

going to other professions and mercantile business instead of the Church. Look across the Irish Sea, and you will find the same thing in Ulster. Look to your own city of Glasgow, in which, I am told, there is a singularly small number of students coming out for the ministry of the Free Church. That is to me a most melancholy fact. But I do not wonder at it; I am at liberty to devote myself to poverty, if I choose; but I don't know that I am at liberty to devote my family to the poverty ministers must lay their account with. I do not want wealth in the Church; I do not want the Free Church to be a rich Church: I do not want the attractiveness of wealth set up; but I want the repulsiveness of poverty removed. People talk of ministers being spiritual men; but I wish to know if they think I can keep up a body of six feet two-and-a-half inches on air. I remember addressing a country congregation, the minister of which is one of the heaviest doctors of divinity in the Church, and who has among his friends one of our most ponderous divines, and asking whether they thought these friends kept up their corporations on air.

"It is very easy to talk about ministers being men of spirituality—I wish we were more so than we are—but I would pray such talkers to remember that we are men of like passions with themselves, and like infirmities, too. My doctrine is—Lord, lead us not into temptation; and I want every Christian parent to be delivered from the temptation to which I know some have yielded, of turning away the aspirations of their children from the ministry, and directing them to more lucrative occupation. And I want our young men of talent to be delivered from the temptation of seeing their brethren made comfortable in other professions while they are ground down with difficulties. And I don't want our ministers to be doing what I know some of them are doing, maintaining themselves on their private means—no that does not belong to them, but to their children. I tell you that I have heard it said in my own ears, in my own house, by two most respectable ministers of our Free Church, that the very last profession on earth to which they would rear a son was that of a Free Church minister. That is a sad and melancholy state of matters, which will be most injurious to our Free Church. And let me tell you that there are Free Church ministers who have not that in their power, though they had it in their wish. I once entered a lovely Free Church manse. The minister, a most devout excellent man, who would be an honour to any church, was from home, and his lady in conversation told me that she had a son who had been attending Edinburgh College. I said I would be most happy to see him, and presumed, on learning that he had not been up last session, that he was in bad health. When I sympathized with her on that understanding, a most painful expression passed over her face, and I, seeing it was a painful subject, dropped it. I thought to myself—now, that son has turned out to be a mother's heart-break; like other sons, he has gone away with a mother's prayers and tears on his cheek, and a father's blessing on his head, and has become the victim of some of the vices of our large towns. But I began to think again—is it possible that that young man may have been kept there at home, and lost the best year of his life because of the difficulty of sending him to college. So, after conducting worship in the inn where I was living, I turned the conversation to the manse and the minister, and said, by the bye, the minister's son was not at the college last session, do you know the reason why? Upon which, to the credit of the man's kindly feeling and delicacy, he drew his chair to mine as close as he could, and whispered they were not able to send him. I don't know a better test than that, of whether our ministers are adequately provided for. I know there are some people who do not care what a minister gets. Some people think, I have no doubt, that when Dr. Candlish or I go to the pulpit, we have nothing to do but to open our mouths, and out come the sermons like water out of a pump. Some people think that all other professions may be respectable, but that it is quite reasonable that a minister should be a poor man. I know a small town where a dancing-master, who spends in it five weeks of the year, carries away for teaching the children to kick up their heels, more money than two worthy Secession ministers of the place get all the year round. Some think that a minister is all the better for being kept poor. There was a friend of mine who was assistant to his father, as a Seceding minister, and got £80 a year, while his father got £100. After his father's death, the question was, Whether the minister should be kept at his old allowance of £80 or get the £100, like the father. Whereupon an honest