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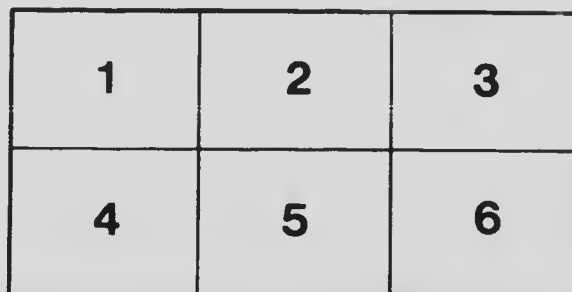
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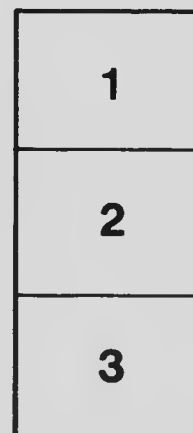
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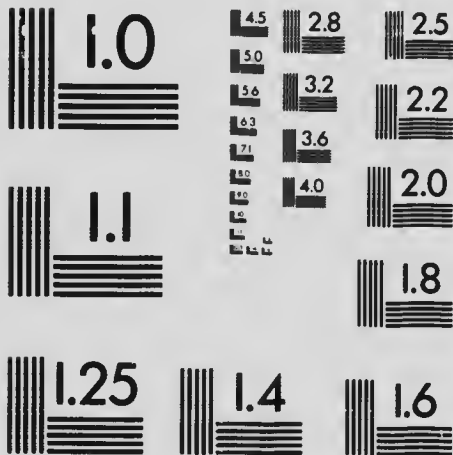
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THE GREAT "OUGHT"

BY

The Rev. Richard Duke

TORONTO



Toronto :
WILLIAM BRIGGS
1913

*To be had also of the Author, 109 Summerhill Avenue, Toronto.
Price, postpaid, single copy, 10c.; 12 copies, \$1.00.*

*Mr. Saml. Inglin,
with the writer's best wishes.*

1911.

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WE CONTEND:

That not to give away any part of our income is unlawful;

That to leave what we shall give to be determined by impulse or chance, without any principle to guide us, is unlawful;

That to fix a principle for our guidance by our own disposition, or by prevalent usages, without seeking light in the Word of God, is unlawful;

That when we search the Scriptures for a principle, the very lowest proportion of our income, for which we can find any show of justification, is a tenth of the whole;

That, therefore, it is our duty to give away statedly, for the service and honour of our God, at the very least, one-tenth, of all which He commits to our stewardship.

THE REV. WM. ARTHUR, A.M.

THE GREAT "OUGHT"

ON one occasion our Lord was surrounded by a gathering of the common people, among whom were the disciples, and also scribes and Pharisees. Upon these last He looked with anger, because of their hypocrisy. His zeal for the Kingdom of God stirred Him to the following rebuke: "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye tithe mint and anise and cummin, and have left undone the weightier matters of the law, judgment, and mercy, and faith: but these ye OUGHT to have done, and not to have left the other undone. Ye blind guides, which strain out the gnat, and swallow the camel." Here he exposes their sin; but the woe was not because they tithed the small herbs of the garden, but because they had neglected judgment, and mercy, and faith. An exact equivalent in meaning for, "and not to have left the other undone," is, "ye OUGHT to have done the other." Now, "the other" is the tithing of mint and anise and cummin. So then we find our Lord here saying, in effect, "ye OUGHT to tithe mint and anise and cummin." He

does not say that the tithing of the herbs was not *per se* a weighty matter, but simply that the claims of judgment and mercy and faith were weightier—weightier as a camel weighed against a gnat. Here it was the principle of tithing which he approved; for if He commended its application to minute things He, thereby, magnified the principle itself. And what is that principle? We apprehend it to be one-tenth of net income, required as a minimum offering to God, with liberty in respect of thank-offering. We are to understand, then, that our Lord says to these scribes and Pharisees expressly, and to the whole assembled multitude indirectly, “Ye OUGHT to tithe.” This OUGHT is the OUGHT of the Son of God. Let us reverently seek to know the meaning of the great word, in the connection in which it is spoken. It is a summons, at once, to the bar of conscience in their souls; it brings them under the all-penetrating eye of the Judge-of-all, who requires this duty at their hands. Duty then is OUGHT in execution. It was their duty, to whom Christ spoke, to keep the law of tithe—something they were required of God to do, under penalty of his displeasure. OUGHT is imperative, and duty is fidelity to the Voice within. When truth and right are presented to the mind the Voice within responds, “I OUGHT”—“deep calleth unto deep.” These scribes and

Pharisees heard the great OUGHT of the Prophet, as did all the people assembled, and it spoke its own echo in their souls. To it they must have assented. Any Rabbi might have said to this gathering whom Jesus addressed, in confident assurance of an affirmative response in their minds and hearts, "These OUGHT ye to have done, and not have left the other undone," for no law was better honored at the time in the observance than the law of tithe. The great thing here gained for the cause of right-giving is that Jesus, by these words, puts his signature in full, publicly and impressively, to this immemorial law, and for our eyes to see.

He commends the people for keeping it, and, by implication, commands them to continue to keep it. The OUGHT of the Christ was based upon the following facts and considerations:—

1. *The law of tithe was a law from Heaven.* Its origin was not human. Its birth-place was the mind of God. In the nature of things such a law must be a matter of revelation. He, who, in the beginning, called for a seventh of time, must say how much of substance he requires at man's hands, if any. Time and substance are the only things entrusted to us as stewards, outside our own personal talents. It has pleased the Almighty to say what proportion of the

former he requires to be separated, as holy unto his service, would he not also reveal His will in regard to the proportion which he requires of the latter?

2. *The law of tithe was from the beginning.* Every Jew knew that traditional laws were recognized and enforced before the codification of laws by the hand of Moses. Great primal laws were communicated orally to men, which should be for all people, in all times and places. These were based upon the constitution of human nature and man's relation to God; the law of the Sabbath, for instance. It can hardly be doubted that the law of tithe was regarded by the Jewish people as coeval with the Sabbath law. The very phraseology in which the law is recorded is sufficient evidence that a Sabbath day was recognized before the finger of God inscribed the commandment on the Tables of Stone: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." They were to keep still well in mind and practise what all along had been known to them as the mind of God respecting the seventh of time. And similarly, we believe, there was from the beginning a law of tithe-offering, which was for man as man, and designed to run the whole course of time. The practising of the tithe-principle by ancient heathen nations, in their worship, points back to an oral

communication from God in the remotest age, as the common source of this practice. Some of the early fathers of the Church understood the moral difference between Cain and Abel's offering to be that Cain withheld a part of the prescribed tithe. In harmony with this we read in the Septuagint, "If thou hast offered aright, but hast not divided aright, hast thou not sinned?" And again St. Paul calls Abel's sacrifice a larger sacrifice, which seems to corroborate the view that the offence in Cain's offering was that it violated the tithe principle in that it lacked in quantity. Abel's offering is also spoken of as a righteous act, which seems to imply that there was a recognized law of proportion, or standard, with which the act complied.

Long before the book of Leviticus was written Abraham and Jacob gave their tenth. Their offerings were pleasing to God, and they were blessed in return. The language in Leviticus clearly indicates that the law of tithe was primeval; that as found in the book of the law it was simply the original, traditional law published under fresh sanctions. The definite article and the present tense of the verb in the sentence, "*The* tithe . . . *is* the Lord's" prove this. Had the law been then given for the first time, the language would have been, "*A* tithe . . . *shall be* the Lord's."

3. *The law of tithe was strongly emphasized throughout the Scriptures, which the Jewish people took as their rule of faith and practice.*

As the word OUGHT fell on the ears of the people they would naturally recall the allegiance of patriarchs and prophets to this law, and the conspicuous place given it, under Divine direction, by the hand of their great leader, Moses, when he set in order the code for the government of the chosen people.

It would appear perfectly clear to them that they OUGHT to follow the example and teaching of those who were providentially set over them as spiritual guides. No law was more deeply embedded in their history than this one, and respect for their history OUGHT influence them in the direction of the observance of it.

4. *The people to whom our Lord said, in effect, "Ye OUGHT to tithe," knew from their own national history, that prosperity attended the keeping of this law, and vice versa.*

The great OUGHT stood also upon the self-interest of those to whom it was spoken; they would be advantaged in their substance and in their souls by tithing their income. Abraham and Jacob, who in the written history of God's ancient people set

the grand example of tithing, were, in the double sense, rewarded for their fidelity to this law—they prospered in substance and they prospered in spirit. “Blessed be Abram of God, Most High, possessor of heaven and earth,” was the benediction of the high priest, in the name of God, because the patriarch had offered the tenth of the spoils, which benediction included spiritual blessing, inasmuch as it conveyed the assurance that God was well pleased with the offering. Abraham’s servant said to Laban: “I am Abraham’s servant. And the Lord hath blessed my master greatly, and he is become great; and he hath given him flocks, and herds, and silver and gold, and men-servants and maid-servants, and camels and asses.” Here was temporal blessing in abundance. Jacob vowed, “I will surely give the tenth unto thee,” and the Lord heard him, and subsequently said to him: “I am the God of Bethel where thou anointest a pillar, where thou vowedst a vow unto me.” From this reference it is evident that the vow of the tenth was pleasing to God. And Jacob, too, was blessed in substance and in spirit, for it is said, “The man increased exceedingly, and had large flocks and maid-servants and men-servants, and camels and asses.” “With my staff,” he says, “I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two companies.” And he was blessed in spirit; for it is

written: "Jacob was left alone, and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day" . . . and Jacob said: "I will not let thee go except thou bless me." "And he blessed him there . . . And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel. for, said he, I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."

When the nation was faithful to its duty of tithing it was blessed. "Then Hezekiah questioned with the priests and Levites concerning the heaps. And Azariah, the chief-priest of the house of Zadok, answered him and said: "Since the people began to bring the oblations into the house of the Lord we have eaten and had enough, and have left plenty, for the Lord hath blessed His people, and that which is left is this great store." Here the great store which was left was the blessing of God in return for the bringing in of the oblations to the house of the Lord.

"Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase, so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." But less than the prescribed minimum so far from honoring God would be the robbing of God.

When the tithe law was neglected the nation suffered. In Malachi's day the ill-condition of the

people was very great. "I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of hosts." "Ye are cursed with a curse; for ye rob me, even this whole nation." "Will a man rob God? yet ye rob me. But ye say, wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings." Then they are graciously invited to "bring the whole tithe into the storehouse that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

5. The reasons on which the tithe law was based, from the first, continued in undiminished force.

These reasons were:—

(1) That the worship of the true God might be preserved among men.

(2) That God's sovereignty over property, and consequently, that man's stewardship of it, might be suitably acknowledged.

(3) That gratitude for Divine mercies might find a ready and ample means of expression.

(4) That an efficient restraint might be placed upon the innate selfishness of the human heart.

(5) That means might be provided systematically, and in due proportion to everyone's ability, for the

maintenance of true religion, and for works of beneficence.

The OUGHT which, in effect, was pronounced by the Divine Teacher in commendation of the practice of tithing was based upon the foregoing facts and considerations.

Let us briefly re-state them:—

The law of tithe was a law from Heaven;

The law of tithe was from the beginning;

The law of tithe was strongly emphasized throughout the Scriptures;

Prosperity attended the keeping of this law, and *vice versa*;

The reasons on which the tithe law was based from the first, continued in unabated force.

On this broad basis of belief the OUGHT of Jesus rested; and to it his OUGHT appealed; and from it his OUGHT, secured in every listener's conscience, whom he addressed, an affirmative response.

Now if it can be shown that this OUGHT of Jesus grips his professed followers of to-day as tenaciously as it gripped those to whom he at first addressed the great imperative, it is to be hoped that the reader of these pages will not only yield his assent to the evidence offered, but will prove the sincerity and depth of his conviction by applying the tithe prin-

ciple to his givings to the cause of God, if already he has not taken up this attitude as a Christian steward. And first, let me invite attention to the fact that the five reasons stated as being the foundation on which the tithe-law stands are, to say the least, as applicable to the times in which we live as they were in Old Testament times. Let us briefly recall them, one by one.

That the worship of the true God might be maintained in the earth.

The formal offering of substance to the God of the universe, at regular intervals of time, would in any place and age, be an impressive act of public worship, a proclamation of faith before the world, in the One-God-Over-All, and a summons to all spectators to join in this God-honoring, soul-exalting, and most reasonable offertory service.

This reason still holds good.

That God's sovereignty over substance, and man's consequent stewardship of it, might be acknowledged.

The natural heart, now as ever, is inclined to say, 'what I have is my own,' 'my power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth,' and thus draws a circle around substance, from which God is shut out. The truth, "He is Lord of all," is suppressed; and men use their substance to gratify their

appetites and fancies, without the restraining influence of the service of stewardship. Tithing is an acknowledgment, at once, that God is the owner of all, and that man is but a steward of the substance that he holds.

This reason still holds good.

That gratitude for Divine mercies might find a ready and ample means of expression.

The grateful spirit is a happy spirit. Its manifestation is beautiful to the eye of the beholder, for it brightens the countenance, and its words of thanksgiving are pleasant to the ear. Gratitude is well-pleasing in God's sight, and has ever a refining influence on the heart where it dwells. Gratitude finds its widest channel of expression in the offering of substance on the altar of God's service—wider than song, if we can conceive of it apart from song—wider than prayer, if we think of our prayers only apart from our offerings. The principle of tithe implies the offering of substance to God in an act of worship, at regular intervals of time, and thereby, not only makes the best provision for the efficient utterance of gratitude, but becomes the most potent cultivator of the grateful spirit.

This reason still holds good.

That an effective restraint might be placed on the innate selfishness of the human heart.

Selfishness is the deepest sin of the spirit of man, and the most widely spread sin of all the sins that disfigure the face of society. It takes its worst and commonest form in the love of money. The Divine author of the tithe law knew that this evil required a vigorous check, and one to be applied with regularity and frequency. And such a check is found in the periodical assessment of income upon the tithe basis.

Selfishness has been rampant in all ages and places. With the lapse of time there has come no lessening of its virulence, save where the transforming influences of the religion of Jesus Christ have been felt, and even there—in the midst of the Church—it is the sin which offers the most stubborn resistance to the appeals of the Gospel. The present has been called a money-loving age. We can conceive of no better curb to the money-loving spirit than the faithful application of the tithe principle to income. Financing on this principle, we associate with our money-making the elevating thought that we are making money for God's cause, and just in proportion to the degree of prosperity he is pleased to send.

This reason still holds good.

That means might be provided systematically and in due proportion to everyone's ability, for the maintenance of true religion, and for works of beneficence.

It is not reasonable to suppose that our Heavenly Father would originate a scheme for the recovery of lost man, and not at the same time make provision for the execution of that scheme. To this great end the offering of substance on man's part was indispensable. Now, the adoption of the tithe principle, as found in the Scriptures, will furnish all the monetary aid requisite to the carrying out of the great saving plan to the farthest purposes of the Divine Mind. As we pass into the New Dispensation we find the financial need of the Church greatly increased. The Church's operations hitherto were limited to home, but thenceforward she was under commission to go and take the whole world for Christ. This reason still holds good, with greatly added weight.

All the foregoing reasons, constituting the grounds of the tithe principle, continue until now in undiminished strength, and there being no repealing of the law, we therefore conclude that the tithe principle is that on which the followers of Jesus, at the present day, are required, by Divine authority, to base their givings to the cause of God.

True, there is no formal re-publication of the tithe law in the New Testament. But why look for a formal re-publication of it? The law was being honored in the general and strict observance. A formal re-publication would have been meaningless. We recognize the perpetual obligation to keep holy one day in seven, although there is no formal re-publication of the Sabbath law; as, also, we teach the duty of Christian parents bringing their infant children to God in baptism, although we have no direct command to do so in the New Testament. But may we not regard the words of our Lord as fully equivalent to a formal re-publication of the law of tithe? Here is the august Son of God himself giving his endorsement to that law—proclaiming it, if not upon the housetop, yet upon the highway, and in the hearing of a great number of people in the various walks of life, among whom were his own disciples, who would be sure to give this familiar law a fresh impetus by their teaching and example, wherever they might itinerate, because that with their own ears they had heard the great Master say, in effect, “Ye OUGHT to tithe.”

Here are a number of Jewish people who are scrupulously careful in the observance of a requirement of their religion. Our Lord desired that they should believe in him as their long-promised Messiah,

should follow Him as their infallible teacher and guide; and in thus believing in Him and following Him, that they should continue the practice of tithing. But believing in Him and following Him they would thereby be Christians, though not as yet in name, for a Christian is one who, in any place or age, believes in and follows Christ. Here, then, are persons who are called to be followers of Christ, that is to say, called to be Christians, and who are at the same time commanded to continue the practice of tithing; therefore, we conclude, that to tithe is a duty of Christians. And it is probable that there were some who listened to this OUGHT of Christ who did there and then accept him as their Saviour, and thenceforth followed him—followed His teaching—and so became Christians indeed, and as such, continued the practice of tithing their income unto God. We, twentieth century believers, were, in a certain sense, in that very gathering of Jewish people. What Christ said to them He intended for our ears, too. How are we to learn of Him in the Gospels except we, in thought, mingle with the people who go after Him through the villages and cities of His native land, and receive His words as spoken to us? It has ever been our happy and profitable custom to join the wondering crowds, and identify ourselves with them as hearers of the itinerant Prophet, taking

His words to ourselves, quite as much as we supposed them spoken to those who actually received them fresh from the breath of His mouth. He was the Light of the world. When he spoke to Jews He spoke to Gentiles. So here, when He says, in effect, "Ye OUGHT to tithe" to those around Him, He speaks to us as well.

Notice, that our Lord here binds four things together by the band of His OUGHT, namely, judgment, mercy, faith and tithing. The OUGHT refers to them all—the tithing, no less than the judgment, or the mercy, or the faith. Are we then to listen obediently to His words which make three of these binding upon our observance, and close our ears as the fourth drops from His lips? Are we to say of judgment, mercy and faith, let them live? and of tithing, let it sleep in the grave of things that are forever out of date? Who put the sword into our hand thus to rend the garment of truth which hangs upon His shoulders who is The Truth? "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." Does Jesus Christ commend to us judgment, mercy and faith, so does He, in the same breath, commend to us tithing; the former exhibiting to us the spiritual side of Christian service; the last named, the material side; but in the unity of the service the quaternion are one.

The New Testament was the development and fulfilment of the Old. The figurative passed away, but the great moral duties continued. Honoring the Lord with our substance is a duty not limited to time, or place or dispensation. "Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets. I came not to destroy, but to fulfil." This is the testimony of Jesus.

Undoubtedly the Lord Himself paid tithe according to His ability. He was "born under the law"; he was brought up in a Jewish home. There He was accustomed to see all due respect paid to everything pertaining to the religion of a Jewish family. In infancy his parents brought him into the Temple, "that they might do concerning him after the custom of the law"; at twelve years of age they took Him to the Passover Feast at Jerusalem. He was well versed in the Law. The common people heard him gladly, for many reasons; one was, that he spake with the fulness of knowledge and authority. They said, "We know that thou sayest and teachest rightly." By precept and example He upheld the law. He asserted the continued authority of Moses' seat, saying to the leper, whom He had healed, "Go thy way, show thyself to the priest and offer the gift that Moses commanded for a testimony unto them"; and to the multitude and the disciples, "The scribes and

Pharisees sit on Moses' seat; all things, therefore, whatsoever they bid you, these do and observe." He insisted on being Himself baptized, saying, "Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." To a certain lawyer, who put a question to Him, he replied, "What is written in the law? how readest thou?" He taught compliance with the demands of the civil rule: "And when they were come to Capernaum, they that had received the half-shekel came to Peter, and said: "Doth not your Master pay the half-shekel?" He saith, "Yea." And when he came into the house, Jesus spake first to him, saying, "go thou to the sea, and cast a hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a shekel; that take, and give unto them for me and thee." Would Jesus not practise what He taught? His watchful enemies never accused Him of disregard of the tithe law. They would have been quick to do so had He afforded them the opportunity. He challenged them to lay to his charge the breach of any commandment: "Which of you convicteth me of sin?" We are forced to the conclusion, and do not hesitate to affirm, that he who acts upon the principle of one-tenth of net income, as the legal minimum of offering to God, is in this particular, a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. Honoring God with the due proportion of our substance is one of the duties of the

moral law which abides forever. It holds its place, from age to age, as based upon things that do not change.

The priesthood of Christ furnishes additional evidence that His followers are required to tithe. Jesus, our great High-Priest, continues a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek. He is our Melchizedek now. Melchizedek of old was pre-eminently the type of Christ. The type must appear in the antitype. Now an inseparable and outstanding characteristic of the type in this case was that this priest-king received tithes in God's name. How does this characteristic appear in the Melchizedek of the New Testament, if by the law of our religion our Jesus, gone up on high, receives not tithes?

My subject, however, is not tithe in the New Testament, therefore I must leave unnoticed several New Testament passages that might be employed in the demonstration that Christians are under Scriptural requirement to tithe their income.

Believers contemporaneous with our Lord tithed.

We have seen that this duty was well observed in our Lord's time. It would never occur to any, who became His disciples, that they should cease to practise tithing simply because they recognized Him as their long-promised Deliverer. They could never see

in this a shadow of a reason for ceasing to observe the immemorial law. They would, the rather, see in this a fresh incentive to obey the law. As "believers" they followed their Master from place to place, still tithing unto God. And when at last he spread His hands over their worshipping heads, as he went up to His throne from the mount, and blessed them, they were tithers still. And as they sat together in the Upper Room, waiting for the power to fulfil the commission to bear the Gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, which came upon them, but confirmed their loyalty to the great principle of the dedication of their substance to the service of their ascended Lord. They would come to know that in the transition period from visible Judaism to visible Christianity the law of tithe would have to play a more conspicuous part—or, at least, a more potential part—than before; for the Christian propaganda would demand an offering, not limited to the legal tithe, though based thereon, but a free-will thankoffering, going beyond the tithe, and worthy of the greater privileges under the Gospel. True, the first heralds of the Cross were sent out without any reliance, apparently, on the arm of flesh. But then, there was in the Gospel, as believingly received, the potency and promise of all the financial aid the Church exchequer might require

for the spreading of the Kingdom of Jesus in the earth. The thankful love of God, born of the Gospel, and guided by the tithe-principle, would amply furnish the sinews of war for the overthrow of the Kingdom of Satan, and the building up of the Kingdom of God among men.

The Early Fathers and writers of the Christian Church upheld the law of tithe.

No break occurs in Church history in the recognition of a divine claim upon the tenth of income. Irenæus, Cyprian, Eusebius, Augustine, Ambrose, Jerome, Chrysostom, Clement, and others, all spoke, or wrote, of the tithe-offering as an abiding ordinance in the Church of God. Not one writer can be quoted who regarded it as obsolete. As the followers of Jesus greatly increased in numbers, and alas! greatly cooled in their devotion, the paying of the tenth naturally became less hearty and less regular. They were bound only by conscience, and not by civil law, to pay. The only punishment for negligence in the performance of the duty would be the reproof of conscience, or the censure of the Church, or both. The iron-hand could not be laid upon them for a purely religious or ecclesiastical offence. In process of time, however, emperors themselves bowed the knee to Jesus and brought their

tribute to the King-of-Kings; and, possibly, in the spirit of fealty to the Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, made laws to enforce the payment of the tithe to the Church. However well-intentioned, this was a stupendous blunder, to put it in the mildest way, for it shifted the ground on which tithe-payment stood from its relation to the Church as a debt to God, and made it, practically, a debt to the State. The spirit of gratitude and love and holy fear, to which the tithe in worship gave expression, took in flight at the approach of the tax-gatherer, who came in the name of the State, to demand payment of the tithe, and which demand had the inevitable effect of creating a prejudice against the tithe itself. And to this source we must trace the abandonment of the long-continued practice in the ancient Christian Church of the members regularly tithing their income, and bringing the legal proportion into the house of the Lord as an important item in the programme of the public worship of the Most High. The interference of the State made a confusion of spheres: "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's; and unto God the things that are God's!" The tithe is God's.

If we transfer our study of the subject from continental Europe to the British Isles, our belief in the abiding character of the law of tithe is but strength-

ened. Going back as far as we can reach we find the inhabitants offering one tenth of their substance to their gods. After Christianity had taken root in the land, we have Bede quoting Malachi in support of the tithe. Later on Ethelwulf gathers counsellors around him in one of the great churches. Here they subscribe to a Royal Charter granting one-tenth of all the lands of England to the Church, the King signing the document at the altar. William the Conqueror, with his wise men, settled what should be the common laws of England, and one of these was a law requiring the payment of tithe. At the time of the Reformation the people of the British Isles might be regarded as tithe-payers. But the blunder before referred to, of the marring of the Scriptural character of the tithe by the interference of the State, was repeated and perpetuated in those "dear isles of the sea." Instead of the Church reaching out her hand in the name of God to receive the tithe from grateful worshippers, the iron rod of the Civil Power compelled its payment. Thus all grace vanished from the offering. It was no longer a religious act, which ministered grace to the doers, but an unwilling compliance with a mandate of the State. The very name of tithe became an offence. Tithe-paying from the Scriptural point of view was a willing and grateful offering to the bountiful Giver

of every good, and not a forced tribute to Cæsar. This change of authority from Holy Scripture to parliamentary statute had the effect of putting to sleep a doctrine of our holy religion. Doctrines of our holy religion have fallen to sleep—the long sleep of centuries. They have fallen away from men's minds, the pulpit has ceased to proclaim them, and the press to publish them; and regarding them there has come over the Church a great hush. The awakening of some of them brought us the Reformation; the awakening of others of them brought us the Methodist revival; and the awakening of the doctrine of Christian Stewardship will bring us the Pentecost of the Twentieth century. The doctrines only slept; they were not dead. They lay concealed in unopened scriptures. But, in the good providence of God, the hidden truths again were brought from their seclusion, and were clothed with power from on high, and their heavenly origin and fitness for the times were demonstrated by their effects upon the minds and hearts and lives of men. So it is now, we are persuaded, in respect to the doctrine of the Christian Stewardship of money. Another name for it is "The Bible principle of Tithe." It may be well, once again, to define what the principle is. To do this as compactly and yet as comprehensively as we may, I would say: The basic

principle of Tithe is one-tenth of net income, as a legal minimum offering to God for every one, with an unmeasured privilege, in respect of free-will thank-offering in addition, for all who are able to go beyond the legal tenth. This definition, rightly weighed, will be seen not to press too heavily on the poor man, while it affords the rich man ample room wherein to register his largest benefactions. And thus does the tithe principle carry with it its own evidence of its divine authorship. This has been a sleeping doctrine for a long course of time. But, thank God, there are many indications that the long sleep is about ended, and that it will e'er many years have flown, take its appropriate place among those working doctrines that are most surely believed by all who accept the Word of God, as contained in the Bible, as the rule of faith and practice.

The following are results which might reasonably be expected to flow from the observance of the law of tithe; they are of a temporal and a spiritual kind:—

Tithing necessitates system, and system is indispensable to success in business. Very many, even good people, have no system in conducting their worldly affairs. They do not keep regular and accurate accounts. The result is loss. When a man

resolves to render back to God a tenth of what he receives he sees at once the necessity for the keeping of a faithful record of what comes in and what goes out, for without this he will not know what his tenth is. This faithfulness will also enable him to see where and what are the leakages, if any—the ceaseless, trickling drain that in a twelve-month means so much—and seeing the leakages may calk them, before they lead to serious or irrecoverable loss. And not only this, but faithful book-keeping will show what line in the business is paying best, so increased attention may be given to that line. There are, thus, business reasons for the tither's temporal prosperity. But there is also a reason of faith; his attitude towards the Giver of all good, as one who tithes his income, assures to him temporal gain. There may be, of course, exceptions to this rule, but still the rule remains:

“Honour the Lord with thy substance,
And with the firstfruits of all thine increase:
So shall thy barns be filled with plenty,
And thy presses shall burst out with new wine.”

The tither fulfils the condition to which the divine promise is here attached—he honors the Lord with his substance by observing the Lord's law respecting the dedication of substance. A man may

give away a great deal more in the cause of religion and charity than a tenth of his income, but if he should fail to divide off the tenth and present it to God he is not acknowledging God's sovereignty over his substance, nor his own stewardship in the possession of it, and these two things tithing is designed to do.

It is not necessary to press the promise to a literal fulfilment as to the full barns and the overflowing vats—the tither may be without barn or vat—but the substance of the promise, that is temporal prosperity, will be made good to him. Thousands are ready to testify that since they began to give their heavenly Father the proportion of their increase which he has set, they have been prospered in “basket and store.” True, the desire of gain is an inferior motive, but it is not an improper one; moreover it is one to which the Almighty himself appeals. It must, however, be associated always with a higher motive. But better blessings come of tithing than those of basket and store.

Tithing introduces a spiritual element into men's worldly business. It spiritualizes the merchant's aim. He has drawn the minimum line below which he must not fall in his benevolences. The thought of making money for God's cause may be a greater

stimulus to him at his post than the thought of how much he may secure for himself. His daily business, so far from being a drag upon the wheels of his aspirations after a higher life, may become a means to that end. Tithing brings God into the business as the silent partner. He has a share in it, and calls for his ten per cent. of the net income. The measure of the gain will be as the Lord may prosper the acting partner. These thoughts: the more I make the more God will have; God with me in my business, blessing me in it; God responsible for the measure of my success, when I do my part—give a dignity to the common business of everyday life, even the humblest, elevating the tone of the office, the shop and the market-place.

Tithing imposes a check upon the most hideous, deep-seated, and rampant vice of human nature—the love of money. This is the form in which man's native selfishness expresses itself most vigorously. There cannot be too many checks upon this frightful passion, that is working more mischief in Church and State than all other evils combined. Regularly assessing income for God at a ten per cent. minimum rate will prove, for the majority of people, a strong and constant curb upon the passion that is said to be "a root of all kinds of evil." For

those of large incomes it may not suffice without a generous use of the column for free-will thank-offering.

Tithing sets the mind at rest as to a duty. All agree that giving to God's cause is a duty. But many there are, in almost every Church, who know not what they should give. They much desire to know. Now tithing is the panacea for their anxious and unsettled state of mind; for it is compliance with the scriptural rule of giving, and compliance is rewarded with the assurance that duty has been discharged, and such assurance brings peace of mind.

Tithing makes giving a pleasure. Previously it was, more or less, a painful operation, through a mistaken sense of loss. All giving seemed losing. But now, when the tither is appealed to for a subscription to some good cause, the appeal is not made to his private purse, but to his tithe-box. So, if he gives he is nothing the poorer, and if he does not give he is nothing the richer. He can, therefore, meet all applications for aid with perfect serenity. His only concern is to know the merits of each claim, and the amount in the Lord's treasury. The sum there is already the Lord's, if any

remain. And if all has been already distributed, to one cause and another, he can, with an easy good grace, so uniform the applicant for aid. Here, then, is an item of spiritual gain for him who gives to God upon the tithe principle—what was a pain becomes a pleasure. The pleasure of giving will henceforth be a new element in his religious life.

Tithing makes giving a means of grace; for the offering of substance to God is worship. Whether it be the offering of the legal tenth, or of the free-will thank-offering, it is worship, pure and simple, and true as any that honors God—as the prayer of the humble and reverent on bended knee, and the praise of the thankful uttered in song. Every act of worship, rightly performed, brings grace to the soul. And thus we point out another spiritual reward of tithing.

Tithing creates a deeper interest in the affairs of the Church, for the tither is not only required to tithe, but he is required to disburse his tithe, and to disburse it wisely. Now this implies a thoughtful study of the various claims upon his tithe; and thus the tither becomes a more intelligent Churchman, as he becomes more familiar with the Church's financial interests.

If all this good may flow to *one*, as the result of tithing, let the reader consider what this would mean to any Church should *all* its members tithe.

Tithing on the part of the members of a Church would save the Church officers a great deal of the time now spent in devising ways and means for raising the income. The official members only know how great is the expenditure of time in planning to obtain the money needed for keeping up the local Church and the numerous connexional funds of the denomination to which it belongs. Men have only just so much time that they can give to the consideration of Church interests, and whatever be the length of time they spend in the discharge of the one duty of financing its affairs, there is just so much less time left for the consideration of matters relating to the Church's spiritual well-being.

Tithing puts an end to official worry. It is said that it is not work but worry that kills. Under the roof of the Church—the Temple of Peace—there is much of it. Where the dark shadows of worry fall, and its wild winds blow, how can holy peace abide? To get beyond the dark shadows and the agitation trustees have compromised with their creditors, others of them have left their country.

and many more, as the effect of worry upon their spirits, have died before their time. This may be a representation of the extreme, but it is not beyond the truth, and it points out the seriousness of the evil in the Church, arising from a weak or depleted treasury. All members tithing would furnish ample means to carry on efficiently every good work. This is true of the individual Church in any place, and it is equally true of the Catholic Church of all denominations at home and abroad. I believe it to be a very safe guess to say that not more than one-tenth of one-tenth of the net income of Church-going people is given to sustain and extend the cause of God in the earth. If the Bible principle of Church finance were understood, embraced and acted upon by professing Christians everywhere, there would be an immediate flushing of all the funds of the Church. And any financial scheme with this end in view, if not based upon the Bible principle, will be like a building with no sure foundation, and, at best, will have but a partial, spasmodic and temporary success.

Tithing would bring to an end the too common practice of employing discreditable means to secure money for religious purposes. For it would remove the reason usually given for using such means,

namely, the want of money. How widespread and humiliating this evil is, is known to every one.

Tithing, if practised by professing Christians generally, would convince the non-Christian and non-Church-going world, sooner than any amount of verbal profession, that the things to which professing Christians bear witness are, indeed, realities, and that they are sincere in their profession. The world, outside the Church, sees now that those who go to Church give more for two things that are, not only not essential to human well-being, but violently antagonistic to it—strong drink and tobacco—than for the support of all the Churches at home, and all the missions abroad.

Lastly: *the general adoption of the Scriptural principle of giving would warrant the Churches of all denominations in expecting a very gracious and widespread revival of heart religion.* We base such expectation on the following consideration. For the Churches to revert to the ancient practice of the principle of tithing income would imply a confession of the sin of having neglected, through a long course of time, a prescribed duty. Conviction as to this neglect would lead to the confession of it; confession would secure forgiveness; and the forgive-

ness would be so abundant as to bring with it the fulfilment of the ancient word of promise—still good to the people of God—"Bring ye the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me ~~now~~ herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open yon the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

The promise carries on the face of it the pledge of temporal good—that will assuredly be fulfilled—but the temporal good will be but the outer garment of the soul of blessing, which is spiritual enrichment. Not only would dews of grace descend to refresh dry and barren portions of the vineyard of the Lord, but copious showers of spiritual influences would come down and make "the desert . . . rejoice and blossom as the rose."

The times call loudly for a large increase in our King's revenue. Beyond the borders of Christian nations, where there is so much call for the wise and sanctified use of wealth, there are nations with teeming millions of people mutely saying, "Come over and help us"; while they, themselves, are unconsciously preparing the way of the Lord in national unrest and disturbance; and innumerable is-

lands of the seas are waiting for their Redeemer's law.

One thing only seems wanting in order that the Gospel commission, in a very limited time, might be fulfilled:—"to every creature"—and that one condition, on which the others seem to wait, is the consecration to this high service of the due proportion of substance on the part of those who are the professed followers of Jesus Christ.

The Word is ready; the qualified human agents are ready; the Holy Ghost is ready. But the Gospel implies a quaternion; and to these three must be added the fourth—cash—the due proportion of our means. This last word has a hard, metallic, worldly ring. Yes. But let us look up through the open gates of heaven, and listen. What do we hear? The heavenly hosts are singing the Coronation song of Him that sitteth upon the throne: "Worthy the Lamb that hath been slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honor, and glory, and blessing."—worthy to receive **RICHERS**. Lo! the word has lost its hard, metallic, worldly ring, caught up on angels' tongues, and made symphonious on their harps. The celestial singers look down for our response.

"And shall not we take up the strain,
And send the echo back again,"—

the echo of their song, "Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain!" and prove the sincerity of our allegiance to our crowned King by paying him, at least, his dues?

