

from them the evidence on which they acted, to be very sure that they had reasons better than those hinted at by the uncharitable; and above all, to apply this rule in our dealings with our clergyman. He cannot degrade himself by running about here and there to explain his conduct. He must be trusted with a confidence that idle tattle or slight appearances will not shake. If you cannot put such trust in your minister, the sooner you part from him in that capacity the better. I have known parents who were much astonished that their children grew up without any relish for the services of the sanctuary, and without reverence for divine things, when the real reason was that their children, from their youth up, had heard them criticize, censure, even ridicule their minister, from week to week,—conduct unreasonable, wicked, and most hurtful to their own best interests.

Of all the excellencies of him whom God has taken from us, there was none more striking than his uprightness. He was conscientious as a Covenanter. Anything mean, sordid, or pettifogging, his soul hated. He might not say much: he would not say much; but there was no wavering in his decision. Often he could have taken advantage of his position to increase his store; but he loathed byways, and would not soil his garments. And when he felt that in a certain path his duty lay, nothing could make him swerve from that,—no matter though it cost him money, cost him friends, cost him the applause of the people. He felt the high responsibility and dignity of his place, as a steward of the mysteries of God, to lead—not to follow—the people; and during his thirty-seven years tenure of office, he wore “the white flower of a blameless life,” and never gave any member of his congregation cause to blush for the indiscretions of his minister.

One love he had—a love that was the mainspring of his life—a love that he preserved strong in death; and that was, a wonderful love for the people over whom God had set him. Many did not believe that, because he was not demonstrative. Their idea is that the noisy shallow little brook is more useful to the sea into which it runs, than the great deep silent river. No: true love is seldom bustling. Many think that their minister does not take an interest in them, unless he is continually running in and out among them like a busybody. Surely, surely, a deeper interest would manifest itself by bearing them on his spirit in his study and at the throne of grace—by searching into God’s Word for the truths that will best suit their various cases—by organizing the various activities of the congregation so that they may include as many workers as possible, and be thoroughly efficient. And just because of the true love your late pastor bore to you, he never would consent to surrender

his charge, until he was convinced that it would really be for your permanent benefit. And here I may state that I would not have come to this field of labour, had it not been for his affectionate and earnest entreaties. You had no claim upon me: you could offer me no inducements. His letters first showed him to me in his true light, as a man capable of real affection, self-sacrificing and humble. To show you the relation in which we always stood to each other, it will not be out of place for me to read an extract from the letter he wrote, when at last I consented to his repeated solicitations, and proposed that he should still remain as senior minister. He writes on Nov. 17th 1862, as follows:—

“MY DEAR MR. GRANT.—

“How I am rejoiced at learning from you the decision you have come to respecting the call. I believe that you have been directed from above in your determination to accept, and that in due time your admission to the charge will take place with the divine blessing, and a connexion formed between pastor and people which shall be long and happy, and eminently blessed to the good of souls.

“Dismiss from your mind the idea that the people are difficult. Labour under no such apprehension. You will be received by them with kindness and hearty good-will, and find them, as you have reason to expect from their intelligence and class of society, reasonable, and actuated by right feeling.

If diligence had been used since the meeting of the congregation, we would have had you here this fall; for, as I told the Committee, if you accepted, you would feel differently about staying the winter in the Island, and your coming at once would have been advantageous to the congregation and yourself, and especially agreeable to me. As it is, I fear that I must needs buckle to work again. But, my dear Mr. Grant, be not concerned. The inconvenience to me is not to be regarded, and I must see to it that the congregation do not suffer. Your proposal is certainly the ordinary way. But as soon as my retirement was mooted by the movers in the matter, I liked their idea; and, in the circumstances, it is the best for all parties.

“I hope you will find me a quiet, exemplary parishioner. You may be assured of my sympathy with you in all your labours. I am not demonstrative; but I will watch your operations with deep interest, and rejoice in all your successes.

“I am, my dear Mr. Grant,

“Very truly yours,

“JOHN SCOTT.”

This was the man whom God hath taken to his everlasting rest—who broke the bread of life to you, faithfully declaring the whole counsel of God—the father, the prophet, the man of prayer. Calmly and in deep peace he passed from a world in which his work was done, into the world of spirits. The last