

AN ADDRESS TO A YOUNG MINISTER AT HIS
INDUCTION.

If the following address has never been delivered to a young minister at his induction it should have been :

My Dear Brother,—You are now about to enter upon the active work of the ministry. You have finished your university work, completed your course of study in the theological seminary, and we are now inducting you into this pastoral charge. Doubtless you have heard and read a good deal about the arduous nature of some of the duties that will now devolve upon you as a pastor. Allow me for your special encouragement to point out some of the *easy* situations that you may find yourself in before you have gone very far in your ministerial work. Perhaps your congregation may be composed of two or more stations. Two of these stations may desire to have services at the same hour on Sabbath. There is a "sweet reasonableness," about such a desire that must at once commend itself to your youthful mind. You must, of course, help both parties. If you side with one, the other will be sure to blame you. If you try to be neutral, both stations will denounce you. Your studies in Natural Philosophy will have shown you how to occupy two pulpits, several miles apart, at one and the same time. Bring your Natural Philosophy to bear on the situation, my brother, and preach in both stations at the same time. That is the proper and easy way to get out of the difficulty.

In the course of your ministry, a part of your congregation may wish to build a new church. The other part may think the old church good enough until the roof falls in. Just when a new church is needed is a more interesting question than any you tried to solve at college. A Presbyterian church in one of our western Ontario towns was old, dingy, dilapidated, and awfully dirty. The rain came in through the roof on wet Sabbaths and fell on the minister's head as he preached. He had to stand to one side while he preached. Neither the sermon nor the minister was *dry*. A wicked newspaper published in the town suggested that one of the elders should go into the pulpit and hold an umbrella over the minister's head during service on wet Sabbaths. Some of the people in that congregation strenuously contended that the old church was quite good enough. The same question may arise in your congregation, my young brother, but you need have no difficulty in the matter. The party in favour of building may blame you if you don't help them, and the party opposed to building may denounce you if you don't help *them*, and both may go for you if you are neutral, but you need give yourself no trouble in the matter.

Then supposing the majority decide on erecting a new church, the question of site is very likely to come up. Half the people may wish to build on one site and

half on another. Your Natural Philosophy will again come to your rescue, and you will at once see that the proper position for the minister to take is to build the church on both sites.

My young brother, other and still more interesting questions may meet you in the course of your ministry. Part of your flock may be strongly in favour of using an instrument in public worship, and part of them may begin to speak about "Popery and Jenny Geddes' stool" and "the Claymores of the Covenanters," and make several other historical allusions, the moment a melodeon is named. Now, my young brother, you are about to enter upon one of the most delightful experiences of a Canadian minister. Get ready. Buy a lot in the cemetery and secure a room in the nearest lunatic asylum. You are not quite sure what your *terminus ad quem* may be before this question is settled. Take the side of the organ men and the anti-organ men will denounce you. Side with the *antis* and the organ men will be down on you. Try to be neutral, and both will threaten you. Now you are having a good time. Now you see how easy it is to be a minister, and please everybody. Be careful how you act while the people are displaying their Christian graces on this question. If you are heard whistling a little air in your yard, the anti-organ men will declare you are in favour of instrumental music. Don't whistle. If you tell your small boy not to use his mouth-organ or jew's harp on Sabbath, the organ men may suspect that you are opposed to the use of the organ in public worship. The situation is delightful, especially when it lasts long. If you are alive and sane when the question is settled, don't be the least surprised if you see some of the anti-organ men who led in the fight unite with a congregation in which they use two or three organs. That is a way some of them have of relieving their consciences and showing their consistency.

My young brother, there is another very interesting question that may meet you in the course of your ministry. Some of your flock may wish to sing hymns, and some may be very much opposed to hymn singing. Some of those who are opposed to hymns make very refined distinctions on questions of Psalmody. They quite joyfully sing: "When to the sacred font we came," but they cannot bear "Jesus, Lover of my Soul." They take quite kindly to such soul-stirring sentiments as "Ye Indolent and Slothful, Rise," but they won't rise to sing "Nearer, My God, to Thee." They have no objection to that verse which tells of poising "the steady pole" (whatever that was) or the "boundless void of space" (wherever that may have been), but their conscience won't let them sing "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name." You may not be able to grapple with these fine distinctions, but you are a young man yet. Now, when the question, "Hymns or no hymns," is being discussed, you are