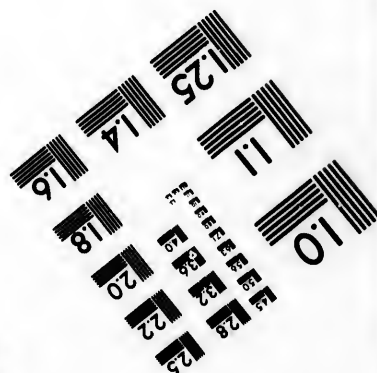
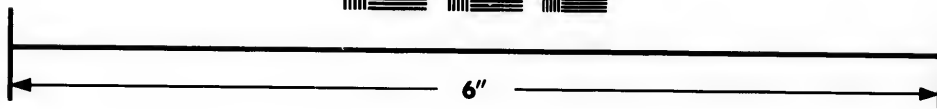
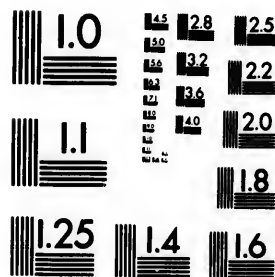


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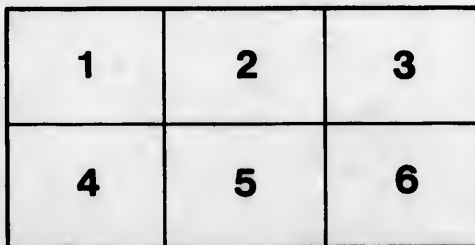
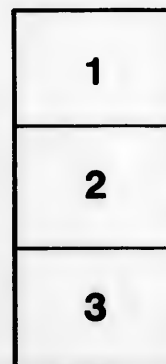
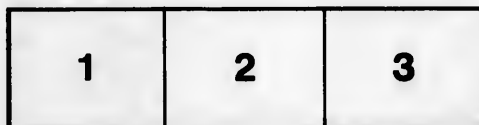
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SERMON
AND
ADDRESSES,

ON THE
OCCASION OF THE ADMISSION, BY THE PRESBYTERY OF TORONTO,
OF THE

REV. JOHN BARCLAY, A. M.,

TO THE PASTORAL CHARGE OF THE
CONGREGATION OF ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH,
TORONTO,

ON THE 6TH DECEMBER, 1842:

THE SERMON BY
THE REVEREND WILLIAM RINTOUL, A. M., STREETSVILLE;

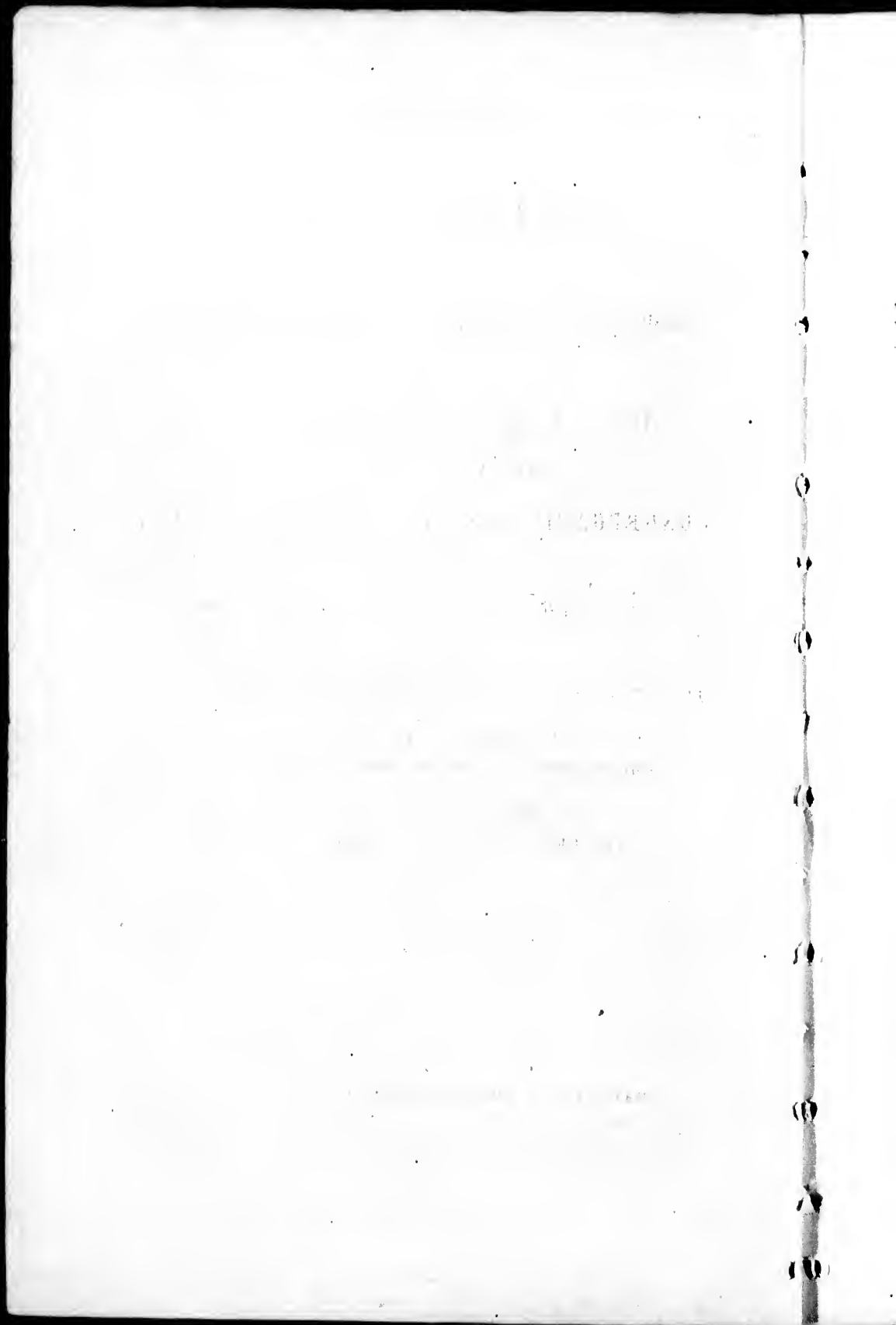
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THE REVEREND JAMES GEORGE, SCARBOROUGH;

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## SERMON.

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"And the Lord said unto Gideon: The people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there. And it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go."—Judges, vii., 4.

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If the question were put to us, in what portion of the sacred volume the fullest illustrations of Providence are to be found, we would answer,—in that part of the Old Testament which contains the history of Ancient Israel; for God's procedure towards that people, appears to have been designedly illustrative of His procedure towards His Church in all ages. Paul intimates this much when he says, respecting the events that befell Israel: "All these things happened unto them for ensamples, (rather types or models,) and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."—I. Cor., x. 11. And this, my hearers, I may remark in passing, appears to be a characteristic feature of the works of God—that certain great analogies or resemblances run through them all; so that the lesser are emblems or patterns of the greater. Thus, some one small portion of the earth's surface, it may be an island in the ocean shall be in respect to its mineral structure, and its vegetable and animal productions, an epitome of the globe itself. And, in respect to what is confessedly the grandest and most glorious of all the works of God—the work of human redemption, intimations are not wanting, that, it is just an illustration, in the treatment of one class of creatures, in their peculiar condition of ruin and wretchedness, of the transcendent excellencies and glories of the Godhead, as these are to be unfolded in the government of the whole intelligent universe throughout an unending eternity. The church being thus a theatre on which the sovereignty and all-sufficiency, the boundless grace and righteousness of God

are exhibited to man, and to all ranks and orders of angels. Hence, the Apostle adverts to it as an end of the Gospel dispensation, "that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God."—Eph. III. 10.

Let us then cease to wonder that, in the history of ancient Israel, there should be wrapped up the secrets of God's government of His people : and let us forbear to regard that history, as many regard it, as a mere assemblage of curious incidents that form, as it were, a class by themselves, and are unfitted to afford any useful lessons for ordinary life. On the other hand, with the key to their history which the New Testament furnishes, we shall recognise in their wanderings and warfare, the Church of God, sojourning in an evil world, and contending for the establishment of the kingdom of God in it; we shall view their judges as emblems of those champions for the truth, whom the great Head of the Church has in all ages raised up and qualified for asserting His own cause : and in the conditions and circumstances in which the Judges were victorious over the oppressors of Israel, we shall learn what the circumstances and conditions are, in which the servants of Christ are at any time to be successful, in their enterprises for the advancement of the truth in the world.

In directing your attention to the incident with which the text stands connected, with the view of drawing from it some useful lessons, it may be sufficient to the understanding of the incident itself, to notice that Gideon had some time before the juncture in which he is here presented to us, been specially called by God himself to be a deliverer of Israel from the Midianites, and that under a Divine impulse, he had summoned the people of his own and several of the neighbouring tribes, to follow him to the conflict with the numerous hosts of their oppressors. It appears, that not more than thirty-two thousand men had complied with this summons: a proof this, how greatly Israel had been weakened by their enemies, or were now daunted and dismayed by their numbers. The historian tells



us that "the hand of Midian prevailed against Israel : and because of the Midianites the Children of Israel made them the dens which are in the mountains, and caves, and strong holds. And so it was, when Israel had sown, that the Midianites came up, and the Amalekites, and the Children of the East, even they came up against them ; and they encamped against them, and destroyed the increase of the earth, till thou come to Gaza, and left no sustenance for Israel, neither sheep, nor ox, nor ass, for they came up with their cattle and their tents, and they came as grasshoppers for multitude ; for both they and their camels were without number : and they entered into the land to destroy it."—Judges vi. 2–5. There must have been a great disparity in numbers between these vast predatory hordes and Gideon's small army. Yet, history furnishes many illustrious instances of small bodies of men having been victorious over great undisciplined masses ; especially when the former, as must have been the case with the Israelites, have been well acquainted with the local features of the country, and have been able to choose their own positions for defence or attack, and, when at the same time, they have been fired with enthusiasm, or roused to desperation in fighting for their country, their homes, and their lives. However, the very possibility that Gideon's army might have prevailed through resolute bravery, or any of what are called the chances of war, became, in God's account, an objection to their going into the battle in such numbers. He himself was to give them the victory, for their cry had come up before him, (vi. 7 ;) and, therefore, they must be so reduced in numbers as to have no ground "for vaunting themselves against Him, and saying, mine own hand hath saved me."—vii. 2. It had been established as a law in Israel, that on the occasion of making a general levy of the people for war, there should be a liberal exemption from actual service for those whose domestic or private circumstances had peculiar claims upon them. And the fearful and faint-hearted, especially, were to be warned to retire from the ranks.—(See Deut. xx. 8.) We find no instances on record

of this law having been acted on. But Gideon, by the Divine command is made to honour it ; when not fewer than twenty-two thousand men take their departure,—thus, virtually confessing themselves to be cowards.—(vii. 3.) Strange to say, though less than a third of the original number continues with him, God makes the same objection to these, and they must undergo a still farther reduction, that all men might see and know that the victory, and the glory of Israel's deliverance belonged to God alone. By what may be viewed as almost an arbitrary test, the ten thousand are reduced to three hundred :—this number having, when the whole army was brought to a stream to drink, quenched their thirst by lapping the water with their hands, while the rest of their companions in arms, for the sake as it would seem of taking a larger draught, kneeled down on their knees. This small party having thus proved themselves to be the most patient of thirst, may be regarded as having been the very *elite* of the Israelitish army, and by them, with Gideon for a commander, the Lord was to deliver his people from the countless hosts of Midian. The narrative of the inspired historian to which we need not now more particularly refer, informs us, that this handful of men, by relying on the encouragements, and following the directions which God himself gave them, were completely victorious, so that the rest of their countrymen were summoned out to pursue and destroy, and divide the spoil. The watchword of the Israelites in the fight, if it may be said to have been a fight, was a fit indication of the way in which the victory was achieved:—THE SWORD OF JEHOVAH AND OF GIDEON.—(vii. 20.)

This incident, my hearers, is no doubt one of the ensamples or types to which the Apostle refers, and it suggests important lessons respecting the mode of the Divine procedure in the advancement of His Kingdom in the world, and the duty of all those whom he admits to a co-operation with himself in establishing it.

I would at present, in humble dependance on the Divine blessing, invite your attention to the following considerations:

*First*—That God, in all those works in which he admits men to co-operate with himself, or to be his intelligent instruments, has yet a jealous regard to His own glory. *Secondly*—That God does not make any account of the mere number of those who attach themselves to His service, but, in many circumstances, honours the instrumentality of the few rather than that of the many.

I observe, *first*, that God, in all those works in which he admits men to co-operate with himself, or to be, as we may say, His voluntary instruments, has a jealous regard to his own glory, so that he will not allow them, as he would not allow Gideon and his army, to vaunt themselves and say, “mine own hand hath saved me.”

In many departments of Providence, men are unconscious and in a sense involuntary agents in accomplishing the Divine purposes : so that, when they may be studying only to gratify and aggrandize themselves, without any acknowledgment or thought of God: yea, when they may be acting from the enmity of their hearts to Him, and may even be attempting to oppose His will, and traverse His plans ; they may yet all the time, as was the case with the murderers of the Saviour, be executing “ what God’s hand and counsel determined before to be done.”—Acts iv. 28. Thus, as is well known, the pursuits of commerce, and of the arts and sciences, in which innumerable instances, men are actuated only by covetousness and vain-glory—the ravages of war, and the trade in human beings for slaves, in which nations are the criminals,—are all, in connection with other agencies, made subservient to the advancement of the Kingdom of God in the world. It were superfluous to advert to facts in illustration of this remark. It may be enough to adduce the statement of it given by the inspired Psalmist :—“ Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee ; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.”—Psalm lxxvi., 10. In all cases of the unconscious and involuntary instrumentality of man in accomplishing the plans of Providence, God himself is glorified much in the same way

as in the employment of irrational and inanimate creatures : though it will be allowed that it is a higher manifestation of His wisdom, and power to make beings like men his instruments, when the intention of obeying and honouring him is not once entertained, but rather repudiated by them. Their thoughts and volitions, desires and passions, so properly their own, and so uncontrollable by others, are, without suffering any violence, made to fulfil the purposes of God, as readily as the instincts which he has implanted in the lower animals, or the properties which he has communicated to inanimate matter.

Now, it is a distinct enhancement of the glory of God, in that manifestation of His character which He has made in the Gospel dispensation—what is in an eminent sense the Kingdom of God, that men are employed in it, as intelligent and voluntary instruments—yea, that they are even fellow-workers with the ever-blessed God. Indeed, in the introduction of man into this kingdom, they are treated as conscious and voluntary agents. For, while in this case there is truly a Divine power exerted upon them this is not in the way of violence to the constitution of their minds, but in harmony with it, so as that they are themselves made to choose the Son of God as their Saviour and Lord, and God himself as their Portion and God. They are made “His willing people.” And hence the propriety of the exhortation: “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling : For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure.”—Phil. ii., 12, 13. And, as the subjects of the Kingdom of God, they are specially called to promote that kingdom in the world : this is, indeed, one of the principal objects which the Saviour seeks to accomplish through each of His people—even to increase the number of the saved,—the number of those who shall be monuments of the sovereignty and grace of God. And believers understand something of their high destination, and approve it, and study to fulfil it. Animated with the same spirit that was in Christ, they desire to honour their Father in

heaven, and they have a compassionate regard for their fellow-sinners, and desire to rescue them from sin and everlasting ruin. And, according to their talents and acquirements, their station in society and their influence over their fellow-men, they can in various ways promote these great objects. They may communicate the message of mercy to others in the counsels of private friendship, in the intercourse of domestic and social life, or in the way of formal public instructions. They can, and they will plead with God for the effusion of the Holy Spirit upon all flesh. And in all circumstances, even where they may be denied the opportunity or the power of bearing a formal testimony to the truth, they can yet exhibit a living picture of it in their temper and conduct. In all this, believers act as instruments for promoting the salvation of their fellow-men. And according to the constitution of the kingdom of God, theirs is such an instrumentality, as cannot be dispensed with. The word or truth of the Gospel committed to the church, must in one way or another be introduced into the hearts of men, otherwise it will be 'as vain to look for spiritual life, as to expect vegetation where no seed has been sown and no shoot planted. And yet, the efficient energy is not in the instrument. Peace, holiness, salvation, where they are happily known and enjoyed, are something very different from what man or any other creature can communicate ; they are the results of Divine power alone. In the first commission to publish the Gospel throughout the world, we see the appointment of a human instrumentality. "Go ye," said the Saviour to his Apostles, "into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." And in the inspired historian's record of their labours, we may see the cause of their success : he adds—"And they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them."—Mark xvi. 15, 20. Hence, while the Apostle Paul, who had exalted views of the dignity and importance of the ministry, could describe himself and other ministers as "labourers together with God ;" and could speak of ministers

as saving themselves and those who hear them.—I. Cor., iii. 9; I. Tim. iv. 16. We yet find that when he speaks of the agency of man, and of God in this matter, in the way of comparison or contrast; he represents the former as nothing and the latter as everything—"I have planted," says he, "Apollos watered; but God gave the increase, so then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase."—I. Cor. iii., 6, 7. The illuminating, the sanctifying and comforting power which goes through the word is all of God: it is the effect of His Spirit alone.

I would say then, my hearers, let us honour the means of grace, as we call them, as God honours them. We may even magnify the importance of them; because they are of Divine appointment, and because the Spirit of God works through them, and that in a way so transcendently glorious as in the salvation of lost sinners. But, let us see to it, that we do not honour them at the expense of God's own proper glory,—that we do not depend on ourselves for success, and seek in our use of them our own honour or praise. To do so is virtually to rob God of His prerogative, and to claim to ourselves a power and honour which belong only to Him. And wo to those, whether ministers or members of churches, who fall into this sin. The good Spirit of God will hold no communion with them; and their pride will speedily prepare them for a fall, and well shall it be for them, if having fallen, they be humbled, and brought to repentance. We find God making this protestation:—"I am Jehovah, that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." And those who think that their eloquence or ingenuity in expounding the word is to be effectual to convert men; or, that the external order and discipline of their churches, are to save those who connect themselves with them, are certainly attempting to share with Him the glory of the greatest of all His achievements—the spiritual renovation of fallen man; and are exposing themselves to his fiercest anger.

It should, methinks, brethren, be an awakening consideration, that in proportion to our occupancy and zeal about the advancement of religion, so in some respects is our danger of trusting to the external means, and seeking our own glory through these. And the want of success in many an enterprise that bears the aspect of being a Christian one, may just be referable to this, that the agents in it have been acting, as though they were doing all, and have been seeking to themselves the glory, and so they have been left to themselves. In this way, we fear that we are often denied the gracious presence of the Divine Spirit, in all our religious exercises,—as in the closet and family—the meeting for prayer—the sabbath school—the solemn assemblies of the sabbath—the sacramental services, and the meetings of the rulers of the church. We have in many cases sought our own glory, as personal agents, or the glory of our own church or communion; and, God has refused to maintain fellowship with us and to confer any true honor upon us. And, why should we wonder that he has thus dealt with us? Is He, by honouring those who dishonour Him, to become the rewarder of His enemies in the very acts of treachery and rebellion against himself? Let us rather admire his patience and long-suffering with us, and, while yet retained in His service, and permitted to occupy various stations of influence and responsibility, let us strive and labour in a dependance upon His blessing for the advancement of His kingdom.

But as God, in His spiritual kingdom, makes no account of the mere instrumentality, when He is not himself acknowledged in the use of it, so neither, as I now remark, *secondly*, does He regard the mere number of those who connect themselves with His service, but, in some circumstances, as in the case of Gideon's army, He honours the instrumentality of the few, rather than that of the many.

God saw that, had He given the victory to the thirty-two thousand, or even to the ten thousand, Israel would have vaunted themselves, and not have acknowledged Him in it. And, therefore, He cut off all occasion of glorying in themselves, by

giving the victory over the Midianitish hosts to a band that amounted to not a hundredth of the original levy; thus making it manifest, that it was His power, and not the handful of Gideon's followers, that discomfited Midian. Now, we may be sure, whenever a Christian church, or any associated body of Christians, depend for success in any enterprise, on their numbers, that God will not prosper them in it. The principles on which His spiritual kingdom is conducted utterly forbid this. That kingdom "is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." And He cannot employ, as the direct means of its establishment, the pride of man, whether that pride finds its gratification in the individual talents, or the numbers and aggregate resources of the instruments. It is evident, then, that this view of the matter comes under the first remark which I have endeavoured to illustrate, viz :—That God's just and jealous regard to His own Glory, prevents Him, as we may say, from honouring, as instruments in His service, those who do not honour Him. He will frown on those who pride themselves on their numbers, just as he frowns on those who vaunt themselves for personal acquirements.

But it may not be out of place to show from other considerations, that mere numerical strength is not of itself a recommendation to God of instruments for the advancement of His kingdom. Let it be observed then, that there will be amongst all the people of God wherever they may be found, and howsoever grouped, as in large or small communities—what may be called a homogeneity of character. Above all distinctions growing out of age or sex, rank or national origin, Christians ought to be one— one in mind, affection and character; and that, from their common union with the Saviour, and participation of His spirit.

Need I remind you, my hearers, that it was the Saviour's prayer for His people—a prayer in which He cannot but be heard—"that they all may be one, as Thou, Father," said He, "art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us." Now, Christ's professed followers may be very numerous, so, they are in our own day, congregations may be large, and the aggregation of those



In a district, or a province, or country may be large : yet, when they are wanting in the proper homogeneousness of the Christian body—oneness in the faith and love of the Saviour, and oneness in mutual affection—then, it is certain God will not greatly honour them in employing them to advance His kingdom in the world. If all their union be found in a formal profession of the same creed, and observance of the same external organization and mode of worship, they are at best, like some promiscuous levy of men who have been drawn together from various selfish views, without any hearty patriotism and concern for the common welfare : and, who have no more marked agreement with each other than a common military garb, and, for a time at least, one common standard. Such an army might be very imposing from its numbers, but if the men composing it were defective at once in discipline and in a hearty resolution to stand or fall with each other and with the banner of their country ; of what avail would it be in actual warfare ? No proclamation, like that of Gideon, would be required to rid it of the fearful and faint-hearted. These would troop off at every attainable opportunity for desertion, and would keep each other in countenance, by pronouncing their treachery to be only a justifiable regard to personal safety. Alas, for the enterprize that depended on such an army ! The commander would do well if he kept his own ground. If he did make head against the enemy, he would have to refer his victory to their weakness, and not to any valour in his own forces. Now the church is in our own day as she always has been a church militant. Her head is “ The Captain ” rather the prince or leader “ of Salvation.”—Heb. ii. 10. And many a time He is described in the word, as a mighty conqueror, heading His servants in their conflicts in His cause. All believers are His soldiers : ministers have no other eminence than that of the officers of an army, who head its subordinate divisions. The warfare in which they are engaged is with sin, in all the various forms in which it prevails in the heart, and manifests itself in the conduct of men ; and with Satan, who rules in the hearts of all the children of disobedience, and entrenches himself in strong places in the world—as through the ignorance that

prevails in masses of its population, or the infidelity and malignant errors that are often current amongst the learned and speculative classes; or, through the superstition and Pharisaism that characterize many specious religionists or through the Epicureanism or love of worldly pleasure to which multitudes of all classes addict themselves. Such are the enemies, such the strong places, which the followers of Christ must seek to conquer and reduce. This is their warfare all over the earth. Though its aspects may greatly vary with the external condition of men, and the various subordinate influences that modify their characters, it is yet in itself, every where substantially the same. Its objects are the subversion of Satan's usurped dominion over men, and the bringing them into the kingdom of God.

And is the mere name of Christ, when assumed by numbers, to prevail in this warfare? If this blessed name has failed to sanctify those who profess it, yea, and too many of those also who preach it; is it to have a magic influence on the masses of men to whom it is proclaimed to charm them into obedience and holiness? Ah! my hearers, observation in all ages, and in all lands assures us, that carnal and godless christians, if such a description may be tolerated, however numerous they may be, can exert no direct converting influence on the unprofessing world around them. And how should they do so? They do not heartily desire the salvation of men from sin, and the honour of the Saviour. They do not importune God for the establishment of His kingdom in the hearts of men; they do not use their talents and influence for disseminating His truths amongst them: they do not embody it before them in their own characters and conduct. They have the appearance, indeed, of being in arms on the side of Christ—they seem to keep the field in opposition to the enemy; but they do so only from a secret understanding with him. He knows full well that he has nothing to fear from them: and so he allows them without much molestation, to go through their manœuvres on what he claims as his own territory. But, let a genuine concern for the honour of the Saviour, and the extension of His kingdom in the world possess any of the leaders, the ministers and other office-bearers of the Church.

And let these earnestly and faithfully urge on their followers to approve themselves as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, in the exercises of personal piety, by reproving the wickedness of others around them, and by exerting themselves to bring all whom they can influence to submit to the yoke of Christ. Then, I do not say that they would be abandoned by all their people: for, it has never, I believe been found, that a revival of religion has taken place, amongst the office-bearers of a church without at the same time extending to the members also. But, many of these would in all likelihood hang back; yea, or turn aside from the enterprises to which they were urged. They would not choose to come out from the world. They would grudge the sacrifices of reputation with their worldly friends, and the sacrifices of their time and substance which they were now called on to make. In short, if their leaders would advance in a course of active service on the Lord's side, such followers would be left behind. They would act like two-thirds of Gideon's levy, who virtually said, that, though they had no relish for the yoke of the Midianites, they had still less relish for perilling their lives in throwing it off.

You may thus, my hearers, see how a church might sustain a diminution of its members, and of its ministers, too, without sustaining any real loss. Such diminution, like the lopping off of some of the branches of a tree, might be an actual step to a state of greater efficiency. The same results might be brought about by a different process, on any portion of the visible Church; as, by the occurrence of persecution, or even the threatening of it. Ah, my brethren! though all of us who take our place in the ranks of Christ do so under a formal engagement to take up the Cross and to follow Him, whithersoever He conducts us; may we not fear, that the mere prospect of fines and imprisonment, to say nothing of death, would be sufficient to tempt many to quit the ranks of the Saviour. So, you know it has been in every age and in every church. It was so, even amongst the followers of the Saviour when He was on earth. It was so, as Paul tells us, amongst the Christians in Rome, when he himself, was brought before Nero. Who can say how much all our congregations

would be reduced, were the scenes which took place in the land of our fathers from 1662 till 1688, to be re-enacted amongst us in these days ?

A reducing process may take place in a church, if it be in a reviving state from the temptations to sinful indulgence, with which the world is constantly plying the followers of Christ. This is so obvious that it requires no illustration. So, heresies assume, from time to time, a kind of epidemic form, and by attracting to them unstable professors, draw them off from the true profession of Christ. These heresies are, themselves, the results of spurious religion, while they tend to make it manifest ; so Paul intimated to the Corinthians—" There must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you." I. Cor. xi., 19. When the members of a church are diminished from any of these causes, I need not say, that the cause of Christ is not injured by such diminution : it is injured by the presence of carnal and ungodly men in the church. The removal of these, in any of the ways just mentioned, or by the salutary exercise of discipline, is like the disencumbering an army of its ineffective men,—it is but the commencement of a process which shall be carried out to the utmost, ere the church militant become the church triumphant. I would say, then, let no man's heart fail him for the cause of Christ, and His church when desertions from her ranks occur. Such desertions are an indication that the Captain of Salvation is preparing His followers for enterprises in the advancement of His kingdom.

These remarks, brethren, have not been suggested by any thing in the present state of the Church of Scotland—deeply interesting to all of us as are the circumstances of that beloved Church. Yet, here I am reminded that the distractions and troubles with which she is beset are referable to the operation of principles in the Divine Government, to which I have been adverting. For the period of more than a quarter of a century, she has been in a reviving state ; and the opposition which those in her who are known as the reforming majority of her ministers and elders are experiencing — an opposition which threat

an internal separation, as well as the rending asunder her connection with the state, is but a natural result of the revival which has been passing upon her. The doctrine of the cross, in its living power, has been extensively proclaimed from her pulpits. The rulers of her congregations have been exerting themselves to maintain a scriptural discipline. Her people have been supporting, with their contributions and prayers, Missionaries to Gentiles and Jews—to the home and the colonial population. And it has been, when she has thus been proving herself a faithful witness for Christ, that Satan has found means to stir up a hostility from without,—and, what is far worse, a dissension within her, which together, for the time, threaten her destruction. But, He who appeared in the burning bush, and saved it from being consumed, is we believe in the midst of her. And children yet unborn shall, we doubt not, see her come forth from the fire through which she is passing, and shall confess the appropriateness of the motto which her reformers chose for her, "*Nec tamen consumebatur*,"—(and yet it was not consumed.)

It would, my hearers, be inexcusable in me at this time not to make a specific reference to the state of the church in this Province, with which we ourselves are connected. In the present divided state of the general Christian community, when churches are separated from each other, not merely by territorial limits, but even more so by diversity of views respecting modes of government, discipline, and worship, and the extent of their separation from that great apostate body which has the bad eminence of being "the mother of abominations of the earth." We are reminded from what has just happened amongst ourselves,\* and is happening in other churches, that changes may be taking place in the relative numerical strength of churches, if we

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\* It may be noted, for the information of any reader ignorant of the circumstances referred to, that, at the time this Sermon was preached, letters of resignation from two ministers, were on the table of the Presbytery, and that the Presbytery afterwards felt themselves called on to depose these brethren.

may so speak, by the passing over of ministers and members from one church to another. Now, it is an obvious view of such changes that they do not necessarily imply a loss to the general cause of Christ; they resemble the transference of officers and men from one detachment of an army to another. If faithful and devoted men leave the church with which they have been connected, in consequence of admitting the conviction that she is corrupt and defective in her constitution and administration, that church sustains a great loss,—the greater, in that it is to be presumed that such men have not gone forth from her without first having testified against the evils which they could not tolerate, and warned their brethren of them, and that after all, they have been unsuccessful in their endeavours to remove them. And as a church thus deserted of her best Ministers and members is in a condition to be truly deplored, so is that church to be congratulated which is drawing to itself all who are in right earnest about their own salvation, and the advancement of the kingdom of the Redeemer in the world. On the other hand, if those who are deserting a church are of a secular spirit; men who have no right discernment of Divine truth; no love to the souls of men; no zeal for the advancement of the church and the honour of the Redeemer; then, I would say, that their departure is no loss, rather—alas that it should be so—a deliverance to the church which they have left,—as the gain of them is but that of a loss by the church which receives them.

Next in importance to the increase of consistent and faithful members and ministers in a church, is the removal from it of those who evince no true zeal for the honour of God and love to his people. The church which is casting off such members will, ere long, through the blessing of her Great Head, have their places more than supplied by others in whom the virtues and fruits of holiness shall be manifest. And, second only to the evil of having faithful men driven away from a church because of its corruptions, or through a tyrannical exercise of its discipline, is the evil of having its ranks and offices filled with merely formal professors. The church that is thus increasing may be in her

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own account, from the number and wealth of her members, and her favour with the men of the world, like the church of Laodicea of old, "rich and increased with goods, and having need of nothing;"—and yet like that Church, too, be nigh unto chastening, yea even to utter excision.

And now, my beloved hearers, ye who are partakers with me in the profession of the Gospel, as well as ye who are joined with me in the care of souls, suffer in conclusion a word of exhortation. I would say, then, let us see well to it that our profession is genuine and sincere—that we are in truth the followers and the servants of the Saviour. Our efficiency in contributing ought to the advancement of his kingdom in the world, and our own everlasting well-being depend absolutely on our being ourselves his faithful subjects. Many and decisive are the trials to which the Saviour exposes his people while sojourning in this wilderness, originating—some in the varying dispensations of his providence; others in the infirmity and depravity of our own tempers and hearts; others again in the wickedness of the world, and all more or less subordinate to the malignant hostility of Satan, the god of this world. And, under these trials, we can maintain our integrity, and persevere unto the end, to the salvation of our souls, only through the grace of the Redeemer. As a portion of the visible church, we have in many ways avowed our determination to aid in extending the kingdom of Christ throughout the length and breadth of the land. And well may we feel deeply interested in this work. Before many generations shall have passed away, the population of this great Province may be expected to equal that of the Parent State. How solemn the consideration, that the character of millions yet unborn is to be greatly influenced by our character and proceedings as the professed servants of Christ. Well may we labour and pray that the young as they grow up may make a voluntary surrender of themselves to the Saviour; that the members of our churches may be increased; and that unoccupied missionary fields and vacant churches may be plentifully supplied with labourers. And yet, dear brethren, at a time

when the Great Head of the church has been diminishing the number of our ministers, by separating from us two in circumstances which indicate that their ministerial responsibility had sat lightly upon them,—how loud is the warning to us who are invested with office in the church, to take heed that we are indeed called and owned of God to be his servants; that, above all selfish and sectarian objects, we are seeking his glory in the subversion of error and the advancement of the truth, the conversion and edification of immortal souls, and the glory of the Redeemer. AMEN!



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## CHARGE.

I now proceed, my dear Brother, to discharge the duty which, on this solemn occasion, the Presbytery has seen meet to lay upon me. In addressing you, time will not permit me to do more than throw out a few hints, which, if they do not suggest new views,—a thing I can hardly anticipate,—may, at least, refresh your own thoughts, and, through the divine blessing, strengthen your motives for the faithful discharge of the sacred duties of your office.

You are, now, in the full sense, a minister of the gospel. You have been ordained according to *true scriptural practice*, and have been called by this people to take the oversight of them in the Lord. As a minister of Christ, and a steward of the mysteries of God, your station is one of great honour. Of the dignity of your office if you think aright, you can scarcely think too highly; as such views cannot fail to deepen your sense of responsibility, and urge you to a vigorous discharge of all your clerical duties. For, whether we reflect on the relation in which we stand to our Divine Master as the heralds of His mercy and the expounders of His will,—or on the lasting effects which our labours, if faithfully performed, must have on immortal souls, it cannot admit of a doubt that, as ministers of the gospel, we occupy by far the most important sphere that any men can occupy in the present life. “Ambassadors for Christ,”—“co-workers with God,”—are expressions which fully bear out this view of the matter. Divine wisdom has seen meet to employ men, not angels, to disseminate throughout the world the knowledge of redemption. As the highest of creatures could give no additional value to this system of truth by their services, God has manifested his power and goodness in commissioning men, to declare the way of salvation to their fellow-sinners. The treasure is his,—and it is put into earthen vessels, “that the excellency of the power may be seen to be of God.” Yet, how great is the honour with

which they are clothed, who are counted worthy of being put into the ministry, and thus made instrumental in presenting to the world incomparably the most precious knowledge with which the human mind can be made acquainted.

If in all civilized countries, a large share of honour is readily conceded to those teachers of the arts and sciences, who extend the boundaries of human knowledge, or multiply the means of present enjoyment, how much more honourable is the office he fills, who teaches Divine knowledge, and whose vocation it is, to lead men to a participation of the purest enjoyments, of which they are capable not only in this life, but through eternity. The philosopher expounds the laws of nature, investigates the qualities and relations of matter ;—the minister of Christ unfolds the perfections of that glorious Being, from whom these laws emanate, and shews the qualities of moral truth and the relations that subsist betwixt Jehovah and his accountable creatures, as well as the *laws* by which the destiny of the human mind shall be eternally fixed. The former aims at lessening the sum of human suffering and benefiting man in his physical and social condition,—the latter is a direct and essential benefactor to his fellow-men in this respect, but specially aims at their deliverance from guilt, and seeks by every means their spiritual and eternal welfare.

This is surely a high aim.—The instruction communicated is commensurate with it. Our world stands greatly in need of this sort of teaching. For all the extant history of the human race furnishes a melancholy and vivid commentary on the Apostle's declaration, that where the truths of the gospel have not been made known, men have lived without hope and without God. Every kind of knowledge is useful ; but *this*, to sinful men, is absolutely indispensable. The depravity of the human heart, or in other words, man's natural aversion to the holiness and government of God, must in the nature of things, if left to take its course, entail on a creature of sentiments and passions, and destined to live for ever, an amount of misery which no language can utter. But this depravity has not remained,—(how could

it in such a creature as man)—in the mere form of a loathsome and hateful obstruction. It hath broken out into open rebellion against the Most High, by which guilt is incurred, that naturally binds over to punishment, under the government of a Being at once just, wise, and omnipotent. But, through the unspeakable mercy of Jehovah, man although wretched by sin, is not left without hope. “The glorious gospel of the blessed God,” as it presents the offers of pardon and the means of sanctification for the most guilty and depraved of the children of men, is emphatically the good news of an immortal hope. Now, as a minister of Christ, you are sent to proclaim all this,—you are commissioned by Almighty God, as his ambassador, to go and tell men of their guilt, helplessness, and misery, and, at the same time, you are, with the most affectionate earnestness, to announce a free pardon to all who will believe in a crucified Saviour. Yes,—and all who do believe the gospel message you deliver, shall be saved,—shall be made heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ of the heavenly inheritance. What a sacred vocation is yours my Brother,—how solemn its duties,—how great its honours,—how vast its responsibilities,—and how pregnant with results which eternity alone can develope!

Shall these hints, intended in some measure, to show the dignity of our office, puff us up? God forbid. Their natural and proper tendency should be, to make us the most humble of men. “For who is sufficient for these things,”—and, if we wilfully fail in the discharge of the duties of our honourable and highly responsible office, what a fearful account shall we have at last to render of our stewardship! A clergyman proud of his talents, and strutting with a vain conceit of his office through sacred functions, must be a laughing-stock to devils. Yet there is a holy magnifying of our office, which will be no more overlooked by the wise and the humble, than it can be comprehended by the vain and presumptuous, who, although they speak in “great swelling words” of the sacredness of the ministerial office, are yet utterly incapable of feeling any thing of its solemn and momentous responsibilities. Nor must you permit yourself on this matter, to be at all influenced by the opinions of men of the

world. You are no doubt aware of the light in which they look at the sacred office, even when its duties are faithfully and meekly discharged. Those who rate every situation in proportion to the fame, or wealth which it secures its possessor, will entertain but a poor opinion of the gospel ministry, unless when accompanied with weighty emoluments and earthly distinctions. These are temptations from which the ministers of the Presbyterian Church have little to fear. But I must tell you that you have much to fear, if any thing can induce you to entertain low notions of the vocation to which you are called. I do not mean to say that it has been the main cause; yet I am strongly impressed with the conviction, that a low opinion of the *ministerial work* has contributed in no small degree to many of those clerical falls, which have brought reproach on the name of Christ. Be that as it may, it cannot admit of the shadow of a doubt, that he who thinks meanly of the situation he fills, whether sacred or secular, will neglect as many of its duties as he safely can; while those he cannot neglect, will be gone through with a hurried and heartless perfunctoriness, which will indicate but too plainly, the contempt or dislike that lurks in his bosom. This in a minister of religion is scarcely less disgraceful, than it is criminal and ruinous,—I say ruinous,—for it will paralyze all the powers of his mind, so that by a just and terrible retribution, he who thinks meanly of that ministry which he usurps and profanes, becomes himself, the meanest and most despicable of men. A sense of propriety, or the lust of applause, may partially conceal the evil from others, but will rather tend to increase, than lessen its effects, on the heart of the wretched trifler with sacred things.

It will naturally be expected, that I should say somewhat on the duties of this sacred office. On a theme so vast, however, nothing more can at present be attempted, than a very brief reference to a few of its more prominent points.

Among these duties the public preaching of the Word occupies a highly important place. It was predicted of our Lord, that He should "preach the Gospel to the poor."

And we learn from the Evangelists, that, when he appeared in the flesh, he often did so not only in the temple and the synagogues, but frequently in the open air. It is also worthy of notice, that while thus engaged himself, he sent forth his disciples to preach the Gospel in the towns and villages of Judea, and, when about to ascend to heaven, we behold him confirming the duty of preaching, under circumstances ineffably solemn. For, among the last words which the Lord of Glory addressed to his followers, was the *grand commission*,—"Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." The Apostles obeyed this Divine injunction; and the nations that sat in darkness and in the shadow of death were enlightened.

All who have read with care the Acts of the Apostles, or the Epistles of Paul, must have been struck with the peculiar prominence which is everywhere given to the duty of public preaching. The reason of this commends itself to every man's understanding,—for, plain it is, that the greater part of men can never be made acquainted with Divine Truth, unless instructed in it from the pulpit. In most instances, it is from the lips of the living preacher that sinners first hear the truths that alarm them, as well as the promises that are fitted to bring consolation to their bosoms. That preaching should be slighted by those who have but little dependence on the efficacy of saving truth, but boundless dependance on sacred persons, sacred vestments, and sacred buildings, needs awaken no kind of surprise. How much there is of either apostolic doctrine, or practice in this, I shall not stop to enquire. Apart from the proof which the Scriptures furnish, ecclesiastical history fully warrants the statement, —that the pulpit must occupy no secondary place in the church, or, if it does, Divine Truth will soon vanish from the minds of the people. The consequence of this must be, either practical atheism, or gross superstition;—and, if the latter, the Ministers of religion are no longer the instructors of the people, but *masters of the ceremonies*, and leaders in a sacred pageant.

A thorough conviction of the importance of preaching, as a grand means of doing good, ought to lead you to great fidelity in the discharge of this part of your office. You will be careful to select such topics for the pulpit as are the most likely to be useful to your people. It is well when a Minister's taste and the dictates of conscience fully accord in this. For there is some ground to fear that the *subject* is occasionally chosen, not because it is apparently most to the edification of the people, but rather as it is supposed to afford a peculiarly fine field for a display of salent, or may be got up with little expense of time or labour. I trust that neither sloth nor a love of display shall ever be allowed to interfere with the wants of immortal souls, and the sacred claims of your own conscience in this matter. While I cherish the hope that you will—let me nevertheless urge upon you the duty of choosing such topics for the pulpit, as you think shall, through the Divine blessing, tell most powerfully on the understanding and conscience of your hearers. Your chief object is to bring men back to God. The truth of the Gospel, applied to the soul by the Holy Spirit, is the instrument you are to employ. But this instrument is only employed aright when Gospel Truth is preached as the Bible unfolds it. We must never forget that, while we are to teach and enforce many things which natural religion indicates, our grand theme is *the way of salvation*. If we overlook this, whatever we are, certainly we are not preachers of the Gospel. Hence all subjects ought to be selected with a view of either directly or indirectly bearing on this. Let me therefore earnestly beseech you, my brother, to give, in all your public ministrations, that prominency and relative position to the essential doctrines of the Gospel, so necessary for the spiritual and eternal well-being of your hearers. And I need hardly add, that no doctrine can have its right position, and no duty can be properly illustrated and enforced, unless the doctrine of the substitution of the Son of God in the room of sinners shall clearly occupy the first place. Any serious inaccuracy in this matter does not so much derange, as destroy the whole structure of Christianity.

The peculiar doctrines of the Gospel, to which reference has been made, are but few in number. This does not evidence, as some may fancy, a poverty of truth, but a sublime simplicity in system, strikingly analogous to what we perceive in some of the greatest of God's works in nature. All are aware that the noblest of the physical sciences rests on a few great principles. But, although the peculiar doctrines of Christianity are few, and capable of being expressed in a form simply axiomatic, so that all may readily learn them, and the weakest, in some measure, comprehend their import; yet, like all great first truths, but in a degree beyond any other, they admit of amplification and inference to an almost boundless extent. The Minister who does not understand this, or does not give it effect, may utter nothing but truth, yet his discourses will awaken little interest and yield but little instruction. For what is so uninteresting, and, in a sense, more valueless than first truths jumbled together, and repeated without any intelligible end in view. Men who think accurately, and aim at mastering their subject, will rarely fall into this error. Yet I fear the supposition is by no means rare, that a useful discourse has been produced, because there has been thrown together, although in sad defiance of all logic, a heap of common-place truths and Bible principles. You will of course guard against this. And I need hardly add, that clear views of Christianity, as a system of facts, or of doctrines growing out of these facts, or inseparably connected with them, as well as the relation in which one truth stands to others, will enable you to give a variety and richness to your pulpit labours, which will at once enlist the attention, and enlighten the minds of those you address.

You will no doubt frequently preach on the duties which men owe to God, and to one another; and, in doing so, permit me to remark, that I hope you will avoid vague generalities. I can scarcely conceive any sort of preaching less likely to benefit,—I had almost said more likely to do harm,—than when the people are perpetually told to be good,

without any distinct intimation whence this goodness springs, or what is the nature of its particular graces, and what are the fruits which each grace should produce in the life. This is a highly important and extremely difficult branch of our public labours. Hence to me it appears quite unaccountable how Ministers choose *subjects on the Duties*, because they fancy these subjects may be easily discussed. For, if we imitate Prophets and Apostles, in the exposition and application of these subjects, it is far from easy, and often very painful, to preach on the Duties. Painful, from the conviction that counsel and reproof will frequently be heard with indifferency, or treated with scorn. Besides, to handle these topics properly, we must have an accurate conception of the connexion betwixt doctrine and duty,—great moral courage, tenderness, and prudence,—an intimate knowledge of human nature, and a facility of applying analysis and synthesis, as occasion offers. Trusting, my brother, that the Lord has bestowed upon you the gifts requisite for this, as well as the other parts of the ministerial office, I fear not to affirm, that, if these gifts are employed in this manner in the way I have suggested, you will not only be enabled to do great good to others, but your own mind will acquire a vigour and an amplitude, which a mind chained down by the law of isolation, or dealing in vague generalities, can never possess.

But how accurate or extensive soever your views of Divine truth may be, you are no doubt aware, that without severe mental labour in private, you will fail in producing a constant succession of good sermons for the pulpit. Those who have a large fund of Theological knowledge, and are withal men of active and vigorous minds, may for a time draw freely on their capital in hand. Such men, because they have studied much, may for a while preach much, and study little. But, wo to the Minister, or rather wo to his people, who thinks that little labour is required for the pulpit. Men of intuitive genius, who can preach without study, may sneer at this. To such I can make no reply, as I do not



pretend to understand well the conformation of their mind, or the state of their conscience. My own conviction is, that nothing great or valuable can be produced without labour. Depend upon it, a good sermon is no exception. It is sloth or vanity, not genius, that accounts for the facility with which certain *things* are got up for the pulpit.

The Apostle enjoins Timothy to devote himself to reading. He who gave this advice was eminently wise. And if he to whom it was given, with all his high endowments and the advantages from early life which he possessed for the acquisition of sacred knowledge, was nevertheless enjoined to give himself to study, that he might be a useful preacher, it were presumption in us to think that we might dispense with the former, and yet attain to anything like the latter. Indeed, without severe and well-directed study, our discourses will soon be characterized by a painful sameness, or a barefaced poverty sufficient to put any man out of countenance, but a slothful Minister. In mental labour different minds pursue different modes,—but, whether it be with pen in hand, or by a process more intellectual and abstract, if the labour be gone through, the result must be beneficial. Nor will it be questioned, that those most profoundly sensible that their highest efforts must fail without the Holy Spirit's influence, will be found in labours just the more abundant in preparing spiritual nourishment for immortal souls. What a shame is it to appear before a christian people on Sabbath, with nothing better than the hasty sweepings of our memories.

You will, of course, devote a portion of your time to reading,—and, I hope, read to purpose. For there be men who read merely to banish *ennui*, or save themselves the labour of thinking. It is not easy to have a high opinion of such. Their minds, at best, are a sort of little tanks, not fountains, and the contents are often impure and stagnant. Still, it is more difficult to have a good opinion of the Minister who is not a reading man, inasmuch as, for the most part, he has no claims to the character of a thinker. And, as soon as

the College gloss wears off, he loses every vestige of the clerical character. To be compelled to spend a day in the society of such men, is a trial of very serious magnitude. I take it that you are quite incapable of permitting yourself to sink into this state of mental inanity.

The Holy Scriptures will unquestionably occupy a first place in your reading. Study that invaluable treasure constantly and systematically, and let this be done in the languages in which the inspired penmen wrote. On this I deem it superfluous to say more, than merely to express the hope, that the fruits of your Bible reading will in all cases constitute the stamina of all your discourses. You will no doubt give considerable attention to what is technically called Theological reading. The number of works of a high order in Divinity, is much smaller than one would at first sight be apt to suppose. Indeed, choice Theology, like choice poetry, may be placed on a comparatively small shelf. Not but there are to be found in a vast number of works in Sacred Literature, as well as in every department of learning, many views and sentiments, which a man of ripe powers may judiciously select, and wisely and honestly appropriate. Yet, after all, these works are to be regarded as rather the agreeable companions of an hour, than the friends whose society we are sedulously to cultivate, with the view of acquiring solid information and habits of accurate thinking. None but first-rate productions can lead to such results. Select a few of these *Masters*, if you have not already done it, and give them your patient attention.

A mind formed on the lofty standards which past ages have left us, will, in addition to the valuable knowledge thus acquired, often be found to possess much true dignity and genuine simplicity. Such a mind can scarcely fall into that vicious mode of sermonizing, which, for want of a better phrase, I would denominate the *Essay style*,—a mode which a man of sense will despise for its puerility,—a man of intellect, for the restraints it lays on his powers,—while the

man of piety must loathe it for the mischief which it invariably does to the great and simple truths of the Gospel. He who thinks that the highest effort of a pulpit production is the brief and elegantly trimmed Essay, has nearly as much to unlearn in matters of taste, as he has to learn in Theology. Indeed, *the purling brook and flowery mead* style, both in language and sentiment, ought in all fairness to be left to ambitious lads in boarding-schools and debating societies. The pulpit has no legitimate claim to it,—and, when it is carried there, although certain persons may be delighted, yet assuredly men of sense and piety will hold down their heads and mourn. But I beg your pardon, my brother, for I firmly believe you are quite incapable of this. Taste and conscience alike condemn the folly.

In a word, endeavour to come to the pulpit prepared to deliver solid scriptural instruction, and aim at giving to each a portion in due season. A mind richly fraught with Divine knowledge, and animated by heavenly love, will seldom fail to present truth in a form to satisfy the wise and the good, while truth communicated by such a mind will not be without salutary effects on persons of a very different stamp. And, be assured, that while you are throwing out large portions of God's truth, it will offend no man of taste and piety, if you should at times overbalance a sentence or spoil an antithesis.

As your aim,—may I not add the sole aim,—in all that you do, must be the advancement of the Saviour's glory in the salvation of men, you will embrace every opportunity by which you can in any way be instrumental in accomplishing this. Pastoral visitation, when prudently and faithfully gone about, has ever been found very subservient to this great end. How often a Minister should pay pastoral visits to each family of his charge, is, in some measure, a question of circumstances. But it can be no question that if this duty is wholly neglected, any congregation must suffer seriously in its spiritual interests. The Minister himself must also suffer,

and that to an extent of which it is not easy to form any conception. A moment's reflection will show this. The clergyman who stately visits his people, and on these occasions converses freely with them on the concerns of their souls, and catechises the junior members of each family, has an excellent opportunity of communicating much wholesome instruction, and of giving, in a pointed and easy way, such encouragement, counsel, or warning, as the respective cases may seem to demand. He that neglects visitation has no such opportunity of doing good in a private way as he otherwise might. Nor should it be overlooked, that by this familiar and confidential intercourse, a Minister may in some measure learn the real state of religion among those over whom he is appointed to watch in the Lord. Thus there is put into his hands, if I may so speak, a kind of moral thermometer, which may be of the last moment to his usefulness, and which a wise man will not fail to employ for the best of purposes. Besides, such visits when prudently conducted, must contribute in no small degree to knit the hearts of all persons of reflection to their pastor. They see that he is really in earnest,—that he is not the mere functionary of the Sabbath, but is anxious, in season and out of season, to seek the salvation of their souls. Pains-taking efforts in private, when they spring from pure motives, and are judiciously carried out, are almost certain to produce this impression on the minds of the people. Of such an impression you will not think lightly, nor can you easily estimate the extent to which it may go in preparing the heart for giving a ready reception to the truth you deliver in public. I shall not so far question your own good sense and experience, as to offer a single remark in the way in which you ought to conduct your pastoral visits. I would merely observe that you must guard against permitting these visits to degenerate into mere formal or complimentary calls. At these seasons you go forth among your flock as the servant of the Most High God, to see how it fares with their souls. Hence the character of the pastor at these times must not be allowed to

sink into that of the mere neighbour or acquaintance. It appears to me, that pastoral visits paid with the haste and sinpering levity of forenoon calls, would be very effectual for bringing all nily religion to an end in a congregation.

Besides your regular pastoral visits, you will no doubt have often to visit the house of mourning. To such calls of distress, especially when the soul is smitten with a sense of guilt, or the heart is sinking under the griefs of bereavement, you will, I am sure, ever lend a ready ear. But if the Minister of Christ is much, very much, needed in the chamber of death, it cannot be concealed that there he sometimes meets with the severest trials of his fidelity to his Master and the souls of men,—trials which require the highest moral firmness, combined with the most exquisite tenderness. For, alas! all for whose souls we watch, or by whose death-bed we may be called to take our stand, are not in that state of mind in which we could wish to see them depart. Some may be fearfully stupid, or the victims of false hopes that spring not from faith, and cannot end in glory,—while others may be struggling with remorse, which even the hope of the Gospel cannot for a time dispel. On such occasions, if a Minister has not a large portion of his Master's spirit, he may do unspeakable harm. To minister to a soul diseased, and that soul on the brink of eternity—what a duty! Yet I trust, my brother, you will not shrink from it. Discharge it faithfully in the strength of the Lord,—and, if you have a single eye to your Saviour's glory, and if your heart is influenced with love to souls, you will not fail even in this delicate and trying part of your work.

I cannot forbear to add, that anything like indifferency or aversion in a Minister to visit the sick, or the mourner, manifests such a hardness of heart and searedness of conscience, as cannot be contemplated without the most intense disgust and horror. Oh how unlike to Him who went with the mourning friends to the grave, and mingled his tears with theirs!

But if the dying and the afflicted require your sympathy and counsel, the young who are just entering on life, charmed with its hopes, and ignorant of its snares, demand in a special manner your care and direction. The injunction, "Feed my

lamb," is one which I trust you will never for a moment forget. Indeed, I am sure, you will view the young of your flock as, in some respects, the most interesting portion of your charge. There are many reasons,—not one of which I can stop to notice at present, which must come home to a Minister's bosom with irresistible force, to lead him to employ every means in his power, in order that the young may be early brought to know the Lord Jesus, and, in wisdom and faith, to profess his Name. I cannot doubt but you fully appreciate the truth in all its bearings at which I have hinted, and that you will not fail to give it effect. In doing so, you will manifest His spirit, who took up little children in his arms and blessed them, and who said, "Let them come unto me."

In fine, my dear brother, I beseech you to cultivate personal piety. Without this we can scarcely look for any success in our labours, nor can we have any comfort in them. If formality be a very dangerous sin, none have more cause to dread falling into this sin than Ministers. Guard against this. Live near to God; be much in secret prayer. Rise from your knees to prepare your discourses,—go from your knees to deliver them. For of our labours it may be said with peculiar emphasis,—let them all be done with prayer and supplication. Often examine yourself, and your work. Strive to grow in all the graces, but especially in love, meekness, and humility. Eminent piety will give to your mind a noble simplicity, as well as prudence, firmness, and patience, which, for the performance of any duty, but in a peculiar manner for duties that are difficult and trying, you will find to be of unspeakable importance.

I have to apologize for the length of this address. But were I to offer any apology for the plain terms in which I have spoken, I am sure I would not less offend your understanding, than do violence to my own conscience. My brother, I say it from my heart, that I rejoice you are come among us. The harvest is so great in this country, and the labourers are so few, that it becomes us to hail every faithful labourer with sacred pleasure. And it is my earnest prayer, that the Great God our Saviour may make you an able Minister of the New Testament, and give you many souls for "a crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord."

## ADDRESS.

### MY FRIENDS AND BRETHREN :

As there can be little, if any doubt that this is the first time that we have all met together, so, in all probability, it will be the last time that we shall all meet on earth. The next time, then, that we can reasonably expect all to meet will be on the great and terrible day of the Lord; and the next place of meeting will be before yonder great white throne of judgment and justice. We must all meet then and there. It will be a solemn meeting. It will be to be judged, every one according to his works.

I appear in your presence, at this time, not merely knowing and believing, but under the deep and solemn impression that I am an accountable being, and that the awful hour is rapidly approaching when I must give an account for what I am now to address to you. You are accountable beings, and the solemn hour is not far distant when you, each for himself, must render to God an account for the transactions of this day, and for the use that you may make of what I am to say to you. It therefore becomes me to speak with solemnity, and it no less becomes you to listen with solemnity.

A watchman has this day been set over you. It is his duty to warn you of the dreadful and awful danger to which you are exposed, of perishing in your sins. To do this he has received a Divine commission, and Divine authority. Let me remind you of a few of the obligations under which the connexion that has been formed, between you and your pastor, lays you :

1. You are to be taught gratitude for the grace and condescension of God, in sending among you an ambassador to make known to you the counsels of His will. Your minister has come to proclaim to you, that God, in Christ, has been graciously pleased to lay aside the thunder of His

power,—that he has suppressed the awful voice which makes earth shake to its centre, and hell tremble in the agonies of despair,—and that he has sunk the Sovereign and the Judge in the Father and the Friend. And should you not welcome the message, with warmest gratitude, which encourages hope for eternity,—which invites to peace with an offended God,—which soothes the soul to rest on a Saviour,—which extinguishes the hell within the breast, and brings the means of escape from the hell beyond the grave. Because God is so gracious and condescending as to send this message, be thankful. Of all punishment, that of despised mercy,—of slighted grace,—of ingratitude for these, will surely be most just, and will certainly be the most severe.

2. You are to *take* warning from him who has been set over you. He has been appointed a watchman to you to give warning. If he do so faithfully, he will save his own soul; but unless you *take* his warning, you will perish in your sins, and your blood will be required at your own hands in the day of the Lord. To take warning is to flee from the threatened danger, from the wrath to come, to the refuge set before you in the Gospel. Let his warning voice awaken in you the deepest sense of danger, and the most earnest and intense desire after deliverance. Be warned by him, to a complete renouncing of all refuges of lies, and of all false confidence. Let his warning voice persuade you seek safety and salvation in Christ alone. In taking warning to flee from threatened danger, stop not till you be beyond the reach of danger. Stop not half way between the avenger of blood and the city of refuge. Many have had convictions, alarms, and desires, and begun as it were to escape, while, after all, they have halted, or looked behind them, or lingered, till they were overtaken by eternal destruction. Take up with nothing short of real conversion. Flee to Christ, not merely towards him, but to him. Flee under the covert of His righteousness from the terribly tremendous storms of Divine indignation and wrath. Apply to him, and accept of him for wisdom, righteousness,



sanctification, and redemption. The taking of warning implies not only fleeing to Christ from danger and for safety, but also fleeing from sin. All those that take warning effectually, experience such a remarkable and complete change of views, sentiments, desires, and pursuits, as amounts to a new creation. They become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is the hating of sin with a perfect hatred, and the living of a life of new and holy obedience, and the pressing forward till the prize of a crown of resplendent and immortal glory be obtained. This will be taking warning from him who has been set over you as a watchman.

3. You are to be aware of taking offence at the sharp and piercing, the solemn and awful sounds of the warning voice that may be addressed to you. Your minister, in order to be faithful, must declare the whole counsel of God, whether you will hear, or whether you will forbear. He has been sworn to declare the truth, the whole truth, to keep back nothing. It is not pleasant, it is disagreeable, it is very painful for such as are sleeping the deep sleep of spiritual death, to be disturbed and alarmed with the loud and sudden, the terrific and awful cry of danger dreadful. But why should you be angry with him who would warn you of your danger? If your house were in flames, at the dead hour of midnight, and you in the most dreadful danger of perishing in its flames, would you be pleased with the watchman who should forbear to give the alarm, lest he should disturb you? No. You would be pleased, *well* pleased, however loudly and alarmingly he should sound the cry of danger, if it should be in time and loud enough to enable you to escape a fiery grave. You are exposed to a danger infinitely more awful than that which we have supposed, even the danger of perishing in everlasting and unquenchable fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. How, then, is it possible that you can be offended with him, who, with tender affection and love for your souls, would faithfully warn you to flee from such danger? Beware, lest by censuring and condemning the sentiments of the preacher, and taking offence at his

faithfulness, you should be found to censure and condemn what the eternal Jehovah, the God of Truth, has declared in the sacred volume of inspiration. To condemn any man's ministrations, because they may happen to be contrary to preconceived opinions, or opposed to the natural pride of the human heart, or obnoxious to the carnal mind, or calculated to bring down the towering imaginations of self-righteousness, as dangerous and criminal presumption. But alas! it is a species of presumption which is by no means uncommon. Be not you guilty of it.

4. Be regular in your attendance on your pastor's public ministrations. By occasionally absenting yourselves from the house of God, you may lose the very truths which your cases most require. Sabbath after Sabbath he is bound to proclaim to you the glorious Gospel of the grace of God,—those doctrines and precepts, warnings and promises, by the knowledge, faith, and obedience of which alone your souls can be regenerated, enlightened, sanctified, and saved; and Sabbath after Sabbath you are no less bound to appear in the place where God has promised to record his Name, and to meet with his people and bless them; unless you have a reason for absence which your own consciences will approve in the solemn hour of death, and the Great God, who searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins of the children of men, will sustain in the Day of Judgment. The preaching of the Gospel is the principal means which God renders effectual for the conviction and conversion of sinners, and the spiritual improvement of his saints. To absent yourselves, therefore, from the preaching of the Gospel, on any occasion, unnecessarily, is saying that you feel but little concerned about your immortal interests. It is not keeping the Fourth Commandment to divide the Sabbath between religion and the world—Christ and the devil. When your minister is here to preach, be you here to listen.

Lastly. It is your bounden duty, and it should be your conscientious, delightful, and daily practice to remember

your pastor at a throne of grace by prayer and supplication. Even the Apostles themselves needed, and earnestly entreated the prayers of those to whom they ministered. "I beseech you, brethren," says the Apostle Paul, "for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me." And surely that which the great Apostle of the Gentiles so fervently implored, any—every ordinary minister more peculiarly needs. Let your minister have the benefit of your daily prayers.

And when praying time is ended, may you and he together assist in swelling the song of Moses and of the Lamb forever. **AMEN!**

