

for the best investment for our money. No better investment can any man have than that which the text suggests. Let him be liberal in the support of ordinances from right motives, and he may rest assured that a blessing will attend the labour of his hands which will far more than compensate for any seeming sacrifice he may make. Nay, we may expect not a temporal blessing merely, but are warranted to believe that God will be more ready to bless Zion's provision to our good, so that the ministrations of His house will prove increasingly conducive to our present comfort and our everlasting welfare.

Lest, however, any one should argue that the promise in the text is not applicable to us, but was merely meant for the Jews, let me remind you of what Paul says, when speaking of liberality to such objects, "He that soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." And again, "God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that ye always, having all sufficiency in all things, may abound unto every good work."

Are we not every day reminded of our dependence on God? Mere industry, mere foresight, will do much, and generally are successful, for God has so ordered the constitution of things that the hand of the diligent and the prudent maketh rich. Industry and prudence are virtues, and are therefore rewarded. But do not events continually occur to remind us how vain are all the wisdom and all the toil of men, unless they are seconded by the overruling hand of Him who controls all things. The merchant is incessant and indefatigable in doing his part, and justly looks for success. A storm at sea, some unlooked for change in the market, renders all his labours useless. The farmer prepares the ground, sows the seed, and carefully tends it, but vain his efforts! the rains from heaven are withheld; or, it may be, the grain is ready for harvest, is already cut down, when the rains descend in torrents and rot it where it lies. All this teaches us that something more is necessary than mere industry or skill. We must secure the favour of Him who holds the elements in His hands. The text reminds us of one way, among others, through which we may ensure this: honouring and conscientiously supporting those institutions which are of His appointment. God promises that He will bless us in our outer estate, in the labour of our hands, and in the fruit of our fields. I firmly believe, my hearers, that God will do as He has said. Let us then taste and see if it be not so.

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### THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

BY REV. P. MELVILLE, M.A., B.D., FREDERICTON.

"O YE hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky, but can ye not discern the signs of the times?" Why spoke the Saviour of the world such words of deep indignation and bitter grief? Reader, know you why? He saw His chosen nation hurrying on heedlessly towards the destruction of their city, ever cunning as foxes in selfish trifles, but stupid as asses regarding the awful signs and warnings of national ruin. How it wrings a father's heart to see his sons and blooming daughters growing up "penny-wise and pound foolish!" They win a few pretty presents and plenty of heartless compliments, but lose their good character and prospects, leaving their life a wreck and a failure here and hereafter! No wonder, then, that the Saviour spoke out this solemn warning with stern and awful plainness.

That warning is as necessary for us to-day as it was for the Jews of that day. Can you, reader, discern the signs of this time? Do you even try to understand the course of events? Depend upon this, that if we do not think seriously beforehand, we will soon find ourselves sadly behindhand.