

not regard the teachings of the Spirit on this subject without painful apprehension. Paul says, 2 Cor. viii. 12 (see the whole chapter), "For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." How comprehensive the phrase, "*according to that a man hath,*" it speaks peace to the poor man, contributing his mite; but what a voice is it to the man who gives a little, a very little out of his abundance, "*accepted according to that a man hath.*" The Apostle continues, verse 13, "For I mean not that other men be eased, and you burdened; but by an *equality*, &c." Now where, amongst the very best and most devoted of our churches, do we find such rules observed? Where do we find *equality* in giving practised? Look at the mode of communicating their earthly substance, their "carthly things," adopted by God's professed people, and it would really seem as if God had commanded in the most positive terms, that in sustaining his cause some should be eased and others burdened, and that equality should specially be avoided. When a man abandons every earthly prospect of gain, leaves every earthly avenue to fortune, for the single purpose of preaching the gospel to his fellow men, and is left without a competency to prosecute his exhausting labors, is not that anxious man *burdened* to sustain religious doctrine and institutions, while others are eased? And where is the *equality* in men pocketing their hundreds or their thousands a year, and keeping the income of the man who supplies them with the bread of life down to the *bare living* point; and (when his circumstances are all taken into consideration) beneath a respectable living point? But this is not all; God's rule of action in the matter of giving is utterly and recklessly disregarded by church members in nearly every contribution that is made. Take, for example, the course pursued in raising means to defray the current expenses of any church within the limits of our Association, and where do we find equality the rule of giving? One man pays three per cent upon his entire income, another two, another one, while others do not pay one penny on the pound. Is not this setting the Holy Spirit's legislation on this subject at defiance; and can churches grieve that Spirit and still expect to prosper? We blame the churches