

been lost upon religious communities. It is plain that the more the members trade with one another the wealthier they will become, and the more they will have to spare to give to the "Church." This is financing on the basis of a common brotherhood in which the idea of mutual helpfulness is paramount. We can see nothing to condemn in this method, in which mutual good offices and good will have been crystallized as it were into a rule. On the contrary, it has much to commend itself to many of our struggling congregations, as it first began its development among dissenting religious bodies when they were but a "feeble folk" and required all the means they could obtain in order to strengthen themselves. The system gathered force and importance as they increased and its power is now plainly manifest everywhere around us. The lesson should not be lost upon us. Let our Church Guilds get to work, and if their labours are conducted with prudence and foresight, it will not be long before grand results are attained. Of course the tithing system is the grandest of all; it is Divine, but it cannot be brought about without a long course of training from childhood up; and while the practice is merely the chosen plan of a few of the enlightened, they will be quietly allowed to bear their chosen burden, or rather to exercise their privilege. It might be one of the aims of regular parish Guilds to inculcate the doctrine of tithes, but first of all they will have to learn to practise it.

#### THE WADE-McMULLEN CASE.

The Rev. Rural Dean Wade, of Woodstock, delivered a sermon last Sunday week at old St. Paul's, which was reported in the *Toronto Mail*. His text was, "That they all may be one," St. John's Gospel, xvii. 21. Therein he undertook to enlighten the critics of his escapade in the same church on Christmas Day, and especially this journal. We may say we never expected from him anything so craftily *ad captandum* in response to our strictures as this sermon. We gave him credit for, and even expressed our admiration of the generous spirit and impulse which prompted what was manifestly a breach of the Church's law. He was blamed for allowing his sentiments to lead him into such a serious pitfall. We had not thought his action was quite deliberate, but we were sure it was sufficiently grave to require correction at the hands of his Bishop, and we spoke by the Prayer Book and Articles, the terms of which he solemnly undertook to obey and enforce in their *literal and grammatical sense*. But this sermon shows his *deliberate* intention to carry out his views, whatever law might be broken. We regret exceedingly the case is so much worse than we had imagined. In the sermon he completely evades the point at issue—the question of his obedience to his ordination vows, and proceeds to interpret the text in a way to hide the real issue and to procure a popular verdict in his favour, at the same time assuming that he and those who think with him have a monopoly of charity for those outside the Church, while the opponents of his recent course wish to build themselves up in exclusiveness. Nothing could be less the fact. Those who took the lead on the Church's side in the promotion of the late conference looking to re-union, were those of the clergy who deprecate Mr. Wade's conduct most. Their proceedings were of an orderly character, and brought about a greater measure of kindly feeling and hope, and none of them had sufficient self-consciousness to presume to take the law into their own hands to

do what they would without authority, pending the arrival at a mutual corporate understanding. If anything has become a clog in the wheels of progress towards re-union, we trust Mr. Wade will see that it is his own unwisdom.

It is interesting to compare the utterances of the "Bond Street Prophet" on the same day (reported in the *News*) with those of the Rector of old St. Paul's on the same subject. The ideas are for the most part similar; but the former is consistent, while the latter is not. The one is a teacher on his own account, while the other is a priest of the Church of God—the pillar and ground of the Truth, and has undertaken to hold that "The Church hath authority in controversies of Faith." Dr. Wild speaks ably from his point of view, and often makes particularly shrewd and sensible observations. Here is one to the purpose, to which the Rev. Rural Dean will not assent. Speaking of religious organizations he says: "They have a right to their rules, creeds and ceremonies, and those who join them should labour to observe them, and not be fractious. If you cannot agree with what is subscribed to, whether ministers or members, do not dishonour yourselves by fighting against your own oath, but leave, as honest men and women, for you were not forced to go in, neither were you forced to stay." It is on these common-sense principles, therefore, that we assert, that it is not the part of Rural Dean Wade to try to justify himself by any views of his own of the meaning of a Scripture text. His duty is plain. If he cannot resist breaking the Church's law he should retire. It is preposterous to suppose that by individuals in the Church becoming "a law unto themselves," they can promote the cause of re-union. The only way to succeed in this is by the private or public exercise of legitimate acts of kindness, by a proper explanation on all convenient occasions of our ecclesiastical phraseology and usages, the meaning of our theological terms, and the Scriptural sanctions of our doctrine and ritual. When these are all understood, it may turn out that we are not so far apart as we thought we were. Then will come the time for corporate action. Public breaches of discipline by individuals, meanwhile, do not inspire respect outside, and much less within the pale of the Church. Dr. Wild's words quoted above (and he speaks for not a few), and what has appeared in the press, ought to be enough to convince any one of this. It is useless for Rural Dean Wade to shelter himself behind the lawless actions of others, however, in many respects, good or great. Two or a hundred wrongs do not make a right, and any number of actions of isolated individuals cannot commit the Church to a course contrary to her written laws. The further accumulation of such precedents should at once be stopped by proper authority. We could show that both Dr. Wild and Mr. Wade are wrong in some of their interpretations, as well from the context and other passages of Scripture, as historically; but such a discussion would be irrelevant and would only becloud the issue. Our remarks may be concluded by a brief reference to the craftiness of Mr. Wade's method of dealing with this matter. Instead of answering our arguments categorically from the Church's standard authorities, he first sets himself up as an authority in the Science of Hermeneutics, parading his wide sympathies largely to the exclusion of the Church to which he has sworn loyalty; and then to throw discredit on the journal which has taken him to task, he goes out of his way to drag in the Roman Catholic *Record*—which having seen the article in this paper, makes

similar comments on the case—which he displays in parallel columns, and then, *ergo*, he asks everybody to infer what a popish paper this is! The course of this journal from its inception, in regard to the established and authentic principles of the Reformation, is too well-known to our readers to require that the cunningly devised slander of Mr. Wade should be refuted, and we strongly advise him to clear his mind of cant, conceit and humbug, and to attend earnestly, and without any self-deluding devices, to the one question to which present and pressing duty binds him, viz.: Whether he can consistently remain an officer in the Church while attempting to justify himself in breaking her laws which he has sworn to obey.

#### STUDIES ON PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE.

BY REV. DR. GAMMACK, EAST TORONTO.

No. 10.

St. Luke xvi. 1-13.

The current interpretation of the Parable of the Unjust Steward is the least satisfactory of all the parabolic cycle. It requires at the outset an apology that it does not mean what it naturally seems to do, and upon this somewhat doubtful foundation the work of the commentator proceeds. But He who gave the parable is the Truth, coming to reveal God to man, and being Himself the Way of righteousness. He knew what was in man whom He had made, and His word is the only perfect rule for humanity. By this parable, so understood as we have said, we are placed in a serious difficulty. Jesus, in order to enforce a particular virtue, selects the case of an acknowledged swindler, gives the details of how he carried out his dishonesty for ulterior results, and then holds him up to honest men as an example of wisdom in preparing for the future. He seems to wish us to be blind or indifferent to the roguery inherent in the matter, and to think only of the commendation to the steward for his wise forethought and preparation against the evil day. It must strike every one as strange that He whose every motive was for "doing good," should thus be needlessly throwing moral temptation into the way of the sinful and weak, who cannot enter into fine distinctions, and are more likely to accept the broad fact of commendation than to distinguish justly between the present act and the distant object. Jesus says that the steward acted *wisely* in his little scheme, but He knew human nature too well to imagine that there was any wisdom in the steward's calculation for gratitude from those benefited. The debtors might be willing to connive at the falsifications and accept the reductions that he made on their accounts, but they would be quite alive to his roguery, and would despise the man while they accepted his temporary benefits.

"And for a while, because his children reigned,  
Men praised his fortunes, nor condemned his sins:  
Wise bards but called him 'craftiest of mankind,'  
Proud rulers 'the most blest.'"

There must be something wrong, as the same spirit of trickery has landed many at Kingston and kept them for a term of years. By their own or other men's experience our "honourable men" have learned that "Honesty is the best policy," and that selfishness of motive is but a lame excuse for meanness of action. How, then, can we view the Parable of the Unjust Steward so as to free it from this suspicion of moral obliquity? How can we put it into the hands of our preachers in such a light that they may not have to waste their energies and their hearers' patience in showing what it is not, and in proving that the readers of