

to whom he has ministered. Where a man becomes a political tool, it matters little in whose hands, or on which side, for his usefulness is doomed. Could I gain access to such a minister, I would whisper in his ear, "Let the dead bury their dead—but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." "Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth"; the Christian minister will find that with all the advantages he may possess, the work is sufficiently difficult to "persuade men to be reconciled to God." While he has the "wisdom of the *serpent*", he needs combined with it, as a corrective quality, all the "harmlessness of the *dove*."

Intimately connected with this is another requisite in an ambassador—that he *should devote himself wholly to the work, and take a lively interest in it*. No man is likely to succeed in any undertaking without this qualification. It is well known that a mere sense of duty never influences men so powerfully, as a consideration of advantage. But where duty and advantage, or interest, are combined, we may safely calculate upon success. Yet it is fearful that many have been influenced by inferior considerations.—Such are ill qualified for their work. Suppose, for illustration, that the British minister at China should abandon his negotiations between the two Governments, and devote his time to the cultivation and shipment of *tea*; or the minister at Washington, when measures of vast importance are entrusted to him, should be found engaged chiefly in *mercantile speculations*, seeking his own pecuniary advantage, to the prejudice of his country's interests.

Yet no less inconsistent and reprehensible is the conduct of the minister of Christ who enters upon secular pursuits when he ought to "be about his master's business." How will such a man stand when the day of reckoning comes? Will it avail him to say, "O, I had my own personal concerns to look after! I could not have been expected to spend *all* my time in one employment"? *I think not*. An "inquisition will be made for blood", when it is to be feared that *the blood of souls* will be found in his skirts. O how I have lamented over the conduct of some ministers! To see men of talent, men of evident piety, and men once eminently useful in the work, abandoning their master's service for gain—joining in an unholy "strike" for worldly wages—selling the souls of their fellow-creatures, as well as their own souls, for "filthy lucre". I have been led to inquire, what strange infatuation has come over them; what blindness has happened to them, that they should thus "play the fool" and "work folly in Israel"? This has become one of the greatest curses to the church at the present day. It is alarmingly on the increase. By it the ministerial office has been brought into disrepute, the Redeemer's name scandalized, and the enemy of souls suffered to triumph. The minister of the New Testament cannot be too far remote from a mercenary spirit. He never should be influenced by worldly considerations. His appeal should be as triumphant as that of the poet—