

1. One of the great secrets of success in every department of life is the power of self-control. With this, even a medium share of ability will be turned into successful exercise, while without it, culture, talent, even genius, will be wasted, if not even worse, for it may run into dangerous and direful excess.

The minister of Christ, from his very office, is like a "city set upon a hill, which cannot be hid;" but not only because of the morally influential position which he occupies, but from the very nature of his work, no man needs to cultivate with more determined and sustained earnestness this vital element of power.

The principles underlying the thoughts already submitted, will at once reveal the important fact, that the Christian minister must look deeper than to mere professional fitness for the root of genuine success in his work. His own soul and body must be under the sympathetic regulation of Christian law. Like Paul, he must say, "Therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air; but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." The doctrines which he zealously proclaims, the precepts which he solemnly teaches, and the glorious example by which he enforces his ethics, alike make it imperative that his own entire manhood should answer to the will of Christ, as the vessel obeys the rudder. The same may be said in reference to study, to intercourse with Christians, and with the world, to pastoral work, and to ministerial labour; all should be subjected to Christ, and through him be brought under an intelligent self-control.

It cannot, however, be too deeply realised that this is an *attainment*, and not a *grace*; that it needs long and faithful cultivation, to reach anything like satisfactory strength. It will be well, if in you, the traces of early parental culture are still found, or if almost hidden, lost—not amidst the rank weeds of waywardness and unrestrained forces; but under the foliage and fruit of disciplined mental power, and of well cultivated moral excellence. Whatever your former advantages, or disadvantages, in this respect let me, my dear brethren, urge you as students to seek the mastery of yourselves, and to exercise yourselves daily, nay hourly, in this all important method of preparation for your sacred work.

(2) If care is needful to keep self in proper regulation, application is no less requisite for self-development. A man may be blameless and at the same time powerless. Conduct may be so trimmed, that energy and independence may be destroyed. Intellectual life so restrained, that originality and vigour may be crushed; and even character itself, by control without development, may lose its distinctive features, and nothing be left but intellectual machinery. Seek after sound bodily health, and endeavour to develop your muscular power. Let this be regarded as a religious duty. I am unable to see any piety, in willingly allowing the temple of the Holy Spirit to get into ruins; and cannot perceive any moral beauty, or if you will, holiness, in a sickly mind, in a sickly body, induced by the careless neglect, or wilful defiance of God's laws. Try to bring with you, when you get at your future work, a strong and well developed body, and you will find yourselves in possession of a very substantial qualification for the work of the Christian ministry.

Much of our work demands mental application. Knowledge; stored, well