

to insinuate that there are yet "Ananias and Sapphiras in the Church." No doubt the remark was suggested by the belief that there were some persons who were taking advantage of the system of Sabbath offerings in not contributing as much as they were expected to contribute, or had formerly subscribed. It was not intended as an argument against the system, but rather to prove that in spite of such a drawback it was superior to every other. In congregations where the plan of giving at worship has realized the anticipations of its most enthusiastic advocates, similar remarks are heard—*e. g.*, one and another says, "My subscription used to be \$2.00 or \$20.00, and I never thought of exceeding that sum, but now, by my Sabbath offerings, I am giving yearly a half or as much more to the Lord." But from other statements which he makes you are led to infer that some must be "keeping back part of the price." Now what is the remedy, not merely for this defective liberality, but for the worse evil from which it springs? Why simply to realize that everything that we devote or purpose in our heart to give to the Lord is sacred. When a man says "I will give five or fifty cents a week to the Lord," he ought to consider that sum as "devoted" and therefore "most holy unto the Lord." If he asks what he is to do with what he has devoted, if he is prevented from attending the house of worship—we answer preserve its sanctity, keep it separate to be at some future time cast into the treasury. Often a person may think when he has not had an opportunity of giving when he intended, that he has *saved* so much, and no one will be any the wiser of his delinquency. But was not this just the thought of Ananias and Sapphira? The reports of many congregations would lead us to the sad conclusion that there are many who will faithfully fulfil any legal contract, who are trustworthy in any ordinary business engagement, whose word of honour is as good as their oath, and yet who may be remiss in their engagements with the Lord. We have charity enough, however, to believe that this remissness in most cases arises, not so much from want

of conscience as from want of consideration. To such the Apostle says, "*Herein I give my advice. Perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have.*" "*When thou vowest a vow defer not to pay it,*" &c. Eccl. v. 4. The sanctity of this ordinance ought to be impressed upon us more forcibly from the fact that other modes of Divine worship derive their name from it, because there is in them the general idea of something given, rendered, presented to God. And what, indeed is our highest ideal of a religious life, but the *devotion* of ourselves, our substance and our service wholly to the Lord!

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### MISSIONS IN 1873.

Speaking of the Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, the Board say:—The missionaries of the Presbyterian Board have never had greater encouragement than during the last year. Many a cloud of the size of a man's hand has risen over the scattered and thirsty fields of labor. Among the Nez Percés Indians large accessions to the Church have been made during the year. Thirteen Chinamen in San Francisco have stood up together, and professed their faith in Christ. At Cos, in Mexico, on two or three occasions, goodly numbers have been baptized. And in some of the suburban towns around the Mexican capital, earnest Christian men and women in increasing numbers have come even through the storms of persecution to testify their adherence to the faith.

The Brazilian Mission has enjoyed a series of accessions throughout the year, while Mr. Bushnell, on the opposite African coast, has been harvesting the fruits of the labors of other years in large numbers of hopeful converts. In India a single church received thirteen at once, and other stations on the same field have also been greatly refreshed. The Canton letters have been full of the joy of spiritual success as shown in large accessions to the Church. Three new churches have been formed in the Ningpo Presbytery, while in the Shantung Mission successive reports of precious ingatherings have been received, the last of which is a recent letter from Dr. Nevins, stating that Rev. Mr. Corbett of Chefoo had just baptized thirty persons among the outstations, and that there were supposed to be in the same region not less than two hundred inquirers after the truth. These cer-