

and harassing influences of the world, that their time and labours, publicly and privately, may be wholly consecrated to it. The maintenance of his ordinances under even the Old Testament economy, required such a separated class of men; how much more, the main cause of them, and the spread of their mission, under the New Testament, when the Ministry were not to be consecrated as to be separated from the influence or responsibilities of religion, nor from the common obligation of its duties; any more than they were from the passions and liabilities of other men; but they were only to be exempted from the ordinary business and avocations of life, that they might give themselves wholly to the work of God. This required, simply the aid of others, and their families, they should be placed above the anxieties and the fear of want, and furnished with such an adequate provision, as might leave them no temptation to regret their own position, or to feel any envy or covetousness of the alliance enjoyed by others in earthly things.

The Ministry of the Old Testament economy was provided for by God himself; and, like most other ordinances of that period, the provision made was placed under express law. And in the law, we have a very clear indication of what the will of God is, in reference to the manner of outward comfort in which his servants should be placed; and in which his Church, under a more advanced economy, to imitate. For there was nothing ceremonial in the measure of the provision made, though the mode of supplying it was peculiar to their original constitution. The Apostle expressly says, in reference to the New Testament, when he says, "Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things, live of the things of the temple? And they who 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." This provision was exempted from the labours of the field, but they had their measured allotment constantly of the produce. And this was not a bare allowance, but a provision the most ample. The Israelites tribe, was, as a tribe, only a thirteenth part of Israel; and, in respect of population, according to the enumerations of Moses, it was not a fifth part of Israel; and yet there was appointed to it a tenth part of all the produce of the country, besides the numerous other obligations, in first fruits and sacrifices, which belonged to God, were by him conferred on them, and being with his provision, did for them homes, in which they and their families had the full enjoyment of domestic comfort. The number of cities, with their suburbs allotted to them, amounted to more than one city to every thousand of the population of the tribe of Levi. All this abundance of provision for the ministers of God's service in Israel, conferred on them no pomp nor splendour, such as might give them a feeling of inferiority over their brethren; nor any opportunity to shew or to lose it. It only raised them above the fear of straits, either in the period of their active labor, or when disabled by affliction, or by the infirmities of age; so that they might, without worldly care, or anxiety about the future, give their entire energies of their minds to the ministration of the temple, or their duties as teachers and rulers in the Church of Israel. And the people were made to feel their obligation to them as the Ministers of God, by the provision which was assigned to that tribe being made to pass, year by year, through their hands. The payments which they annually made on their behalf, were built an act of obedience to the commandment of God, and an acknowledgment of their debt to his ministers. Their fear of the one, and their love to the other, went hand in hand. And to neglect the provision for his Ministers, was to rob God himself, as they would soon experience to their own temporal as well as spiritual loss. For when, in the days of Nehemiah, the portions of the Levites had not been given them, "The Levites had died, every one to his field," and "the house of God was forsaken." And this God, by the prophet of the period, Malachi, pronounced a robbery of himself, which had brought a curse on the whole nation. "Ye have robbed many of their tithes, even this whole nation." And then follows a promise of an overflowing blessing, should they bring all his tithes unto his storehouse, that there might be meat in his house.

The Ministry of the New Testament must be as entirely consecrated to the work and service which they are to fulfil, and, in order to this, they may be as well as wholly raised above worldly occupation and care. They are to "give attendance to teaching, to exhortation, to doctrine;" "to give themselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." From these sacred occupations, their minds are not to be diverted; and to them, their minds are not to be distracted. The Apostles and Evangelists, indeed, who were first called to the ministration of the gospel among the heathen nations, went forth with taking nothing of the heathen, and required even to labour, working with their hands for their own support; and at first, also, to waive their right of support from the infant churches, lest the influence of the gospel should be endangered. And Missionaries still, who go forth to spread the gospel among idolatrous nations, must be dependent for their support on the churches at home, until the influence of the gospel has taken root, and the people have become a plant. For it is the sanctifying power of the gospel, when felt, which opens the heart, both to the liberal support of men or incomes, and to their extension to those who have them not. In a land so thoroughly evangelized as ours, the case is altogether different; and especially in a church whose members are so enlightened in the scriptural principle that "religion is to support and propagate itself," as that the necessity is, among us, the minister of the gospel ought never to be reduced to the necessity, or exposed to the temptation, of working with his own hands for the support of himself and family, whether by teaching, or otherwise;

nor compelled, as has too often been the case, to relinquish a pastoral charge where there is a field of usefulness, from the want of a home to shelter him, or of the adequate means of keeping himself and family above the haunts of carnal desires. The ministers of the gospel are to be brought to court God, not to court earthly comfort, or the convenience of earthly station. But they are to be brought to court God, in his residence; or, reduced to a position in society which must detract from their ministerial influence. They belong to all spheres of society; to the high and to the low, to the prince, and the lowest of the people. They are the teachers of all; and the messengers of God to all. Their mission extends to every creature. Hence they occupy a middle station in society, in which they equally come with those at the summit, and those in the lowest walks of life; and they ought to be placed in circumstances fitting them to be the friends, the consolers, and the associates of every class, of the high and low. It would neither be practicable, nor would it tend to good, to depress them, by a stinted support, from the place in society which the nature and ends of their office assign them. This would impair their usefulness, and lower the influence of religion as administered by them.

The Ministers of the Gospel have a right also to a comfortable home in their various spheres of labour. If they have either no homes provided for their residence, or only an uncomfortable dwelling, or if they are left to their own ability to get themselves and families accommodated, this must seriously interfere with their labours, and hinder them in their work. They require, in consequence of their labours, a ministerial, not the most enlarged, maintained an abode for their families. But circumstances in every respect as necessary as extravagance would be superfluous.

The amount of their annual support, to which this address has a special reference, must be made in a sufficiency for the support of themselves and families, and by enabling them to implement faithfully all the duties of their office. Each of them has a sphere of usefulness around him, which he ought to have the means of cultivating; and which it is equally the honour of the Church, as it is his duty, thus to should fully occupy; but from the proper occupancy of which stinted circumstances so easily preclude him. He ought to have amply the means of taking his place in the public movements of religion, in attending the courts of the Church, and aiding, by his presence and otherwise, in all general measures for the advancement of religion, and the improvement of society. His life is to be devoted to usefulness and opportunity; not the most enlarged are always before him. The education of his family, too, and the sitting of them up in the world, will require no small provision. And also, as he is subject to the same laws in providence as other men, he may at any period of life have to leave behind him a widow or dependent family; for which contingency he ought to be able to provide. Or, even as he should be spared to old age, and after years of active service, in his labours, he should, through infirmity, be retired from active service, he ought, throughout his ministry, to be placed in circumstances which shall have enabled him to anticipate and lay up against such an emergency; that he may not be then possibly cast off by those among whom he has spent his youth, and left upon the ready allowance of the public charity of the Church. The Levites retired from active service, and lived to their meals at the age of fifty, but the provision for their support remained the same, with the exception of a few perquisites to those who for the time ministered at the altar.

The Church ought calmly and conscientiously to look at these requirements in the provision to be made for the support of the Gospel Ministry. Other men, in the occupations of common life, have the means and the opportunity, according to their skill and industry, of making provisions for themselves in the future and for their families. They can increase their gains, and enlarge their business; they can lay up, and have enough for themselves in old age, or for the widow or family whom they leave behind. And, though the Gospel Ministry can never be in circumstances to lay up wealth, they ought, in common with all others, to be in circumstances which enables them to prepare for the ordinary personal or family contingencies, which may occur, and which they may be called upon to have a bare subsistence during the period of infirmity, and to be reduced to a ready subsistence in the period of infirmity, or of age, would be a harder lot outwardly than the common lot of man; and is far from being in accordance with the mind of God, as indicated in his care about his ministry under the Old Testament.

But is the Church, it may be asked, in a condition to make easily the provision for the Gospel Ministry, which is thus required? We answer unhesitatingly, in the respect of principle, that it is entirely competent to do so, without incurring any burden that could be felt, nay, it could do so with more comfort and more security than it collects for their support an imperfect allowance. A stinted allowance implies a stinted spirit in the giver, to which the work must ever be an annoyance, however small the amount given; whereas, a mind of liberality and faith will be more than content to give, and will be more than content to feel, that the effort asked of the Church in this address would not require them to abridge themselves in any of the useful comforts of life. It will not reduce them to poorer fare, or to humbler clothing, or to a meaner dwelling. Let them only give to religion what they now give to things which do not profit, and the Church, it is believed, would be rich, both for the support of its Ministers, and the edification of the Redeemer's paring counts. The demand made upon the members of the Church, on the behalf of the Christian Ministry, would not probably require them to deny themselves in anything necessary and good; but only, perhaps, in luxuries