

than the physical effort employed in delivering them. Our object at present, however, is, not to dwell on the way in which individual ministers may discharge their duties, but to consider the duties which they have to discharge; and although it is to be lamented that there is a large proportion of the population who may think that all is right, provided they have religious ordinances in any shape whatever, and that the less of a pecuniary sacrifice which they make for these ordinances the better; yet we trust we are addressing readers who have some relish for spiritual things, and who, when the path of duty is plainly pointed out to them, will both walk therein themselves, and use their influence to get others to accompany them in their progress.

It must be very obvious that our views of ministerial duty ought not to be founded upon the way in which it may be discharged either by the worldling who may enter upon the office merely to make a "bye-job"* of the souls of his people, or even by the pious labourer who, being left to his own efforts for the means of worldly support, can give only shreds of his time to a work which he has really at his heart, and which he knows also should occupy his life. Our

standard here must be the word of God; and it may be useful to refer to it, both for the sake of the people, that they may be more impressed with a sense of their interest in the object for which they are required to make a sacrifice, and for the sake of the ministers also, that they may be reminded that he who has established their right to support, has laid upon them most onerous duties, in the discharge of which it is that they have their title to support.

Long and expensive as the course of training may be through which a student has to pass, before he can be qualified to receive license as a preacher of the gospel, it would be a grievous mistake to suppose that, even where his studies may have been prosecuted with most success, when at length he is licensed or even ordained and settled in a charge, he is so completely instructed that, without further study, he may at any time ascend the pulpit, and so minister as at once to feed the people with knowledge, and to exonerate his own soul as a preacher of God's word. In the progress of his preparatory studies, he has indeed been furnishing his mind with literary and scientific information, he has been making himself acquainted with the principles of sound philosophy, and has been obtaining scriptural views of that gospel which he is to expound to others, and the blessings of which he is to press upon their acceptance. With all this, however, he has been only preparing himself for the work of the ministry, he has been only acquiring a facility in the use of the instruments with which he is to ply this work, he has just made an entrance on studies in which, as he advances, the field is daily widening more and more before him. Instead of terminating, his studies in the fullest sense of the word only begin, when he receives a ministerial charge; and they ought to be so prosecuted as to engage his whole soul. That this is the scriptural view of the case is evident from the language of the Apostle Paul in 1 Tim. iv. 13-16, where he says, "Till I come give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon those things; give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that

* The late Dr. Andrew Thomson, in a speech delivered in the General Assembly against pluralities, related the following anecdote:—"When that amiable man, Dr. Walker, was presented to the church and parish of Colinton, he was violently opposed by the people. They did not think that he would be an edifying or useful minister to them; and therefore they resisted his settlement. The late Dr. McKnight was anxious to conciliate them, and to render Dr. Walker's settlement as smooth and pleasant as possible. And accordingly he went out on a Sunday (that perhaps being his day for supplying the vacancy), and seeing in the church-yard a venerable intelligent looking man, whom he thought he might address as a leading person in the parish, he began to converse with him on the subject. He found all his arguments however quite fruitless.—And at last he told the man, as one of the most powerful recommendations of Dr. Walker, as a learned and able man, that could be given, that since he had been presented to the parish of Colinton, the king had also given him a professorship in the University of Edinburgh. "Has he, Sir?" said the old man, but firmly, and looking on him with a keen and penetrating eye, "that makes the thing far waur; I see how it is to be now. He will just make a bye-job of our souls."