

in the sphere to which God has called thee. The trials and joys of past years, they have all been ordered to make thee fit to do God's work now. Thy confirmation—thy first communion—that turning of thy heart, whether it were gradual or whether it were sudden, which led thee to realize thy nearness to God and the things unseen, far more than thou couldst have done in thoughtless days—the solemn impressions of thy first ordination—the cares and difficulties of thy first pastoral charge—the death-beds, standing by which, yet inexperienced, thou wast called in Christ's name to cheer or warn—thy early teachings, as much of thyself as of the children committed to thee in the ministrations of the Sunday-school—thy growing opportunities of usefulness in a wider sphere as years advanced and ministerial experience deepened—all thy felt acquaintance in past times with thine own weakness and miserable failures, and thy grateful acknowledgment of being empowered to do some good in thy Master's name amongst those whose souls were committed to Thee—consider now that thy gracious and loving Father has been overruling all these things to fit thee for this thy life's work. It is a work which needs all training and all help; but in which thy heart has no cause to fail thee, if thou dost enter on it in a faithful, prayerful spirit, depending on the Lord Jesus Christ.