

indeed, various shapes : it is, by many, hardly recognised as a difficulty ; and not a few have professed and believed themselves to have solved it ; but it still meets them, though in some new and disguised form, at every turn ; like a resistless stream, which, when one channel is dammed up, immediately forces its way through another. And as the difficulty is one not *peculiar to any one* hypothesis, but bears equally on all alike, whether of revealed or of natural religion, it is better in point of prudence as well as of fairness, that the consequences of it should not be pressed against any. The Scriptures do not pretend (as some have rashly imagined) to clear up this awful mystery : they give us no explanation of the original *cause* of the evil that exists ; but they teach us how to avoid its *effects* ; and since they leave this great and perplexing question just where they find it, it is better for us to leave it among 'the secret things that belong unto the Lord our God,' and to occupy ourselves with 'the things which are revealed,' and which concern us practically—which 'belong unto us and to our children,' that we may 'do all the words of God's law.' "

THE SABBATH AND THE LEDGER.

When shall we consecrate our means to God ? Saith Paul, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." Here you find a concise answer. It has no uncertain sound to European, Asiatic, or American churches.

With one bold sweep it unfolds the duty to God's charities, and to God's church. Every miserable excuse of a grasping age is ruthlessly thrown aside. The Apostle brings you face to face with God. He closets you alone with him, and then unfolds to you the bounden duty of every true child of God.

Upon the Sabbath day every one was to "lay by himself" in store, at home, and then "what each had thus laid aside from his weekly gains could be put into the common treasury of the church." Here then we clearly have system, pointed duty, a specific course of action.

But modern Pharisees tell us it is disgraceful to hear "the clink o' siller" in the house of God. Yea, we have preached to at least one congregation in Canada that thought it "no richt" to have a collection on a Sabbath day.

Saith history, the Jews had synagogue collections on the Sabbath. The primitive Christians had collections on the Sabbath ; and we believe that even yet "it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath day."

Whatever may be thought of cash matters on the Sabbath now, the Apostle thought then that it was neither wrong to consider our obligations to God's cause, nor to give to that greatest of all causes on such a day.

But he goes further, for he boldly states that no man can truly worship God unless he first solemnly dedicated from his means as God hath prospered.

Tried by this standard and not by present-age shams, can we wonder at our very feeble playing at missions.