

and its devoted bishops, who, in past ages, have shed a halo and a glory upon Christendom. As the part of the painter, who was called upon to sketch Alexander the Great. Alexander had a scar upon his forehead, which he had received in the course of his Macedonian battles, and the painter was perplexed to find a way by which to escape this deformity on the portrait; at last he hit upon the happy expedient of representing the monarch sitting in his char, his head leaning on his right arm, and the fore-finger covering the scar upon his brow. When I sketch the independent communion, I would put my finger upon the scar by which it may be deformed; when you sketch the Church of Scotland, lay the finger of charity upon the scar by which she has been defaced, when we sketch the Church of England, let us put our finger over the scar which I fear is growing in breadth and deformity upon her, and I would say the same of the Church of Rome, only she is *at a scar*—there is no soundness in her at all."

Miscellaneous.

INCREASED SUPPORT OF THE GOSPEL MINISTRY.

We have it on the very highest authority, that the labourer is worthy of his reward, and that he who is taught in the word should communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. In accordance with these declarations of Scripture, it is stated in an article of the Basis of Union, that "this church asserts the obligation and the privilege of its members, influenced by regard to the authority of Christ, to support and extend, by voluntary contribution, the ordinances of the Gospel." And it does not require much consideration to discern wisdom in these principles. Not only are they divinely authorized, but they are fitted, when faithfully followed out, to secure an unspeakable amount of good. Where a minister is generously supported by his people, it is natural to expect that he will love his people; that he will feel a pleasure in labouring among them; and that, howsoever heavy his engagements may be, the tangible proof of their being appreciated, as well as their own unparalleled importance, will yield him no small satisfaction. And, it may be expected on the other hand, that in such a case, the people will be interested in the labours of their minister, that both in his public and private duties they will manifest some befitting sympathy, and that, whether he is visibly successful or otherwise, their emotions will generally correspond with his own.

And as these results may be fairly anticipated, they are realised in fact. We are willing to appeal to the test of comparison. And whether in Established or in Voluntary churches are pastors and flocks most exemplary? the pastors, in preparing for the duties of the pulpit,—in doing good from house to house,—in attending to the young, and the dying, and the disconsolate,—and in helping the extension of the glorious Gospel? and the flocks, in observing the duties of the sanctuary,—in having gratefully ministerial visitation,—and in giving pecuniary and personal assistance to the spread of Christianity throughout the world? And a similar conclusion is unavoidable when these voluntary churches are compared with one another—the most exemplary in the matter of supporting ordinances being generally the most exemplary in moral worth. Let us not, however, be misunderstood here: liberality and parsimoniousness in any of our churches is not to be determined by mere numbers, but by the amount of available resources, taken in connection with numbers. One church might be termed liberal which would raise for the support of ordinances £100 a year, while another church, the same numerically, might be termed parsimonious, if it raised no more annually for the same objects. Now let those churches be compared, which, in these senses, give liberally or parsimoniously, and then let it be asked, which are the most exemplary in personal motive, in public religion, in relative fidelity, in scriptural intelligence, in missionary ardour, in all that is true, and honest, and just, and pure, and lovely, and of good report? We leave the question to unbiased candour, and we doubt not that the liberal churches will gain the preference.

It is taken for granted in these observations, that some of our churches are wanting in liberality, and the evidence of this is abundantly manifest; for how is it that the granting of moderations is occasionally deferred till the vacant churches have increased their offer? How is it that not long ago a "Friend to the neglected" transmitted to our treasury his thousand pounds to induce a more generous standard of giving? How is it, that at a late meeting of Synod an overture was brought forward by a layman, having for its object the more liberal support of the Christian ministry? Are not these unequivocal intimations that, in some quarters, there is an unnecessary holding back of the secular and that is due to the pastorate, and that Christ's injunction is greatly overlooked—"Freely ye have received, freely give"? The evil, we allow, is not universal; far from it; we honour the liberality of many of our own churches—small ones as well as large, in rural parts as well as in cities and towns, at the extremes of the country as well as at its centre, who, according to their power, if not beyond their power, provide most worthily for the ordinances of grace among themselves, and do not a little for the general extension of our common Christianity. But some of our churches are far otherwise; not on account of paucity of members, because they amount to several hundreds; not on account of poverty, because their collective resources are respectable. But still it is a well ascertained fact, that with all their enterprise in worldly matters, with all their generosity in matters of pleasure, they contribute a very inconsiderable sum to the maintenance and

comfort of their spiritual overseers. And what is the consequence to these overseers? their hearts are dispirited, their progress in knowledge is greatly impeded, their official zeal is often repressed, their powers of beneficence are unnecessarily crippled, and their family concerns are kept low, while, perhaps, with a view to diminish their anxiety, and to render their condition less embarrassed, some of them abandon office altogether.

And is there any good reason that it should be so? We know of none. It is common, indeed, for some people to point to the circumstances of the early preachers, and to ask if they had much of the world? and whether modern preachers have much reason to complain when their circumstances are considerably easier. Now, if this argument is worth anything, it implies that there should be an approximation, if not a similarity, between the status of the apostles and primitive churches, and the status of pastors and flocks of the present day. And do those who say so, voluntarily and without necessity, subject themselves to the worldly straits in which the early followers of Christ were generally placed? We throw not, and besides, we have yet to learn that without necessity any minister should be kept under disadvantages from which the members of their own flock can extricate themselves. And is it a fact that our merchants, our agriculturists, our tradesmen, or even our artisans keep themselves in difficulties, when they can fairly and honourably render it otherwise? And why, then, should those be unnecessarily involved in straits who are laboring in the noblest of all causes,—who have passed through an expensive education,—who are daily devoted to hard study (which they find to be indeed a wearisomeness to the flesh),—who are instruments in doing the greatest good, in saving souls from death, and in hiding a multitude of sins?

We are somewhat averse to these interrogations, because they relate to an objection which is put forward by comparatively few, and because of the evidence of growing liberality in connection with the cause of missions. But it is possible for the liberal to be somewhat misguided; not so much in regard to their objects, as in regard to the proportions they allocate to them. It is possible to give much for objects at a distance, and to give little for objects that are near. It is possible to pour in generously for a foreign cause, and to be over-economical for one that is at home. It is possible to be liberal to missionary labour among the heathen, and to reward labour at one's very door, with a scarcity that is little better than niggardliness. And this, we affirm without hesitation is not in accordance with sound reflection, is not required by the law of Christ, is not agreeable to the current proverb (which may be overlooked as well as perverted), "charity begins at home."

The question, however, naturally arises, How is a better provision to be secured? The difficulties, we think are not considerable, if once the belief were diffused more widely, whether by the pulpit or the press, or otherwise, that there is actually a need for immediate improvement. For the present, there is much good effected by means of the supplementing fund, and this is deserving of continued support by those churches who are liberal to the ordinances among themselves, and are able to contribute assistance to others. But to those churches which have been hitherto stinted in their energies, and are quite able to contribute more largely, we would say, "Might you not, through your office-bearers, be more peremptory in seeing that every member performs his duty, and that no member (who is able to give) receive ministerial labour for nothing? Might you not, with propriety and safety, require a higher price for your seats, if not in the case of every one of them, at least in the case of those that are preferable? Might you not, at certain periods of the year, appoint special extraordinary collections, and announce these as supplementary efforts; or might you not in some way or other remove congregational debt, and thereby strengthen the treasurer's resources, which the payment of interest meanwhile enfeebles? Such are a few suggestions, not unworthy of calm consideration, if not of practical obedience also. But what is of primary importance, is an enlargement of liberal spirit. Let this be secured (and secured by agitation in various forms), and difficulties will disappear, indefensible hoarding will be given up, our treasuries will become what they really should be, our mansees would exhibit smiling comforts, and the argument will appear to be almost unnecessary, "If we have sown unto your spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?"—*Un. Presb. Mag.*

THE NINE COMMANDMENTS.

"Nine commandments! What does that mean? I always thought the commandments were ten." There used to be that number. There were ten proclaimed by the voice of God from Mount Sinai; and ten were written by the finger of God on the tables of stone; and when the tables were renewed, there were still ten; and the Jews, the keepers of the Old Testament Scriptures, always recognised ten; and so did the primitive church, and so do all Protestants in their creed and catechisms. But the Roman Catholics—(you know they can take liberties, for they are the true church, the infallible; a person, and so a church, which cannot possibly make a mistake, need not be very particular about what it does)—these Christians, who have their head away off at Rome, subtract one from the ten commandments; and so they have but nine commandments. Theirs is not a Decalogue, but a Nonalogue.

It is just so. When many years ago, I first heard of it, I thought it was a slander of the Protestants. I said "Oh, it cannot be that they have dared to meddle with God's ten commandments, and leave out one." They cannot have been guilty of such impiety. Why, it is just as if some impious Israelite had gone into holy of holies, opened the ark of