

portunate beggar you have given nothing ; you have simply *bought off* a nuisance.

7. The law of faith in God. (See 2 Cor. ix : 8-11.) We are here taught that from first to last our giving is to be the result or outworking of our vital relation to God.

(a) Faith that, in giving, I am simply heeding God's call ; that the hand of the poor or needy stretched out to me is really God's hand. (b) Faith that my giving is really the work of His all-sufficient grace in me ; that He is working in me *eo will and to do*. (c) Faith that the supply of the means to give is of God ; that of His own I am giving Him. (d) Faith that I shall suffer no serious lack for what I have bestowed in answer to His call. (See verse 10.) This fine figure will bear examination : our substance is here compared to seed which may either be sown for a harvest, or given to one who needs to make of it bread. If I, from the seed I reserve for the sowing, give to one who is in danger of starving, God knows how to make it up to me in my harvest. Money is therefore presented to us in two aspects : as seed of a harvest, as bread for human want ; and we are warned against the subtle temptation of using it all as seed instead of giving it as bread. (e) Faith in the divine approval. (See verse 7.) God loves the cheerful giver. If therefore my giving is an act of faith, I am sure of God's approving smile. (f) Hence, last of all, the law of faith includes the confidence of an abundant recompense. What I give, cast as seed on the waters, I shall find, even though after many days.

II.—MOTIVES TO GIVING.

1. The imitation of a beautiful example. (2 Cor. viii : 1-5.) Paul was eye-witness of the zeal of the Macedonians. Out of their persecution came both joy in God and loss of worldly goods ; yet this joy and loss united to produce a rich liberality, or, literally, single-mindedness, that looked away from their own estate to the greater need of their brethren. John Howard says, "Our superfluities should give way to the comforts of the poor, our comforts to their necessities, and even our necessities to their extremities."

The beauty of this Macedonian liberality lay in three things : (a) It was out of deep poverty, not of abundance. (b) It was in proportion to their ability and even beyond it. (c) It was spontaneous, entreating, rather than being entreated ; instead of yielding only before importunate appeal, they besought that they might have the privilege of giving, and so exhibit the true fellowship of all saints.

2. The necessity of a full chorus of graces. (Compare 2 Peter i : 5-8.) Grace is single in bestowment, but multiform in development and manifestation. We are like reservoirs in which a single stream empties, but out of which pour many streams at different heights.

Paul says (2 Cor. viii : 7) : "Therefore as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in