

THE
CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN.

No. XIV.—FEBRUARY, 1880.

CELSUS—UNBELIEF IN THE SECOND
CENTURY AND THE NINETEENTH.

IN the latter half of the second century, there lived a broadly and philosophically educated scholar, called Celsus, a friend of the noted satirist, Lucian of Samosata. As Lucian employed the pointed weapon of wit against Christianity as well as against the heathen mythologies, so Celsus brought up against it the artillery of his learning and philosophical culture. He wrote, about the year 178 A.D., a polemical treatise against Christianity, entitled "A True Word." The book itself is now lost to us, having been destroyed by the Christian zeal of the following centuries. But the substance of the work seems to be contained in a reply, composed about sixty years later by Origen, at the request of his friend Ambrosias; so that a pretty successful attempt could be made to restore the lost work from the answer.*

We frequently, but erroneously, imagine that throughout the heathen world at that time all religion had been dead, so that Christianity was readily accepted, as the only refuge for all who still had a deeper religious interest. Among the common people, the religious sentiment was never extinct; and though, towards the close of the pre-Christian period, the educated classes had largely broken with the popular religious faith, yet the second century of our era was a time of religious reaction, even among the educated. In the days of the Antonines—viz., from 138 to 214 A.D.—the moral and religious spirit of the ancient world strove to rise afresh, and endeavours were made to revive the old religions. The Stoic philosophy, which was then dominant, was pressed into the service; and

* Comp. *M. v. Engelhardt*: "Die älteste Kritik biblischer Geschichte und christlicher Lehre vom Standpunkt des Heidenthums" ("Dorpater Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche," 1869, part 3), and *Keim* "Celsus' wahres Wort. Älteste Streitschrift antiker Weltanschauung gegen das Christenthum, vom J. 170 nach Chr. Wiederhergestellt, aus dem Griechischen übersetzt, untersucht und erläutert, mit Lucian und Minucius Felix verglichen" (Zürich, 1873). Both works are made use of in the following, besides Origen's reply itself.

[CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN, February, 1880.]

these, supposing the interpretation of them to be correct, in illustration of the Old Testament history? They are not, strictly speaking, historical illustrations. They throw no light on points of contemporary history left indefinite by Scripture; they do not themselves profess to be history at all. But they have come down from a remote antiquity—a far greater antiquity than, on any theory, has ever been ascribed to the written narrative of Genesis, and, so far as the Deluge is concerned, they are almost universal. “A recollection,” says Lenormant, “everywhere so precise and so accordant, cannot be that of a myth invented at pleasure. It is necessarily that of an event real and terrible, which struck so forcibly the imagination of the first ancestors of our race that it could not be forgotten by their descendants. This cataclysm occurred near the first cradle of humanity, and before the stem-families from which the principal races were to descend were separated from one another. For it would be quite contrary to probability and to sound laws of criticism to admit that, in all the different localities where such traditions are found, local phenomena exactly alike should have taken place, and that the recollection of them should always have assumed an identical form, and should be associated with circumstances which could not necessarily present themselves to the mind in every case” (*Commentaire des Fragments de Bérose*, p. 287). To clothe these traditions in the mythological garment which we find them wearing was doubtless the gradual work of the successive generations through whose hands they passed, among whom that mythology itself was only gradually growing up. But the substance of the narrative is proved to belong to an antiquity probably little short of the time when the facts themselves occurred. And the contrast between the somewhat irreverent superstition of the Babylonian story and the pure and manly theism of the Bible narrative, brings into strong relief that “majesty of style” which is one of the most marked characteristics of the Word of God.

ANDREW MELVILLE.

CHRISTIAN GIVING.

LIKE a dead fly in the apothecary's ointment, its constant demand upon the liberality of its adherents is often regarded as something disfiguring to the Christian religion. What has the religion of Divine mercy and grace to do with money? Why should spiritual enjoyment be marred by unpleasant requirements? Unlike the tidings of a free salvation, or the description of redemption's glories, the duty of giving is an unwelcome subject; and many, if not most Christians, would be willing to have it passed over in the ministrations of the pulpit, and the time given to more pleasing themes. The multiplied objects of benevolence, the constant recurrence of appeals and collections, the

CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN, February, 1880.]

impossibility of ever doing all that is to be done, and making an end of it—these things are very trying to the patience of many. “It is nothing but give, give,” they say. “If it is not one thing, it is another; we must be giving all the time.”

Now, instead of being a blemish, the practice of giving is one of the beauties of Christianity. Instead of an incongruity, it is a proof that this religion is from God. Instead of apologising for it, we claim for it apologetic value.

Is it granted that religion should make men *like* to God—that the grand end and aim of spiritual culture is conformity to the Divine image? Then, how sadly wanting would Christianity be found, did it ignore, in the culture of man, that attribute of God which makes Him a bountiful and constant giver. God is “giving all the time.” “He giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not.” He is not wearied by our frequent prayers, or our ever-recurring necessities. Nor, in His infinite love, does He count any gift too costly, or any sacrifice too great; He has not even spared His Son, but has delivered Him up for us all. If man would be like God, he must abound in love, he must exercise goodwill toward men, he must cherish the spirit of willing self-sacrifice, he must learn to be a generous and constant giver. And Christianity, in toiling for the attainment of this high ideal, substantiates its own claim upon the faith of mankind.

Nor could a religion be from God, or make men like God, which did not strike at the root of all the vices which corrupt our nature. Must religion rebuke anger, lust, pride, falsehood, dishonesty? Likewise, must it set itself in opposition to selfishness, worldliness, and covetousness. It must tear out of the heart that root of all evil, the love of money. It must destroy the “love of the world,” with which the “love of the Father” cannot dwell. This is not an easy task. Nor is it accomplished once for all. Vices, like noxious weeds, spring up again and again, and can be kept under only by constant toil. The remedy for selfishness and covetousness must be applied, not once, but continually; and our holy religion prescribes their only cure in the very thing of which some complain—giving *all the time*. Let a Christian cease to give, let him shut up his heart against the necessities of his fellow-men and the demands of God’s cause, and these vices will grow upon him until they choke his piety. But let him be a constant giver, let his heart and his hand be ever open; and in each worthy object presented, each collection taken up, each case of privation made known, he will find, not a source of annoyance, but a precious means of grace, an opportunity for rebuking his covetousness, for gaining the victory over self, and putting the world beneath his feet.

Besides, if religion be designed to make man a possessor of the highest possible *blessedness*, it would be incomplete without this. True, there would still remain the blessedness of receiving, the joyous reception of Divine mercy and grace, the delight of feeding upon the bread and

[CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN, February, 1880.]

being refreshed with the water of life. But the Lord Jesus has taught us that there is a higher happiness, of whose sweetness the mere *receiver* has not tasted. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." To give makes us partakers, not only of the Divine nature, but the Divine activity, "labourers together with God." And to share in God's work is to share in His felicity, to participate in the "joy of the Lord."

Thus essential to the true religion, giving has been a prominent feature of it from the beginning. Cain and Abel, when they came to worship, brought offerings unto the Lord. Noah, Abraham, and other holy men of their days, reared altars and offered sacrifices to God. Abraham gave tithes unto Melchisedek, priest of the most high God. Jacob vowed unto the Lord, "Of all that thou givest me I will surely give a tenth unto Thee." By all, giving was recognised as a religious duty.

Under the Levitical dispensation, this duty was, by Divine command, brought into still greater prominence. Its demand was declared to be universal, for God said, "none shall appear before Me empty." Its measure was prescribed in the tithes and offerings which all were commanded to bring. And its application was pointed out, in the offering of burnt-offerings and sacrifices, in the keeping of feasts unto the Lord, the support of the priests and Levites, and the care of the poor. In that dispensation, the "offerings of God" formed the most prominent and conspicuous feature of worship. They were the vehicle of praise and thanksgiving, the constant accompaniment of prayer, the propitiation for sin, the oft-repeated expression of consecration and devotion.

It is not to be supposed that the obligation of giving unto the Lord has passed away with the dispensation under which it was first formally and elaborately inculcated. This element of piety existed before the Levitical dispensation, and continues after it. And if that dispensation was "a shadow of good things to come," what were its sacrifices and offerings but a type and prophecy of something greater and more glorious, which should belong to these latter days? We know what grand fulfilment one class of these offerings,—that which related to sin and transgression—obtained in the redemptive work of Christ. The blood of atonement shadowed forth the blood of Jesus Christ, which cleanseth us from sin. The victims slain to propitiate Divine justice, typified "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." And shall we say that those other offerings, expressive of dependence, and gratitude, and devotion, had no meaning which pointed to the future,—that they were not shadows of something real, and have passed away without fulfilment? Shall we not rather say, that, as the feelings they expressed are infinitely heightened and deepened in the experience of the Church under the full glories of a finished redemption, so the *expression* should be correspondingly enlarged,—that, in addition to their immediate object, the tithes and offering of the Old Testament worship were designed to prepare the way for the bountiful liberality which God meant to be exercised under the New?

CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN, February, 1880.]

Assuredly, the principle is still sound and Scriptural, that men should not appear before the Lord empty. In part, too, the object of Christian liberality is the same as that of Jewish, namely the support of the ministry, and the care of the poor. And wherein it differs, Christian liberality has only been exalted into a more "reasonable service," and widened into a more practical design. Many of the offerings which the Jew brought to the Lord were simply consumed by fire. No useful purpose was seen to be subserved by them; their smoke ascended to God, whom it could not profit. Hence, their presentation might have seemed an act of unreasoning faith and devotion. But, to our liberality, there is given the additional stimulus of a grand and evident utility. God has taken us into His counsels as to the employment of our gifts. They are not consumed with fire, but used for carrying on the great missionary work of the Church, in preaching the Gospel to the poor. Christian liberality makes us co-workers with God in the salvation of mankind, a consideration which should prompt us to its largest possible exercise.

As we look back upon the worship of the Old Testament Church, and see so many victims consumed upon the altars, we are sometimes tempted to ask "to what purpose was this waste?" But, apart from the devotional character and typical significance of the "offerings of God," is not a sufficient answer found in the consideration, that those were times of preparation for the future? No missionary work was as yet to be done, "the fulness of the times" had not yet come; within the narrow bounds of Judaism, salvation was only being prepared for the world. And as, under the extending sway of the Roman Empire, God prepared the highway, and, in the diffusion of the Greek language, the vehicle for carrying the knowledge of salvation; so, in the liberality of His people, He prepared the motive power, training them to liberal giving against the time when their gifts would be needed for the fulfilment of the commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." The Old Testament worship cut the channel, set in motion the current, and filled to the banks that river on whose broad bosom the blessings of salvation are now being borne to all mankind.

To illustrate this, we need only refer to the remarkable liberality of the Christian Church in the apostolic age, when the impulse of the training of the past was yet fresh and strong. Many even "sold their possessions, and brought the price, and laid it at the apostles' feet;" the missionary work was not crippled for want of means, the knowledge of the Gospel was spread far and wide, the Church grew and multiplied with amazing rapidity, thousands of souls were converted and saved.

Alas! that the noble impulse should ever have been weakened, and the fruits of that costly training in any degree have been lost! It is that weakness and loss which paralyse the Church's energy, and stop the chariot wheels of the Gospel's progress. Had the offerings of

being refreshed with the water of life. But the Lord Jesus has taught us that there is a higher happiness, of whose sweetness the mere *receiver* has not tasted. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." To give makes us partakers, not only of the Divine nature, but the Divine activity, "labourers together with God." And to share in God's work is to share in His felicity, to participate in the "joy of the Lord."

Thus essential to the true religion, giving has been a prominent feature of it from the beginning. Cain and Abel, when they came to worship, brought offerings unto the Lord. Noah, Abraham, and other holy men of their days, reared altars and offered sacrifices to God. Abraham gave tithes unto Melchisedek, priest of the most high God. Jacob vowed unto the Lord, "Of all that thou givest me I will surely give a tenth unto Thee." By all, giving was recognised as a religious duty.

Under the Levitical dispensation, this duty was, by Divine command, brought into still greater prominence. Its demand was declared to be universal, for God said, "none shall appear before Me empty." Its measure was prescribed in the tithes and offerings which all were commanded to bring. And its application was pointed out, in the offering of burnt-offerings and sacrifices, in the keeping of feasts unto the Lord, the support of the priests and Levites, and the care of the poor. In that dispensation, the "offerings of God" formed the most prominent and conspicuous feature of worship. They were the vehicle of praise and thanksgiving, the constant accompaniment of prayer, the propitiation for sin, the oft-repeated expression of consecration and devotion.

It is not to be supposed that the obligation of giving unto the Lord has passed away with the dispensation under which it was first formally and elaborately inculcated. This element of piety existed before the Levitical dispensation, and continues after it. And if that dispensation was "a shadow of good things to come," what were its sacrifices and offerings but a type and prophecy of something greater and more glorious, which should belong to these latter days? We know what grand fulfilment one class of these offerings,—that which related to sin and transgression—obtained in the redemptive work of Christ. The blood of atonement shadowed forth the blood of Jesus Christ, which cleanseth us from sin. The victims slain to propitiate Divine justice, typified "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." And shall we say that those other offerings, expressive of dependence, and gratitude, and devotion, had no meaning which pointed to the future,—that they were not shadows of something real, and have passed away without fulfilment? Shall we not rather say, that, as the feelings they expressed are infinitely heightened and deepened in the experience of the Church under the full glories of a finished redemption, so the *expression* should be correspondingly enlarged,—that, in addition to their immediate object, the tithes and offering of the Old Testament worship were designed to prepare the way for the bountiful liberality which God meant to be exercised under the New?

CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN, February, 1880.]

Assuredly, the principle is still sound and Scriptural, that men should not appear before the Lord empty. In part, too, the object of Christian liberality is the same as that of Jewish, namely the support of the ministry, and the care of the poor. And wherein it differs, Christian liberality has only been exalted into a more "reasonable service," and widened into a more practical design. Many of the offerings which the Jew brought to the Lord were simply consumed by fire. No useful purpose was seen to be subserved by them; their smoke ascended to God, whom it could not profit. Hence, their presentation might have seemed an act of unreasoning faith and devotion. But, to our liberality, there is given the additional stimulus of a grand and evident utility. God has taken us into His counsels as to the employment of our gifts. They are not consumed with fire, but used for carrying on the great missionary work of the Church, in preaching the Gospel to the poor. Christian liberality makes us co-workers with God in the salvation of mankind, a consideration which should prompt us to its largest possible exercise.

As we look back upon the worship of the Old Testament Church, and see so many victims consumed upon the altars, we are sometimes tempted to ask "to what purpose was this waste?" But, apart from the devotional character and typical significance of the "offerings of God," is not a sufficient answer found in the consideration, that those were times of preparation for the future? No missionary work was as yet to be done, "the fulness of the times" had not yet come; within the narrow bounds of Judaism, salvation was only being prepared for the world. And as, under the extending sway of the Roman Empire, God prepared the highway, and, in the diffusion of the Greek language, the vehicle for carrying the knowledge of salvation; so, in the liberality of His people, He prepared the motive power, training them to liberal giving against the time when their gifts would be needed for the fulfilment of the commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." The Old Testament worship cut the channel, set in motion the current, and filled to the banks that river on whose broad bosom the blessings of salvation are now being borne to all mankind.

To illustrate this, we need only refer to the remarkable liberality of the Christian Church in the apostolic age, when the impulse of the training of the past was yet fresh and strong. Many even "sold their possessions, and brought the price, and laid it at the apostles' feet;" the missionary work was not crippled for want of means, the knowledge of the Gospel was spread far and wide, the Church grew and multiplied with amazing rapidity, thousands of souls were converted and saved.

Alas! that the noble impulse should ever have been weakened, and the fruits of that costly training in any degree have been lost! It is that weakness and loss which paralyse the Church's energy, and stop the chariot wheels of the Gospel's progress. Had the offerings of

being refreshed with the water of life. But the Lord Jesus has taught us that there is a higher happiness, of whose sweetness the mere *receiver* has not tasted. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." To give makes us partakers, not only of the Divine nature, but the Divine activity, "labourers together with God." And to share in God's work is to share in His felicity, to participate in the "joy of the Lord."

Thus essential to the true religion, giving has been a prominent feature of it from the beginning. Cain and Abel, when they came to worship, brought offerings unto the Lord. Noah, Abraham, and other holy men of their days, reared altars and offered sacrifices to God. Abraham gave tithes unto Melchisedek, priest of the most high God. Jacob vowed unto the Lord, "Of all that thou givest me I will surely give a tenth unto Thee." By all, giving was recognised as a religious duty.

Under the Levitical dispensation, this duty was, by Divine command, brought into still greater prominence. Its demand was declared to be universal, for God said, "none shall appear before Me empty." Its measure was prescribed in the tithes and offerings which all were commanded to bring. And its application was pointed out, in the offering of burnt-offerings and sacrifices, in the keeping of feasts unto the Lord, the support of the priests and Levites, and the care of the poor. In that dispensation, the "offerings of God" formed the most prominent and conspicuous feature of worship. They were the vehicle of praise and thanksgiving, the constant accompaniment of prayer, the propitiation for sin, the oft-repeated expression of consecration and devotion.

It is not to be supposed that the obligation of giving unto the Lord has passed away with the dispensation under which it was first formally and elaborately inculcated. This element of piety existed before the Levitical dispensation, and continues after it. And if that dispensation was "a shadow of good things to come," what were its sacrifices and offerings but a type and prophecy of something greater and more glorious, which should belong to these latter days? We know what grand fulfilment one class of these offerings,—that which related to sin and transgression—obtained in the redemptive work of Christ. The blood of atonement shadowed forth the blood of Jesus Christ, which cleanseth us from sin. The victims slain to propitiate Divine justice, typified "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." And shall we say that those other offerings, expressive of dependence, and gratitude, and devotion, had no meaning which pointed to the future,—that they were not shadows of something real, and have passed away without fulfilment? Shall we not rather say, that, as the feelings they expressed are infinitely heightened and deepened in the experience of the Church under the full glories of a finished redemption, so the *expression* should be correspondingly enlarged,—that, in addition to their immediate object, the tithes and offering of the Old Testament worship were designed to prepare the way for the bountiful liberality which God meant to be exercised under the New?

CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN, February, 1880.]

Assuredly, the principle is still sound and Scriptural, that men should not appear before the Lord empty. In part, too, the object of Christian liberality is the same as that of Jewish, namely the support of the ministry, and the care of the poor. And wherein it differs, Christian liberality has only been exalted into a more "reasonable service," and widened into a more practical design. Many of the offerings which the Jew brought to the Lord were simply consumed by fire. No useful purpose was seen to be subserved by them; their smoke ascended to God, whom it could not profit. Hence, their presentation might have seemed an act of unreasoning faith and devotion. But, to our liberality, there is given the additional stimulus of a grand and evident utility. God has taken us into His counsels as to the employment of our gifts. They are not consumed with fire, but used for carrying on the great missionary work of the Church, in preaching the Gospel to the poor. Christian liberality makes us co-workers with God in the salvation of mankind, a consideration which should prompt us to its largest possible exercise.

As we look back upon the worship of the Old Testament Church, and see so many victims consumed upon the altars, we are sometimes tempted to ask "to what purpose was this waste?" But, apart from the devotional character and typical significance of the "offerings of God," is not a sufficient answer found in the consideration, that those were times of preparation for the future? No missionary work was as yet to be done, "the fulness of the times" had not yet come; within the narrow bounds of Judaism, salvation was only being prepared for the world. And as, under the extending sway of the Roman Empire, God prepared the highway, and, in the diffusion of the Greek language, the vehicle for carrying the knowledge of salvation; so, in the liberality of His people, He prepared the motive power, training them to liberal giving against the time when their gifts would be needed for the fulfilment of the commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." The Old Testament worship cut the channel, set in motion the current, and filled to the banks that river on whose broad bosom the blessings of salvation are now being borne to all mankind.

To illustrate this, we need only refer to the remarkable liberality of the Christian Church in the apostolic age, when the impulse of the training of the past was yet fresh and strong. Many even "sold their possessions, and brought the price, and laid it at the apostles' feet;" the missionary work was not crippled for want of means, the knowledge of the Gospel was spread far and wide, the Church grew and multiplied with amazing rapidity, thousands of souls were converted and saved.

Alas! that the noble impulse should ever have been weakened, and the fruits of that costly training in any degree have been lost! It is that weakness and loss which paralyse the Church's energy, and stop the chariot wheels of the Gospel's progress. Had the offerings of

being refreshed with the water of life. But the Lord Jesus has taught us that there is a higher happiness, of whose sweetness the mere *receiver* has not tasted. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." To give makes us partakers, not only of the Divine nature, but the Divine activity, "labourers together with God." And to share in God's work is to share in His felicity, to participate in the "joy of the Lord."

Thus essential to the true religion, giving has been a prominent feature of it from the beginning. Cain and Abel, when they came to worship, brought offerings unto the Lord. Noah, Abraham, and other holy men of their days, reared altars and offered sacrifices to God. Abraham gave tithes unto Melchisedek, priest of the most high God. Jacob vowed unto the Lord, "Of all that thou givest me I will surely give a tenth unto Thee." By all, giving was recognised as a religious duty.

Under the Levitical dispensation, this duty was, by Divine command, brought into still greater prominence. Its demand was declared to be universal, for God said, "none shall appear before Me empty." Its measure was prescribed in the tithes and offerings which all were commanded to bring. And its application was pointed out, in the offering of burnt-offerings and sacrifices, in the keeping of feasts unto the Lord, the support of the priests and Levites, and the care of the poor. In that dispensation, the "offerings of God" formed the most prominent and conspicuous feature of worship. They were the vehicle of praise and thanksgiving, the constant accompaniment of prayer, the propitiation for sin, the oft-repeated expression of consecration and devotion.

It is not to be supposed that the obligation of giving unto the Lord has passed away with the dispensation under which it was first formally and elaborately inculcated. This element of piety existed before the Levitical dispensation, and continues after it. And if that dispensation was "a shadow of good things to come," what were its sacrifices and offerings but a type and prophecy of something greater and more glorious, which should belong to these latter days? We know what grand fulfilment one class of these offerings,—that which related to sin and transgression—obtained in the redemptive work of Christ. The blood of atonement shadowed forth the blood of Jesus Christ, which cleanseth us from sin. The victims slain to propitiate Divine justice, typified "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." And shall we say that those other offerings, expressive of dependence, and gratitude, and devotion, had no meaning which pointed to the future,—that they were not shadows of something real, and have passed away without fulfilment? Shall we not rather say, that, as the feelings they expressed are infinitely heightened and deepened in the experience of the Church under the full glories of a finished redemption, so the *expression* should be correspondingly enlarged,—that, in addition to their immediate object, the tithes and offering of the Old Testament worship were designed to prepare the way for the bountiful liberality which God meant to be exercised under the New?

CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN, February, 1880.]

Assuredly, the principle is still sound and Scriptural, that men should not appear before the Lord empty. In part, too, the object of Christian liberality is the same as that of Jewish, namely the support of the ministry, and the care of the poor. And wherein it differs, Christian liberality has only been exalted into a more "reasonable service," and widened into a more practical design. Many of the offerings which the Jew brought to the Lord were simply consumed by fire. No useful purpose was seen to be subserved by them; their smoke ascended to God, whom it could not profit. Hence, their presentation might have seemed an act of unreasoning faith and devotion. But, to our liberality, there is given the additional stimulus of a grand and evident utility. God has taken us into His counsels as to the employment of our gifts. They are not consumed with fire, but used for carrying on the great missionary work of the Church, in preaching the Gospel to the poor. Christian liberality makes us co-workers with God in the salvation of mankind, a consideration which should prompt us to its largest possible exercise.

As we look back upon the worship of the Old Testament Church, and see so many victims consumed upon the altars, we are sometimes tempted to ask "to what purpose was this waste?" But, apart from the devotional character and typical significance of the "offerings of God," is not a sufficient answer found in the consideration, that those were times of preparation for the future? No missionary work was as yet to be done, "the fulness of the times" had not yet come; within the narrow bounds of Judaism, salvation was only being prepared for the world. And as, under the extending sway of the Roman Empire, God prepared the highway, and, in the diffusion of the Greek language, the vehicle for carrying the knowledge of salvation; so, in the liberality of His people, He prepared the motive power, training them to liberal giving against the time when their gifts would be needed for the fulfilment of the commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." The Old Testament worship cut the channel, set in motion the current, and filled to the banks that river on whose broad bosom the blessings of salvation are now being borne to all mankind.

To illustrate this, we need only refer to the remarkable liberality of the Christian Church in the apostolic age, when the impulse of the training of the past was yet fresh and strong. Many even "sold their possessions, and brought the price, and laid it at the apostles' feet;" the missionary work was not crippled for want of means, the knowledge of the Gospel was spread far and wide, the Church grew and multiplied with amazing rapidity, thousands of souls were converted and saved.

Alas! that the noble impulse should ever have been weakened, and the fruits of that costly training in any degree have been lost! It is that weakness and loss which paralyse the Church's energy, and stop the chariot wheels of the Gospel's progress. Had the offerings of

[CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN, February, 1880.]

being refreshed with the water of life. But the Lord Jesus has taught us that there is a higher happiness, of whose sweetness the mere *receiver* has not tasted. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." To give makes us partakers, not only of the Divine nature, but the Divine activity, "labourers together with God." And to share in God's work is to share in His felicity, to participate in the "joy of the Lord."

Thus essential to the true religion, giving has been a prominent feature of it from the beginning. Cain and Abel, when they came to worship, brought offerings unto the Lord. Noah, Abraham, and other holy men of their days, reared altars and offered sacrifices to God. Abraham gave tithes unto Melchisedek, priest of the most high God. Jacob vowed unto the Lord, "Of all that thou givest me I will surely give a tenth unto Thee." By all, giving was recognised as a religious duty.

Under the Levitical dispensation, this duty was, by Divine command, brought into still greater prominence. Its demand was declared to be universal, for God said, "none shall appear before Me empty." Its measure was prescribed in the tithes and offerings which all were commanded to bring. And its application was pointed out, in the offering of burnt-offerings and sacrifices, in the keeping of feasts unto the Lord, the support of the priests and Levites, and the care of the poor. In that dispensation, the "offerings of God" formed the most prominent and conspicuous feature of worship. They were the vehicle of praise and thanksgiving, the constant accompaniment of prayer, the propitiation for sin, the oft-repeated expression of consecration and devotion.

It is not to be supposed that the obligation of giving unto the Lord has passed away with the dispensation under which it was first formally and elaborately inculcated. This element of piety existed before the Levitical dispensation, and continues after it. And if that dispensation was "a shadow of good things to come," what were its sacrifices and offerings but a type and prophecy of something greater and more glorious, which should belong to these latter days? We know what grand fulfilment one class of these offerings,—that which related to sin and transgression—obtained in the redemptive work of Christ. The blood of atonement shadowed forth the blood of Jesus Christ, which cleanseth us from sin. The victims slain to propitiate Divine justice, typified "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." And shall we say that those other offerings, expressive of dependence, and gratitude, and devotion, had no meaning which pointed to the future,—that they were not shadows of something real, and have passed away without fulfilment? Shall we not rather say, that, as the feelings they expressed are infinitely heightened and deepened in the experience of the Church under the full glories of a finished redemption, so the *expression* should be correspondingly enlarged,—that, in addition to their immediate object, the tithes and offering of the Old Testament worship were designed to prepare the way for the bountiful liberality which God meant to be exercised under the New?

CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN, February, 1880.]

Assuredly, the principle is still sound and Scriptural, that men should not appear before the Lord empty. In part, too, the object of Christian liberality is the same as that of Jewish, namely the support of the ministry, and the care of the poor. And wherein it differs, Christian liberality has only been exalted into a more "reasonable service," and widened into a more practical design. Many of the offerings which the Jew brought to the Lord were simply consumed by fire. No useful purpose was seen to be subserved by them; their smoke ascended to God, whom it could not profit. Hence, their presentation might have seemed an act of unreasoning faith and devotion. But, to our liberality, there is given the additional stimulus of a grand and evident utility. God has taken us into His counsels as to the employment of our gifts. They are not consumed with fire, but used for carrying on the great missionary work of the Church, in preaching the Gospel to the poor. Christian liberality makes us co-workers with God in the salvation of mankind, a consideration which should prompt us to its largest possible exercise.

As we look back upon the worship of the Old Testament Church, and see so many victims consumed upon the altars, we are sometimes tempted to ask "to what purpose was this waste?" But, apart from the devotional character and typical significance of the "offerings of God," is not a sufficient answer found in the consideration, that those were times of preparation for the future? No missionary work was as yet to be done, "the fulness of the times" had not yet come; within the narrow bounds of Judaism, salvation was only being prepared for the world. And as, under the extending sway of the Roman Empire, God prepared the highway, and, in the diffusion of the Greek language, the vehicle for carrying the knowledge of salvation; so, in the liberality of His people, He prepared the motive power, training them to liberal giving against the time when their gifts would be needed for the fulfilment of the commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." The Old Testament worship cut the channel, set in motion the current, and filled to the banks that river on whose broad bosom the blessings of salvation are now being borne to all mankind.

To illustrate this, we need only refer to the remarkable liberality of the Christian Church in the apostolic age, when the impulse of the training of the past was yet fresh and strong. Many even "sold their possessions, and brought the price, and laid it at the apostles' feet;" the missionary work was not crippled for want of means, the knowledge of the Gospel was spread far and wide, the Church grew and multiplied with amazing rapidity, thousands of souls were converted and saved.

Alas! that the noble impulse should ever have been weakened, and the fruits of that costly training in any degree have been lost! It is that weakness and loss which paralyse the Church's energy, and stop the chariot wheels of the Gospel's progress. Had the offerings of

being refreshed with the water of life. But the Lord Jesus has taught us that there is a higher happiness, of whose sweetness the mere *receiver* has not tasted. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." To give makes us partakers, not only of the Divine nature, but the Divine activity, "labourers together with God." And to share in God's work is to share in His felicity, to participate in the "joy of the Lord."

Thus essential to the true religion, giving has been a prominent feature of it from the beginning. Cain and Abel, when they came to worship, brought offerings unto the Lord. Noah, Abraham, and other holy men of their days, reared altars and offered sacrifices to God. Abraham gave tithes unto Melchisedek, priest of the most high God. Jacob vowed unto the Lord, "Of all that thou givest me I will surely give a tenth unto Thee." By all, giving was recognised as a religious duty.

Under the Levitical dispensation, this duty was, by Divine command, brought into still greater prominence. Its demand was declared to be universal, for God said, "none shall appear before Me empty." Its measure was prescribed in the tithes and offerings which all were commanded to bring. And its application was pointed out, in the offering of burnt-offerings and sacrifices, in the keeping of feasts unto the Lord, the support of the priests and Levites, and the care of the poor. In that dispensation, the "offerings of God" formed the most prominent and conspicuous feature of worship. They were the vehicle of praise and thanksgiving, the constant accompaniment of prayer, the propitiation for sin, the oft-repeated expression of consecration and devotion.

It is not to be supposed that the obligation of giving unto the Lord has passed away with the dispensation under which it was first formally and elaborately inculcated. This element of piety existed before the Levitical dispensation, and continues after it. And if that dispensation was "a shadow of good things to come," what were its sacrifices and offerings but a type and prophecy of something greater and more glorious, which should belong to these latter days? We know what grand fulfilment one class of these offerings,—that which related to sin and transgression—obtained in the redemptive work of Christ. The blood of atonement shadowed forth the blood of Jesus Christ, which cleanseth us from sin. The victims slain to propitiate Divine justice, typified "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." And shall we say that those other offerings, expressive of dependence, and gratitude, and devotion, had no meaning which pointed to the future,—that they were not shadows of something real, and have passed away without fulfilment? Shall we not rather say, that, as the feelings they expressed are infinitely heightened and deepened in the experience of the Church under the full glories of a finished redemption, so the *expression* should be correspondingly enlarged,—that, in addition to their immediate object, the tithes and offering of the Old Testament worship were designed to prepare the way for the bountiful liberality which God meant to be exercised under the New?

CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN, February, 1880.]

Assuredly, the principle is still sound and Scriptural, that men should not appear before the Lord empty. In part, too, the object of Christian liberality is the same as that of Jewish, namely the support of the ministry, and the care of the poor. And wherein it differs, Christian liberality has only been exalted into a more "reasonable service," and widened into a more practical design. Many of the offerings which the Jew brought to the Lord were simply consumed by fire. No useful purpose was seen to be subserved by them; their smoke ascended to God, whom it could not profit. Hence, their presentation might have seemed an act of unreasoning faith and devotion. But, to our liberality, there is given the additional stimulus of a grand and evident utility. God has taken us into His counsels as to the employment of our gifts. They are not consumed with fire, but used for carrying on the great missionary work of the Church, in preaching the Gospel to the poor. Christian liberality makes us co-workers with God in the salvation of mankind, a consideration which should prompt us to its largest possible exercise.

As we look back upon the worship of the Old Testament Church, and see so many victims consumed upon the altars, we are sometimes tempted to ask "to what purpose was this waste?" But, apart from the devotional character and typical significance of the "offerings of God," is not a sufficient answer found in the consideration, that those were times of preparation for the future? No missionary work was as yet to be done, "the fulness of the times" had not yet come; within the narrow bounds of Judaism, salvation was only being prepared for the world. And as, under the extending sway of the Roman Empire, God prepared the highway, and, in the diffusion of the Greek language, the vehicle for carrying the knowledge of salvation; so, in the liberality of His people, He prepared the motive power, training them to liberal giving against the time when their gifts would be needed for the fulfilment of the commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." The Old Testament worship cut the channel, set in motion the current, and filled to the banks that river on whose broad bosom the blessings of salvation are now being borne to all mankind.

To illustrate this, we need only refer to the remarkable liberality of the Christian Church in the apostolic age, when the impulse of the training of the past was yet fresh and strong. Many even "sold their possessions, and brought the price, and laid it at the apostles' feet;" the missionary work was not crippled for want of means, the knowledge of the Gospel was spread far and wide, the Church grew and multiplied with amazing rapidity, thousands of souls were converted and saved.

Alas! that the noble impulse should ever have been weakened, and the fruits of that costly training in any degree have been lost! It is that weakness and loss which paralyse the Church's energy, and stop the chariot wheels of the Gospel's progress. Had the offerings of

being refreshed with the water of life. But the Lord Jesus has taught us that there is a higher happiness, of whose sweetness the mere *receiver* has not tasted. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." To give makes us partakers, not only of the Divine nature, but the Divine activity, "labourers together with God." And to share in God's work is to share in His felicity, to participate in the "joy of the Lord."

Thus essential to the true religion, giving has been a prominent feature of it from the beginning. Cain and Abel, when they came to worship, brought offerings unto the Lord. Noah, Abraham, and other holy men of their days, reared altars and offered sacrifices to God. Abraham gave tithes unto Melchisedek, priest of the most high God. Jacob vowed unto the Lord, "Of all that thou givest me I will surely give a tenth unto Thee." By all, giving was recognised as a religious duty.

Under the Levitical dispensation, this duty was, by Divine command, brought into still greater prominence. Its demand was declared to be universal, for God said, "none shall appear before Me empty." Its measure was prescribed in the tithes and offerings which all were commanded to bring. And its application was pointed out, in the offering of burnt-offerings and sacrifices, in the keeping of feasts unto the Lord, the support of the priests and Levites, and the care of the poor. In that dispensation, the "offerings of God" formed the most prominent and conspicuous feature of worship. They were the vehicle of praise and thanksgiving, the constant accompaniment of prayer, the propitiation for sin, the oft-repeated expression of consecration and devotion.

It is not to be supposed that the obligation of giving unto the Lord has passed away with the dispensation under which it was first formally and elaborately inculcated. This element of piety existed before the Levitical dispensation, and continues after it. And if that dispensation was "a shadow of good things to come," what were its sacrifices and offerings but a type and prophecy of something greater and more glorious, which should belong to these latter days? We know what grand fulfilment one class of these offerings,—that which related to sin and transgression—obtained in the redemptive work of Christ. The blood of atonement shadowed forth the blood of Jesus Christ, which cleanseth us from sin. The victims slain to propitiate Divine justice, typified "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." And shall we say that those other offerings, expressive of dependence, and gratitude, and devotion, had no meaning which pointed to the future,—that they were not shadows of something real, and have passed away without fulfilment? Shall we not rather say, that, as the feelings they expressed are infinitely heightened and deepened in the experience of the Church under the full glories of a finished redemption, so the *expression* should be correspondingly enlarged,—that, in addition to their immediate object, the tithes and offering of the Old Testament worship were designed to prepare the way for the bountiful liberality which God meant to be exercised under the New?

CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN, February, 1880.]

Assuredly, the principle is still sound and Scriptural, that men should not appear before the Lord empty. In part, too, the object of Christian liberality is the same as that of Jewish, namely the support of the ministry, and the care of the poor. And wherein it differs, Christian liberality has only been exalted into a more "reasonable service," and widened into a more practical design. Many of the offerings which the Jew brought to the Lord were simply consumed by fire. No useful purpose was seen to be subserved by them; their smoke ascended to God, whom it could not profit. Hence, their presentation might have seemed an act of unreasoning faith and devotion. But, to our liberality, there is given the additional stimulus of a grand and evident utility. God has taken us into His counsels as to the employment of our gifts. They are not consumed with fire, but used for carrying on the great missionary work of the Church, in preaching the Gospel to the poor. Christian liberality makes us co-workers with God in the salvation of mankind, a consideration which should prompt us to its largest possible exercise.

As we look back upon the worship of the Old Testament Church, and see so many victims consumed upon the altars, we are sometimes tempted to ask "to what purpose was this waste?" But, apart from the devotional character and typical significance of the "offerings of God," is not a sufficient answer found in the consideration, that those were times of preparation for the future? No missionary work was as yet to be done, "the fulness of the times" had not yet come; within the narrow bounds of Judaism, salvation was only being prepared for the world. And as, under the extending sway of the Roman Empire, God prepared the highway, and, in the diffusion of the Greek language, the vehicle for carrying the knowledge of salvation; so, in the liberality of His people, He prepared the motive power, training them to liberal giving against the time when their gifts would be needed for the fulfilment of the commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." The Old Testament worship cut the channel, set in motion the current, and filled to the banks that river on whose broad bosom the blessings of salvation are now being borne to all mankind.

To illustrate this, we need only refer to the remarkable liberality of the Christian Church in the apostolic age, when the impulse of the training of the past was yet fresh and strong. Many even "sold their possessions, and brought the price, and laid it at the apostles' feet;" the missionary work was not crippled for want of means, the knowledge of the Gospel was spread far and wide, the Church grew and multiplied with amazing rapidity, thousands of souls were converted and saved.

Alas! that the noble impulse should ever have been weakened, and the fruits of that costly training in any degree have been lost! It is that weakness and loss which paralyse the Church's energy, and stop the chariot wheels of the Gospel's progress. Had the offerings of

being refreshed with the water of life. But the Lord Jesus has taught us that there is a higher happiness, of whose sweetness the mere *receiver* has not tasted. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." To give makes us partakers, not only of the Divine nature, but the Divine activity, "labourers together with God." And to share in God's work is to share in His felicity, to participate in the "joy of the Lord."

Thus essential to the true religion, giving has been a prominent feature of it from the beginning. Cain and Abel, when they came to worship, brought offerings unto the Lord. Noah, Abraham, and other holy men of their days, reared altars and offered sacrifices to God. Abraham gave tithes unto Melchisedek, priest of the most high God. Jacob vowed unto the Lord, "Of all that thou givest me I will surely give a tenth unto Thee." By all, giving was recognised as a religious duty.

Under the Levitical dispensation, this duty was, by Divine command, brought into still greater prominence. Its demand was declared to be universal, for God said, "none shall appear before Me empty." Its measure was prescribed in the tithes and offerings which all were commanded to bring. And its application was pointed out, in the offering of burnt-offerings and sacrifices, in the keeping of feasts unto the Lord, the support of the priests and Levites, and the care of the poor. In that dispensation, the "offerings of God" formed the most prominent and conspicuous feature of worship. They were the vehicle of praise and thanksgiving, the constant accompaniment of prayer, the propitiation for sin, the oft-repeated expression of consecration and devotion.

It is not to be supposed that the obligation of giving unto the Lord has passed away with the dispensation under which it was first formally and elaborately inculcated. This element of piety existed before the Levitical dispensation, and continues after it. And if that dispensation was "a shadow of good things to come," what were its sacrifices and offerings but a type and prophecy of something greater and more glorious, which should belong to these latter days? We know what grand fulfilment one class of these offerings,—that which related to sin and transgression—obtained in the redemptive work of Christ. The blood of atonement shadowed forth the blood of Jesus Christ, which cleanseth us from sin. The victims slain to propitiate Divine justice, typified "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." And shall we say that those other offerings, expressive of dependence, and gratitude, and devotion, had no meaning which pointed to the future,—that they were not shadows of something real, and have passed away without fulfilment? Shall we not rather say, that, as the feelings they expressed are infinitely heightened and deepened in the experience of the Church under the full glories of a finished redemption, so the *expression* should be correspondingly enlarged,—that, in addition to their immediate object, the tithes and offering of the Old Testament worship were designed to prepare the way for the bountiful liberality which God meant to be exercised under the New?

CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN, February, 1880.]

Assuredly, the principle is still sound and Scriptural, that men should not appear before the Lord empty. In part, too, the object of Christian liberality is the same as that of Jewish, namely the support of the ministry, and the care of the poor. And wherein it differs, Christian liberality has only been exalted into a more "reasonable service," and widened into a more practical design. Many of the offerings which the Jew brought to the Lord were simply consumed by fire. No useful purpose was seen to be subserved by them; their smoke ascended to God, whom it could not profit. Hence, their presentation might have seemed an act of unreasoning faith and devotion. But, to our liberality, there is given the additional stimulus of a grand and evident utility. God has taken us into His counsels as to the employment of our gifts. They are not consumed with fire, but used for carrying on the great missionary work of the Church, in preaching the Gospel to the poor. Christian liberality makes us co-workers with God in the salvation of mankind, a consideration which should prompt us to its largest possible exercise.

As we look back upon the worship of the Old Testament Church, and see so many victims consumed upon the altars, we are sometimes tempted to ask "to what purpose was this waste?" But, apart from the devotional character and typical significance of the "offerings of God," is not a sufficient answer found in the consideration, that those were times of preparation for the future? No missionary work was as yet to be done, "the fulness of the times" had not yet come; within the narrow bounds of Judaism, salvation was only being prepared for the world. And as, under the extending sway of the Roman Empire, God prepared the highway, and, in the diffusion of the Greek language, the vehicle for carrying the knowledge of salvation; so, in the liberality of His people, He prepared the motive power, training them to liberal giving against the time when their gifts would be needed for the fulfilment of the commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." The Old Testament worship cut the channel, set in motion the current, and filled to the banks that river on whose broad bosom the blessings of salvation are now being borne to all mankind.

To illustrate this, we need only refer to the remarkable liberality of the Christian Church in the apostolic age, when the impulse of the training of the past was yet fresh and strong. Many even "sold their possessions, and brought the price, and laid it at the apostles' feet;" the missionary work was not crippled for want of means, the knowledge of the Gospel was spread far and wide, the Church grew and multiplied with amazing rapidity, thousands of souls were converted and saved.

Alas! that the noble impulse should ever have been weakened, and the fruits of that costly training in any degree have been lost! It is that weakness and loss which paralyse the Church's energy, and stop the chariot wheels of the Gospel's progress. Had the offerings of

[CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN, February, 1880.]

being refreshed with the water of life. But the Lord Jesus has taught us that there is a higher happiness, of whose sweetness the mere *receiver* has not tasted. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." To give makes us partakers, not only of the Divine nature, but the Divine activity, "labourers together with God." And to share in God's work is to share in His felicity, to participate in the "joy of the Lord."

Thus essential to the true religion, giving has been a prominent feature of it from the beginning. Cain and Abel, when they came to worship, brought offerings unto the Lord. Noah, Abraham, and other holy men of their days, reared altars and offered sacrifices to God. Abraham gave tithes unto Melchisedek, priest of the most high God. Jacob vowed unto the Lord, "Of all that thou givest me I will surely give a tenth unto Thee." By all, giving was recognised as a religious duty.

Under the Levitical dispensation, this duty was, by Divine command, brought into still greater prominence. Its demand was declared to be universal, for God said, "none shall appear before Me empty." Its measure was prescribed in the tithes and offerings which all were commanded to bring. And its application was pointed out, in the offering of burnt-offerings and sacrifices, in the keeping of feasts unto the Lord, the support of the priests and Levites, and the care of the poor. In that dispensation, the "offerings of God" formed the most prominent and conspicuous feature of worship. They were the vehicle of praise and thanksgiving, the constant accompaniment of prayer, the propitiation for sin, the oft-repeated expression of consecration and devotion.

It is not to be supposed that the obligation of giving unto the Lord has passed away with the dispensation under which it was first formally and elaborately inculcated. This element of piety existed before the Levitical dispensation, and continues after it. And if that dispensation was "a shadow of good things to come," what were its sacrifices and offerings but a type and prophecy of something greater and more glorious, which should belong to these latter days? We know what grand fulfilment one class of these offerings,—that which related to sin and transgression—obtained in the redemptive work of Christ. The blood of atonement shadowed forth the blood of Jesus Christ, which cleanseth us from sin. The victims slain to propitiate Divine justice, typified "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." And shall we say that those other offerings, expressive of dependence, and gratitude, and devotion, had no meaning which pointed to the future,—that they were not shadows of something real, and have passed away without fulfilment? Shall we not rather say, that, as the feelings they expressed are infinitely heightened and deepened in the experience of the Church under the full glories of a finished redemption, so the *expression* should be correspondingly enlarged,—that, in addition to their immediate object, the tithes and offering of the Old Testament worship were designed to prepare the way for the bountiful liberality which God meant to be exercised under the New?

CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN, February, 1880.]

Assuredly, the principle is still sound and Scriptural, that men should not appear before the Lord empty. In part, too, the object of Christian liberality is the same as that of Jewish, namely the support of the ministry, and the care of the poor. And wherein it differs, Christian liberality has only been exalted into a more "reasonable service," and widened into a more practical design. Many of the offerings which the Jew brought to the Lord were simply consumed by fire. No useful purpose was seen to be subserved by them; their smoke ascended to God, whom it could not profit. Hence, their presentation might have seemed an act of unreasoning faith and devotion. But, to our liberality, there is given the additional stimulus of a grand and evident utility. God has taken us into His counsels as to the employment of our gifts. They are not consumed with fire, but used for carrying on the great missionary work of the Church, in preaching the Gospel to the poor. Christian liberality makes us co-workers with God in the salvation of mankind, a consideration which should prompt us to its largest possible exercise.

As we look back upon the worship of the Old Testament Church, and see so many victims consumed upon the altars, we are sometimes tempted to ask "to what purpose was this waste?" But, apart from the devotional character and typical significance of the "offerings of God," is not a sufficient answer found in the consideration, that those were times of preparation for the future? No missionary work was as yet to be done, "the fulness of the times" had not yet come; within the narrow bounds of Judaism, salvation was only being prepared for the world. And as, under the extending sway of the Roman Empire, God prepared the highway, and, in the diffusion of the Greek language, the vehicle for carrying the knowledge of salvation; so, in the liberality of His people, He prepared the motive power, training them to liberal giving against the time when their gifts would be needed for the fulfilment of the commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." The Old Testament worship cut the channel, set in motion the current, and filled to the banks that river on whose broad bosom the blessings of salvation are now being borne to all mankind.

To illustrate this, we need only refer to the remarkable liberality of the Christian Church in the apostolic age, when the impulse of the training of the past was yet fresh and strong. Many even "sold their possessions, and brought the price, and laid it at the apostles' feet;" the missionary work was not crippled for want of means, the knowledge of the Gospel was spread far and wide, the Church grew and multiplied with amazing rapidity, thousands of souls were converted and saved.

Alas! that the noble impulse should ever have been weakened, and the fruits of that costly training in any degree have been lost! It is that weakness and loss which paralyse the Church's energy, and stop the chariot wheels of the Gospel's progress. Had the offerings of

being refreshed with the water of life. But the Lord Jesus has taught us that there is a higher happiness, of whose sweetness the mere *receiver* has not tasted. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." To give makes us partakers, not only of the Divine nature, but the Divine activity, "labourers together with God." And to share in God's work is to share in His felicity, to participate in the "joy of the Lord."

Thus essential to the true religion, giving has been a prominent feature of it from the beginning. Cain and Abel, when they came to worship, brought offerings unto the Lord. Noah, Abraham, and other holy men of their days, reared altars and offered sacrifices to God. Abraham gave tithes unto Melchisedek, priest of the most high God. Jacob vowed unto the Lord, "Of all that thou givest me I will surely give a tenth unto Thee." By all, giving was recognised as a religious duty.

Under the Levitical dispensation, this duty was, by Divine command, brought into still greater prominence. Its demand was declared to be universal, for God said, "none shall appear before Me empty." Its measure was prescribed in the tithes and offerings which all were commanded to bring. And its application was pointed out, in the offering of burnt-offerings and sacrifices, in the keeping of feasts unto the Lord, the support of the priests and Levites, and the care of the poor. In that dispensation, the "offerings of God" formed the most prominent and conspicuous feature of worship. They were the vehicle of praise and thanksgiving, the constant accompaniment of prayer, the propitiation for sin, the oft-repeated expression of consecration and devotion.

It is not to be supposed that the obligation of giving unto the Lord has passed away with the dispensation under which it was first formally and elaborately inculcated. This element of piety existed before the Levitical dispensation, and continues after it. And if that dispensation was "a shadow of good things to come," what were its sacrifices and offerings but a type and prophecy of something greater and more glorious, which should belong to these latter days? We know what grand fulfilment one class of these offerings,—that which related to sin and transgression—obtained in the redemptive work of Christ. The blood of atonement shadowed forth the blood of Jesus Christ, which cleanseth us from sin. The victims slain to propitiate Divine justice, typified "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." And shall we say that those other offerings, expressive of dependence, and gratitude, and devotion, had no meaning which pointed to the future,—that they were not shadows of something real, and have passed away without fulfilment? Shall we not rather say, that, as the feelings they expressed are infinitely heightened and deepened in the experience of the Church under the full glories of a finished redemption, so the *expression* should be correspondingly enlarged,—that, in addition to their immediate object, the tithes and offering of the Old Testament worship were designed to prepare the way for the bountiful liberality which God meant to be exercised under the New?

CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN, February, 1880.]

Assuredly, the principle is still sound and Scriptural, that men should not appear before the Lord empty. In part, too, the object of Christian liberality is the same as that of Jewish, namely the support of the ministry, and the care of the poor. And wherein it differs, Christian liberality has only been exalted into a more "reasonable service," and widened into a more practical design. Many of the offerings which the Jew brought to the Lord were simply consumed by fire. No useful purpose was seen to be subserved by them; their smoke ascended to God, whom it could not profit. Hence, their presentation might have seemed an act of unreasoning faith and devotion. But, to our liberality, there is given the additional stimulus of a grand and evident utility. God has taken us into His counsels as to the employment of our gifts. They are not consumed with fire, but used for carrying on the great missionary work of the Church, in preaching the Gospel to the poor. Christian liberality makes us co-workers with God in the salvation of mankind, a consideration which should prompt us to its largest possible exercise.

As we look back upon the worship of the Old Testament Church, and see so many victims consumed upon the altars, we are sometimes tempted to ask "to what purpose was this waste?" But, apart from the devotional character and typical significance of the "offerings of God," is not a sufficient answer found in the consideration, that those were times of preparation for the future? No missionary work was as yet to be done, "the fulness of the times" had not yet come; within the narrow bounds of Judaism, salvation was only being prepared for the world. And as, under the extending sway of the Roman Empire, God prepared the highway, and, in the diffusion of the Greek language, the vehicle for carrying the knowledge of salvation; so, in the liberality of His people, He prepared the motive power, training them to liberal giving against the time when their gifts would be needed for the fulfilment of the commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." The Old Testament worship cut the channel, set in motion the current, and filled to the banks that river on whose broad bosom the blessings of salvation are now being borne to all mankind.

To illustrate this, we need only refer to the remarkable liberality of the Christian Church in the apostolic age, when the impulse of the training of the past was yet fresh and strong. Many even "sold their possessions, and brought the price, and laid it at the apostles' feet;" the missionary work was not crippled for want of means, the knowledge of the Gospel was spread far and wide, the Church grew and multiplied with amazing rapidity, thousands of souls were converted and saved.

Alas! that the noble impulse should ever have been weakened, and the fruits of that costly training in any degree have been lost! It is that weakness and loss which paralyse the Church's energy, and stop the chariot wheels of the Gospel's progress. Had the offerings of

[CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN, February, 1880.]

Christ's people continued their copious flow, His work would have progressed unceasingly ; and long ere this, it may be, the whole world would have been brought to the foot of the cross. The need of the present hour, in the work of the Lord, is the enlarged liberality of His people. The cry of missionary boards and societies is for means to carry on their work. There are men ready and willing to go and preach the glad tidings of redemption to the heathen and the destitute ; but "how shall they preach except they be sent?" Oh, were the Church of Christ awake to the grand opportunities which are before her in the present age of the world, when commerce and geographical discovery have opened all lands to the Gospel ; did she, with open heart and open hand, bring the riches with which God has blessed her, and lay them upon His altar,—with what gigantic strides would the conquests of the Redeemer's kingdom advance ! There is nothing needed now but apostolic liberality, with the blessing of God, to repeat, on a far grander scale, the triumphs of the apostolic age, and usher in the promised day when "the knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall cover the whole earth as the waters cover the sea."

We turn to consider the principles which regulate the *method* and *measure* of giving. For, concerning these, there is much confusion, and perhaps more want, of thought. Too much of our giving is the fruit of mere impulse. The eloquence of the appeal is often more potent in inducing liberality than the worthiness of the cause ; and under the influence of a temporary excitement, money is poured out, which a calmer consideration would withhold, or a wiser liberality bestow on more worthy objects. Some persons would never give, unless roused by appeals, or wrought upon by cases of distress. And comparatively few, it is to be feared, of the great mass of Christian people, follow any method, or are guided by any settled principles, in their discharge of the duty of giving.

Now, it cannot be a matter of indifference how this duty is performed, or whether it shall be performed at all. Giving is not a thing which we may do, or leave undone, at our pleasure. It is an imperative duty. It is pressed upon us by every feeling of gratitude to God for the blessings we have received, and of sympathy with our fellow-men in their need ; by the authoritative sanction of Divine command, and the constraining power of the love of Christ ; by the exalted privilege of fellowship with God, and the blessedness of doing good. And to neglect it is to "rob God," who has claims upon our gratitude and devotion, to rob our fellow-men, who have claims upon our help, and to rob ourselves of rich experience and glorious reward.

It is clearly taught in the Scriptures that giving should be *regular* and *systematic*,—not the result of mere impulse, but the outcome of settled principle,—not desultory and spasmodic, but continuous. Not to appear before the Lord empty, to honour Him with our substance and the first-fruits of all our increase, to bring an offering when we

CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN, February, 1830.]

come to His house, to lay by us in store on the first day of the week for His service and work,—such commands as these indicate that the stream of liberality is to be kept continually flowing. Giving, like prayer, should be “without ceasing.”

The Scriptures teach, further, that liberality is measured by ability, that it should be proportional to our means. This principle was the foundation of the Old Testament system of tithes. It was this principle, also, which made the widow's two mites, so insignificant in themselves, greater than the shekels of the rich. “For,” said Jesus, “all they did cast in of their abundance; but she, of her want, did cast in all that she had, even all her living.” And this is the principle which must regulate and measure the liberality of all Christians. We are to lay by us in store, “as God hath prospered us.” Our gifts are accepted “according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.”

Retaining the principle of proportion, the New Testament does not reiterate the law of tithes. It does not say that one-tenth, or one-fifth, or any fixed fraction of income shall be set apart as holy unto the Lord. The rate of giving seems now to be left to the individual conscience, under the enlightening influence of the Word of God and the Holy Spirit, and the constraining power of the love of Christ. But this, instead of narrowing, enlarges the duty of liberal giving. The new impulse is stronger than the old. We are delivered from the bondage of the letter into the freedom of the spirit; and the Christian spirit finds its true expression, not in throwing off the claims of duty, and refusing even a tithe, but in yielding to the promptings of love, and giving, like Zaccheus, half of our goods to the poor, or, like Barnabas, our all to the Lord.

“We are not under the law, but under grace,” and grace is the mightiest of motives to duty. The heart which does not respond to the grace of Christ, and to those words of His, “freely ye have received, freely give,” is one which, under the law, would have robbed God in tithes and offerings, and have been cursed with His curse. Indeed, grace teaches that not merely a fraction, but the whole of our possessions should be consecrated to God. And the true principle of Christian living is, to use all for God's glory, both that which we give and that which we keep, or employ for our own maintenance. On the one hand, we may not think, that, if we have given one-tenth to the Lord, we have a right to use the other nine-tenths as we please, without reference to Him; for in all we are God's stewards and must give account. On the other hand, we are not to consider that which is used in the proper maintenance of ourselves and those dependant upon us, as held back from the Lord; for this, too, is the Lord's work and our duty. This principle, when rightly apprehended, will lead, not to the spending or keeping of all for ourselves, but to a recognition of *all* the claims which God has upon us, and to such conscientious economy and self-denial as will enable us to perform our duty to His Church and the world. And

[CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN, February, 1880.]

if we have any experience of the grace of God in our hearts, and any fellowship in the self-sacrificing love of our Redeemer, we will put self, not first, but last ; and make our gifts of charity, not the pittance which may remain after self is satisfied, but "the first-fruits of all our increase."

In prescribing no system of tithes, no uniform ratio of gifts to income, the New Testament leaves the way clear for the *growth* of this grace of giving. If it permits us, in certain circumstances of personal or domestic necessity, to fall below the liberality of Old Testament times, it leaves us free, in other circumstances, to rise above it. And if it binds us by no letter, it is in consonance with its spirit that we should increase the percentage of our giving as God increases our prosperity. Beginning with one-tenth, or less, the Christian may, as his income increases, advance to the giving of one-fourth, one-third, one-half. And when it is no longer needful to toil for self and family, he may, if health and vigour be continued to him, work on for God, gathering the rich rewards of industry to lay them *all* upon God's altar ; thus, in a good sense, obeying the exhortation, "present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God."

The great practical *hindrance* to systematic and generous giving is, want of faith in the providence and promises of God. The principles already laid down will commend themselves to thoughtful Christians, but there will still linger much timidity about putting them in practice. Will not liberality keep us poor, if not bring us to want ? Will it not prevent that suitable provision for our children, which seems to be a duty ? These are questions urged by the dictates of prudence ; and fear of the dangers they imply often shuts the hand of liberality. It is hard to see how it is possible to give, and not be impoverished.

But it is just at this point, where sight fails, that faith takes the guidance of the timid soul, and leads it steadily forward in the path of duty. *Giving must be an act of faith.* Only faith can remove the mountain. Only faith can see the end from the beginning, and comprehend that profound and practical truth, so paradoxical to a worldly mind, that "there is that scattereth and yet increaseth, and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, and it tendeth to poverty."

And is there not, in God's Word and the experience of His people touching this matter, enough to strengthen our faith ? Was Jacob impoverished by his liberality ? His vow of one-tenth unto the Lord was made when he fled from his father's house, with no possessions but his staff, when the sky above him was his roof, his bed the earth, and his pillow a stone. "A rash vow," some would say, "for a poor man, and keeping it will keep him poor." But a score of years passes, and Jacob is the possessor of great wealth. His giving has not, like a heavy burden, held him down to poverty ; but his possessions have increased more and more, until he who went out so poor, returns to his own land with "flocks, and herds, and camels, and asses, and men-servants, and

CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN, February, 1880.]

maid-servants"—a striking illustration of the proverb, "the liberal soul shall be made fat."

His experience is not exceptional. Many of God's people, in our own time, testify that their liberality has been one of the elements of their prosperity; the more they have given, the more God has poured into their lap. Many who have shut their ears to the cry of the poor, and held back from God that which was His due, have seen their hoarded riches "take to themselves wings and fly away." But God will honour them that honour Him. It is surprising how many promises God has given to liberality. It is only more surprising that His people are so slow of heart to believe, so unwilling to cast themselves, in faith, upon the word of Him who cannot lie.

If the promises of God seem at times to fail, if the liberal are poor in this world's goods, while the niggardly and covetous grow rich, the failure is only apparent. "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." And if God, for any reason, withhold the blessings of worldly prosperity from the generous giver, He can and will give blessings which are greater and better, which make rich and bring no sorrow. Whether riches shall be a blessing or a curse depends altogether on the blessing of God, which may or may not accompany them. "The little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked." And it were better to be poor all our lives, than grow rich by robbing God.

An eagle, darting down from her eyrie, once lighted on the burnt-offering which lay upon the altar of God, and bore it away to feed her young. But a burning coal adhered to the flesh of the offering; laid down upon the dry sticks of the nest, it set them on fire, and the unfledged eaglets perished in the flames. And in like manner, many a man, anxious to be rich and to leave behind him riches for his children, has hoarded that which should have been laid, as a willing sacrifice, upon the altar of God, and has carried into his house the curse of God, to burn there after he is dead, and bring wretchedness and ruin on those he sought to bless.

Rich or poor, the liberal giver has the best of all possessions—the blessing of God. In this, all the self-denial which his generosity has cost him will find a full and glorious reward. The promises of God are his; and, casting himself upon them, he need feel no anxiety, either for the present or the future. God will care for those who care for His poor; and for those whose faith and love are expressed in self-sacrifice for His kingdom on the earth, He has prepared an everlasting kingdom in the heavens.

W. B. NOBLE.