

DR. POLONIUS WELCOMES HIS SON HOME FROM THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND GIVES THE YOUNG MAN SOME SOUND ADVICE.

(By Knoxonian.)

Glad to see you home again, my son. You had a good time in Winnipeg. You found the Winnipeg people very kind and hospitable. Didn't your father tell you the Winnipeg Presbyterians are just the sort of people to entertain a General Assembly? Nothing small about them. When the Assembly wants to go right into Eden it should always meet in Winnipeg.

Glad to hear that you were delighted with the supreme court of your Church, my son. It is a fine body of men, and seemed to be in excellent spirits this time. It is good for a young man like you to see the great ecclesiastical machine running. In our supreme court you see order without red-tapeism, geniality without levity, and dignity without dullness. You remember, my son, when you used to have a little juvenile hankering after some of the other denominations. It was about the time you had the measles. Your mother and I told you that as soon as you got your wisdom teeth and a little more experience you would see that your own Church was quite as good as any other, and a good deal better than some. Right glad are we that you see it now. There is no spot, my son, on this globe where a young man may not hold up his head and with honest pride say he is a Presbyterian. The very name commands respect all the world over. See that you never do anything to lessen that respect.

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Glad to hear you say, my son, that you were struck with the spirit of fairness in which the Assembly goes about its work. The Assembly is a fair body. The members often differ in opinion as to what ought to be done, and in regard to the best way of doing it, but they want to do the right thing. They many occasionally make mistakes—what body does not—but they mean to do what is best for the Church. The only wonder is that, considering the immense amount of business done and the haste with which much of it has to be disposed of, more mistakes are not made.

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You were greatly pleased with the manner in which the Moderator discharged his duties. Glad to know, my son, that you admire genial, dignified, well-bred men. The Moderator has served his Church for a third of a century. During all these years he has been a faithful, diligent pastor. He never bored a church court with long speeches as dry as a lime-burner's shoe. He never worried a church court by "rising to points of order" when there was no point. He never made disorder by professing to keep order. He preaches the Gospel, and does not find it necessary to preach anything else. If you preach the Gospel faithfully, and work well among your people, and never try to pose as a church lawyer, and avoid grumbling and snarling and fault-finding,

and serve your Church and your Master loyally and well for thirty-four years, you may be a Moderator too.

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Glad to know, my son, that you admire the orderly, quiet and dignified way in which the clerks and other officials do their work. Presbyterians don't appoint officers in their superior courts who strut about in peacock style and display their official feathers. They put solid, sensible men in responsible places. That is one of the reasons why Presbyterianism is a power in this land. Should the day ever come when feather-heads will occupy the high places of the Church, the usefulness and influence of this Church will have gone. Always vote for a solid man.

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Now, my son, let me give you some advice as to the future. The General Assembly is over. You have had a pleasant time. You have come home strengthened in your attachment to your Church. You believe in Presbyterianism more than you ever believed in it. Now, my son, get down to earnest hard work, and do something for the Church you admire so much. Preach better than you ever preached. There is no more sorry spectacle than to see a pastor stalling in Church courts and fussing about ecclesiastical procedure who cannot preach a decent sermon. Remember that Presbyterianism has been made by preaching the Word, and by preaching Presbyterianism must stand. You look upon the meeting of the General Assembly as a great occasion. So it was, but you have a greater occasion every Sabbath. Every time you enter your pulpit you have more important work in hand than any work done by the supreme court. Let me quote the words of one who was himself a prince among preachers: "In the delivery of a sermon does the true preacher appear. His throne is the pulpit; he stands in Christ's stead; his message is the Word of God; around him are immortal souls; the Saviour, unseen, is beside him; the Holy Spirit broods over the congregation; angels gaze upon the scene, and heaven and hell await the issue. What associations and what vast responsibility!" Let it never be said of you that you can do anything else better than preach. When it can be truly said of a pastor that he is great in the Presbytery, but small in his pulpit; when he is clever at overtures and motions and amendments, but awfully stupid in handling texts; that he is sharp at points of ecclesiastical law, but can make no points in a Gospel sermon; that he is a big man at conventions, but a very dry man in the prayer meeting—when this can be truthfully said of a pastor, that pastor is in a very bad way. His usefulness, if he ever had any, is about gone. Preach the very best you can every time. Use whatever ability God has given you and preach in your own way. The way you can preach best is the best way for you. Never degrade your manhood, and make an ass of yourself, by trying to preach like any body else. Prove to the world that by honest, manly Gospel

preaching you can draw and hold and help the people. If one congregation does not like that way of doing things, another will.

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Attend diligently to your pastoral work. Senseless, unreasonable people may sometimes complain about lack of attention, but go quietly on doing your duty. Help the tempted. Be kind to the poor. When trouble darkens the home be there in your Master's name, and with as much as possible of your Master's spirit. When the angel of death comes down upon a household, help the bereaved. Let your prayer, commending the departing spirit to the God who gave it, be among the last things your dying parishioner hears. The expressions of gratitude that struggle from the bloodless lips of a dying child of God are worth a million times more to a true minister of Christ than the loudest plaudits of a General Assembly. To help a struggling, tempted man is higher work than to support an overture or move a resolution. To guide one soul to the cross is to do more for the Church and the Master than to make the best speech ever delivered in a Church court. When this quiet work is going on there will be no admirers to applaud, and no stenographers with their swift pencils to tell the world the good things you said, but the Master Himself sees all; the record is above and the reward is sure.

THE SUFFRAGETTES.

Canada awaits, not without trembling, the honor of a visitation by the Suffragettes. There are two great institutions on which we depend for our civilization and happiness: the state and the family. Both are just now in conflict with revolutionary forces, which in both cases perhaps have their source in passion as much as in thought, and are consequently violent in their manifestations. Violent is surely not too strong an epithet to be applied to the demonstrations of the Suffragettes over the water. Strange would be the state of a family in which one of these should be wife and mother. The men alone make the laws because they alone can uphold them. The men alone declare war because they alone can fight. Men, as a rule, regulate the family, though with women as their help-mates, because as a rule it is their duty to maintain it. Such apparently is the ordinance of nature, which assigns at the same time to women a sphere gentler, but not by any means less momentous. No specific charge seems to have been brought by the Suffragettes against British legislation. They do not, it is hoped, want greater laxity of divorce. Upon that question the children have a claim to be heard. Mothers cannot well attend Parliament or public offices, and yet their practical exclusion from politics would be the exclusion of the most important part, and, generally speaking, of the most prudent part, of the sex. It is to be hoped that our fair visitors will leave this country with the conviction that the harmony of the family is as dear to the wife, as it is to the husband, and that her belief is not likely to be shaken by such physical arguments as the Suffragettes have been using in England. It is but just to the leaders of the present agitation, who appear to be Radicals, to bear in mind that it was the Tories, with their Primrose League, that started the agitation in England. The Radicals in taking it up are giving it less decorous form. Faction spares nothing, not the domestic hearth or the cradle.—Goldwin Smith, in the Weekly Sun.