

For the Colonial Churchman.

TITHES APPOINTED BY GOD FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE CHURCH.

Messrs. Editors,

It would be well if a little enquiry could be excited, in this country, on the subject of tithes, which, in my opinion, may still be proved to be Scriptural and appointed means for supporting religion. It may not be a very pleasant office for the clergy, who might be thought interested in the matter; but if they can prove by *God's own Word* that tithes are still due to the church, and that we are bound to pay them, just as we are bound to pay our private debts, then, I should think, no man who has the least respect for the Bible, will ever think of attributing any sordid motives to those expounders of Holy Writ who would successfully demonstrate that such indeed is the case.

The well known, and deeply deplored, religious wants of this country,—the carelessness of our Legislature for the souls of men,—the necessity of our having recourse to the voluntary system, however precarious it may be,—and the present excitement produced by the "Wesleyan Centenary," which "an apostolic Church" should by all means imitate as far as it is good,—these reasons, Messrs. Editors, have led me to bring the subject of tithes before your readers. Dissenting ministers call upon their congregations to support them as an act of charity on their part, but we can prove that the laity, in supporting their church, only do their duty, and are far from doing any thing more than God has plainly required of them, until they actually give away more than the tenth part of all their incomes.

I suppose no one, who has read the Bible, will deny that tithes were paid by the Patriarchs, and that God made the payment of them necessary by the Laws of Moses. He says: Lev. 27 ch. 30, 31, 32, all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's; it is holy unto the Lord, &c.

This being clear, it is only necessary for us to know whether the New Testament dispensation abolished tithes as no longer necessary for the support of religion? or else, whether the Christian church and ministry are not entitled to the same help and support, and are not even allowed to demand it as their due?

We find, in the New Testament, that the Saviour evidently expected his ministers to be maintained at the expense of those who received their heavenly message. When he sent them into all the earth to preach the Gospel to every creature, he relieves them from the care of providing "either scrip or purse," by assuring them that they might eat whatsoever was set before them as "workmen worthy of their hire;" not as beggars, not as being indebted to those who feed and clothe them, but rather, that they were to receive temporal for heavenly things. And so St. Paul manifestly understands the Saviour's meaning, and plainly declares it to be the duty of Christians to support their ministers in temporal matters; nay, but he goes further, and he appeals to the Law of Moses; and while shewing that "they who feed the flock must also eat of the milk of the flock," and "they who serve at the altar, must also live of the altar," he positively says,—"*even so hath the Lord ordained that they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel.*" (1 Cor. ix. 14.) The apostles, then, is far from abolishing tithes; rather he refers to them, and then says: "*even so hath the Lord ordained*" that it should, of course, be the same under the Gospel.

But we might also consult the Primitive Fathers on this subject. Many of them were intimately acquainted with the apostles, and must, therefore, have known their opinion on this and many other matters,

better than ourselves. Now it is well known that many of the Fathers considered tithes as God's property, and this was the reason why all the primitive churches have been supported in this way, even down to our own days, in the nations of Europe. The proprietors of the soil were convinced of their obligation to obey the Laws of Moses in this respect, and from the king to the lowest lord of the land, they all agreed, and made it the law of the land as well as of the Bible, that "all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, should be holy unto the Lord."

A learned and pious clerical friend at home, in a letter to me full of brotherly and useful suggestions, writes as follows:—"It was the opinion of many of the Fathers, that God expects every man to dedicate to his service at least one tenth of his income. Unless we do so we rob God, and do not enjoy our property with a clear conscience. And this rule applies to the poorest as well as the richest. Every one should be taught to set apart immediately a tenth of all that he receives, whether money, goods, or produce. It is well to carry out this plan so far as to tithe ourselves with equal care and promptitude, whether we receive a sixpence or a thousand pounds. The money may be put into a separate purse, to be called God's purse; and out of this we are to take whenever we bestow alms, or contribute to religious purposes, or buy religious books to give away, &c. One advantage of this plan is, that when we give out of God's purse, we shall not feel as if we were giving our own property, and so we shall escape the danger of self-righteousness or self-praise in our alms-deeds. Another advantage is, that when the practice becomes general, the church will never want means for any of her purposes, whether to support the clergy, to build and repair, and furnish churches, to maintain schools, to feed the sick and aged, &c. Those whose hearts are liberal, and who can afford it, may add as much more as they please to the tenth, as a free-will offering to the Lord; they may give two tenths, or three tenths &c.; and we ought to preach that such free-will offerings are very acceptable to God, and will be surely rewarded, for "he who soweth little shall reap little, and he who soweth much, shall reap much."—as we can hardly expect many grown-up persons to adopt, late in life, this practice of tithing and dedicating their income, let us urge it on our children, whose tender minds are more easily wrought on; also upon religious parents, recommending them to train their children in the habit of setting apart a tenth for God, by teaching them to begin with the first sixpence they receive or earn.—We ought to explain from the pulpit that tithes are expected by God as a continual acknowledgment to Him that all our property belongs to Him, and is enjoyed as a loan from Him."

Hoping, Messrs. Editors, that the above suggestions may produce the same effect on the minds of others which they have had on my own, viz:—the determination of tithing my income and of applying the tenth to holy purposes without any other feeling but a desire to pay my debts; and earnestly praying that this divine and primitive mode of supporting the Gospel may be soon generally received.

I remain, Messrs. Editors,

your's, &c.

A CHURCHMAN.

September 13th, 1839.

It is impossible to know our justification except in our obedience to Christ. And to obey Christ or hope for justification through him, unless he were God over all would be indeed blasphemous.—*Howell's Remains.*

Christ Jesus is great in every respect; finite beings are only great in some things when compared with each other, and when compared with God they are little in every respect.—*Ibid.*

SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL IN FOREIGN PARTS.

NEWFOUNDLAND.

From the Rev. Charles Blackman, Missionary at Port-de-Grave, to his Diocesan.

"St. John's Newfoundland, 4th January, 1839.

"I continued my services in Port-de-Grave, &c, until the middle of October, when as I have already informed your Lordship, I was directed by the Arch-deacon to proceed hither, and take upon me the charge of St. Thomas's Church in this town.—Immediately I had established myself here (and having got all my supplies round to Port-de-Grave, I did so not without great expense,) I directed my attention to the numerous outposts in the neighbourhood where, your Lordship will be surprised to hear, there are one thousand six hundred and eighty members of our Church, requiring, from their poverty and their ignorance, very much consideration and instruction. Feeling the importance of preventing these of our people from going over to other teachers, I have visited two of the settlements weekly; held divine service; administered the sacraments; visited the sick; and performed such other offices as circumstances rendered necessary. Believe me, my Lord, this, in addition to the duties of the new church, has taxed my strength severely; and walking, as I frequently do, more than twenty miles a day, over most wretched roads, and sleeping afterwards in some winter tilt, I have been surprised, as well as thankful, that I have been enabled to persevere. The benefits, however, of a regular attendance on these poor scattered sheep of the wilderness are already apparent; and I trust the Society will kindly keep in remembrance their great need of spiritual instruction.

"Though I made the best provision in my power for Port-de-Grave and Barened, by securing the gratuitous services of two excellent Readers, and the occasional visits of Mr. Howell, from Bay Roberts, I felt a strong desire to see how my late parishioners fared; and as Mr. Carrington kindly undertook to supply my place at St. Thomas's for one Sunday, I started on Monday, the 31st December, for a regular missionary tour round Conception Bay. My limited income not allowing me to keep or even hire a man, I was compelled to buckle on my own knapsack; and, thus accoutred, I walked to the south shore of the Bay,—interred the body of a woman I had visited in sickness before, and passed on to Kelligrews distant from St. John's about twenty miles. Early on the morning of Tuesday (New-Year's day), I proceeded to Holyrood; which place, although I was alone, and had never travelled the road before, I reached without much difficulty: but in passing through the woods between Holyrood and Harbour Main, I lost my way; but, with considerable labour and some anxiety (for the snow was falling thickly) I got to the sea-side, where I found a tilt, whose owner kindly directed me aright. On reaching Harbour Main, I was strongly advised not to attempt, at a late hour of the day, with a somewhat wearied body, and with feet bleeding from the excessive roughness of the road over which I had gone, the journey to Brigus. Sensible, however, that I could be of little or no service where I was, (for there is not a Protestant in the place), I determined on pushing forward; and having procured a guide, I reached Brigus, quite exhausted, about two hours after night. Here I spent the following day, baptizing the infant child of R. J. Piment, Esq. the stipendiary magistrate of the town; and visiting such people as I knew to be attached to the Church. On Thursday I reached Port-de-Grave where, for the two or three days preceding the Sabbath, I had quite enough to do in visiting the sick and aged, and regulating other matters connected with the Church's interests. On Sunday I had an overflowing congregation, to fifty-five of whom I administered the Holy Communion, and then admitted six children into the body of Christ's Church. At Barened, in the afternoon, I had a very full church; and after pressing upon my hearers such feelings and such duties as the season seemed especially to call for, I administered the sacrament of baptism to four children of that place. I held service a third time at Port-de-Grave in the evening, and reached my lodgings