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{ Terms in Advance:
ONE DOLLAR A YEAR.

ON GIVING ALMS.

THAT there is a strict and formal command to give alms, and that the giving of alms is not a matter left to each one's choice or caprice, is incontestably proved by the fact, that God has threatened eternal punishments to those, who do not give.

The land of a certain rich man brought forth plenty of fruit. And he thought within himself saying, "What shall I do, because I have no room wherein to bestow my fruits?" And he said "This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and will build greater: and into them will I gather all things that are grown to me, and my goods. And I will say to my soul: Soul! thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thy rest; eat; drink; make good cheer." But God said to him: "Thou fool! this night do they require thy soul of thee, and whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?"

This is a heavy punishment; Christian Soul, which God here inflicts on this rich man—"this night do they require thy soul of thee!"—it is a sudden punishment—"this night," the very night on which he had determined to build his new barns. And why this punishment? Is there anything in his conduct which appears to deserve it?—to deserve instant death. Let us see. He has just reaped an abundant harvest;—there is no crime in that. After his barns are built and his harvest secured therein, he determines to "eat, drink, and be merry. And I will say to my soul: Soul! thou hast much goods laid up for

many years; take thy rest; eat; drink; make good cheer." There is no crime in all this, for take notice! he did not say to his soul—Soul! eat too much; drink too much; be riotously merry; all he evidently determined to do was to "eat, drink, and be merry in contentment." And yet Almighty God calls him a fool for all this; and what is more he tells him that he will that night be summoned to his account. "Thou fool! this night do they require thy soul of thee." Why all this? Why this terrible denunciation? Ah! Christian Soul, Jesus Christ himself supplies the explanation—Jesus Christ himself gives the reason in the last verse of the parable, "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself and is not rich towards God." This rich man is not rich towards God—this rich man layeth up treasure for himself and not for God's poor who hold the place of God on earth;—behold there his crime; behold there the reason why he is a fool: behold there the reason why his soul is summoned in the dead of night to meet its Judge. He has not robbed and cheated like so many other men, remember! in order to be rich; his riches are not the spoils of widows or of orphans or of the poor man injured and oppressed. No! it is God himself who has given them, for they are the result of a bountiful harvest. Neither, remember, has he used his riches in the gratification of his passions and lusts; nor to avenge him of injuries; nor to gain unjust lawsuits. All that he has determined to do is to eat, drink, and be merry. No; his crime is not any of these; it is solely that he has laid up his treasure for him-