

habits of Western ladies, under the influence of Christianity. Coming from the far East, where the wearing of jewelry is universal among the women, I was still struck with the superabundance of gold and silver, with which the women of Palestine literally load themselves. Their chief delight seems to be in a head-dress composed of gold and silver coins strung together. The weight of this piece of ornament must be inconvenient at times, equalling that of a king's crown. Nor is the habit of wearing it confined to the rich, even the poorest peasant girl thinks she cannot appear in the street without the string of coins. Besides this universal ornament, you see necklaces, bracelets, anklets, and rings in great profusion. No wonder Jeremiah said, "Can a maid forget her ornaments?" and Isaiah spoke of "the heaviness of their tinkling ornaments." Paul, in speaking of the adorning of women, alludes to the "plaiting of their hair." Women have had different ways of arranging their hair in various ages and lands, but any one in Palestine will understand why Paul said "plaiting." The women, and especially the fine ladies, wear their hair, in scores of fine plaits, hanging down their back. Perforated coins are sometimes plaited in with the hair, serving at once as ornaments and as weights to keep the hair in place. This elaborate arrangement of the hair must have consumed a great deal of time, while it gave occasion for the display of female vanity.

In Ruth iii. 15, we are told that Ruth took home six measures (*seaks* pecks) of grain in her "vail." We would call this garment a *shabel* or mantle, and not a vail. I noticed it on the women of Bethlehem (the very place where Ruth was). It is a square of stout cotton, like a sheet, that they use to cover all the upper part of the body, wearing it over the head to protect themselves from the heat of the sun, just as a woman here sometimes throws a shawl over her head, or as a Spanish lady uses her *manila*.

Esau is said to have been a "hairy man." I noticed the same characteristic in many of the Arabs of the present day. The camel drivers from the desert often had the surface of their brawny chests covered with hair. As they almost always have their chests uncovered by clothes, this may be a provision of nature to interpose a non-conducting substance to protect them from the heat of the sun.

A "staff" seems to have been carried by an almost universal custom in Bible times, and the custom remains to the present day. As you go along the roads every man you meet is armed with a staff. This is not used as we use a cane, though it no doubt serves the same purpose, but is usually carried over the shoulder or horizontally in the hand. It seems to be a club rather than a cane, and probably is carried chiefly as a defensive weapon, in case of a fight or an attack of wild beasts on their flocks; it is also used to strike a camel or ass with when necessary. There seems to be an instinctive desire in men to carry something in the hand, be it umbrella, cane, club, or fan. I have seen Chinese carry a fan loaded with lead, and it is no uncommon thing to see them with wooden tobacco pipes that can be used as clubs.

In Bible times, time was reckoned from sunrise to sunset, and this ancient custom still remains among the Arabs. I was quite puzzled when I first noticed an Arab clock. Though it was an hour before sunrise the hands were at 11. I afterwards saw that they counted from sunset. According to them it is always 12 o'clock at sunrise, and the sun rises at 9 or 10 o'clock in the summer and at 2 or 30 in the winter. As among the Jews and Greeks, the *nuchthemcon*, or twenty-four hours, is composed of a night and a day, "the evening and the morning," and not of a day and night as we reckon: e.g., the Sabbath begins at sunset Saturday.—R. H. GRAVES, in *Religious Herald*.

CHRISTIAN LIBERALITY.

What proportion of my income should I give to the Lord? and for what objects should it be given? are questions which every intelligent disciple of Christ will ask himself. The questions do not admit of a simple answer. It must largely be left to the individual conscience and the circumstances in which we are placed to decide. Still some general considerations may be suggested for guidance.

1. Everyone who has an income should give something.

2. Everyone should give in proportion to his income and to the demands made on it.

3. The amount left after deducting the necessities of life from income should form the basis of contribution. Suppose, for example, that the cost of necessities for two persons is \$200 per annum, then a man having a wife, but no children, and having an income of \$400 per annum, should pay more than another man having a family and the same income. Again, the amount contributed by a family of which three, four, or five members are earning, ought to be greater than that paid by a family of the same size where only the father is earning.

4. Suppose that one-tenth be assumed as the average proportion of income to be devoted to charitable and religious purposes, still the claims of poor, sick or dependent relations, or contributions to local charities may be so disproportionate that while one man should pay nearly all into Church and missionary funds, another might properly not give one half of the tenth to Church and missionary funds. Every man must decide for himself regarding the object to which this tenth of income is to be appropriated, provided that it is not expended for his own profit, pleasure, or entertainment, but is devoted in some way to his Lord's cause.

Let us now try to suggest a scale for contribution suited to the circumstances of those who have an income more than is required for the necessities of life, and who have from \$100 and upwards to be spent on comforts, amusements and luxuries; or to be laid up as capital. We do not now refer to wealthy men whose income is much greater than their proper expenditure. These, if Christians, will devise far more liberal things than now under consideration. For persons of moderate means only we write:

Income per week.	Income per annum.	Contribution per week.	Contribution per annum.	Contribution for Church per week.	Contribution for Church per annum.	Contribution for other purposes per week.	Contribution for other purposes per annum.
\$ 6	\$300	\$ 50	\$ 250	25	\$12.50	25	\$12.50
9	450	30	40	20	20	40	20
12	600	20	70	15	15	50	25
20	1,000	2.50	125	15	67.50	1.15	57.50
40	2,000	6.00	300	4.00	200.00	2.00	100.00
\$87	4,350	\$11.00	\$550	\$ 6.70	335.00	\$4.30	\$215.00

Thus five persons having an annual income collectively of \$4,350 would contribute \$335 for Church and missionary purposes, and \$215 for other charities—a goodly sum but oppressive to no one.

Such a graduated scale seems fair to all parties and would require some little self-denial from those having larger incomes as well as from the poorer. It is much in advance of the usual rate of giving, but certainly not beyond what can be done. The suggestion is merely illustrative, but may serve to shew where the weak points in our Church finance lie, viz.: (1) In trusting to a few liberal men of wealth for large contributions and not spreading the burden equally upon all; and (2) in not expecting an increase in the rate of contribution as the income increases. If some such plan were generally adopted, always making allowance for varying circum-

stances, the funds for churches and missions would be well supplied and other charities would be liberally supported.

SENSATIONAL PREACHING AND PREACHERS.

The charge made against Christ was that "He stirreth up the people," and against His apostles that they "turned the world upside down;" and it was true. Christ avowed it, acted upon it, and neither He nor His apostles could deny it. Unless preaching produces a sensation or excitement in the mind of the hearer, it can do no good. No wicked man was ever led to renounce his sins without being strongly moved. No person ever sought the conversion of his soul languidly and found a genuine Christian hope. John the Baptist produced a great sensation; Jesus spake as never man spake, and multitudes flocked to hear Him; the apostles roused the people, and if they failed they hastened to another place. Wesley, Whitefield, Edwards, Nettleton, Finney, and Payson created a great sensation. Unless Christians hear stirring preaching they grow apathetic with regard to their own salvation, and lose all interest in aggressive work. Great awakenings never occur and continue under abstract, pointless, or insipid preaching. But how were these sensations produced? In no case by that kind of oratory whose only object is to interest by furnishing a temporary excitement to the feelings; but by truth manifested to every man's conscience in the sight of God: truth revealed by God, confirmed by reason and history, illustrated by experience, and enforced by powerful appeals. The sincerity, the earnestness, and the truthfulness of the preacher are the elements of his power: "the clearness, force and earnestness" of an honest man who renounces the hidden things of dishonesty, and does not walk in craftiness; who speaks face to face with those whom he would save just as he does in the pulpit; who is as ready to talk and pray in private conversation to save one soul as before a multitude. Such a man may be weak in personal appearance, and his speech, judged by cold critics, may be contemptible; but he will make some sensation everywhere, and in some places a great sensation. It is not essential that he should be a logician, or a rhetorician; that he should be scholastic in his methods, or that he should not be: that he should be realistic, or revel in the ideal; if he has the truth, utterance, and a strong personality, with character, and is imbued with a desire to save men, he will be a stimulating, rousing, convincing, persuasive force wherever he goes. Self-examination, prayer, and re-consecration would transform many a powerless preacher into such a worker. Reinforced by a church of similar type, the community would be shaken now as aforesaid. A metaphysician preached twenty-five years without conversions; then a change came, and everywhere he went converts were numerous. A friend asked him the reason of the change. He replied, "Formerly I simply unfolded my contemplations to the people, who tranquilly listened. Now I preach, pray, and live to pluck men as brands from the burning."

Many, however, do not seek for this kind of sensation. They have no sympathy with it. It costs a price which they are not willing to pay, and requires an attention to details which none but a conscientious man could give, and a mode of life which has no charms for them. But they are not willing to be dull, preach to a beggarly array of empty pews, to be unsought. They seek the sensational; to fill the house by excitements on ephemeral things, by *outré* methods, by seizing on the latest scandal, by advertising tragic or serio-comic themes, by flying in the wake of the secular press to see what they may pick

up for immediate use, by making extravagant and startling statements, by tickling the ears of different classes successively, and by taking pains to prevent any one's being permanently offended, "courting a grin" very soon after saying a sharp thing, or discharging such a shower of arrows that everybody is hit, and nobody hurt. Others are decorous enough in the pulpit, and feed the excitement outside by driving or training fast horses, by doing things which the devout among the community regard as questionable, or by generally acting in such a way as to make themselves notorious for peculiarities, rather than famous for zeal and good works. Every young minister, unless unusually devoted, when he sees the crowds drawn by these men, is tempted to imitate them. The genuine success that rewards patient work seems too far off, and the spectacle of many good and able men, whose success is rather in the general confidence felt in them, than in the enjoyment of place, honor, and emolument, but which they are not yet sufficiently mature to esteem at their proper value, is not attractive.

But woe to the minister who imitates the sensationalist, and woe to the Church who has such a man for its pastor. The best of these ministers in the days of their greatest popularity are spoken of contemptuously by their leading members. The officials who rejoice to see the aisles crowded, can scarce refrain from winking at each other, and come to regard themselves as managers of a paying exhibition. While they call their minister a "good fellow," there is no evidence of reverence for his character. The good that is done by the labors of such men is incidental, and the vast evil that follows, though not recorded in statistical tables, is none the less real. When such men leave a Church they are often derided by their strongest supporters, and the giddy crowd that admired them, now speak of them with levity. A sure test of the heartlessness of this class of men is, that they have no interest in the pastoral work. To visit a few prominent families, to attend a conspicuous funeral, to call on a new-comer of wealth, they are quite willing; but to climb to the top floor of a tenement to pray with an aged saint, (unless the case is well-known), or to hasten to the remotest parts of the parish to cheer up the man who has lost his property, is something that, left to themselves, they never do. They never embarrassingly examine a candidate for admission into the Church. The substance of their questions is, "Do you want to join? have you been baptized? and what is your full name?" Generally, there is a vein of immorality in their natures, which shows itself from time to time. Now it is financial delinquency. While they are popular, this is considered an "eccentricity of genius." Then it is untruthfulness, the extravagance of their public oratory being carried into private life, where it does not escape detection. Again, flattery and adulation overcome them; they lose the power to discriminate between prudence and imprudence, righteousness and sin. Many, also, are addicted to the use of stimulants to sustain their unnatural warmth of manner. The Methodist Episcopal Church has had some of these spurious preachers; but the itineracy has prevented the blasting effects of their influence from being concentrated upon any one Church. Whether this is a benefit may be doubted. But wherever they are, they are a grief to the pious, an occasion to the enemies of God to blaspheme, a cause of flippant disrespect for religion in the young, and a prolific source of scepticism and infidelity.

Let young ministers shun them as models. As for the Churches that call them from near or from far, they take their punishment into their own hands.