

TITHING EXPERIENCES. V.

LETTER FROM AN "ONTARIO FARMER."

"**W**E—that is my wife and I—are farmers. We have practised giving the tenth for about ten years. Some time before we had adopted it my wife spoke occasionally about it, but not until I had read Kain's pamphlet, No. 2, did we really begin.

We like it very well. In fact, such a thing as going back to the unsystematic way of giving, we never think of

And yet, in face of the many testimonies we read, of the tide of prosperity beginning to rise with the adoption of this system, we do not find that we are more prosperous than formerly. The crops do not yield any more. Indeed, owing to unfavorable weather, and the ravages of insects, which do not seem to understand that they should leave ours alone, for the past two years they have yielded decidedly less. And prices have gone down, so that, as is well known, the returns from almost every kind of farm produce have been much less than they used to be. These things affect us in company with others and make our income smaller.

We find also, notwithstanding many fine little stories which go the rounds of missionary meetings, of missionary hens which lay a fabulous number of eggs, of missionary pigs which grow and fatten in an extraordinary manner, etc.; that our live stock goes on in the ordinary way, thriving and doing well when kindly treated and well cared for, but apparently without any just conception of their high privileges as affecting the progress of missions. And yet we continue to practice the tithing system, and are hearty advocates of the same, because

1st. We did not expect that it was a sure way to get rich, and there are not soured and ready to fling it up because it seems to have failed in that respect.

2nd. Because giving is more of a pleasure than formerly. The minimum sum we ought to give is fixed for us, and our business with it is simply to apportion it properly, and that is a pleasant duty.

3rd. Because it makes the truth, that our business is not our own, but that God is a partner in it, more real to us, with all the comfort and blessing that comes from the realization of such truth.

4th. Because our givings are larger than they used to be, or than they would be, were we not tithers."

From another comes the suggestive lines:—
"In answer to your request in the Record, I may say I have tried the tithing system and like it well. I thought it my duty to give as the Lord prospered me, and *every dollar we get is thus a reminder that He is the giver*. I would advise every one, whatever portion they may decide to give, to have a systematic way of doing it. I believe in giving a tenth of the money received."

CALEB COBWEB ON PROPORTIONATE GIVING.

A MAN was giving me, the other day, his experience with proportionate giving. He was a foreigner, and had not had the easiest time in the world, I imagine, in getting settled in this land of the free. Nevertheless, he early determined to give to the Lord one-tenth of his income.

"Two years ago, Professor Cobweb," said he, in his broken English that I shall not attempt to reproduce,—*"Two years ago, my wife says to me, says she, 'Don't you think we can do better by the Lord next year?' That is what she says: 'Don't you think we can do better by the Lord.'* And we did, Professor Cobweb; we did do better by the Lord. We gave him fifteen per cent. of everything we earned. And I want to tell you, sir,"—and here my friend's eyes began to grow bright and his voice to be even more earnest,—*"I want to tell you that that year the Lord blessed us as he never had before. We never had so many orders. The money just poured in. We were doing better by the Lord, and He did better by us,—see! I tell you professor, the Lord is not going to let it be a losing business to serve him!"*

Now, my friend was right, absolutely right, in that last remark; only—we must remember that what God counts a losing business is not always what man so counts. When Jesus bade the rich young man sell all he had and give to the poor, he did not promise him treasure on earth, but only—(only!)—treasure in heaven. No one will see the righteous forsaken or his seed begging bread; but the Bible does not promise that the righteous shall get rich.

Very often, when we give God a tenth, he will reward us tenfold in this world; but he very often sees it best to leave us in this world just one-tenth poorer—in money—than we were before we gave.

As to my friend, he was simply rejoicing in God's goodness. If his increasing gifts had *not* brought increasing prosperity, I am quite sure he would still have kept up his giving at the advanced rate as long as God made it possible for him to do so, and would have looked forward for his reward to the world to come. No; better than that, he would have been conscious of getting a glorious reward all along, in the joy of doing his Master's will.

That spirit must be the oasis of all our giving. If the gift is to profit us anything, we must not give it hoping for any profit save the profit of the soul. I am so glad that you are learning how to give freely, as God gives to you, and not after the miserable, petty, grudging, stingy fashion so common among men. I hope before long to see every Endeavorer—yes, every single one—enrolled in the splendid army of tithe-givers. I do not see how any Christian can give less than one-tenth of his income to the Lord's great work. Give it, however,—as I know you will,—purely from love of that work and love of the dear Saviour, and not because of any hoped for return in kind.—*Golden Rule.*