

gift that is in them, by the preaching of the word. I need not remind you that it has not always been so, and that some of the earlier students of the college not only "wrought with their own hands" for their support, while pursuing their studies, but that they often returned to the work of the session richer in faith, perhaps, but poorer in purse for having preached the gospel during the vacation. That state of things has, happily, passed away, and the work of the students has come to be regarded as a most interesting and important feature in our missionary operations. Going forth with youthful zeal and energy, they have often been greatly blessed of God in the quickening of the churches, and in gathering in a harvest of souls who, doubtless, have been prepared to receive the gospel under other ministries, but who, perhaps, needed just the kind of help some young Apollos could give them, and so were brought by him into the kingdom of God. Herein, once more, is that saying true, "one soweth and another reapeth." The Lord has a place and a work in his vineyard for every one of us; let it be our care to fill to the best of our ability, whatever portion he assigns us, and ascribe all the praise of our success to Him.

Your vacation work has two great ends in view—your own personal preparation for the larger ministry of future years, and the saving of sinners by the preaching of the gospel. Permit me to say a few words on each of these ends. First, as to your vacation work as a part of your training for the ministry. The days of "trial sermons," when a candidate was expected to prove his fitness or unfitness for the sacred office by the character of the sermon he read before a bench of "grave and reverend seniors," is happily passing away. Many a man can write an excellent theological essay with suitable exordium and application, and may even deliver it with grace and apparently with unction, who is utterly unfit for the pastoral office. Or he may possess the right spirit as well as all the necessary literary and theological attainments, while for want of an opportunity to exercise his gifts, and gain experience and aptness in their use, he may fall into such mistakes and errors in his early ministry as shall blight and discourage his whole future course. No trade or profession can be properly learned from books; the theory may be never so clearly explained, but the practical knowledge necessary to its successful prosecution can be ob-

tained only from working it out. The apprentice must not only see his master forge the shoe or mould the clay, or construct the machine, but his own as yet unskilled hands must attempt some humble part in the same process. The medical student must acquaint himself as fully as possible with the latest results of medical science, as taught in books and college, but he must walk the hospitals and begin to practice the healing art if he would become a successful physician. And the young minister in like manner, must have his clinical course, and learn from experience and intercourse with the people the divine healing power of the gospel. My illustration partially fails, I know, in that the young *medico* has beside him, as he visits the hospital, the experienced physician, whose hints and counsels relieve him of a large amount of the responsibility that would otherwise attach to his treatment of any critical case. And it would, perhaps, be an improvement on our present plan could we associate our under-graduates, during their vacations, with some of our more experienced pastors that they might thus have the benefit of their counsel and practice in ministerial and pastoral work. But, for the present, our paucity of men and means, and the urgent claims of long-neglected missionary fields, seem to forbid any such arrangement, and our young men have to go forth depending on the grace and strength of Him who has promised to be with us, and to direct the steps of such as acknowledge Him in all their ways. With the heart in the right place, a fair share of common sense and the eye ever fixed on the example and self-sacrifice of our Divine Master, no one, however inexperienced, need ever go far astray, or fail of success. But dear brethren, let me press upon you all the supreme necessity, if you would be "able ministers of the New Testament"—and you will observe the apostle doesn't say successful but "able," the bible says very little about success for that belongs to God—the supreme necessity of beginning right. This it is which seems to me to invest your vacation work with its highest value and importance, viz., that as you begin so you are likely to go on. "The child is the father of the man," and the divinity student makes the future minister. Permit me therefore, to very briefly hint at a few things which enter into my idea of a right beginning. And, first:

1.—You must have a right conception of the