

# ON THE BEST MEANS OF IMPROVING THE FINANCIAL CONDITION OF THE CHURCH WITH REGARD TO ITS MISSIONARY WORK OR OTHERWISE.

A Paper Read by the REV. P. J. FILLEUL at a Rural Deanery Meeting, held at Weymouth, Nova Scotia, on the 12th October, 1881.

THE present financial condition of the Institutions of the Church in this Diocese is such as to be a source of much anxiety and concern to many of its members. In the first place, the annual income of the Board of Home Missions is utterly inadequate to enable the Committee to respond to the numerous and urgent calls upon them for aid. The position of King's College also must awaken painful interest in all who cherish any affection or have any regard for the prosperity of this seat of learning. Then we have the resolution of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts to reduce its annual grant to Nova Scotia to the extent of \$3,000, being a withdrawal of aid in a much larger proportion than ever before. It will, therefore, be very apparent that our troubles have accumulated, and our difficulties multiplied. We should, however, prove ourselves unworthy of the great blessings we have so long enjoyed, if we failed, in the spirit of faith and prayer, to put forth most vigorous efforts, to enable the Church to pass safely through the emergency in which she is now placed.

Now, there can be no doubt, that were we to adopt the method, or means, for the maintenance of the "Church and the officers thereof" laid down in Holy Scripture, her resources would be largely increased. Experience constantly proves that the modes often employed are manifestly insufficient for that end; and it will be well for our people to be convinced of sad delinquencies in this matter. They must not be unwilling to be taught the claim which the Church of God has on their substance. Too often men have been wont to give from mere impulse, just as they feel disposed at the time, or may be convenient. And sometimes, when they do give, give more from regard to the party who applies, than from sympathy for the object which he pleads.

We all know that from the very beginning God made it imperative on men to devote a portion of their time to His service by hallowing the day of rest. It is clear that He did not leave that portion undefined; indeed, had men been left to their own discretion in this matter, the world might have had no Sabbaths at all. And if the proportion of man's time to be, in an especial manner, employed in God's service was defined, could it be supposed that the portion of substance which He required of everyone for the maintenance of religion should be undefined?

It will therefore be necessary to ascertain what has been said in the Old Testament on so important a matter. Leviticus xxvii. 30, "All the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the trees, is the Lord's; it is holy unto the Lord." Numbers xviii. 21: "And behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, and the service of the tabernacle of the congregation." And when they neglected the payment of tithes, the prophet indignantly rebuked the people for their impiety and covetousness, and this in the very last book and last chapter but one in the Old Testament. "Will a man rob God? yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings" (Malachi iii. 3). In the next three verses God promises the people that if they will return to their duty He would remove the judgments He had inflicted on them, and cause such a return of prosperity "that there should not be room enough to receive it." But it may be alleged by some that the Gospel has released us from the obligation of devoting a specific portion of our substance to the service of religion; but are not men wont to forget that the faith of the Old Testament and of the New are essentially one? Is not the Christian Church an expansion of the Jewish? Does not St. Paul declare that the "Gospel was preached unto them as well as unto us"? The precepts of the Old Testament are still binding upon Christians, except such as have been abrogated. The civil and the ceremonial laws of the Jews are not now binding upon us, still, the giving of a tenth being a part of the moral law, must be considered to be still in force. This proportion had already been laid down in the Old Testament. *ere* was therefore no necessity for its renewal,

and had any change in this matter been made, we should have been told so in express terms. We find St. Paul, in his Epistles, reasoning in reference to the calling of the Gentiles into the Church, the change in the Priesthood, the abrogation of sacrifices, and of the ceremonial law; but nowhere in the New Testament have we the least intimation given that Christians were now under less obligations to honour God with their substance than were the Jews. If "whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning," can we believe that this moral obligation should fail to influence those under the New Dispensation? In I. Cor. ix., we find St. Paul referring to a law which was as binding in its spirit upon the Christian Church as it ever was upon the Jewish; and he vindicates the right of the Christian Ministry to a maintenance by the people among whom they laboured. And whence does the Apostle draw and enforce his proof? From the case of the Jewish Priesthood—"Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so has the Lord ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel." And we may safely infer from what the Apostle says in the 8th verse—"Say I these things as a man" (merely according to human judgment), "or saith not the law the same also?"—that the Christian Ministry has as Divine a right to the same proportion of support as that of Levi had. Surely there could be no retrograde movement here. Christ had given a new commandment to His people—new in one sense, but not in another. The love of Christ should henceforth constrain them to love their brethren as He had loved them. And what do we see in the opening scene soon after the Day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the early Church—"And they that believed were together, and had all things common, and continued steadfastly in the Apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." In their new-born zeal, with affections enlarged and elevated, neither from force nor compulsion, they met the emergency of their position. The devotedness of these early Christians should not be lost upon us. When the necessities of the Master's Church are most urgent, we should consider that all we have belongs to Him, and give liberally to relieve the Spiritual wants of our fellow-Christians. And when persecutions raged against the early Christians in Judaea, the Apostle directed that collections should be made by the Churches of Corinth and Galatia for their relief: "Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him." Now, the Church of God, knowing that St. Paul spoke with the voice of inspiration, directs her members to act upon his injunction, and make their offerings each Lord's Day for the support of the ministry, the expenses of the Church, and the extension of Missions, whether at home or abroad. The day would be an occasion when the mind of the worshipper would be under the most powerful control. Oh! what thoughts would cluster around the heart of the Christian at such a time! He would be reminded of the astounding benefits which have come to him from Him who "died for our sins, and rose again for our justification," as evidence that our justification had not only been accomplished but accepted by God. And now he is told to give as "God has prospered him." What are the relative claims of the Law and the Gospel? Will not the believer then feel that he has much greater light, and vastly more privileges than the Jew possessed. It would be wrong to suppose that the Gospel has lowered its claims. Under the former Dispensation, the people of God had given Him their tenth, and there could be no doubt that not a few would now feel constrained to surpass the former in the expression of their gratitude.

In I Cor. xvi., 2, we notice that the Apostle says—"let every one of you." The direction includes all, even the poorest members of the Church, for there are ever those who, as some of the Corinthians did, contribute out of "their deep poverty." The pence of the pious poor are dear to Christ. The act of the poor widow, who cast all her living into the treasury of the Temple, drew forth from Him a eulogy that will go down to remotest time, testifying that even the slenderest offering is well-pleasing to Him. And Mary's box of ointment will live fragrant in the records of the Church, for Christ deems no offering too sumptuous, when singleness of heart prompts the bestowal of it upon Himself and His cause. Assuredly, these and other instances

sternly rebuke that narrow and niggardly spirit which seeks to intrench itself under the shallow plea that "Charity begins at home."

(To be continued.)

## Correspondence.

The columns of THE CHURCH GUARDIAN will be freely open to all who may wish to use them, no matter what the writer's views or opinions may be; but objectionable personal language, or doctrines contrary to the well understood teaching of the Church, will not be admitted.

### DORCHESTER PARISH.

(To the Editors of the Church Guardian.)

SIRS,—It is a pity that writers who undertake to send items to the public press would not take the trouble to be accurate. Referring to a short communication from Dorchester in your issue of 17th inst., I beg to state that I did not resign the charge of the Parish "on account of ill health." My health, I am thankful to be able to say, is good—generally is so—as the almost uninterrupted services during my incumbency of more than three years bear witness. The public, however, are not particularly interested about my health; but I am obliged to allude to the subject, because the statement, coming apparently from my neighbourhood, and appearing in the GUARDIAN, might be supposed to have originated with me, and I might seem to be putting forth a false pretense. I resigned for several reasons, some of them bearing, as I thought, directly upon the welfare of the Parish: others of a more personal or private nature. Passing these by, I may mention, as a discouragement at least, that the old pew system is still in vogue in Dorchester, and that it is most unsatisfactory to see before one's eyes, Sunday after Sunday, a poor "account of empty boxes," while outside there may be many persons, not of the wealthy class, who would be willing to come to church if they could be admitted without having to be told that they must go up stairs into the small gallery over the door—conspicuously the place for the colored people and the poor. Just now the subject comes home to my own family directly and rather inconveniently, for when they have to vacate the Rector's pew, they, too, will be excluded from the church, unless they should be willing to accept continually some friend's hospitality (which indeed has been kindly offered) or ascend into the gallery. With my convictions of right and wrong, I cannot either buy or rent any portion of what is, by consecration, and what ought to be in reality God's house. I do trust that, in a few years at the farthest, under the new Rector, this evil may be removed, and that Mr. Campbell may be eminently successful in the work of his holy office.

I remain faithfully yours,

RICHD. SIMONDS.

P. S.—Of course I could not fail to notice the unkind tenor of the communication above referred to. It certainly is not pleasant to find oneself advertized, far and wide, as a clergyman who is the reverse of "live and zealous."

### INSPIRATION.

(To the Editors of the Church Guardian.)

SIRS,—At the late Clerical Conference of the Diocese of Montreal several interesting and valuable papers were read, and among them three on the subject of "Revision and Inspiration." As the time allotted to the speakers was very limited, and some among them, including the writer, were suddenly cut off in the midst of their remarks, I desire, therefore, to express, through the columns of the CHURCH GUARDIAN, my dissent from the *dogma of verbal inspiration*, as advocated by Canon Baldwin, and known among theologians as the *mechanical theory*. This view of inspiration was first adopted in the Christian Church by Justin Martyr, who considered that the mind of the prophets, under the influence of the Spirit, resembled a *plectrum*, a mere organ, the instrument giving out particular sounds according to the chord that was struck. That the sacred writers were nothing more than *amanuenses*, merely putting on record what was dictated by the Spirit, and having no more control over their pen than a piece of mechanism over the wheels which belong to it, is scarcely credible. Such a theory is opposed to the constitution of the human mind. As God, in enlisting the services of men to communicate a supernatural knowledge of His will, would, undoubtedly, proceed in accordance with the laws of His mental constitution, so His agency in the work of inspiration must be considered as put forth in a manner fitted alike to distinguish the Divine from the human element.

We see in the structure and composition of the Scriptures such evident and unequivocal marks and signs of human instrumentality, of human modes of thought, feeling and writing—such human temperament and disposition distinguish the style of the sacred writers that it is impossible to ascribe these to any other cause than the free and independent, yet guided and guarded, action of the inspired mind. Thus in the sacred writings we trace a Divine and a human element, but this latter Canon Baldwin would have us entirely eliminate, because in his view its retention lowers the Scriptures in the estimation of Christians. Apply this mode of reasoning to the *hypothetical union*, and how unsound it is!

Every Christian believes that there was a union of two natures in the person of Christ, and those natures, though perfectly distinct, were yet so intimately connected that the sacred writers sometimes speak of Him under the name of God as performing actions which could be done only by man. As in the incarnate Word there are two natures, so in the written Word there are two elements—the human and Divine. How the Spirit of God acted upon the minds of the sacred penmen, and yet at the same time left them to act in accordance with their personal peculiarities and idiosyncracies, is inexplicable, yet nevertheless true, and we have abundant evidence of the same in the Scriptures. The *Theopneustia* which the Apostle Paul claims for all Scripture, or, as we read in the revised edition, every Divinely-inspired Scripture, indicates, in my humble judgment, a rational influence on the mind rather than a physical and mechanical control of the lips. As it is usual and natural for men to think in words, so the action of the Spirit of God in the minds of the prophets was in accordance with the principles of their mental constitution prompting and stimulating them to the adoption of such words as would exactly express the Divine mind which they were commissioned to make known. They were not passive recipients of the Divine *afflatus*, as Canon Baldwin intimated in his paper, but active recipients co-operating with all their energies in the discharge of their Divine mission.

That there is a human element pervading the Apostolic Epistles is evident from such passages in which the writers express their ignorance and doubtfulness of what they are speaking, as when St. Paul says—"I know not whether I baptized any other," or as when St. Peter says—"I will come to you when I pass through Macedonia," and confesses afterwards to the Corinthians that he did not perform that journey. Surely, we cannot suppose that the Holy Ghost would incite him to perform that which he knew he could not perform. Once more, the theory of verbal inspiration as advocated so strenuously by the Rev. Canon is incongruous with such passages as these—"I hope to see you on my journey," and many similar expressions which might be quoted. Hope implies uncertainty *spes est incerte rei nomen*. The Holy Ghost cannot be uncertain of anything, nor would He inspire men to speak after such an uncertain manner. These passages clearly show, that in the ordinary intercourse of life the Apostles possessed in greater knowledge than their natural sagacity or memory enabled them to acquire. But there is a broad distinction in the conduct of the Prophets and Apostles as men in their familiar intercourse with each other, and their procedure as the commissioned servants of God, and witnesses for Christ.

In the former case, they were fallible, in the latter, infallible, and this infallibility renders their writings an unerring rule in all matters of faith and duty. In reply to all this, Canon Baldwin may say, as he did at the Conference, "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God." If he means by *all* that every sentence, word and letter is impregnated by inspiration, I must still dissent from him. The Greek word *pneuma* is used frequently by the sacred writers in a *restrictive sense*, and may be considered here as limited to every Divinely inspired writing, and this is the sense put upon it by Dr. Adam Clarke and the Anglo-American Revisers. The Rev. Canon, in his criticism on this text, observed, among other things, that we need not be informed that every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable, and that we can scarcely suppose that the Apostle would make so trivial a statement. With regard to this text, I would observe that the right rendering of this passage depends upon the question whether *theopneustos* is to be taken as the *subject* in conjunction with *pasa graphé*, or the *predicate* after *est*. Dr. Pyle Smith, Alfred and Ellicott support the former, and make the *Kxi* emphatic. The Syriac Version, which is older than any of the existing MSS., favour the same, and so do the Arabic, the Vulgate, and the English Bible of 1539.

As *graphé* here is without the article and standing absolute, it is evident that the Scripture referred to is not limited to the Jewish Scripture, but comprehends those writings of the New Testament which were then in circulation. The meaning of the text, when taken in connection with the previous context, I take to be this: Not only, my son Timothy, are the Sacred Scriptures of the Old Testament which you learned whilst a child able to make you wise unto salvation, but every Scripture Divinely inspired under the New Testament dispensation is also profitable for the same purpose. Might it not have been the intention of the Apostle to lead Timothy to discriminate between inspired Gospels and Epistles and the uninspired compositions of those pious men who undertook to write concerning our Lord, and whose writings, Dr. Bloomfield thinks, formed the foundation of those apocryphal Gospels and Epistles which were in circulation among the primitive Christians, and whose existence, we may add, kept the whole question of what constituted the Canon of Scripture open for some time? In concluding my remarks on Inspiration, I would observe that I believe God never works without a purpose, and what the Apostles could do, and do well, without supernatural power, that they were permitted to do, but when supernatural assistance was necessary it was graciously bestowed by Him from Whom cometh every good and perfect gift.

PRESBUTEROS.

Chambly, P. Q.,  
Nov. 15th, 1881.