

and the Revised Version read thus, "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain," but it is contended that the original might bear a more literal rendering. The expression or phrase, "more excellent sacrifice," might be read "a larger sacrifice" or "a more sacrifice." Then from this we must infer that not the quality but the quantity of Cain's sacrifice was in default.

I would next recall to your remembrance the fact of Abram paying a tenth of the spoils of war unto Melchisedeck, "the Priest of the Most High God."

According to the custom, under the circumstances, Abram was entitled to all the booty recovered in war, but while he would not take any portion of the spoils for himself, he took a tithe of them to give to the Lord God through His Priest, Melchisedeck. The spoils were really Abram's possession, and as such a tenth of them must be given to God. This portion Abram had no right to forego; it belonged not to him, but to God. Thus, while he returned all the remainder to Chedorlaomer and his confederate kings, he paid the tenth thereof to Melchisedeck. It is sometimes questioned whether this was an exceptional act on the part of Abram, or whether he devoted generally a tithe of all his possessions to God. It would hardly seem possible to consider this an exceptional case; it seems to have been done so much like an acknowledged and practised duty, and it was of so much importance in the history of the Jews that we find it also used in the Epistle to the Hebrews to illustrate and enforce Christian teaching and practice.

Now, if God rejected Cain's offering because it was too small, and received Abel's offering as being of the required, though unrecorded proportion, we here have an account of God's acceptance of the offering of Abram, which was of a definite proportion of the goods and spoils he had taken in war. Thus we find God's tacit approval of man offering to Him a tenth of their possessions.

A little later we read in Scripture history that Jacob, when leaving his father's house, vowed a vow unto God, and devoted unto Him a tenth of all that God would give him. It is quite possible that Jacob knew personally of the practice of his grandfather, Abraham, in this respect; or, at least, it is reasonably to be inferred that Isaac had been taught by Abraham, and so in his turn Isaac had taught his son Jacob. And the occasion on which Jacob made the vow gives considerable weight to the matter as an acknowledged duty. Jacob was just leaving his father's house, and was starting out in life on his own responsibility, and nothing would seem more natural than that he should thus seek the blessing of his father's God, and vow to pay to Him such a proportion of his possessions as he knew to be the accustomed duty of his forefathers. And after the vow God greatly blessed him.

So far we might only infer, but we can very well infer that a tenth of man's substance was an acceptable offering and sacrifice to God. Not yet have we seen or found that God has made any mention of satisfaction with this proportion or bid man thus to honor Him with their substance.

We come, then, to the next incident in connection with this matter, where we find that God does particularly mention this same proportion with approval. In Lev. xxvii, 30, God says "All the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's; it is holy unto the Lord." And in the same chapter, verse 32, "And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord." This tithing is not here commanded as a new principle, but rather as the continuance of a well known and accepted system. It is generally conceded that the law of the Fourth Commandment was not a new law, but the re-enactment of an old law, which

view is well supported by the expression, "Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day." And just as God seems formerly to have required a seventh of man's time, so likewise it would seem that He had also required a tenth of man's substance.

About six months later, as we read in Num. xviii, 21-24, these tithes were specially ordered by God to be given to the Levites for their maintenance and support, as they were set apart by God for the service of the Tabernacle, and were not given any inheritance among their brethren.

Here, then, we do find God not only showing Himself as a beneficent general Providence, but as a true Financier, propounding and enacting a fiscal system for the support of those whom He had chosen and appointed to minister in the holy things of that true worship of Himself which He had ordained among His people, the children of Israel.

We believe that we reason justly when we infer that God still requires a seventh of our time, because the ordinance regarding the same has not been amended nor ended, nor expressly repealed; so would we not reason with equal justness were we to infer that under the same circumstances God now requires a tenth of our substance for the maintenance of those whom He now appoints to minister in holier things, and for the support of the services of His Holy Church?

(To be Continued.)

#### SIGNS OF SCHISM.

When field and forest are covered with snow, no diversity, no contrast is visible. There is a unity in outward appearance, but it is the unity of death. But when the genial warmth of spring unlocks the imprisoned streams, and Nature decks herself with the harmonious contrasts of leaf and flower, delighting the eye with the unity of purpose in the variety of effects in God's work, there is unity, but it is the unity of life.

Thus it is also in matters of faith. Unity among Christians can be obtained by descending under the snow of unbelief. It is now gravely proposed by some sectarians that in order to obtain unity each sect shall cast aside, as no longer useful, every point in belief or practice heretofore causing separation, and standing in the way of universal freedom of opinion. This idea seems to have furnished the key-note to many of the speeches at the Grindelwald Conference on unity last summer. It was apparent that in the opinion of all the speakers unity would require the sacrifice of almost all points of diversity. But it was equally clear that the sectarian opinion demanded the sacrifice of most points in Catholic faith and practice. The great majority of speakers utterly rejected the overtures for peace offered by the Lambeth Conference, especially the Historic Episcopate as the true line of Holy Orders.

In the direction of sacrifice of primitive Church principles none seemed to be so ready as those who had the most to lose, namely those few weak-kneed Churchmen who took it upon themselves to represent the Church of England. One of the most noted of their number, the Bishop of Worcester, not only there but afterwards in Birmingham, sitting as chairman of the Church Congress emphatically repudiated the necessity of the Historic Episcopate, asserting the equality of sectarian Orders with those of the Catholic Church. It seems amazing that so complete a surrender of the position of our branch of the Catholic Church should have been allowed to pass at Birmingham without a word of remonstrance considering the argument sure to be deduced by sectarians and Romanists from such silence in such an Episcopal assemblage.

It would be quoted as a full admission that the Church of England stands on the same footing as the very newest sect of Dissent.

Bishop Anson, late of Qu'Appelle, who as a member of the Congress, and like many other sound and able Churchmen, seems to have been struck dumb with amazement until the Bishop of Worcester left the chair, has since published a most able and energetic protest against his assertions and ill-judged and false liberality.

The words of the Bishop of Worcester will probably be quoted in days to come as a refutation of Episcopacy, as were a few words from Bishop Lightfoot which he himself afterwards explained in the opposite sense. But in both cases the antidote will go forth with the bane to refute it.

The Anglo-Catholic Church, in the strength of Christ's promise, stands on a foundation which cannot be disturbed or undermined even by those of her children who would fain purchase an imaginary unity by the surrender of her appointed faith and practice.

The greatest opponent to corporate re-union among the professed members of Christ's Body, in our day, is false liberality. It leans directly to false doctrine, heresy and schism. It would fain expel the vital principle of true education by eradicating all definite religious teaching from our schools and colleges. It would shake our faith and confidence in the Holy Trinity and the Holy Scriptures by its ever varying "Higher Criticism." It would justify even the newest schism by placing it on an equality with the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. All this is becoming more manifest every day. But it is proving the absolute necessity for true Catholic doctrine, worship, and practice.—*Church Work*, N. S.

#### THE LITANY DESK.

When Litanies ceased to be recited in processions, and were used in church as special forms of supplication, they naturally gathered round them a tradition of locality, and Edward VI.'s injunction, 1547, may have laid hold of a former usage. This injunction, which was simply renewed by Elizabeth in 1559, directed that "the priests, with others of the quire, shall kneel in the midst of the church, and sing or say plainly and distinctly the Litany, which is set forth in English. With all the suffrages following, to the intent people may hear and answer," etc. That there was a place we infer from the rubric prefixed to Psalm lvi. in the Communion, "the priests and clerk kneeling in the place where they are accustomed to say the Litany shall say this Psalm." Bishop Andrew had for the Litany "a faldstool (tolding stool) for this purpose, between the western stalls and the lectern" in his chapel at Winchester, and Bishop Cozen, in 1627, makes inquiry in his diocese for Durham "whether the church had a little faldstool or desk with some decent carpet over it in the middle alley of the church, whereat the Litany may be said after the manner prescribed by the injunctions." A fuller interpretation of this is given in his "Notes on the Common Prayer":—"The priest goeth from out his seat into the body of the Church, and at a low desk before the chancel door, called the faldstool, kneels and says the Litany." His Litany desk is still in Durham Cathedral and applied to its ancient use. It is a literal and appropriate application of the prophet Joel's injunction when a fast is to be sanctified: "Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, meet between the porch and the altar," etc. (ii. 17). The Litany desk stands below the chancel steps, and faces eastward; there are many in the English churches ancient and modern.—I. G.