

remain a distinct profession while the world lasts,—nay, I would not be surprised though there should be a division of labour in the profession, such as there has been in the healing art, so that the work which is now generally done by one man may be shared by several, each having his own special sphere; but whatever may be the distinction in office, ministers should not be regarded as lords over God's heritage, nor simply as hired servants, but rather as helpers of your faith, as workers together with you towards the perfection of humanity in Christ. Priests they may be, as other people may, inasmuch as they intercede with God for you, and offer their spiritual sacrifices; and mediators, in as far as they may be gradually lifting you up into unity with the Divine life; but not as being good for you, or obtaining pardon and eternal life for you, while you may yet remain in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity—aliens at heart from God. Your servants, too, they may be, and should be, yet not as simply doing so much work for so much pay to save you the trouble of working; but as those who are labouring with you, and trying to teach you how you may act for yourselves in the freedom and might of spiritual manhood. They are set for the edification of the body of Christ, for the building up of men in faith and hope and love—in all that is good and great; and in choosing and calling your pastor, you have chosen and called him for that purpose, and with a view to that final result, we presume. But in so doing, you have virtually said that you desire and are aiming at the spiritual perfection of yourselves and of all men in Christ. And does that not mean that you are to labour with your pastor for one common end, and each for the good of all? The obligation of being good and doing good, though it is constantly forgotten, lies equally upon all—upon people as well as pastor; and though it is true that the life and character of the pastor tend to give an impulse to the people in the same direction, it is equally true that the life and conduct of the people tend to make their minister what he is in relation to them. There is an old and true saying which many of you may not recognize as Scripture, but which, nevertheless, comes from the Prophets,

viz: "Like people, like priest." Keep that in memory as a proverb, and act accordingly.

It is not enough, then, that you pay your minister's salary punctually and take your place in your pew on Sunday, (though if some were to do that more regularly, it would be something to their credit, and a step in the right direction); you should show your sympathy and willingness to work with him in all the directions in which you would like to see your Church succeed and improve. Your interests as pastor and people are one, and should be thought of as one; and whatever is to the advantage or disgrace of the one party is more or less to the advantage or disgrace of the other. A defect or negligence on the one side will tend to produce a corresponding defect or neglect on the other. Take the matter of preaching, for instance. You all want to have a good sermon every Sunday, I suppose. But how can a good sermon be produced except under appropriate conditions? And unless you show a sympathy with your pastor in his work by regular attendance and a disposition to embrace and act upon any good suggestion or utterance of the truth, how can you expect him to produce what you want? What, indeed, is the use of his working or being at all among you? You must, in a large measure, from what you are and how you act towards him, supply the stimulus and materials for the writing or thinking out, and still more, perhaps, for the effective delivery, of a good and appropriate discourse. Be a sermon ever so good in itself, it may fall flat in its delivery from want of an audience to receive it.

But, for fear of becoming tedious, I must stop. I would only say, in conclusion, with regard to all such ordinances and occupations as preaching and praying, attending Church and Sunday School, remember that they are not ends in themselves, but only means for the attainment or production of a perfect life, for the rearing and developing of character in all directions, and in all the relations in which you may stand as men to men or as men to God; and don't expect too much, in the way of help to perfection, from your minister, or from any individual man or any class of men; but, while availing yourselves of all the means of