

in the discharge of your duties, and, if you accept of my ministrations to aid you to the utmost of my power; if you are in sorrow and distress, and need comfort, I am ready to minister to you the consolations of the Gospel of peace; if laid on a bed of sickness or of death, and you long for Christian Communion, and in fellowship to present your prayers at the throne of grace in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, send for me, let it be by night or by day, I am bound if in health, to attend on you; I am Christ's servant, and I am your servant for Christ's sake. He has sent me with his Gospel to preach it and apply its consolations as he has given me ability. I stand in his stead, and in his name I offer to your faith all its unspeakable blessings. I constrain not your conscience; I dictate not your faith; 'I speak unto you as wise men, judge ye what I say.' Christ has given me my commission. He has commanded me to discharge the functions of my office, 'whether you will hear or whether you will forbear.' In His kind providence, through the liberality of the State, I am raised above the influence of your flattery or your frowns.—Placed in a position where I am neither tempted to preach to you smooth things, nor by ecclesiastical anathemas to work upon your fears, my business is by the force of truth to build you in fellowship with Christ, and with each other. 'having the same love, being of one accord and one mind.'

Nor are the silent influences of Sabbath convocations the least powerful, in the system of means employed to elevate the national character. Assembled to worship God, manifested in Christ Jesus; as infinitely merciful, compassionate and good, by sympathy, the religious feelings of the congregations are awakened into intenser exercise, and their social affections enlarged. Profoundly impressed with the Majesty of that unseen Being, into whose dread presence they have come—they are filled with reverential awe,—every sinful passion is hushed. Every earthly feeling is laid aside, all selfishness is swallowed up in the intenser emotions of brotherly love. United by a common faith, they look on each other as children of the same Father, and heirs of the same heavenly inheritance. The ennobling effects of social worship are heightened in the Rural Parishes, especially where the inhabitants are of one religious persuasion, and their minds are not ruffled with the emulations and jealousies of sectarian strife. Assembling in the "Auld Kirk Yard," a few minutes before the hour of worship,—as they were often wont to do—to recall to