

favoured servant, whom he hath accounted faithful, putting you into his ministry. And now, in His blessed name, we would charge you "Take heed to the Ministry which thou hast received, &c. Ah, there is surely something most weighty and emphatic in this oft repeated expression—"Take heed, Take heed," &c. This implies at least two things—First, that the Ministry of the gospel is a very great work—a most respectable work, a sacred treasure committed to our trust—for this treasure is put into earthen vessels. Supposing you were specially entrusted with the keeping of the Regalia and Crown Jewels of this Empire, you would feel that your very life depended on the faithful discharge of your high and honorable office. But what are these but glittering toys in comparison to the sacred trust which is committed to you, in being entrusted with the charge of immortal souls! Or, supposing you had received your Sovereign's royal commands to act as her ambassador at some foreign court, would you not deeply feel the weight of responsibility attaching in that high capacity? But you are now charged with an embassy of unspeakably greater importance. You are an ambassador of the Lord Jesus, and in Christ's stead you are to beseech sinners to be reconciled unto God. But is there not something more implied here? Do not the words "take heed" imply a danger of negligence, and consequently of failure? a danger lest the ministry be not fulfilled by us—lest we prove unfaithful to the trust committed unto us? It is well for us to take heed in this respect—Blessed is the man that feareth always with a godly fear. Are we not in fact surrounded by many warning beacons—many fallen stars—many of those who were invested with this sacred office, and who were thought well qualified for it, were talented, and learned, and eloquent, but who unhappily made shipwreck of the faith and of their ministry, by their misconduct, and their slothfulness, and their carnal indulgence?—"Be not high minded but fear—Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall,"

But now to come more particularly to the point. Is it asked (and surely it is a necessary and most important question) *how am I to take heed to my ministry?* I shall only sketch out the answer in two or three particulars, believing that you are no stranger to its practicable importance:—

1st. Take heed unto *thyself*. The Minister and his sacred office are inseparably connected. I might almost say, identified—at all events, people will judge of our ministry by our own conduct. O see to it then, dear sir, that there be a habitual harmony between your conduct both in private and public, and your sacred office. See to it that you give no offence in anything that the ministry be not blamed. cultivate those devotional habits, and those graces of the Christian character, and that walking with a God, which alone will qualify you for the fulfilment of your ministry. See that the holy oil be daily in your vessel, so as to keep the lamp ever burning; and, so as to diffuse the light of truth and of holiness all around you. Bear about with you habitually a deep sense of the sacredness of your office. Let no rust lie on your gifts or graces—on your mind and body through negligence on your part. Be always ready for every good work. Seek a large portion of that wisdom which cometh from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, &c. It is a trite and proverbial saying that personal religion is indispensably necessary for a minister of the gospel. But may we not go a step farther and assert, that a minister ought to be *eminently religious*, *eminently distinguished for piety*, so as to be an example to all the flock. Be thou, therefore, an example of the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

2nd. I would say farther—"Take heed unto the doctrine.—Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." Let the Holy Bible be your only text book, and from every text you handle let the truth of God be diligently and clearly gleaned by you. Let your doctrine be sound, evangelical, and practical, let it be full of Christ, let it be leavened with the love of Christ, let Christ Jesus be the sum and substance, the alpha and omega, of your preaching. Preach the Lord Jesus Christ fully in all His offices, and in all his gracious relations as our all-sufficient Saviour. Preach Him to all your hearers, preach Him with special application to their hearts and consciences, removing from them every refuge of lies and every vain and selfish excuse, and so shutting them up to the obedience of faith. And while it will be your delightful duty to instruct, to exhort, comfort, and edify the children of God, oh give a daily portion to the poor *unconverted sinners*. Like your blessed master, have compassion upon the ignorant, and them that are out of the way; show them most plainly their danger, their lost and perishing condition. Uphold to them the great gospel remedy, bring it near to them, offer it to them most freely as an all-sufficient remedy for the chief of sinners. Urge it upon their acceptance, and tell them most plainly that if they will not embrace this great salvation which is now offered, and if they will not come to Christ now, the fault will be all their own. "Their blood shall be on their own head."

3rd. I would say, Take heed to the flock, to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made thee pastor, to feed the Church of God which He hath purchased with His own blood. This flock is now solemnly committed to your pastoral care and superintendence—Oh let them be precious in your estimation, As you have voluntarily accepted of this charge this weighty and solemn charge, resolve, in strength of God the Lord, to act the part of a good and faithful shepherd to them. Feed these sheep, feed these lambs of Christ's flock; feed them with knowledge and understanding and in the fear of the Lord. Watch for their souls as one who must give account to the Chief Shepherd of the flock. See that none of them go astray through negligence or remissness on your part. Do all in your power for their spiritual and eternal welfare. Be instant in season and out of season, warning every man, and teaching every man, that you may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. While you will be called occasionally to minister in other congregations, remember that this flock is your special and peculiar charge, and that there is a sacred bond of connection between you and them as pastor and flock. Oh be faithful to these souls committed to your charge; let them be the objects of your most prayerful solicitude, and most vigilant attention. "Son of man I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me," saith the Lord. Ezek. iii. 17.

In fine—Take heed to the work of the ministry that thou *fulfil it*. To fulfil the ministry is to perform all the duties of this office faithfully, to go through with the work, to make this the great business of your life, and to see that no part be left undone. To complete the work in all its parts—as the Apostle saith to his beloved Timothy—"But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." Keep this great end always before you, viz., to fulfil the ministry which you have received of the Lord. Be of the same mind with the great Apostle of the Gentiles, who said—"But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself that I may finish my

course with joy, and fulfil the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus." Difficulties, trials, and oppositions you may have to encounter in the discharge of your ministry. Perhaps these may come from a quarter whence you least of all expected them to come. But let none of these things move you to abandon your sacred work. Occupy the sphere of duty which the Lord hath assigned to you, and maintain it faithfully in the face of all opposition, until He who placed you there should, by a special call of providence, remove you elsewhere. It would ill become a good soldier of Jesus Christ to desert his post of duty, and to leave the flock committed to his charge, whenever he has to face difficulties and oppositions. Let no opposition, let no discouraging circumstance move you in this respect. But cast your every care, your every burden on the Lord and He shall sustain thee. Let no overwhelming sense of the magnitude of the work to which you are called as a minister of the Lord Jesus hinder you from going forward in the diligent performance of your work, for, "through Christ strengthening you, you can do all things." His promise is, "Lo I am with you always—My grace is sufficient for thee." He sendeth none of his servants to a warfare on their own charges. He has a fullness of grace adapted to your every want, your every duty, your every trial. You serve a great and gracious Master who is most able and willing to supply all your wants and necessities, and to strengthen you "with all might by His Spirit in the inner man," and who will finally crown all His faithful servants with a crown of glory that fadeth not away. He saith to you now "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." May this be your glorious recompense of reward, after fulfilling the ministry which you have received of the Lord! May yours be the high honour of being eminently successful in turning many from darkness to light, and in warning many precious souls to Christ. And may yours be the bright and glorious destination of those who, having turned many to righteousness, are destined to shine as stars in the heavenly firmament for ever and ever! "The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy Spirit—Grace be with you. Amen."

JOHN McLATCHLAN.

Acton, August 22, 1859.

Missionary Intelligence.

FREE CHURCH—INDIA.

From the *Home and Foreign Record* we learn that the Rev. Mr. Gardiner from Calcutta has arrived in Scotland in very shattered health. We trust that he may soon be restored. At Madras the foundation stone of a Mission Church had been laid. It is named "Anderson Church" in memory of Rev John Anderson a missionary, who will be long affectionately remembered in India.

The following letter is from Rev. D. Daff, and will, not, we doubt, be read with interest.

CALCUTTA, 17th June 1859.

MY DEAR DR. TWEEDE.—The enmity in men's hearts to the truth of God seems everywhere as rampant as ever. When seen at a distance, men—even natural men—may admire it, or coquet with it. But when it comes nigh unto them as a piercing, sin-convicting, regenerating power, they start from it, or hate it, or persecute it unto death. And this natural enmity no art, or science, or philosophy, or any secular refinement or accomplishment can eradicate, or even materially abate.

Some time ago I mentioned that a fine young man took refuge in the mission-house, as an