

others who have not awoke to the inflexible principle which shall guide the final adjudication of Heaven, "To whom much is given, of them shall much be required."

Nor must we overlook, in this testimony to some of our opulent members, the thousands among the comparatively poor, who, in proportion to their means, are not a whit behind them in their generosity. It requires but a slight knowledge of the financial history of our churches to show that there is a glorious nobility of heart among many of our operatives and struggling tradesmen; and no one can be acquainted with the sums which they have raised from time to time, without wondering upon what principles of domestic economy so much has been saved. Many are the sanctuaries in our land which have been reared almost exclusively by the self-denying liberality of men who were compelled to obey the call of the factory bell, and to earn their bread by the sweat of their brow. These, too, are amongst the obscure but real princes of the earth, for whom a day of heavenly coronation is reserved. Faithful here over a few things, they shall be rulers over many things. If this free-handed responsiveness to the claims of the Church and the age were only general in all Christian denominations, we should have heard for the last time of exhausted funds, and of meritorious societies drooping and dying for the lack of money. Every fresh plan which Christian love and prudence might desire, would find the open purse ready to its hand, as if it said, "Take without stint until the work is done."

But there are several circumstances which act like stones laid at the mouth of a well, preventing all access.

Is there not, for instance, a subtle, and perhaps unuttered impression, that our property is our own, and not God's? Do not some give of what they call their substance even to God himself, as if they would impress him with the thought that they would expect some striking recognition for thus presenting him with that to which he had no title? If creation constitute a title, then He has a title that will prove to be valid enough when man and his parliaments have passed away. He was once the only owner, and even now men are but tenants at will, who may receive not only notice of ejection, but ejection itself at any moment of the day or night. There once was a king, who, after giving with royal munificence, with no less humility than truth, could say, "Of Thine own have we given Thee." This simple sense of stewardship needs but to take possession of the Church of God, and one of the chiefest hindrances to the progress of the Gospel will have vanished like a wreath of morning mist. But how do matters stand? Men—yes, such as aspire to the designation of Christian, who resent appeals for their Saviour's cause, and dismiss them unhonoured altogether, or with a scant, grudging and sour response—will spend in a single night's entertainment to their friends more than they give to the cause of religion during a whole year. Social companies are doubtless right enough in their place, and cannot be wholly foregone without the risk of unsympathetic isolation and selfishness, but surely they ought to have some consistency with a man's whole life. And it is a sin of a dark and terrible hue, when men can spend lavishly on a feast, and turn their Saviour as a beggar away from the door. We envy not the man whose luxuries cost him more than his Lord. The only spirit which Christianity recognises, is that which gives the best to the Lord. Without the giving of the best, we should have had no Gospel. "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life." Heaven has given the best to earth; shall not earth return the best to Heaven? Let us take the words and bind them as a frontlet on our brows, "The best for the Lord." When Solomon built the temple, he never forgot the principle, amid the fragrance of the cedar-wood, and the flashing of the silver and the gold, and the subtle carving of cunning workmen, of "The best for the Lord." When the wise men came from the East to Jerusalem, to welcome the Saviour's advent, they brought "gold, frankincense and myrrh," to honor the principle of "The best for the Lord." When the woman broke the alabaster box of ointment, and poured it on His head, she showed her resolve to give "The best to the Lord." When Joseph of Arimathæa offered his new tomb,