

shame and loss he had to bear, it could not be right of him to deliberately throw away God's highest gift. It must ever be the most flagrant breach of the sixth Commandment possible.

Away, then, with the cheap sentimentality that regarded suicide as the act of a poor unfortunate which demanded sympathy, or at least to be condoned. Such sentimentality was creating untold evil, for the very indifference to the crime which it betokened was adding to the number of suicides, and helping further to corrupt their already sufficiently corrupt society, by moulding a public feeling which in some sort tolerated or justified self-murder. Let them keep their feelings of kindness and sympathy for those who bravely struggled against the difficulties of life, and learn to execrate and make others execrate as the foulest of murderers those hardened wretches who ventured upon self-destruction. It would do much to check the increase of suicide if the would-be suicide knew his memory would be execrated by the society in which he lived. But suicide was more than murder; it was the meanest cowardice, and if they branded the suicide as the meanest coward, it might deter some foolish would-be heroes from so foul a deed. Looking at the matter from a higher point of view altogether, they were told in Revelation xxi. 8 that the fearful, and abominable and murderers shall have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone. What an act of consummate folly did self-murder become—for a murderer could not inherit the kingdom of Heaven. Or travel still higher. Look at the life of Jesus and listen to His message of pardon and of peace. Estimate life at the value He had placed upon it. One look at His sanctified life would destroy all desire for self-effacement.

### Christian Contribution.

An inspired apostle of Jesus Christ lays down the following rule for Christian collections: "Let every one lay by himself in store, as he may prosper." From this Scripture, with others that need not be repeated just here, the following rule for Christian contribution may be formulated: Let every one deposit in store, as he may prosper, that he may contribute in the cause of God and humanity, according to his ability in proportion to the necessity under consideration. The people of Israel, under their theocratic government, paid into the treasury of the Lord as much as one-tenth of their annual income, and at times when the necessity was increased, or there was some extraordinary demand laid upon them, they gave more than this amount. In the New Testament there is no specified amount, as one-tenth, etc., mentioned, yet certain Christians suppose that the whole law of benevolence in Christ has been fulfilled, and all the requirements of the gospel have been discharged by any one in this particular thing, when he has done as much and as well as the people of Israel after the flesh. But Christ does not so teach men, but in this, as in all other things he delivers this injunction to his people: "Your righteousness must exceed their righteousness." The divine rule stated above for Christian living may be learned from such Scriptures as these: "Give to him that asketh of thee." "Freely give," such as you have. "Give not grudgingly, sparingly: for a cheerful giver the Lord loveth." "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Give "as God hath prospered him," and "as every man hath need." "Let every one give according as he hath purposed in his heart," but let him take heed lest by any means this liberty of his become a stumbling-block. "For it is written in the law, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen?" Therefore, "do ye not know that they which minister in holy things, live of the temple? And they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?" "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel, should live of the gospel;" i. e., those who labor in the gospel must be supported from the contributions of the gospel. Then there is something due from every one—i. e., every one owes something to the support of the gospel—and if he fails to pay that sum, whatever it may be in amount, he owes somebody something, perhaps something that means bread and butter and clothing to somebody and his dependent ones, and he lives daily in violation of that plain Apostolic injunction which is laid upon every one, saying: "Owe none anything, but render to all their dues." That means, "Pay what thou owest."

From these Scriptures we gather: (1) That one whose faith is in Jesus Christ is in "duty bound" to contribute of his substance something for the support of the gospel, and that he should make these contributions constantly and at stated times; e.g. every Lord's day. This obligation is surely universal, and should be honored by every one—the rich and the poor, the employer and the employe, etc. There are no exceptions or exemptions; for these Scriptures are addressed alike to all people, the Jew and the Gentile, the bond and the free, the male and the female. Wherefore the Apostles say: "Let every man bear his own burden." (2) Every one is enjoined to contribute of his substance according to his ability—"as he has

prospered." "According to that a man hath, not according to that he hath not." "So that othermen be not envied, and he burdened." Therefore, he that hath an abundance, should contribute of his abundance much and liberally, and he that possesses little, should contribute freely of what he has, remembering how the Lord Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." The proportion according to which all contributions should be assessed and distributed, or assumed by all men according to their wealth, should be somewhat in a geometrical scale of increase or decrease, as wealth accumulates or diminishes. (3) Every one also should contribute according to the necessity under consideration; i. e., in proportion to what is needed and the number of the contributors. When much is required, much should be given, but if little is needed, less might be given, provided there are many contributors. In the light of the foregoing discussion we should look upon our mission work, both at home and abroad. In our home field there is great necessity; much is needed to carry on this work of saving the multitudes of our own land to the gospel. This is also very true of the foreign work—the work of saving the whole world for Christ through the gospel. Then let every one bethink himself and lay this matter to heart and bear his burden in this great work of the Lord. Yea, let him come up to the help of the Lord against his mighty enemies.

### THOUGHTS BY THE WAY.

**TRIAL.**—Behind every storm of trial, and every cloud of sorrow, is the heavenly blue of Christ's unchanging love.

**TRIAL AND TROUBLE.**—Has it never occurred to us, when surrounded by sorrows, that they may be sent to us only for our instruction—as we darken the cages of birds when we wish to teach them to sing?

**TRIAL: WORK.**—Pain is the deepest thing we have in our nature, and union through pain has always seemed more holy and more real than any other.

**TRIALS.**—If we be Christians, affliction must be our coat, and persecution our livery.

I know not how many more Sabbaths God may give me, and it would be a poor preparation for my first Sabbath in heaven to have slighted my last Sabbath on earth.

A comet draws more attention than the steady star; but it is better to be the star than the comet; following out the sphere and orbit of quiet usefulness in which God places us.

Keep the altar of private prayer burning. This is the very life of all piety. The sanctuary and family altars borrow their fires here, therefore let this burn well. Secret devotion is the very essence and barometer of vital and experimental religion.

### PAIN AND REST.

We are told that pain is nothing more than a nerve-irritation. It is experienced when any destructive process goes on in any part of the body, and may be felt in one part of the body while the source of it is in another. The headache may have its source in the muscles of the eye. Pain, strange as it may seem, is really a protective and beneficial sensation. In the case of a broken limb, extreme pain is caused by motion in that limb. Therefore, the sufferer, whether man or animal, tries to keep the limb at rest, which is the very condition requisite for its healing. Surgeons, indeed, have taken hints from nature in this regard, and in cases of tuberculosis affecting joints find that the best results are obtained by rendering the joint motionless by means of splints, though the affliction itself is often not very painful. Pain from indigestion is relieved by temporarily lightening the diet and giving the digestive organs less work to do. Even headache usually indicates a call for rest. Pain due to an overtaxing of the nerve centre, that is, the brain, is usually the most difficult to combat, since here the cause is often obscure. In this state neuralgia—nerve pain, affects first one part of the body, then another. Nature's restorer, sleep, is courted with difficulty, and life's ordinary duties become burdens almost too heavy to be borne. In this condition nature's call for rest is best heeded by a complete change of surroundings. If the call is disregarded, serious consequences are likely to ensue. A vacation offers one of the best chances of recuperation. In fact, a regular indulgence in such forms of recreation is the best means of preventing this very condition, and should be looked upon not as the indulgence of a weakness, but as the performance of a duty. In the natural course of events one adds to, rather than detracts from, the years which may be given to active labors by devoting regular periods to rest. Treat the body not as a mere machine, which wears out in any case after a certain number of years or months of work, but as a vital organism having the power of revivifying itself—capable of being hard worked, but demanding, too, times of recuperation.