

## God's Treasury Department.

WHAT proportion of our increase should we give to God? This is a question that is settled for us in our opinion in the Bible. The *smallest proportion* is one-tenth. It was this that Abraham gave to Melchizedek, Priest of the Most High God. And it is from him that Jesus Christ derives his priesthood. He is a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek. We don't know who that mysterious person was, but he was some one for whom Abraham evidently had a very high regard. We do know, however, who Jesus Christ is. He is our Great High Priest, who to-day is making intercession for us in Heaven. And he is a great deal to us. All our spiritual strength has come from him. To him we owe everything. Never till the end of time shall we know how much we owe to him. What shall we render back to him? In the light of his undying love for us, how little, how insignificant does even a tenth of all our increase seem! To help missions, to build churches, to give children religious instruction, to aid Sunday Schools, to relieve the distressed and suffering poor, surely demands at least a tenth of all our increase.

No one would dispute the moral obligation that all Christians are under to give *at least* a tenth of their increase, were it not that there are enemies which raise their hard heads against it. Three of these we may now mention.

The first is Habit. Men who are wealthy to-day give no more than when they were poor. God's law says, "If riches increase set not your heart on them." Habit says, "If riches increase use them all for selfish ends." But this certainly is not the law of God. It is by the first fruits of all our increase that we are to honor Him, and nothing regulates this better than a systematic plan of always giving a certain set proportion of what comes in to us, because we give then in proportion to what we get. As we prosper, God's cause prospers through us. God gets the benefit of our increase.

The second enemy is Extravagance. This robs God: it is a deadly enemy. If Christians would live in true Christian simplicity they would have much more for God's treasury than they have; but pride makes them want great things and grand things, and they waste on their own perishing bodies what would accomplish untold good. To be penurious is mean; to be economical is right and fair, and if we are economical because we wish to have something to give to God, it is Christ-like and noble.

Another enemy which lifts its sledge-hammer arm against systematic giving is Covetousness. If there is a man who might be exempt from giving a tenth of all his increase it is the poor day laborer who gets a small income and works hard for it. To take from a laborer ten cents for every dollar that he gets in return for a hard day's work seems to leave him but little to live upon. His chance of earning anything depends upon the weather and

his own strength. On a wet day or when he is sick he gets nothing. But for those with large incomes how much they can give, and how much will still be left behind! A man gets \$300 a month; he reserves \$30 to give away, and he has \$270 for his wants; he gets \$500; he puts away \$50 as his tenth, and he has \$450 left; and yet he will not even do this; he must use it all to make his income bigger. This is covetousness; and the Master's words on that should not miss their aim upon us. "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."

Systematic giving has these enemies and many more. Let us kill them. A man does not know the true pleasure of giving till he gives a set portion of everything he gets. Thank God men are beginning to realize this as their privilege. It is a privilege which those who try it would on no account resign.

## Books and Periodicals Dept.

Catechism of Church History; The Young Churchman's Second Catechism; Church Teaching for Little Ones. Milwaukee, The Young Churchman Co.

These three catechisms for senior, middle and junior classes are admirably adapted for Sunday School teaching. The first supplies a need which many clergymen and Sunday School superintendents have felt, that of some simple manual to put into the hands of older scholars by which they may learn something of early Christian history. The other two for junior children are arranged on the plan of the Christian year, giving the history of our Lord and other events of the New Testament connected with the different seasons. They are all arranged on an excellent plan for the instruction of the young.

The *Missionary Review of the World* for December closes a volume of 974 royal octavo pages of extraordinary interest and value. One will be surprised, we are sure, when he scans the Table of Contents, for the volume is a missionary library in itself and a grand cyclopedia of missions. The literature and the facts of missionary enterprise are well brought together and classified. Published by Funk & Wagnalls, 18 and 20 Astor Place, New York. \$2 per year; 25 cents for single numbers. In clubs of ten \$1.50.

*Literature.* An illustrated weekly magazine giving useful information regarding authors and their works. It is valuable alone for its selections of brief readings that it gives from different works of value. John B. Alden, Publisher, 393 Pearl street, New York.

*Medical Work in Foreign Missions*, a useful little pamphlet on this important subject, published by the "Missionary Club," 82 Seneca street, Buffalo, N. Y.