

In short, he must know all those things in heaven and earth of which our philosophy has never dreamed.

Would it be out of place to mildly insinuate here that the whole Church expectant should pray that the Lord would work a miracle in the case of the clergy, and give them that supernatural light which will enable them to see when and where they are wanted—a supernatural patience with the whims and crotchets of their friends, and a thick skin so as to withstand all the assaults of gossip.

But, pending that miracle, it may be well to ask, is that pastoral oversight, of which we hear so much, the legitimate work of the preacher? I answer—it is not. That is work that must be done—those meetings—those baptisms and marriages and funerals, and friendly visits must be done. It is most needful work. But it is *Church* work, and not ministerial work. The minister may suggest, but the Church must execute; he may organize, but he cannot be organizer and organisation all in one. The Church was very small just after Pentecost—the only bit of organisation they had was a common fund for the poor—but the disciples declined to do even that, and asked for deacons. They were devoted to the work of preaching Christ and Him crucified, and left it to others to see that the executive work of the institution was done. It soon came to pass that there was a great variety of wants to be met, and a great variety of work to be done—there were “diversities of gifts” and “differences of administration;” and to meet that “God” did “set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.” But, the old order changeth—and the modern Church has got to believe that it is possible to have all those gifts and graces and powers centred in one man. He, the minister, is expected to combine in himself all those qualities which in the earlier times were divided between many.

Are the churches wise or foolish in acting thus? Foolish without a doubt—for they expect in one man what nothing short of a miracle could give them. Since the Christian ministry was first ordained of heaven it has never happened that a man has been able to fill the double office of minister and pastor well. Men try—they try hard—and fail in both. That is not to be wondered at; for the two are mutually exclusive. The born preacher is an artist born—and a poet—the bent of his mind is such as to unfit him for the position of “help” and “government” and the general oversight of an organization. He has the habits of a student, with the mind and heart of a man who lives intensely in the world of stern realities. On the other hand, the man with mental inclination for the work of helping and governing—of visiting, and of guiding the routine of an institution can never foster the gifts and graces of the preacher. The churches will never be wise until they have learnt to recognise this diversity of gifts and offices. The commercial, and scientific, and literary life of the world would soon languish and die if we attempted to carry them on in the same way as we attempt to carry on our ecclesiastical life, for we are looking for beauty and usefulness out of things which God has ordained shall be incongruous. If the churches want to live real and great lives—if they want to speak and act truth before the eyes of the people, they must take up their own burden of responsibility and bear it along the dusty way. Each church must do its own work, and not make impossible demands upon its minister. The most flourishing churches in Christendom are those in which the clergyman is left to his preaching and the members look after the rest.

If proof were needed that the Ministry is a divine institution, it would be found in the fact that it still exists. The people have made prolonged efforts to make it dull, to bring it into disrepute—to kill it—for they have made hard-and-fast lines for it, denying to it freedom of thought and interpretation—they have formed the clergy into a class, prescribing for them their dress, and their drawl and their facial expression—they have heaped honours upon them, many of which are in themselves a degradation—they have, in truth, put a premium upon dullness and hypocrisy, and yet the institutions is not only needful to the world's life—it is the best and most pure upon the face of the earth. I believe that the Clergy, as a class, are more able, more earnest, and more honest than any other class of men known to us; that hosts of them are saints, and many of them heroes—and this in spite of the popular and persistent effort to make of them men of little soul and mean—an effort in which too many of their own number have joined. If the institution had not been Divine—if it had not been dear to the head and heart of mankind—if it had not been needful for warning and instruction, it would long ago have ceased to live. But, rightly estimated and rightly used—allowed to do its own proper work—it would live a far greater and more noble, because a far more useful life.

CLERICUS.

IS “PROTECTION” POSSIBLE?

The “National Policy” strikes the unprejudiced onlooker who has been mercifully delivered from the fetters of party spirit, as a very decided misnomer. It has certainly nothing National in its composition. It is class legislation entirely—Protection for a class—exposure to the malignity of selfishness for all besides.

Strange as it may appear in this age of realities (?), in which “faith” saves, and “works” are regarded as deadly, true Religion and Free Trade are nevertheless in fact identical.

To establish this, it is only needful to penetrate far enough into Scripture to reach the Ten Commandments. These are the moral law, and therefore a safe and practicable rule of life.

Take for example the eighth: “Thou shalt not steal.” All are agreed that this is right. Even those who have broken it—thieves themselves—say their conduct is a mistake; for ill-gotten gain cannot, in the nature of things, bring enjoyment. It is so written in the Book of Fate, bound in enduring covers by the Ten Commandments. To steal a man's liberty is the very worst and most oppressive kind of theft. Take my money, but rob me not of liberty,—of life. Leave me but the free air of heaven, the glorious scenes, the abundant gifts of Mother Earth, and freedom to roam o'er her bosom and pick here or there what she bestows, and I am alive; none of my faculties dwarfed, but each developed of them bringing its suitable reward. Leave me this and you can

steal my purse if you will; it is but trash in comparison. Such liberty protectionist theories would fain steal from me. I am not to use my faculties when or where I choose. I am to be prohibited from selecting Dame Nature's gifts where these are most abundant. I am denied liberty to roam in search of her choicest blessings most suitable to my condition. I am to be forced to take just what lies nearest to me, or with the materials most appropriate, however poorly these may be adapted to the forming of the useful article my thoughts have conjured up, I must make some mean imitation of that which my thought has conceived, which, however I may toil and labour, cannot reach the perfection which the same thought, with other more suitable materials, could embody in the perfection of usefulness. Out upon such theft of my liberty, and my God-given rights! On such a Government Policy the finger of Providence has carved, in enduring characters, the truth—“Thou shalt not steal” any of the rights of men. “Thou shalt not” implies “thou *canst* not.” There is no escape. Men *take* their rights, and no narrow law, however vigilant, can prevent men from using their liberty and choosing the gifts of Providence in Nature which are most suitable to their needs, wherever they may be found. Such laws are but a fly on that wheel—that perfect circle of Divine command—which turns relentlessly, ever evolving usefulness and adaptation to the wants of humanity. Progress ever revolves, but ever on the same axis, the hub of Divine law. This so-called “Protection” is a theft which gains nothing. The theft steals—transgresses the command “thou shalt not,” and finds ere long the command is an inevitable law as well. That which he vainly tried to steal eludes his grasp, and even if still retained becomes useless to him. It is simply impossible by means of theft to get gain. The evil will that prompted the theft blinds the eyes and inflames the desire at one and the same time, till, ceasing to be vigilant, discovery and ruin overwhelm him. The eighth commandment, as well as the other nine, are not *only* commands, but the very conditions of our being, by which alone we can continue to exist as a community, or as individuals. No government can steal the rights of the governed without bringing destruction on itself. No individual can steal from his neighbour and long enjoy, or even possess, what belongs of right to others. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? Do not the physical, mental and spiritual worlds exist by Him, and can their formation be contrary to His life which supports them?

But the tenth commandment carries the principle still further. “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, nor his wife, nor his man-servant or maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor his trade, nor anything that is thy neighbour's.” This is the most spiritual of all the commandments. It speaks to the will, or ever it has formed itself into act. Thou shalt not even form the desire to injure others. How does the “Protection” theory square with this? Does it not covet its neighbour's trade? It covets the gain which other nations make from the supply of its legitimate wants. It covets the trade of its neighbour whether his wants be thereby well supplied or not. The will to have this steps out into act, and strives, by law to deprive the neighbour of his liberty of choice—or at least to limit such choice. He shall buy only from those within his country, and shall sell only within the same narrow limits. He shall not be a free man, seeking communion and trade with *all* his fellows, but a slave, bound to the will of those who rule over him—fettered in his labour—no hope beyond the narrow circle he inhabits.

For Protection applied to Imports ought logically to apply equally to Exports. If it be best for the community that it should buy as little as possible from other communities, it is best surely that it should sell as little as possible, but retain all its produce for its own use. The means of subsistence would be thus cheapened, the cost of labour therefore lessened, and manufactured goods be better, cheaper, and more in demand. Covetousness in former ages did reach that height; and did not prove a shining success either. Now it cloaks itself with a garb of virtue. “The greatest good of the greatest number” is its motto. It covets the trade of the producer—the farmer—merely that it may send it back in blessings on his head in the shape of increased prices for his produce to feed its artisans. It leaves producers free to get this high price, but also free to get any price they can from other nations. But in this it is not consistent; for it does not put an import tax on produce, nor yet an export tax, which latter would most correctly carry out its principles. By thus conveniently ignoring its principles, it reduces the home market for the necessities of life to the level of the produce markets of the world. Protection not only covets the consumpt trade of the community for its manufactures, but it insists that the manufacturer shall buy his supplies of food for self and employees wherever he can do best. The home market for produce must compete with foreign—the home market for manufacturers must be protected (save the mark!) from all foreign competition. The reasons are obvious on the surface. That death's head—class legislation—shows its hideous visage.

Yet, mark the inevitable law of our own being, of which the Divine commandments are but the verbal expression. This covetousness overreaches itself. It cannot retain that which it would fain steal. To manufacture becomes so profitable, for the moment, that the greed of many is roused to share in the spoils—spoils of trampled liberty, wrong and oppression. Too much is manufactured—more than the country can use. Prices fall, employees are discharged, want, misery and loss follow; for most of the surplus of goods made are, from the very necessity of the case, fitted only for use in the “protected” country. Experience, sharp and bitter, then begins to teach men the inner meaning of the eighth and tenth commandments, when each is forced no longer to steal or covet the property of others, but to earn property by the sweat of the brow or brain, and invention and painstaking labour, to adapt the articles made to the wants of other countries, enable the manufacturer to do what he ought to have done at first from principle,—work with his hands or brain the thing which is good, of benefit to *all* his fellows, and reap his reward from *usefulness*—not from a “protection” alike dishonourable to himself and contrary to the laws of God.

Thus men learn that His commandments are not grievous, but true to Nature and experience, and to act contrary to them is the only cause of misery in the world—that evil works itself out—that the attempt to do evil, to wrong and oppress persistently, is equally foolish and

“IMPOSSIBLE.”