

income, of each who remained in possession of his divinely bestowed estate, and some small proportionate offering under all adverse circumstances.

In a brighter age of the Church, some may infer a sacred obligation for Christianity, as far exceeding the Jewish fourth, as that did the patriarchal tenth, on the principle of a graduation of offerings according to the privileges of respective dispensations. The mention of such a conjecture now savours of fanaticism, if not of insanity.

2. The express demands of the New Testament.

The principle of Christian dedication is entire consecration. "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God," &c. (Rom. xii. 1.)

The defined Christian character is that of a steward, put in trust to serve the only Lord and proprietor,—“Occupy till I come.” A ransomed creature, the absolute possession of his Divine Redeemer,—“Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price.”

The approved spirit is,—“God loveth a cheerful giver.”

The measure,—“According to that a man hath.” “As God hath prospered.”

3. The comparative condition of the subjects of former and present dispensations. The condition of Abraham and Jacob was one of ease and plenty. That of the Jews when first located in Canaan, one of comfortable sufficiency with family industry, every member of the household aiding its interests. Their assessed offerings went to sustain the costs of the Divine theocracy; the worship and service of God as their Almighty Prince and Sovereign Lord. They were warned that God would regard their choice of an earthly king as a rejection of himself, and that the extra costs which this would involve they must stand prepared to meet. (1 Sam. viii.)

Can a Christian in circumstances of equal ease and plenty infer a lower obligation? Admitting his equal obligation, can he fairly first deduct national taxes from his offerings *devoted to God*?

4. The comparative magnitude of the aims of these dispensations.

The patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations were dark and typical compared with the spirituality and glory of Christianity. They were limited and restrictive in their range, and merely conservative in their bearing; while Christianity is gracious, aggressive, and universal in its character and design. They but faintly indicated the mind and grace of God, while Christianity discovers all the yearnings of his heart, all the purposes of his will, and all the riches of his love. Is it possible for a Christian to infer an inferior obligation to a Jew, in equal circumstances?

5. The comparative cogency of the motives which commend their respective claims.

The motives chiefly influencing a Jew to a higher consecration to God were obedience to his direct command, grateful sense of the ex-