

When we add to these that we have even found a threat of a legal prosecution, our readers will have some insight into that fearful struggle through which he had to pass in order to be engaged in that work to which his heart was devoted. It might be thought that it would be better to make no reference to these circumstances, but we have judged it useful and even necessary in such a sketch of his life to refer to them. They show the energy and perseverance of his character in struggling onward amid difficulties. His case may serve to encourage young men of our own church, many of whom have had to contend with serious difficulties in prosecuting their studies for the Holy Ministry. But it speaks also in solemn warning. Undoubtedly Mr. Gordon's struggles were the means of undermining his constitution, and of shortening his earthly career. Plying his loom by day, and poring over his books by night, or afterward teaching both day and evening school, and eagerly pursuing his own studies in the intervals proved too much for his physical frame. By this course the seeds of an insidious and fatal disease were sown in his constitution, and he was prepared for an early tomb.

[To be concluded in our next.]

FOR MINISTERS.

STUDY ESSENTIAL TO A PASTOR'S SUCCESS.

BY REV. J. W. ALEXANDER, D. D.

He can never preach well who has nothing to say. The all important thing for a messenger is the message. Of all the ways of preaching God's word, the worst is the purely extemporaneous—where a man arises to speak in God's name without any solid material, and without any studious preparation. A thousand-fold better were it to read every word of an instructive discourse, in the most slavish and uncouth manner, than to vapour in airy nothings, with suavity of men, fluency of utterance, and outward grace of elocution. It is this which has become the opprobrium of extempore preachers; and it must be admitted that the danger is imminent. As all men dislike labor in itself considered, the majority will perform any task in the easiest way which is acceptable. And as most hearers unfortunately judge more by external than internal qualities, they will be, for a certain time, satisfied with this ready but superficial preaching. The resulting fact is, that in numberless instances, the extemporaneous preacher neglects his preparation. If he has begun this slovenly way while still young, and before he has laid up stores of knowledge, he will in nine cases out of ten, be a shallow, rambling sermonizer as long as he lives. Immense gymnastic action and fearful vociferation will probably be brought in to make out the want of theology, as a garri-son destitute of ball, will be likely to make unusual pother with blank cartridge.

Omitting, for the moment, the unfaithfulness of such a ministry, the man who thus errs will find the evil consequences rebound upon himself. It is only for a time the most injudicious or partial congregation can be held by indigested and unsubstantial matter, however gracefully delivered. They may not trace it to the sight cause, but they know that they are wearied, if not disgusted. The minister, having rung all the changes on his very small peal of bells, has nothing for it but to repeat the old chimes.

Another inevitable result of unstudied preaching, is the habit of wandering or scattering. Nothing but laborious discipline, unintermitted through life, can enable a man to stick logically to his line of argument. Discerning hearers know better than the preacher, why, after stating his point, he constantly plays about