

left as "sheep having no shepherd." A time of vacancy is not seldom a time of trial to a congregation. When it occurs, it is sometimes the indication of trouble; it is sometimes the cause of trouble. It is frequently a season, not of advance, but of retrogression. From evils such as these, God has spared you and in your case the prophetic word has been fulfilled: "Yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers." It has taken away from myself not a little of the bitterness of this parting, that I am able—speaking after the manner of men—to leave you in such good hands. The coming to us of my beloved friend and brother—Mr. Forbes, to be my colleague and successor—has been a great blessing to you, as it has been to me, and our fellowship in the active work of the ministry—I am speaking only for myself—has been of the happiest and most cordial kind. But that fellowship comes, this day, to an end, and one result will be, that whatever changes may take place, his labors and responsibilities will be, for a time, I trust a short time, to some considerable extent, increased. In any case, however, let me impress on you as my last word—keep ever in mind what the Christian ministry is. It is not a human, but a divine institution. It is the ordinance of Christ, who, as the apostle tells us: "When He ascended up on high, gave gifts unto men, and he gave some (to be) apostles; and some (to be) prophets; and some (to be) evangelists; and some (to be) pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

With the ministry, of Christ, therefore, Christian men and women, your best and highest interests are indissolubly bound up. Do everything, then, to strengthen your minister's hands, and to encourage his heart. Give him, and give him cheerfully, as you are able to do, an adequate support, that thus, set free from worldly anxiety and care, he may be able to give himself entirely to his work. Pray for him. Come to the House of God regularly, and give earnest heed unto, and lay well to heart, what