

give; but what is above all money or money's worth, they can give us their prayers flowing from warm and grateful hearts. For our encouragement some are giving to the utmost of their power and under great difficulties; and if you, my brethren, take the subject to God in prayer and look at it in the light of conscience, and with a view to eternity, your contributions will increase, and those who never have had the subject fully and seriously before them will see it in a new light and give abundantly. It is a use of riches to which perhaps they have never been accustomed, but of which they never will repent. Like the seed scattered, as it would seem, a useless sacrifice in the spring, it returns in the harvest an hundred fold. "Honour then the Lord with thy substance, and thy barns shall be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine."

In order to give practical effect to these remarks, I suggest to the vestry of each Church, to request from the Minister at the annual meeting on Easter Monday, a report of the unpaid dues of the congregation on account of his stipend for the preceding year. A committee should then be appointed, and empowered to take immediate and effectual steps for the collection of the arrears, that at the adjourned meeting which, according to established rule, takes place a fortnight subsequently, the claim of the Minister may receive full satisfaction: other debts are always considered imperative, and the necessity for their liquidation readily admitted, but surely no debt is more sacred or binding upon the enlightened conscience than this. If other debts have a legal remedy, and the creditor is armed with power under the act incorporating the vestry to enforce his claim in due process of law, shall the debts we owe to God's Minister be more lightly regarded, and occasion

be given for the application of that startling scripture remonstrance, "Will a man rob God?" If as a rejoinder the question be ignorantly put: "Wherein have we robbed Him?" Is not the answer supplied by the sacred volume "in tithes" or provision for my ministering servants and "offerings" for the service of my sanctuary? Should my suggestion be adopted, as I hope it universally may, this reproach, wherever it may exist, will be wiped away, and our churches and congregations enjoy a reputation for honesty and integrity in their dealings, which is now unfortunately too often called in question, to the injury of their own character, and to the vexation, disappointment, and distress of those who are set over them in the Lord.

In bringing this momentous subject before you, I might have dwelt more on earthly motives; but I take higher ground, I carry you with me to a purer region and to a nobler principle. Standing by the Cross of Calvary, I appeal to nothing lower than your love of Christ, who putting himself in the place of the poor and needy, has said, "I was an hungered, and you gave me meat; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you took me in; for inasmuch as you did it to the least of these my brethren you did it unto me."

I remain,

My dear Brethren,
Your faithful Friend and Brother,
JOHN TORONTO.

Toronto, 25th February, 1861.

P.S.—The Bishop requests the Churchwardens and Lay Delegates to bring this Pastoral Letter under the special notice of their respective vestries and congregations as soon as possible.

(We thank the friend who sent us the following letter, written by a Layman, it comes to us most opportunely treating as it does of the same subject as the Pastoral of our Bishop.)

(To the Editor of the Morning Chronicle)
[SIR,—On perusing the discussion of the proceedings at the annual meeting of the Church Society of this Diocese, given in your issue this morning, I was much struck by an important omission in the arguments of the gentlemen who spoke upon the question of the necessity for augmenting the stipends of the working clergy.

That the clergy in Canada are, as a body, miserably underpaid, and that the spread of the Gospel is every where hindered for the want of funds to carry on the work of the ministry, are truths which, I think, need no demonstration.

It may be also observed, that the great duty of giving liberally, according to our means, to the support of religion, is plainly inculcated in Holy Scripture; and that where people are content to receive "spiritual things" from the pastors whom God has set over them, without giving, ungrudgingly, of their "carnal things" for the support of their pastors, they disregard the Apostolic injunction, and cannot expect a blessing to follow on the use of ordinances which they so lightly esteem: For men do not value that which costs them nothing. But the great question is: what proportion of our means ought we to give for such purposes, and in what way? Holy Scripture answers this for us, when it says: (Malachi, iii. 8, 10) "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings." "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," with other promises to the same effect.

This is not the place to discuss the question of

tithes in its religious aspect. Suffice it to say, that in the work of the learned Leslie, on the Divine Right of Tithes, and in other similar publications, ample proof will be found, that the payment of tithes is as much obligatory on the heart and conscience of Christians, as it was made to the Jew by the law of Moses. While we are freed, through Christ, from the bondage of the latter, it is not that "we may use our liberty for a cloak to our covetousness."

I assume then that the tenth of a man's income is the portion which God Himself has pointed out, as the amount which we should render to Him as an acknowledgment that He is the possessor of heaven and earth, and that we are His stewards, who are bound to use faithfully the temporal possessions we enjoy.

The question of tithes has been much complicated and embarrassed by state interference in the enactment of laws, in Great Britain and other Christian countries, making their payment compulsory. This, I humbly conceive, has been a grave mistake, and has led the masses to look upon tithes with instinctive abhorrence, as men shrink from the idea of an income-tax, in any shape, and only learn to tolerate it by appeals to their patriotism, and the duty they owe to the state in a period of emergency. In like manner, if men were habituated to regard the payment of tithes from a higher stand-point than that of a mere rate for the support of the Clergy, and the maintenance of the Church-worship, they would cease to consider them as a burthen, and could rather rejoice in their payment as a Christian privilege, faithfulness in which would bring down upon them the covenanted blessings of the Most High.

An objection is sometimes urged against tithes, that if their payment were universal throughout Christendom, church property would become excessively large, and disproportionate. To this I could reply, that in the old times, when tithes were freely paid, it was understood that they

formed a fund out of which many standing necessary expenses in every community were defrayed. Besides the support of the clergy, the spread of the Gospel in distant lands, the erection of churches, and the like, out of this fund were also supported the poor. And it is a curious fact that whilst Henry VIII. confiscated an immense amount of church property and revenues, (into the policy of which act, and its state necessity I am not now enquiring,) and lavished the same upon his courtiers, the descendants of whom to this day hold the larger tithes in many of the parishes in England, it became necessary for the first time, in the following reign, to enact the English Poor-law under which last year nearly four millions of pounds sterling were raised in England and Wales alone, for the relief and maintenance of the poor! How much more blessed would it have been, both to the giver and receiver, had this amount been available for poor relief out of the tithes of a Christian people, freely and thankfully offered to God, instead of as the proceeds of a tax which is grudgingly given, and for the most part unthankfully received by the poor, on account of the stringent regulations enforced in its administration.

But to return to more practical considerations. At a time when there is evidently a religious awakening on all sides, and an increased and increasing necessity for larger means for the spread of religion, and the support of the public worship; and when, on the other hand, state support, in the shape of Clergy Reserves, compulsory church rates, the contributions from the public exchequer, are being withdrawn from the church, it becomes the more urgent and imperative that every endeavour should be made to recal Christian men to a sense of the obligation under which they lie to pay their tithes to God, from whom they will receive them back again with a double blessing.

Much is being done in this direction, through the labours of the Tithe Redemption Society in