

spiritual! How infinitely superior in every respect to the present condition of things! How much better than this continual dunning of people for money; this eternal cry of 'Give, give, give'; this turning the pulpit into a begging box! Our hands are never out of our pockets." Stop, sir, stop; I can listen to such talk no longer. Let me ask you a few plain questions in all earnestness. Do you think God is a fool? Do you think He has made a huge mistake in arranging for the preaching of the Gospel by men and not by angels? Better tell Him that to His face; but until you are prepared to do so, better hold your tongue, *say*, and let not even your heart harbour for an instant such an impious thought. Why is it that God has arranged for the preaching of His Gospel by beings compassed with infirmity, beings requiring material support? Is it because the angels think such work

BENEATH THEIR DIGNITY?

Nay, the highest angel in heaven would think it his greatest honour to stand in the place of the most obscure minister of the Gospel, preaching to the smallest audience in the world. Is it then because God cannot spare the angels from their higher duties? Nay, there is in God's universe no duty or privilege higher than exalting the name of the only begotten Son of God as the Saviour of sinners. There is no work more pleasing to God the Father. The angels came with delight to roll the stone away from His sepulchre, and to fold the linen clothes in which His body was wrapped. The smallest service for the Lord Jesus is a work excelling in glory. Is it then because God wishes 'is work to be done at

AS CHEAP A RATE AS POSSIBLE,

and therefore puts part of the burden on us? Perish the thought forever in the sight of the great sacrifice He has made, the unspeakable gift He has bestowed, even His own Son—dearer to Him than all things visible and invisible. What! does the Almighty need our help? Does the Creator of the ends of the earth need our money? Nay, but He knows that *we need to learn the God-like glory of giving, of giving for such a cause.* He would have us children worthy of Himself, knowing that it is more blessed to give than to receive. Therefore, for our good, for our present and future blessedness, He has committed this ministry into human hands. This is part also of our spiritual training, an arrangement made for our spiritual nourishment and growth in grace.

We might also come to this conclusion from thinking on God's ways. If these are His servants, will He not see that they are paid? If they are His soldiers, will He send them a warfare at their own charges? If they are His oxen, will He muzzle them? If He takes care for oxen, much more will He take care for the ministers of His Gospel. And the remembrance of God's past arrangements makes us come to the same conclusion. When He set apart one of the twelve tribes to attend to spiritual matters, He made liberal provision for them. He gave them cities to live in, fields for their cattle, a tenth part of the produce of the fields of their brethren, and in addition urged His people to remember them with special gifts in seasons of thankfulness.

HAS GOD GROWN LESS GENEROUS?

Is He less interested in the support of these men whom He has ordained to preach the Gospel to every creature in the world than He was in the support of

those whom He had ordained to conserve the truth in Canaan till His Son should come? Is He less anxious about those who are torch-bearers to every land of darkness than He was about those who trimmed the lamp and kept it burning in that little land? Nay, He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

But, apart altogether from such inferences as these, we have

THE PLAIN DECLARATION,

"They which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple, and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar. *Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel.*" This is a matter which God has thus ordained; therefore, if any find fault, let him know that he finds fault with God. Hence, also we have the plain command, "Let him that is taught in the word communicate to him that teacheth in every good thing." Nothing could be more plain and emphatic. And remember, it is in connection with this commandment that we have the solemn warning, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." With how many is the support of the ministry

A MERE MOCKERY?

The Rev. Newman Hall tells the following: "I remember once dining at the house of a wealthy merchant, who, though he loved the house of God, was not remarkable for generous contributions, and who said to me across the table that his thoughts had wandered at church in the morning service by calculating that during thirty years he had paid in pew rent upwards of £300 (\$1,500). It was, perhaps, rude in me, but my spirit was stirred to reply: 'Less sir, than for blacking the shoes of your household.' After a pause, he frankly said: 'That is true!' I heard no more of the payment of pew rent as a sign of generosity."

How many think if their own minister is fairly supported their responsibilities cease, as if their little corner of the vineyard constituted the whole Church of Christ. One of the saddest sights in any church, and one of the most hurtful, is the selfishness of a numerous and well-to-do congregation. Not only does it withhold the money which is sorely needed, but its evil example is imitated and its selfish policy adopted by others, to the hindrance of Christian fruitfulness. Little do they dream what mischief they may do in the heritage of the Lord. A large tract of land in Glengarry, Ontario, has been rendered utterly useless by the introduction of *one flower* into the garden of a Roman Catholic bishop there. From one little plant with a beautiful blue flower, it has multiplied into millions and overrun thousands of acres, utterly destroying their fruitfulness; and so the people now call it

THE BISHOP'S CURSE.

Selfishness in any strong congregation is like that weed, and if it is not utterly rooted out will work fearful havoc in the whole Church. The bishop's curse is nothing to it. The strong need to be reminded that they must bear the burdens of the weak, and so fulfil the law of Christ. I was once talking with a farmer on this subject, and as he did not seem to be particularly clear about it, I asked him if he could repeat the Shorter Catechism "Yes," said he; "I learned it when a boy, and I have not forgot

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