

their attachment to the scriptural method of supporting the gospel. Say is not the truth of God blasphemed by your own conduct?

Your example has an evil influence on others in the congregation.—Those who give liberally and conscientiously, might be induced to give more than they do, if others would but make any effort to do their duty. But when they see those who make such high claims to principle and honesty, so recalcant in the performance of duty, they begin to think that they may as well spare themselves too, and thus "evil communications corrupt good manners"—the leprosy which tainted a few extends to others. Where such dispositions and conduct prevail, the cause of religion cannot be in a healthy condition. It lingers in a miserable state between life and death, and more dead than alive. Minister and people are equally wretched and inefficient. And it is vain to expect managers or trustees of congregations to do their duty, when they have no means with which to act.

Your example has an evil influence on those who hold State-church views.—It is a well known fact, that those who hold to State Churchism in Canada, glory in their position, and look with contempt on ministers and people who hold scriptural views. They designate all voluntaries, as sectaries and dissenters, as if they were rank communists and infidels. These religionists do not judge of what is truth, from the statements of God's word, but by what they hear in the professions, and see in the conduct of others. They judge of voluntarism by the representations which you give of it, and from the impressions which your conduct makes. When they hear you denouncing State establishments of religion, as impolitic, unjust and unscriptural—when they hear their own ministers, from the least to the greatest, denounced as State paupers, hirelings and lovers of filthy lucre, they naturally expect to see such high principle and holy zeal as you possess, manifested in some visible, palpable form, in doing what is so clearly proclaimed to be a duty of prime importance. They look around them, and on one side they see their own ministers sustained in comfort, if not in affluence—they see their churches kept in repair, nay, in comparative elegance—within and around them all things seem prospering; on the other side, among professed voluntaries, they see the very reverse of this, and they come to the conclusion, that our professions are hypocrisy, and our principles delusion, and they shut their ears against every argument in favor of voluntarism. Those who act so egregiously at variance with the truth which they profess to hold, have much to answer for, seeing the truth of God, so far as respects the support of his religion, is brought into disrepute among several denominations of professed Christians.

In conclusion, we offer a few words of advice for the consideration of professed voluntaries, in connection with the United Presbyterian Church in Canada, who may read this article. You are not, for a moment, to suppose that we ask for ministers' wealth and worldly honors; that we wish them to be supported in luxury, or that cathedrals or costly churches should be built and sustained, or that they should be highly ornamented with gilded and carved work. We ask no such things. We ask only that each member should give as God has prospered him, that the minister may be sustained as any respectable mechanic, merchant, or farmer is supported. We look for nothing higher, and to do this is the duty of the Church. We have very high authority for saying so. God said to the Israelites, "Take heed, that ye forsake not the Levite so long as ye live upon the earth"—Deut. xxii. 19. (See also Deut. xiv. 29, and xvi. 17.) And the New Testament law of duty is clearly stated by the Apostle Paul, 1 Cor. ix. 11—"If we have sworn unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we reap your carnal things? Even so God hath ordained, that they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel." We ask also, that people should do their duty to themselves and to their religion, by the respect which they pay to the external—the outward arrangements. Where true religion exists, there is a great tendency to arrangement and order. Cleanliness and comfort are not necessary adjuncts of religion, but you will seldom find real vital godliness in any congregation, where cleanliness and comfort are neglected or despised. Look to it then, that your feelings and actions are in harmony with your professed principles—you hold scriptural views in reference to the support of religion—see that your actions are scriptural also; you should give as well as live by faith; you profess to be God's people—that he has called you into the gospel of his Son—that he has made you the

honored instruments by which his religion is to be supported and extended. Can you then take what you give to his cause, and in the retirement of your closets, appeal to the Searcher of hearts, that you do conscientiously what you do in his service—that you give what you contribute willingly, and according as God has prospered you? If you act thus God will bless you, and this voice would soon be heard on every side, "the kingdoms of this world are become kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ."

In our next communication we may speak a few words to managers of congregations, in respect to their duties. D.

THE VALUE OF THE BIBLE.

The excellence of the Bible depends on its divine authority. It was given by inspiration of God; and consequently the writings, as well as the writers, are inspired. In the words of a distinguished English writer, "It has God for its author, truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter, and salvation for its end." Since the Bible is stamped with the broad seal of heaven's authority, and possesses such divine energy and vital influence, it might be argued, from the perfections of the divine character, and independently of experience, that it would embue society with its living spirit, and be productive of the most beneficial changes. It has been, indeed, customary to impute such beneficent changes to the progress of civilisation and to the predominance of the principles of right reason over ignorance and error, always forgetting that civilisation and the rule of right reason, are just part of that ameliorated condition of society for which we are called on to account. The truth is, that those who boast of the achievements of reason, uniformly select their examples of its agency and influence for those countries where the Bible sheds abroad its clearest ray; and hence the philosophers of this world are indebted to the Bible for the discoveries they may have made respecting God and duty. Before a chemist makes an experiment, he is anxious to exclude any foreign ingredient, lest the truth of his results should be affected by it. But whenever revelation is known, men are unconsciously debtors to its light and power; and effects are attributed to reason, which can only flow from the word of God. They take fire from the altar of God with which to kindle the torch of reason; they pillar coin from the mint of heaven, and stamp it with the image and superscription of reason. The fact is undeniable, that a Sabbath school child, by reading the Bible for a few years, can tell more about God, and duty, and eternity, than the wisest philosopher among the heathen could do for ages, without it. It alone solves the all-important question—What must I do to be saved? Without its aid, we would have wandered through a vast moral desert, cheerlessly going along the journey of life, while at its termination would be the midnight of the tomb, with shadows, clouds, and darkness resting on it. But now we possess in the Bible, the only ray of light that can be shed on the dreary darkness of the tomb, and all that is far beyond; the only system of mercy by which goodness can arise out of evil, and on the ruins of our fallen world, an edifice of love and mercy be erected to the praise of its redeeming Lord.

But what are the moral results which the Bible has produced in the world? Whenever it has come, it has found the moral portraiture exhibited in the first chapter to the Romans—Men, haters of God, hateful, and hating one another. It changes the aspect of the heathen world; and instead of a wilderness of poisonous herbs, it presents a lovely garden of pleasant fruits, the trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified. It uniformly finds men sinful and polluted, living in the bondage of corruption, and dying in the midnight of despair; and to all who feel its influence and acknowledge its power, when enumerating the greatest sinners, its unvarying language is—"Such were some of you—not such are, but such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are justified, but ye are sanctified." Compare any of the countries where the Bible is generally read and studied, with the most enlightened of those nations where the word of God, if not virtually prohibited, is yet put as a candle under a bushel. Compare Spain and Portugal, which are manifestly receding from civilization, into barbarism, with Great Britain, honorably distinguished for its advancement in science—compare Italy with the United States of America and Upper Canada, and you will find that the christian sentiment in those countries where the Bible is freely circulated, is as marked as that which originally subsisted be-