

ADVANTAGES AND MEANS OF KEEPING UP HABITS OF READING AMONG THE CLERGY.

It is with unfeigned diffidence that I approach the consideration of the subject which has been assigned to me by his lordship the Bishop. My apology for presuming to speak upon such a theme to the reverend clergy must be that it has been so assigned to me, and not selected by myself. This, however, is a subject upon which I can fairly claim to speak with some confidence, because I have always been in some measure a reading man, while at the same time I have never been without that which is the only plausible excuse for not reading, viz., a large and toilsome pastoral charge. I have had experience both in country and in town, and am acquainted with the difficulties and hinderances of each. I can therefore say something from experience; and this is what I propose to do, to lay before my brethren some of the results of my own reading and observation, but chiefly of my own experience.

It is appointed me to treat of "the advantages and means of keeping up habits of reading among the clergy."

I. The advantages may be summed up in one sentence, that without systematic reading our ministry must prove a failure.

There are certain portions of our duty, it is true, which we may successfully perform by the aid of natural ability and prudence, joined to real earnestness of spirit—such as reading prayers, administering ordinances, and doing all the ordinary routine of our ministry; yes, and even keeping our flock together by diligent pastoral visiting, preventing them from breaking the fold, and all that is implied in the words *ruling the church*. We may do