

## SCRIPTURAL GIVING.

That little English book, "Mister Horn," contains some interesting things, showing how a very plain and simple man looked at the system of weekly giving. One evening he sat with his Bible open before him, at the 16th chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians. His finger passed slowly over the second verse, as he whispered the words to himself: "Now upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him." Then he sat and looked into the fire, turning it over in his mind for some time, as his thoughts slowly shaped themselves into principles of giving. Then he broke the silence with these quaint utterances: "It seems to me there's one thing as plain as can be, for all I am no scholar – a man ought to manage about giving. He is to lay by for it just as he does for his house-rent, and for half a score of things besides, for everything almost except for giving. Very many folks can't give anything upon the spur of the moment; and they think that it is all right if they don't. But it seems to me it is all wrong. They could not pay their rent upon the spur of the moment either; but for all that the landlord expects to get his money. A man is to lay by and arrange for it; whether folks hold with doing on the first day of the week or the last, they are in a bad way who don't do it at all."

This plain man nodded his head with considerable satisfaction, and then resumed his discourse. "Now, the next thing is how much to lay by." (He took up his paper and bit the end of his pencil, as he turned over the question.) "I can make thirty shillings a week (about \$7.50), taking one week with another," said he slowly. "Well, suppose I say three shilling a week." (And he figured a large three at the top of the paper. Holding it out at arm's length, he looked at the figure with an air of satisfaction.) "I don't see how it can, anyhow, be less than that, as Mr. Horn says that the Jews gave a tenth, and I'm not going to be behind a Jew. No, no. They don't know anything about what Paul said," and he turned over three or four pages of his Bible and read, "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye,

through his poverty, might be rich." "No," said he, "I can't give less than a tenth, and I'm almost thinking that I ought to give more." Wetting his pencil, he went over the large three again, and broke out, "Why religion saved me more than the whole of it. Three shillings! that was not half enough sometimes to pay for the week's beer. And then religion made me sober and steady, and that brought me in three times as much. Besides, what else is there that's so well worth paying for? House rent and doctor's bill should not be mentioned in the same breath with it. And butcher's meat and bread are not such good cheer as I get out of religion. And for a Master like mine – bless His holy name! – how can I ever do enough?" Here his whole soul burst forth in the song: –

"See from His head, His hands, His feet,  
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;  
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,  
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?"  
Nor could he pause there –  
"Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
That were a present far too small;  
Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands my soul, my life, my all."

He put up his pencil and paper, and exclaimed, "I'll never believe anybody again as long as I live, when they say they can't afford to give. They can afford sixpence a day in beer and tobacco very often; and they can foolishly spend their money in a score of ways. There's only one reason why folks can't afford to give, and that is because they afford so much for everything else. Why, if a man would put by sixpence a week, he'd very likely be able to give six times as much as he does, and he'd be able to do it as the Book says; not grudgingly or of necessity, but as a cheerful giver such as the Lord loves."

– *Selected.*

=====