

We have seen that it is the principle of God's word, that the labourer is worthy of his hire; and that it is not to be regarded as a great thing that he who sows unto a people spiritual things should reap of their carnal things. It is necessary, however, that we carefully look to the relation betwixt the sowing of spiritual things, and the reaping of carnal things. The temporal support is valuable as a means of securing the spiritual service. If it has no useful bearing in that direction, then, in so far as our argument is concerned, we would say, By all means leave the people unburdened—There is such a thing as seeking, or continuing to occupy, what is called a sacred office, merely as a title to the possession of the living; and with respect to all such cases, we would say, that it were better for the unhappy individual himself who would place himself in such circumstances, and for those whose resources he would thus consume, that the funds were applied to some other object. But there is an essential difference betwixt using the sacred office as a mere stepping stone to reach the emoluments; and seeking and using the emoluments for those objects for which God has appointed that they should be employed, as a means, namely, of carrying out with greater efficiency the work which devolves upon those who would watch for souls as those who must give an account unto God.—The hireling seeks the office for the sake of the wages, and would satisfy himself with the smallest amount of duty that may be sufficient to secure him from a forfeiture of that upon which his heart is set. Let him be secured in the emoluments, and he will show how little interest he takes in the duties of his office, by the perfunctory way in which he gets through them. He may not necessarily sink into a state of torpor. On the contrary, he may show the native activity of his mind by involving himself in a multiplicity of engagements. But while he thus expends his energies upon matters more congenial to him than are the proper duties of his office, in doing so, whatever may be the importance of these matters on other grounds, he sinfully neglects his duty to the flock which he thus leaves to the ravages of the wolf. The true servant of God, on the other hand, seeks the office from a desire to be engaged in its duties. With the apostle Paul, he knows that, while engaged in these duties, he has a right, of divine authority, to reap of the carnal things of those unto

whom he is sowing spiritual things. At the same time, however, and acting in the spirit of that devoted servant of God, he would willingly forego his right, in those cases in which using his power might tend to the hindering of the gospel of Christ. This is the spirit by which the ministers of the gospel ought to be animated. They ought to be willing to "spend and be spent" in the service of Christ, and for the benefit of their people; nor would we encourage any one to propose himself for the work of the ministry, who does not feel something of this spirit in himself.

We would, however, still remind our readers, that it is not ministers alone who should endeavour so to regulate their conduct as that they do not hinder the gospel of Christ. The people who are under their charge, have also a deep interest in keeping this consideration steadily before their mind; and whatever may be the amount of self denial which their ministers may be willing to exercise—to whatever extent they may be willing to forego their claim for temporal support, there may be the strongest obligations, nevertheless, in reference to duty, and the strongest reasons in point of expediency, why the people should use every effort to render this exercise of self-denial—this sacrifice on the part of the minister unnecessary. It may be necessary rather that the people themselves should exercise self-denial—that they should make the sacrifice—that they should do this, under the influence of the same consideration which directed the mind of the apostle, even that they may not hinder the gospel of Christ. A concern for the propagation of the gospel, even in distant lands, should induce those who themselves profess to rejoice in its blessings to make an effort in its behalf, though it may require some considerable amount both of sacrifice and self-denial. But it is in reference to matters that have a more direct bearing upon ourselves that we now write; and we would press it upon the Christian church at large in these Provinces, and upon the congregations of the Free Church in particular, that they are called upon to make such efforts, if they would not hinder the gospel of Christ. A special effort is required at their hands, we do not say that they may aid in promoting the interests of religion in distant regions of the earth, but that they may not hinder the gospel of Christ among themselves, that they may not obstruct its progress in their own fa-