

WHO SHOULD GIVE.

The Apostle tells us, "Let every one of you." Every Jew was required to bring a gift. Every Christian should bring something for the treasury—not only the parents but the children, not only the master but the servant, not only the rich but the poor—all should come into the sanctuary with an offering.

THE AMOUNT OF CHRISTIAN GIVING.

The Apostle lays down the principle that we should give *proportionately*, "as the Lord hath prospered him." Comparatively few people attend to this simple direction. Abraham gave tithes of all he possessed, and Jacob's vow was: "Of all thou shalt give me, I will surely give a tenth unto Thee." The law of tithe was not a Mosaic institution but it was incorporated into the Mosaic code. It was a recognized principle even among Gentile nations that a tenth should be given for religious purposes. Evidently it was a divine rule—intended for all nations and for all ages.

After the settlement in the land of Canaan the Jews were expected to give much more liberally than did their ancestors. First, they required to give one-tenth of the produce of the fields, trees, flocks and herds for the maintenance of the priests and Levites (Num. 18 : 24 ; and then every landholder was expected to give a tenth of the nine parts of his produce remaining to be expended at tabernacle or temple for festival purposes. Then there were offerings for the poor and for other benevolent objects. Probably the pious Jew gave nearly one-fourth of his income.

But what has all this to do with Christian giving? Has not the law of tithe been abolished? We have no evidence that such is the case. The argument of Paul, "that the promise which God made to Abraham could not be annulled by the abrogation of the law which was given four hundred years after the promise (Gal. 3 : 16-18). The law of tithe was not a ceremonial law among the Jews, as

the wearing of certain garments or the mode of offering sacrifice. It was a divinely chosen method for the performance of the obligations of piety, justice and benevolence. It was not as a matter of charity, but as a matter of justice that the Jew was expected to give ; and the ground on which the law was established has never been changed.

THE RESULT OF NOT GIVING.

Although in the days of Moses it was left with the consciences of the people whether they should comply with the demands of justice. If men refused to pay there was no ecclesiastical law by which obedience could be enforced ; yet God would visit them as they deserved. "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say, 'Wherein have we robbed thee?' In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse : for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation."

Those terrible words are as applicable in our day as they were in the days of Malachi. Have we not reason to fear the curse of God, if we are faithless as His stewards? There may be worldly prosperity and success in business, and yet there may be the blighting and blasting influence of Jehovah's curse. There may be rich *fools* in our days as there were eighteen hundred years ago. Any person who takes the trouble to examine the statistical and financial returns of our Church must be struck with the smallness of the average contributions per family and communicant for the schemes of the Church. These returns present a very dark and discouraging view of our Church life and Christian activity. They may well lead us to ask whether, as a people, we are not robbing God? and whether God is not cursing us? When we look at the length of our communion rolls, the size of our congregations, the number of our prayer meetings and the apparent piety of our people, and then consider how few there are inquiring the way to Zion and how slow the progress of Christianity in the world we may well