

Second—THE FRUIT OR REWARD OF CHRISTIAN LIBERALITY.

1st. *The Divine approval and promise.* The eye of God marks intently our gifts for Him. He it is who sends the applicant to you. He notices with what feeling you receive the application, and He observes the motives and rules by which you contribute. He who had His eye on the poor widow, casting in her mite into the treasury of the temple, has His eye on your heart, your property, your gifts to-day. And it is no wonder if that eye flashes with displeasure when some of His professed followers cast in their donations, seeing that there is such a disproportion between the profession and the gift. And in giving there has been a wilful forgetfulness of the fact that they are accountable for all they possess and how they possessed it, for all they spend and how they spend it, for all they give and how they give it, for all they keep and why they keep it. And the Lord wishes all His children to be like Himself, to give to him that needeth. He hates covetousness; He despises the niggardly, He abhors the selfish; therefore, he cannot approve of the illiberal man. But it is stated: "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver," "the liberal soul shall be made fat," "the liberal soul deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand," "give and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over," "whosoever shall give a cup of cold water to a disciple, in the name of a disciple, shall not lose his reward." It is because we sow sparingly that we reap sparingly; it is because we give so little that we have so little enjoyment over what we keep back. The Lord not only blesses what we give, when given aright, but He blesses what we keep also, and everything is to us just what God makes it. If, therefore, we withhold what we ought to give, we shall find that he that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver, nor he that loveth gold with increase. The love of money will pierce its possessor with many sorrows. If you lay by what you ought to lay out, God's curse must be upon it. And it may be as fuel for your children's lusts, a temptation to allure them into paths of sin and ruin. It is better to give to God's needy ones, and live under the smile of God, than to withhold with the barn full but the soul empty. With wealth increasing, and the soul starving, until at last it shall be said: "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee."