

lege and joy (as many of them have experienced) to anticipate reward of a better and more lasting sort than that of mere earthly good. "They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever."

You will soon be called to the responsibilities of active professional life in parish or mission. In either position you will have to assume the care of souls. Yours it will be to preach the gospel of salvation to men impenitent and unsaved; yours, by faithful, earnest, intelligent and intelligible exposition of Christian doctrine and morals, to build up the people of God in their "holy faith;" yours to exercise pastoral care over young and old of every class in your several congregations. I shall not at this time attempt to instruct you in the nature of these sacred duties. This will be done at a fitter time—that in which you will be set apart to the sacred office "by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery." I may be allowed, however, to put you on your guard in relation to some mistakes to which all young ministers are liable, and through which many a young minister has lost moral, intellectual and personal power, involving to some extent—often to a serious extent—professional failure.

1. I advise you, first of all, not to look after great things at the outset of your ministerial career. Be content with moderate positions; deem not yourselves injured if indeed at first you are placed in the roughest, most arduous, and, as to earthly consideration, least desirable sections of that field, to the cultivation of which we are called as a church. In such a sphere, should you be called to it, do your duty like men; or in any sphere for that matter. Bravely meet and surmount the difficulties of any and every difficult position in which you may find yourselves. Consecrate your energies, at all times and everywhere, with self-denying resolve to the rescue of men from sin, and to the training up of Christ's followers in holiness; and, depend upon it, you will soon be heard of, aye, and sought after. You will find, too, when you emerge from what you and your friends deemed obscurity, that roughing it in the waste places, and hard work, and the chastening of spirit which has resulted therefrom, will prove to be the best possible qualification for the higher sphere or spheres to which you may be subsequently called. I have known men spend a life-time in chafing and fuming under the false idea that the church miscalculated or underrated their "powers." The effect was that this temper of mind produced chronic sourness, tainting their whole ministerial life and work. They became bitter in their social, their pastoral, and even pulpit relations. The wretched feeling grew. As it grew it more and more disqualified them for successful work. In the end they were forevermore kept back from "rising" in the church, as it is called. A soured minister is a miserable sort of creature, who may be borne with as a hypochondriac or a monomaniac, but who will never get along in his calling.

The young minister who aspires least, is almost sure to rise soonest. Your modest, unambitious, contented,

industrious, patient man is sure of success. Your restless, dissatisfied, self-satisfied, pretentious man—the man who is ever, and anxiously, and grumblingly too, looking out for what he hasn't got, and can't get probably, will as surely fail.

2. I counsel you, in the second place, not to commit the fatal blunder of throwing aside your individuality by imitating other men. Many young ministers have split upon this rock and have gone to pieces. They have tried to imitate some great man as they deemed, some admired principal it may be, or professor (I mean nothing personal), some preacher of power, and, by dint of laborious practice, have managed to caricature his tones, gestures, tricks of manner and of style; but they went no further—they hadn't the *nous* to go further. The qualities which gave these cherished models their true and only power were overlooked; or, if detected, were so far beyond them that attainment became impossible. These imitators of the great were sometimes found descending so low, as to bring into the pulpit the big men's sermons, and to perpetrate the lie of preaching them as their own. What I would say to you, my young brethren, is this: Be yourselves! every one of you! Don't be or seek to be another man! The real power of any man whom you admire is his own; not yours; not anyone else's! It never can be another man's! It can never be yours! Be yourselves, I repeat. Any man among you who will be himself, who will strive to find out what his individuality is, and will then faithfully work upon the discovery, may become, will be almost sure to become, an influential, able, successful minister in the church.

"This above all! To thine own self be true."

The time and energy which some young ministers spend in copying other men, in modelling their preaching upon the ghastly skeletons which other men supply, if expended on the faithful cultivation of their own powers, would tell a thousand times more upon their ultimate success, than the most perfect imitation of the greatest man that ever lived.

3. Let me recommend you, in the third place, to avoid the mistake into which many young ministers fall, of unduly "spreading" themselves. In other words, don't attempt too much at first. In the beginning of your career keep rigidly to your true and proper work. You will find, for years to come, that preparation for your pulpits, the care of the sick and the bereaved amongst your people, together with the general oversight of your congregation, will more than sufficiently tax both your strength and time. I have known young men (and some old ones), who thought themselves under obligation to be head and front of everything, secular no less than religious, that was going on, not only within their congregations, but even beyond them. I have known clerical rovers absent themselves so frequently from their parishes that they became at length better known away from home than at home. For these outings they would prepare special sermons, speeches, lectures, at a sacrifice of time, which had it been spent