

## SUPPORT OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

To the Editor of the Wesleyan.

SIR,—I have read the question of A Subscriber, relative to the tithe subject, and am of opinion that the first query has been satisfactorily answered by your correspondent, "Philo." He has clearly proved that the Almighty, under the Old Testament economy, commanded his people to give a tenth of their annual increase to the support of his ministers and worship. The second enquiry of "A Subscriber" must, I think, be replied to in the negative: I shall, therefore, by the following brief arguments, endeavour to prove that the tithe command has never by divine authority been abrogated. If this point be sufficiently established, the consequence will be inevitable.

1. *The tithe precept was not repealed during the Mosaic Institute.*

Malachi, the last of the Old Testament Prophets, writes thus:—"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. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, 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." Malachi iii. 8-10. This Scripture declares that the withholding of tithes and offerings was sacrilege, and that it had involved the whole Jewish nation in the curse of God. It also demands the bringing of tithes and offerings, and promises great temporal prosperity to the obedient performers of this imperious duty. Hence it is certain that the tithe affair stood in full force, and was of imperative obligation, in the days of Malachi.

2. *This command was not annulled by Jesus Christ, the great Head of the church.*

Our Lord says, Matt. xxiii. 23, "Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone." See the parallel text, Luke ii. 42. These passages make it obvious that tithes were paid, and paid scrupulously too, in the days of our Saviour; and that he, so far from interdicting them, gives the payment of them his full sanction: "these," says he, ["judgment, mercy, and faith,"] "ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other [tithes] undone." It is true indeed that he pronounces a "woe" against the "Scribes and Pharisees," not, however, for paying tithe of mint, &c., but for omitting the weightier matters of the law, and for hypocrisy; at the same time strongly affirming that both these departments of the law ought to be attended to. Neither, then, do we find here, nor indeed in any other of the sayings of our Saviour, the slightest hint of tithe abrogation.

3. *This precept was not revoked by any of the New Testament writers.*

St. Paul, in the seventh chapter of his epistle to the Hebrews, speaks at some length relative to tithes. Here the Apostle had an excellent opportunity for disclaiming them altogether, and had he received authority to that effect, doubtless he would have done so. Instead, however, of doing this, he identifies the tithes, not only with the Levitical priesthood, but with the still more eminent priesthood of Melchisedec, that strikingly illustrious type of our blessed Redeemer. I instance this portion of the New Testament Scriptures because it is the most prominent apostolical mention they make touching the tithe question. Now it is plain that there is nothing here prohibitory of tithes. In other parts of the New Testament I frequently meet with financial directions respecting ministers of the Gospel, affluent members of

the Church, and the poor and suffering followers of Christ; but I do not recollect a single text which affords the most distant intimation of any repeal of the tithe obligation.

If, Mr. Editor, there be fallacy in any part of the preceding reasoning, I shall feel obliged by either yourself or any of your talented correspondents kindly, but kindly, exposing the same; but if the arguments, short as they are, be scripturally and logically sound, the following conclusion is, I think, natural and inevitable; namely,—That the members of the Christian Church are scripturally obliged to give at least an annual tenth of all their personal substance to the support of God's ministers, and the extension of his cause among the perishing children of men.

I am, Sir,

Yours very respectfully,  
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