

#478

PROSPERITY GIVING

By

F. A. AGAR

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A LAYMEN'S CONVENTION was being held in a large middle western state, and at the afternoon session about 2,500 men were present to engage in a conference upon stewardship.

Late in the afternoon, a man asked about *the law of tithing*. The answer was, "that while undoubtedly the law of tithing was still in effect, giving to God the first fruitage of all the increase to the extent of at least the first tenth was to be more a labor of love than slavish obedience to a law."

This statement was immediately followed by a query from a man who said, "Do you mean to say that every child of God should feel an obligation to put aside the first tenth of one's income and use it for the Lord's work?" Gathering courage, he went on to say, "For instance, I have a wife and three children, and my wages are ten dollars a week. Do you really think that God would want me to give him the first

dollar and only have the remaining nine with which to support my family?"

The leader paused for a moment before starting his answer to the frank question, when a man's voice boomed over the audience with the remark, "Say, preacher, may I answer that last fellow?" "Yes," was the reply. So the man made his way to the platform, and this was his answer, given with an earnestness and directness that carried its own conviction into every hearer's heart.

"Most of you fellows know me, for I used to be one of the worst drunkards in all this city, but a year and a half ago God saved my soul for Jesus' sake. The moment I got into the house that night, my wife saw that something had happened to me, and when I told her at once that I had surrendered to Jesus, she sobbed out her joy for a moment or two, and then pulled me 'down on my knees beside her and began to thank God with a torrent of burning words. Then she said, 'Tom, let's start proper.' 'All right,' I answered. 'How much money have you in your pocket?' So I showed her all I had. It was about \$2.40. She took 25

cents from it, and said, "Tom, from this on, God gets the first tenth of every dollar we get, doesn't he?" "Yes," I said. And from that day to this we have kept our agreement." Here he paused for breath, then he went on to say: "Now I have a wife and four children, and my wages is \$11.00 a week; so God gets the first one dollar and ten cents, which leaves \$9.90 for the family support. Just at that point in his narrative, the man stopped again, gave a sort of hitch to his trousers, and then, raising his hands high above his head, his great voice boomed out, "And mates! mates! I say that God and the \$9.90 go further than me and my wife alone could make the whole \$11.00 go."