

for prayer, and that the worship of believers should be joyful as well as reverential. And while we confess and ask pardon for our sins, even in these supplications we should be cheered as believers by the promise, that "if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." Some persons mistake slowness and dullness for solemnity; but a heavy manner, and a drawling tone, will be much more productive of drowsiness than of any peculiarly devotional feeling in the congregation; and the thoughts are much more likely to wander, when in advance of the reader, or preacher, than even when he is too rapid for them. The general effect, however, is still worse when there is any appearance of hurry, or room for suspicion that the minister is anxious to be released, as soon as possible, from a wearisome duty. And withal you will do well to take means to ascertain, from time to time, whether you are distinctly heard by the whole congregation. "I should not have thought it necessary," says the author of *Ecclesiastes Anglicanus*, "to notice so obvious a truth, but for the very common neglect, or forgetfulness, amongst preachers in this most essential point," and I may adopt his words as applicable to ourselves, for I have been surprised and pained, by hearing some of you unconsciously reading and preaching in a tone almost inaudible to persons at all dull of hearing, or seated at the end of the building in which we were assembled. Attention to this matter is especially necessary, when you have to address those who are more accustomed to manual labour, than to listen to a speaker, and who live much in the open air; for then—unless your voice is sufficiently loud and clear—your words will merely fall upon the outward ear, without reaching the understanding.

Some of these things may appear too trivial to be thus noticed, but nothing is to be accounted trivial which affects, in any way, the efficiency of the minister. Comparatively, however, we admit that they are of minor importance, and I desire now, in conclusion, to direct your attention to that which is absolutely essential. Let us before we separate, my brethren, briefly consider together our heavy responsibilities, and what is required of us. Souls are committed to our care, and we are to answer for every one of them, souls for which Christ died, so precious in his sight that, for their salvation, the Lord of glory endured the agony in the garden and the sufferings on the cross. We are "to feed the Church

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