

the practice of fasting twice in the week: and where anything of the nature of censure can be inferred as against the one practice it would seem to apply equally to the other also.

And yet again, we find our Lord thus teaching His disciples, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven," St. Matt. v, 20. Our righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees. Does this mean that we are to have an utterly distinct class of righteousness from the Pharisees, and, if so, how could we exceed in degree that which is different in kind? Or does it mean that we are to do our righteousness in a more excellent spirit than the Pharisees. Then the righteous acts of the Pharisees are not condemned, but are rather commended to us to be done in a better way. Thus the Pharisee in the parable, who no doubt can be taken to represent his class, was engaged in the duty of prayer, and says in his prayer that he fasted "twice in the week and gave tithes of all that he possessed." We must exceed the practices of these Pharisees, and to do so we must pray and fast, and tithe our substance, but do all this in a more willing and cheerful spirit.

Thus in the Gospels our Lord does not seem in the least to condemn or discourage the Divine Plan of Church Finance as found in the Old Testament.

It remains for me to notice what some might consider St. Paul's Plan of Church Finance. St. Paul says, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him," I Cor. xvi, 2. This is a direction for a regular and systematic giving, but does not touch the matter of any proportionate giving. The giving of a tenth would be the giving of every one in proportion "as God hath prospered him," or according to his ability. Under the system of tithing those who had much would give plentifully, while those who had little would give in proportion to their little. No reference of St. Paul to the duty of giving seems to conflict with the system of tithing.

We have said that St. Paul makes use of the incident of Abram paying tithes to Melchisedec, to illustrate and enforce Christian teaching and practice. Now we might here refer in particular to that teaching. St. Paul shows that Christ our Lord is a Priest after the order of Melchisedec, and that as such His new order of the Priesthood is superior to the Levitical Priesthood. Then he proves the character of the Priesthood of Melchisedec by these two arguments: First, that he blessed Abraham; and, secondly, that he tithed him, or received tithes of him as his due. If then our Saviour be "a Priest after the order of Melchisedec," as no doubt He is, He must have power to tithe the people as well as to bless them, or else He does not fulfil the type or figure of Melchisedec. But then He must exercise the power of tithing in the same way in which He exercises the other power of blessing the people, that is through the Priests of His Holy Church; and thus He not only abideth ever a Priest, but ever exerciseth the two prerogatives of the Priesthood in both tithing and blessing the people, and thus "remaineth a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

And from all this it seems reasonable to conclude that the system of tithing is the Divine Plan of Church Finance, and not the Quebec Scheme, nor the humiliating principle (?) of voluntary support.

Having finished the evidence from the Bible, I have only time (?) to do but very little more than mention the nature of the evidence which yet remains to be called in to witness to the tithing system as the Divine Plan of Church Finance.

This evidence is the universal prevalence of this system amongst the Pagans.

Proof of the universal prevalence of tithes among Pagan nations may be found in extenso in Selden's History of Tithes. Also much to the same effect from a work by the Rev. A. W. Miller, D.D., Pastor of the Presbyterian Church, Charlotte, N.C., entitled "The Law of the Tithe and of the Free-Will Offering, and of Almsgiving."

"The Carthaginians sent the tithe of their Sicilian spoils to Hercules of Tyre."

A verse of the inscription at Delphi, sacred to Apollo and bearing upon this subject, is as follows: "That we may hang up tithes and first fruits to the honour of Phoebus."

It is said of Cadwalla, King of the West Saxons, that before his being made a Christian, about the year A.D. 684, he tithed all his spoils of war to the deity.

It is said, too, that Cadwalla's ancestors, the German Saxons, whence England was chiefly filled, sacrificed to Neptune the tenth of all captives taken in their piracies.

Miller gives the following: "In the language of the learned Montacutus, instances are mentioned in history of some nations which did not offer sacrifices, but in the annals of all times none are found which did not pay tithes."

In the words of the judicious Hooker, "Imagine we that this was for no cause done, or that there was not some special inducement to judge the tenth of our worldly profits the most convenient for God's position."

Says Collyer, in his "Sacred Interpreter": "From Pagan writers we learn that several nations, very far distant from each other in different parts of the world, and, as it seems, without the least acquaintance or commerce one with another, observed this custom. Now, since this proportion of one in ten is certainly indifferent in itself, any more than one in seven or eight, it is reasonable to believe that this custom of paying tithe, like that of sacrificing, had some Divine direction for it, and that it was derived from Adam to Noah, and from him to his posterity, till at length, at the dispersion of Babel, it spread over all the world."

The significant summary of Dean Comber, with which I must conclude, is that "Tithes were first instituted by God, and then promulgated by tradition to all the world."

THE MESSAGE OF THE APOSTOLIC FATHERS TO OUR OWN AGE.—VIII.

11. *The Cross as an Emblem.* There is some evidence that the cross was regarded as a sacred symbol even in the first century, Barnabas says: "The Scripture saith: And Abraham circumcised of his household eighteen males and three hundred . . . Understand ye that he saith the eighteen first, and then after an interval three hundred.* In the eighteen I stands for ten, II for eight. Here thou hast Jesus (*Jesus*). And because the cross is the T was to have grace, he saith also three hundred. So he revealeth Jesus in the two letters, and in the remaining one the cross" (9). This mode of interpretation, which now excites a smile, was held in high repute by the philosophers of Alexandria. Thus it is to Egypt, the home of symbolism, that we owe the primitive symbol of the Cross, which, as distinguished from the Crucifix, and as the emblem of the passion, is the one visible bond of union between East and West.

12. *Fasting and Prayer.*

The Didache enjoins: "Let not your fastings be with the hypocrites, for they fast on the second and fifth day of the week, but do ye keep your fast on the fourth and on the preparation day (Wednesday and Friday). Neither pray ye

as the hypocrites, but as the Lord commanded in His Gospel, thus pray ye: Our Father, &c. (8).

13. *Almsgiving.*

Barnabas writes: "I entreat those of you who are in higher station, if ye will receive any counsel of good advice from me, keep amongst you those to whom ye may do good" (21).

But the early Christians were very far from encouraging pauperism or indiscriminate charity. The Didache says, as part of "the way of life": "The Father desireth that gifts be given to all from His own bounties. Blessed is He that giveth according to the commandment; for he is guiltless. Woo to him that receiveth; for if a man receiveth having need, he is guiltless; but he that hath no need shall give satisfaction why and wherefore he received.

As touching this also it is said: "Let thine arms sweat in thine hands, until thou shalt have learnt to whom to give" (1).

The Didache also enjoins systematic giving: "Every first-fruit then of the produce of the wine-vat and of the threshing-floor, of the oxen and of thy sheep, thou shalt take and give as the first-fruit to the prophets; for they are your chief-priests. But if ye have not a prophet, give them to the poor. . . . Of money and raiment and every possession take the first-fruit, as shall seem good to thee, and give according to the commandment" (13).

14. *The State of the lost.*

The ancient Homily says: "While we are on earth then, let us repent: for we are clay under the craftsman's hand. For in like manner as the potter, if he be making a vessel, and it get twisted or crushed in his hands, reshapeth it again; but if we have once put it into the fiery oven, he shall no longer mend it: so also let us, while we are in this world, repent with our whole heart of the evil things which we have done in the flesh, that we may be saved by the Lord while we have yet time for repentance. For after that we have departed out of the world, we can no more make confession there, or repent any more" (8). This plain teaching is directly opposed to the modern theory of Universalism.

15. *Duties of the ministry.*

St. Ignatius draws the following picture of a faithful deacon: "Those who are deacons of the mysteries of Jesus Christ must please all men in all ways. For they are not deacons of meats and drinks but servants of the Church of God. It is right therefore that they should beware of blame as of fire" (Tral. 2).

St. Polycarp thus described a faithful priest: "The presbyters also must be compassionate, merciful to all men, turning back the sheep that are gone astray, visiting all the infirm, not neglecting a widow or an orphan or a poor man; but providing always for that which is honourable in the sight of God and of men, abstaining from all anger, respect of persons, unrighteous judgment, being far from all love of money, not quick to believe anything against any man, not hasty in judgment, knowing that we are all debtors of sin" (6).

The following is St. Ignatius' counsel to a bishop: "Vindicate thine office in all diligence of flesh and of spirit. Have a care for union, than which there is nothing better. Bear all men, as the Lord also beareth thee. Suffer all men in love, as also thou doest. Give thyself to unceasing prayers. Ask for larger wisdom than thou hast. Be watchful, and keep thy spirit from slumbering. Speak to each man severally after the manner of God. Bear the maladies of all, as a perfect athlete. Where there is more toil, there is much gain. . . . Bring the more pestilent to submission by gentleness. . . . Be sober, as God's athlete. . . . Stand thou firm, as an anvil when it is smitten. . . . Be thou more diligent than thou art. Mark the seasons. Await Him that is

* In Greek 18 is IH, and 300 is T.