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"IF I FORGET THEE O JERUSALEM! LET MY RIGHT HAND FORGET ITS CUNNING."—Ps. 137, v. 5.

Pay your Church Dues.

WE refer not here to the obligations imposed by honesty and justice, in the payment of our common debts, although that is a duty, strange as it may seem, of which Christians need to be continually reminded; but of the imperative nature of the claims imposed on all professing Christians to contribute their proportionate quota towards the support of the gospel. God might have established a ministry of angels, which needed no worldly support; this, however, he has not done. He has instituted a ministry of men, of like constitution and wants as those to whom they are sent, and has accompanied their commission with the reminder that the "laborer is worthy of his hire." Voluntarily cut off from other sources of supply, they are dependent for their worldly support on the people to whom they are sent. It is God's own arrangement, and he will strictly inquire into the manner in which it is fulfilled.

As a general and notorious matter of fact, the Church has never shown its appreciation of God's gift of a teaching ministry by its liberal sustentation of it. Hundreds of our ministers live in poverty, and are diverted from an exclusive attention to their peculiar work, by anxious and painful thoughts, how they may live without wholly secularizing themselves. It is no refutation of this to point out a few exceptional cases, in which ministers are petted and pampered, and have abundance thrown into their lap. It is not so with the majority of the working clergy. On the general subject of ministerial support much has been written and spoken; at present

we propose to advert to a single and remarkable phase of it. We mean the sinful and wicked withholding of what, by direct or implied contract, congregations have engaged to give for the comfortable maintenance of their ministers. In the rural districts, salaries depend on individual subscriptions. On the faith of these, ministers are induced to accept settlements; and yet when they have moved their families within the bounds of such congregations, presuming that the promise of Christians is sacred, how often are they surprised to find that these subscriptions are, with difficulty, collected! Sometimes it is pleaded that no one has time to go round and gather them; at others, that excuses are made and reiterated that payment is not convenient, although there is no lack of means to make purchases for their personal profit; and in some cases, payment is refused.

Here, then, is a minister of Jesus Christ left absolutely destitute of the means of living and paying his debts, through the falsification of the promises of persons professing to be Christians! It is another, but not a less revolting aspect of this subject, that when a minister is settled upon the presumption of such subscriptions, there are some to be found in many congregations, who claim that their obligation to pay was only for a year, and hence withhold or diminish the amount of subscription for the next year. They have induced the minister to come among them, they know he cannot command the means of a ready removal, and now they are willing to see him struggle and gasp like a drowning man, with the predetermination of refusing to him a helping hand! A beautiful commen-