great, we put the question: *Is it right, is it reasonable, that a steward give to his Lord a moiety of the income resulting from the use of his Master's goods, and keep the greater portion for himself?* None need fear that fidelity to our trust will entail even temporal loss upon us. On the contrary, it secures great gain. Though this should be no motive to duty, yet this will be the result of doing our duty. For, God has bound himself to this by abundant promises. Mr. Hildersham, speaking of almsgiving, says: "It is a duty that God hath made greater promises unto, than to any other almost that a Christian can perform." Consider but a few of these promises, and it will appear that charity is the best policy, even in this world. For riches are often fleeting and uncertain. "They resemble a flock of birds in a man's field; he cannot say they are his because they resort there, 'for they take unto themselves wings and fly away.' Now in dealing with things uncertain, it will be your wisdom: 1. To make them as secure as you can. 2. To make the best use of them that you can. Is it not the highest wisdom to insure

our property? And what better way imaginable to insure it, than by putting it into good hands? And what safer hands than the hands of the Lord? Put them into the hands of God's poor, and you thereby put them into God's hands." (Gouge). "Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies. The Lord will strengthen him upon a bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness." "The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. He hath dispersed, he hath given unto the poor: his righteousness endureth forever: his horn shall be exalted with honor." "If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon-day. And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not." "He that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he." "The righteous sheweth mercy and giveth. He is ever merciful and lendeth; and his seed is blessed." "The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out." "Cast thy bread upon the waters, and thou shalt find it after many days." "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat; and he that watereth, shall be watered also himself." "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom; for with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured unto you again." "We account it good measure, when it is heaped up, but when it is not only heaped up, but pressed down, that is more; but when it is heaped up, pressed down, and then heaped up, and running over again, who can but say, that this is good measure indeed?" (Gouge). "Believe me, there

is a special blessing on being liberal to the poor, and on the family of those who have been so; and I doubt not my children will fare better, even in this world, for real happiness, than if I had been saving £20,000 or £30,000 of what has been given away." (William Wilberforce). "He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again." Dr. Hammond mentions an ancient story out of Cedrenus, of a Jew, who upon reading this Scripture, resolved to try whether God would be as good as his word; and thereupon, gave all that he had but two pieces of silver to the poor, and then waited and expected to see it come again. But being not presently answered in that expectation, he grew angry, and went up to Jerusalem, to expostulate with God for not performing his promise. On his journey he found two men striving with each other, engaged in an unreasonable contest about a stone, which both walking together had found in the way, and each claimed. To make them friends, he divided his pieces of silver between them, and took the stone in exchange. Coming to Jerusalem, he shewed it to a goldsmith, who told him that it was a jewel of great value, being a stone dropped out of the high priest's ephod, to whom if he carried it, he would certainly receive a great reward. He did so, and so it proved. The high priest took it, gave him a great reward, and withal sharply reproved him for questioning the truth of God's promises, bidding him trust God the next time.

The Emperor Tiberius the Second was famous for his bounty to the poor, insomuch that his wife was wont to blame him for what she considered a waste of treasure. But he told her that he should never want money, so long as in obedience to Christ's command, he supplied the necessities of the poor. And so it turned out. Immediately after having given much this way, he found under a marble table, which was taken up, a great treasure, and news was brought him too of the death of Narses, a very rich man, who had given his whole estate to him. Melancthon tells a remarkable story of the charitable bishop of Millain, who, travelling with his servant, overtook some poor people, who begged an alms of him. Whereupon, he asked the servant what

money he had with him, who answered three crowns. The bishop commanded him to give them to the poor people. But the servant thinking himself wiser than the master, gave them but two crowns, not knowing what occasion they might have for money before they got home. Not long after, some noblemen met the bishop, and knowing him to be very charitable, directed two hundred crowns to be paid to the bishop's servant, for his master's use. The servant received the money, and with great joy informed his master of it. Whereupon, the bishop said: "Thou mayest now see how in wronging the poor of their due, by keeping back the third crown which I intended for them, thou hast wronged me. If thou hadst given those three crowns, as I commanded thee to give, thou hadst received three hundred crowns, whereas now I have but two."

Dr. John Clark, a London physician of great repute for learning, piety, and charity, was accustomed to lay by all his Sunday fees as a sacred fund for works of benevolence, accounting it sacrilege to appropriate them to himself. Wherefore, the Lord so prospered him, that, from a limited income at first, his practice so increased, and riches flowed in upon him, that he lived in plenty, and gave to his children liberal portions.

Samuel Dunche, Esq., of Pusey, in the county of Berks, England, was accustomed to send, annually, large sums of money to several towns, for the benefit of the poor. He also bequeathed lands and other property for the same purpose. And to Rumsey, in Hampshire, he gave by deed for the same object, a lease of ninety-nine years, to commence after his decease. Several poor children were educated at his expense. Good books were printed at his own charge, and gratuitously distributed among the poor. He further gave, every year, considerable sums of money to such godly ministers as he knew to be in want, and upon several of them he settled considerable annuities, besides liberal legacies which he left them at his decease. The bread he cast upon the waters he found again. This bread, like the loaves with which Christ fed the multitude, was multiplied in his hand, and his oil increased by pouring out. He was but a younger brother, and the estate settled upon him was about £800 per annum;

yet so far was it from being impaired by his constant and liberal charities, that providence not only returned him what he gave, but much more, and a measure "pressed down and running over," was meted out to him and his posterity. There was left to his heirs an estate more than double the value of what he received, besides the very considerable portions he gave to his five daughters.

Such instances—and a multitude of similar ones could be adduced—shew, beyond dispute, that "he who soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully." This proverb the apostle applies to the dispensing of alms. (2 Cor. ix. 6). "Now as husbandmen, who sow their grain with a liberal hand, do usually reap an abundant crop; in like manner, such Christians as shall sow their seed of charity with an open, plentiful hand, shall reap accordingly a plentiful crop, they shall find their seed sown come up with increase, yielding thirty, if not sixty, or a hundred-fold here, besides eternal life hereafter. It may be, thou mayest not presently reap the fruit of thy seed, and what wonder? Who is there that sows, that expects to reap the same day? The husbandman waiteth for his harvest; wait thou on the Lord, and doubt not but a harvest will come, that will pay thee both for thy sowing and thy waiting." (Gouge). "God will try our faith. For a great while this retaliation may be suspended. After many days thou shalt find it. It may be if you do not find it, your children may, for it brings an extraordinary blessing upon our families. (Ps. xxxvii. 26). At other times, the recompense may be more speedy, as in increasing the widow's oil." (Manton). "God uses to pay by the way of returns, it may be neither in the same kind, nor in the same country. Sometimes it is so that he pays not in the same kind: bread for bread, or clothes for clothes, or money for money. Nor possibly may he make his payment in this foreign land, where thou art a merchant-adventurer, but may give thee his bill of exchange to receive it in thine own country, that better country which is thy home and inheritance, which shall be the reward of thy works, and labor of love which thou shewest to his name. And if he do thus, does he do thee any wrong? Is it not best for thee that thou receive thy goods



at thy home? Is it any harm for thee to receive silver for thy brass, gold for thy silver, rubies for thy gold, a treasure in heaven for thy treasure on earth? Doubt not that he will be behind hand with thee; yet hesitate not if thou shouldst be put to it, to wait for payment in full till hereafter; and for the present this thou mayest depend upon: 'He that giveth to the poor shall not lack.' (Prov. xxviii. 27). He shall have in hand what is needful at least. 'He shall not lack,' and there may be more in this word than if he had said, I will presently pay thee all; for all that thou hast, if thou shouldst hold it ever so secure, cannot secure thee from ever coming to want; as great as thine abundance is, thou mayest come to want before thou diest. But what thine abundance cannot do, this promise of God can and will do for thee, even give thee security that thou shalt never lack." (Gouge). Alms should be dispensed *in simplicity*, seeking the glory of God, and not our own; *unostentatiously, compassionately, seasonably, promptly, liberally, cheerfully, and not grudgingly*, accompanied with *prayer and thanksgiving* to God. "Render thanks unto God, that he hath put you among the givers, and not among the receivers, it being a more blessed thing to give than to receive: that he hath put you among the givers, and not the withholders: that he hath given you something to give, and a heart to distribute of your abundance to the needy." "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver." (2 Cor. ix. 7). This text is foolishly abused, when it is quoted to prove that men are not bound by the law of the tithe under the New Testament. Even if it referred to the sustentation of the Church and the ministry, it would not prove that for which it is brought. Did not God require that tithes themselves should be paid cheerfully? Was it not true under the Old Testament, in regard to the free-will offering, that "God loveth a cheerful giver?" And yet the free-will offering, as we have seen, was not optional, but obligatory; and even as to the amount of it that was regulated by the measure of prosperity allotted by providence. If a man who is able to give ten dollars, gives only ten cents, but gives it cheer-

fully, does God love such a cheerful giver? God loveth a cheerful *worshipper*, as well as a cheerful giver, and only to such a worshipper will God have respect. But does that fact exempt any from the *obligation* to worship, who is not so inclined? Such is the conclusion to which the objector has brought himself: that uncheerful givers are not bound to give, and uncheerful worshippers are not bound to worship! Such however is not the doctrine of the apostle: who teaches that the obligation includes the cheerful spirit of the giver, as well as the gift itself. But this text, and the whole context, has reference, not to the support of the Church and ministry, (respecting which the apostle had previously instructed these Corinthian Christians,) but to "the supplying the wants of the saints," as the passage itself teaches, and which begins with these words: "touching the ministering to the saints." It is of alms-giving, then, that the apostle treats, and he shows the spirit in which the duty should be performed: "not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver." So far is it from being true, that any are exempt from this obligation, that a multitude of solemn and fearful threatenings have been given by God, on account of the neglect of it: "Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard." "The Lord will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them." "He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse." "Thou hast not given water to the weary to drink, and thou hast withholden bread from the hungry. Thou hast sent widows away empty, and the arms of the fatherless have been broken. Therefore snares are round about thee, and sudden fear troubleth thee; or darkness, that thou canst not see; and abundance of waters cover thee," etc. The apostle, knowing how backward rich men especially were to works of charity, enjoins upon Timothy to "charge them that are rich in this world—that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate." The expression is very striking: he does not say *ἀγγέλλε*, *declare* unto them, but *παράγγελλε*, "*charge* them," as they love their lives and would save their souls, to be rich in good works. As one well

renders it: "If God should charge the rocks, they would send forth water; if the stones, they would become bread; if the ravens, they would feed Elijah; if the quails, they would supply the wants of the camp; if the clouds, they would rain down food from heaven upon his poor people. Would you then be more rocky than rocks? more stony than stones? more ravenous than ravens? more senseless than birds of the air? more empty than clouds?"

Among the Jews, it was customary to make provision in their synagogues, for the poor, every week; as Maimonides, Buxtorf, Vitranga, Wetstein, and other writers, have shown. It was the duty of the deacons of the synagogues to go about the city, during the week, collecting alms, according to the quality and wealth of every Jew, which were deposited in a purse kept in the synagogue, called "the purse of the alms" by some; by others, "the alms-chest;" or what some churches in modern times designate *the poor's box*. Then, in the evening of their Sabbath, they distributed to their poor as much as was needful for the following week, that they might not be without the necessaries of life, and might not be prevented from coming to the synagogue. (*Eleemosynæ vero sustentandis cujusque loci pauperibus statis illius ecclesiæ membris, destinatæ, tum a privatis mittebantur in Arculas Eleemosynarias ante recitandas præces, tum singulis vesperis Sabbathi, a collectoribus eleemosynarium colligebantur, et eadem illa vespera pauperibus pro hebdomada integra distribuebantur, etc.*" Vitranga de Synagoga. "Apud Judæos erant collectores cistæ vel quæstores ærarii, qui semel in septimana pridie Sabbati pecuniam distribuebant: et collectores catini, ministrantes mensis quotidie, et peregrinorum præcipue curam suscipientes. Collectores sunt viri noti et fidi, sapientes et prudentes. Cibi colliguntur per tres, et per tres distribuntur, quia collectio et distributio eorum æquales sunt. Catinus vel cibi exiguntur quotidie; pecunia semper pridie Sabbati: Cibi cuique homini: pecunia non nisi in usum civium ipsius urbis tantum." Wetstein). It would be well if the same system obtained in all the churches of Christendom. It was the custom in Scotland for deacons to divide the suburbs of the towns and

cities, where the poor generally dwelt, into so many different wards, each deacon having in his ward a given number of families which he was expected to visit regularly for the purpose of religious conversation and prayer, as well as of contributing to supply their temporal wants. Hear the testimony of one of these working deacons: "With fifty-six families, in ordinary circumstances, very little of my time was occupied, and my office was by no means irksome; but when the families increased to eighty, one hundred, and upwards, I found it more difficult to keep up my acquaintance in the district, so that I had less comfort in going amongst them; and whilst my visits were in reality more requisite, they became less frequent. It is easy to keep up a pleasant, familiar knowledge of a small number of families, which creates such interest as to carry one readily back to the district. My first aim was to become acquainted with all the families; and when any person applied for relief, I visited, and made a strict investigation, and then gave in a report of the case at our first monthly meeting. If the applicant was out of work, or had children able for work, we used such means as were within our reach to get employment for them. With few exceptions, I was well received; and in many cases most cordially welcomed, and much pressed to repeat my visit soon. The main-spring of my management consisted in kindness; prompt attention to every application, whether deserving or not; never administering help in ignorance, to save myself the trouble of a visit, rigid investigation, etc." It is obvious at once what a prodigious influence for good, such system of visitation, if operating everywhere, would exert upon the poor, upon the Church, upon society. A hallowed bond of union would thus be established between the various classes of society, differences would be softened, and jealousies and alienations, in great measure, checked. The Church would, through her organs, discharge the blessed office of the peace-maker in the world, binding the various classes together by sacred bonds, and causing them to feel a becoming interest in each other, and to realise that though the members were different, the body was one. How would the poor, too, be benefitted by the working of such a noble system! How

many vices would disappear; how many virtues would take their place; how would poverty itself, in many instances, be prevented or cured! With such a kind care exercised over the poor, looking mainly to their religious improvement, the exhortations and prayers of the faithful deacon, the bibles, tracts, and religious newspapers, with which he furnishes them, could not fail of elevating and blessing them, for this world and the next. For the divine favor would crown this system with signal success. And how would the Church herself be benefitted! The presence of the poor within her is absolutely necessary for her prosperity, as they furnish the occasion for counteracting the greatest evil of our fallen nature, selfishness, and for developing the brightest graces of the Christian character. Under such a system, faithfully worked, the blessing of the poor, which is of no small price, would be her's; and more than that, the approbation of her exalted Head. Seeking to do good in the way of his appointment, his special smile would rest upon her labors. What multitudes of poor would be added to her congregations, and ultimately to her communion! The present habitual non-attendance of thousands at any place of worship, is an alarming evil. Here is the divine remedy for correcting it. May we have grace given us to use it!

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The churches should be faithfully instructed respecting these duties; and the obligations of the tithe, of the free-will offering, and of alms-giving, should be constantly pressed upon the conscience of every individual, both by ministers and church-courts, particularly church-sessions. By the neglect of these obligations, whether from ignorance or otherwise, the Church has suffered in the past, and surely has suffered enough! It is now high time for her to awake out of sleep. Much effort will be necessary, doubtless, in order to change her habits: to arise out of her present abnormal, unsettled, unsystematic supine state, and to attain to the standard of the Bible. But let persistent effort be made, in the strength of her divine Head, until the

glorious end be reached. And let the appointed guardians of the flock lead the way. The sympathies of the Lord's people are not to be left dependent upon the fluctuations of impulse, but should be regulated and sustained by the prescriptions of the judicatories of the Church, as these accord with the teachings of the Scriptures. However a few may, under the impulse of natural benevolence, or of some other motive, contribute liberally of their substance for the support of the ministry, the ordinances of religion, and the poor; still, the great majority of merely nominal Christians will give grudgingly and of necessity; will give far less than that proportion of their substance which God claims as his own. And even those who give upon Bible principles, and by Bible rule, and give more than a tenth, are not exempt from the necessity of reminding them of the obligation of the tithe, any more than of the obligation of the Sabbath, although they give more than one-seventh of their time to God. But to this honorable class, how few belong in these days of growing demoralization and corruption! The kingdom of God is last, and least, in the hearts of the great majority of its subjects. The Government statistics, for 1871, may well cause every honorable man to hang his head with shame, and may well fill every patriot's heart with alarm. They are as follows: let them be pondered by every lover of his country:

Salaries of all ministers of the gospel,	6 million dollars,
Cost of dogs, - - -	10 " "
Support of criminals, - -	12 " "
Fees of litigation, - - -	35 " "
Cost of tobacco and cigars, - -	610 " "
Importation of liquor, - - -	50 " "
Support of grog-shops, - - -	1500 " "
Whole cost of liquor, - - -	2200 " "

And these are the facts in this "enlightened" nineteenth century, and in these United States! One might infer from them, that we are fast becoming, if we are not already, *a nation of drunkards*. And then consider this country's estimate of the gospel ministry: the ministers of all denominations costing a sum, less by millions, *than the very dogs of the land!* What an

insult to the King of kings! Enough to perpetuate the curse of God upon a God-forsaken land! If such be the value set upon the gospel, should it excite surprise if this greatest gift to man be taken from us?\*

Covetousness, which the Word of God declares to be idolatry, excludes from the kingdom of heaven; and the apostolic Church, the purest of all churches, excluded from its pale the covetous member, who devoted to self what was due to God. "I have written unto you," says the apostle, "*not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such an one, no not to eat. Therefore, put away from among yourselves that wicked person.*" (1 Cor. v. 11, 13). And why should not this divine injunction be obeyed now? And why should not church-courts make the observance of the law of the tithe, equally as the observance of the law of the Sabbath, a term of communion, and the neglect of it ground of censure? Did not Christ, from his throne in heaven, administer rebukes to the churches in Asia—rebukes which are left on record for ever? And shall the judicatories, to which he has entrusted the spiritual interests of his flock, scruple to imitate the example of their divine Head, and suffer the covetousness, which is eating out the life of so many churches, to go unrebuked? "The love of money," said Andrew Fuller, "will, in all probability, prove the eternal overthrow of more characters among professing people, than any other sin, because it is almost the only crime which can be indulged, and a profession of religion at the same time supported." Churches must, in their present spiritually weak condition, be trained, by instruction and discipline, to habits of self-denial and liberality, until they experience the sweetness of making sacrifices for Christ, and learn experimentally, that godliness is profitable, spiritually, and

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\*There are on deposit in the banks of Charlotte *more than a million dollars*; the property, chiefly, of the Presbyterians of Mecklenburgh County. And yet, no small difficulty is felt, not only in extending, but even, in sustaining the kingdom of God among us! Some churches are languishing and ready to die, because they have laid up their treasures on the earth, and are guilty, by wholesale robbery, of defrauding the Most High.

temporally, for the life that now is, as well as for that which is to come. What the Church of Christ most lacks, is faith in God. Her unbelief dishonors God and impoverishes herself. Were it not for unbelief and covetousness, what advances might she not have made! Did her fidelity answer in any way to the transcendent position she occupies, and the glorious privileges she possesses, did she freely give as she has freely received, the dark places of the earth, which are now full of the habitations of cruelty, would long since have been illumined by the glorious sun of the gospel; the conquests of divine truth would have been complete; the empire of Satan would be dismantled and overthrown; and the glorious shout would thunder through the Temple of God: ALLELUIA! THE KINGDOMS OF THE EARTH ARE BECOME THE KINGDOMS OF OUR LORD!



## ERRATA.

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Page 3, line 7, substitute *Jehovah*, for "the Infinite One."

Page 19, line 26, for "alletum," put *alterfum*.

Page 32, line 16, for "6055," put 7055.

Page 36, line 7, for "bishop," put *bishops*.

Page 45, line 14, a comma should be after *propriety*, and "of" should be stricken out.

Page 47, line 11, insert the word "in," after "teacheth."