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Rev. J. Walker

VALEDICTORY,

DELIVERED BY

MR. STANSBURY,

ON LEAVING

GRAHAM'S CHURCH.

A

VALEDICTORY DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED BY

THE REV. ARTHUR J. STANSBURY,

AT

GRAHAM'S CHURCH,

IN THE

COUNTY OF ORANGE, AND STATE OF NEW-YORK;

ON SABBATH, THE 18TH OF AUGUST, 1816, ON RESIGNING THE
PASTORAL CHARGE OF THAT CHURCH.

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1816.

A VALEDICTORY DISCOURSE.

I CORIN. xiii. 11. *Finally, brethren, farewell.*

THE assembly which I behold around me—the circumstances under which we meet—the place where I stand—all unite to call up a crowd of emotions which it is difficult to express. I can scarcely realize what I see and know. The hour is indeed come; the ties which bound us are sundered; I am your pastor, you are my flock, no more. It seems but as yesterday when I entered this pulpit for the first time, and now I fill it for the last. The period of my ministry has passed, like a watch in the night. It is gone: gone with those irrecoverable ages which rolled away before the flood, and it has carried its record and its results into the eternal world.

At such a moment it is impossible not to pause; to turn back the retrospective eye; to ponder the transient nature of human things; and to realize that we have completed one of those measured distances which mark our nearness to the grave.

We meet to-day, as we shall meet in the last and great day of account. Our connexion as pastor

and people, is summed up and closed: neither of us can alter the past, can take one from the long number of its sins, can add one righteous deed to the scanty list its limits have comprised. From this place, and this hour, we go to the bar; we part, expecting our next meeting before angels and the incarnate God. Suffer me, then, briefly to review the period of our late relation, and glance at the manner in which our respective duties have been performed; and if, in doing this, it is indispensable that I speak of myself, and of you, I hope you will not charge me in the one case with egotism, or suspect me in the other of personality.

It is now six years since you addressed to me these words:—"We do hereby heartily invite, call, and entreat you to undertake the office of Pastor among us, and the charge of our souls."—Solemn words! Never can I forget how they thrilled every fibre of my frame. They came, indeed, through the lips of men, but I felt them to be the voice of my God. It summoned me to the highest of human honours; but to the most responsible of human employments. It associated me with men of whom the world was not worthy; but it was only to humble me by the distance and the contrast. It called me to minister in the immediate presence of God; but it required me, first, to offer a living sacrifice. I knew the splendid gift to be encompassed with cares and dangers: but my heart loved it, my in-

most affections longed after it, I assented to all its concomitants and consequences, and I received accordingly through the hands of the Presbytery, met on this spot, the most awful trust that can be committed to man. Brethren, my heart trembles when I consider my choice: yet, if a man can know any thing of what governs him, I think that my motives were upright and pure. From that day it became my task to watch for your souls as one that must give an account. I may truly say your souls were very precious in my eyes. Often were they brought in my arms, and spread out with strong crying and tears before the throne of God's mercy. Many resolutions did I make of being a diligent and faithful Pastor. I had no bye ends; I sought not yours, but you: and I was filled with a cheering hope of the success of my ministry. It was my duty in the first place, to take heed to the doctrine I delivered. I felt my obligation to declare the whole counsel of God; and you will bear me witness, brethren, that in public and in private it has been declared without disguise. I never told you that you possessed by nature any goodness of heart, any righteous dispositions, any thing that you could cultivate or modify into holiness; but, on the contrary, have uniformly testified that you are universally and totally depraved; that the prominent characteristic of your fallen nature, its predominant temper, is enmity against God. I never represented this your natural state as simply a misfortune,

involving no guilt on your part; but, on the contrary, have always taught you that you are parties to Adam's sin, and so far from being in a probationary state, are already in a state of complete and righteous condemnation, so that nothing can save you from hell but the direct interposition of God himself. You have been continually warned of the necessity of regeneration; not such as may be had at the baptismal font, but that which reaches and transforms the inner man, and makes the blessed subject of it a "new creature in Christ Jesus." I called you to repent: but I never insinuated that repentance has any efficacy in atoning for the sin over which it mourns: to the blood of Jesus alone, even that blood which stained the accursed tree when he laid down his life for his sheep; to this I have directed your hope as having virtue to satisfy the justice of God, and take away sin. You have always heard from this pulpit that there is no righteousness which can justify a sinner but that which Christ wrought out by his own personal obedience to the divine law; and that there is no way in which this can ever be received and enjoyed but through a lively faith, which has God himself for its author, the testimony of his word for its object, and good works as its necessary and proper fruit. Hence I have ever enforced the obligation of the law as a rule of life, testifying that without holiness no man shall see the Lord: yet I have taught you after having done all to count yourselves unprofita-

ble servants, and to ascribe any difference between yourselves and the most profligate of mankind alone to sovereign, electing, preventing, efficacious grace. I have warned you against self-deception, against resting in the outward forms of Christianity while destitute of its spirit; of trusting to doctrine while neglecting duty, or resting in duty unconnected with truth. These things I have endeavoured to testify and to exhort, warning every man, and teaching every man, that I might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. None can accuse me of having used ambiguous language touching the true and proper divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, or of having refused divine honours to the Holy Spirit of God, or of having left any doubt as to the eternity of hell's torments and heavenly joys.

With respect to the Sacraments, I have aimed at being equally explicit, and at conforming my practice to what I taught. I have always insisted that persons claiming baptism for themselves or their children, are bound to produce the very same evidence of christian character as when presenting themselves candidates for the Lord's Supper: that those who have a right to the one, have a right to the other; and that all professing christians are bound by their own profession to observe both. Baptism has therefore been refused to persons who were not members of the church in full communion, or who did not profess their present intention to be-

come such?" to persons who, having had several children baptized, still persisted in refusing to come to the Lord's table"; and, generally, to all such as were openly reprehensible in their life and conversation. The Lord's Supper I have administered regularly, and with as much frequency as the circumstances of the Congregation would" permit. To this holy feast all have been invited whom the scriptures did not authorize me to exclude; members of good standing in our sister communions, as well as in our own. I was warranted to invite them by the standards of our Church; I was urged to do it by my own solemn convictions of duty. I had no authority from my Master to withhold his bread and his wine from men who give the same visible evidence of being his children as the members of our own denomination give, namely, the profession of the self same faith, accompanied by a walk and conversation equally pure. And it is this day to me a source of cordial satisfaction that I have borne aloft a standard for that great scriptural truth, the Church's unity, in opposition to a sectarian bigotry that is cutting the sinews of the Church's strength, and hewing the body of Christ limb from limb. I hope in God that this spirit may die speedily, and for ever; and I stand ready, and shall ever rejoice, to help it to its end.

In relation to Psalmody, though by no means satisfied of the exclusive claim of the book of Psalms

to be used in the present praises of the Church ; and still less of that particular version of them which has long been in use among us ; I nevertheless so far conformed to the opinions and feelings of good men among my people as to use no other, either in my pulpit or my family : but when supplying in other Congregations, I have without scruple employed the Psalms and Hymns ordinarily used by them? always first satisfying myself that the portion used contained no false doctrine. But there is another part of my public duty in which some have found their chief objection to my ministry, viz. the occasional discourses which have been delivered on days of national fast and thanksgiving. These have been objected to as being of a political cast. On this objection I have three remarks to make. In the first place, a minister of the gospel has at all times a right to discuss in the pulpit such national concerns as involve religion. His people have public as well as private duties to perform, and may as lawfully be instructed in the one as the other. But, in the second place, on occasions such as those referred to, it is no longer left to his choice ; it is a plain, obvious, imperative duty. Is the nation called to fast for sin? Why do you call your minister into the pulpit on that day, or why do you yourselves come into the church, if he is not to mention the sins for which you mourn? The command to him from the temple is, "Lift up thy voice, and spare not : show to Jacob his transgression and to

Israel his sin." What is he to do? If called to make his election between the frown of God and of men, which shall he fear? But, in the third place, I do not find that any of these objections are made when the political sentiments of the preacher happen to coincide with those of his hearers. In that case he may discuss politics as long as he pleases; he may be as personal, and as rude, and as bitter as he will, no man's ears are pained, no man's conscience wounded. Brethren, the plain truth is, that the heats and quarrels so often occasioned by fast-day sermons are not excited by the minister's preaching politics, but his preaching politics which the people do not like to hear. It is, however, freely granted, that these discussions should never be introduced but when required by obvious necessity; that they should be conducted with temper and dignity; and that all irritating language, all levity and sarcasm, especially all personalities, should be carefully avoided. By these principles I am willing to be judged; if I have transgressed them, I am to blame, and acknowledge my faults; if not, I regard all the censure that has been heaped upon me as the idle wind.

But I owed to you much more than the public services of the sanctuary. All these I might have performed, and yet remained a stranger in the midst of my own flock; have had the tribute of your respect, but no place in your heart. I was called of God

not to be your teacher only. When the Lord ascended, he gave to his Church an order of men who were to be pastors as well as teachers. He put the sheep and the lambs under their care, and commanded them to take the oversight of the flock. The spirit of this command brought me to your doors, called me to your fire-side, placed me by your bed. The voice of one of his most distinguished servants had warned me that “the personal attentions of a minister to his people admit of no substitute: that there is nothing which men resent more promptly, forgive more reluctantly, or forget more slowly, than neglect.”* I had just heard the eloquent lips of my preceptor declare that “the presence of a faithful pastor refreshes the soul of labour, and sweetens the crust of poverty; his voice smoothes the bed of sickness, and mitigates the rigours of death.” The words were engraven indelibly upon my heart, and every added year has but deepened the impression. I came to you, therefore, fully impressed with the importance of this part of my duty. But I soon perceived that it opened a vast field of labour, and the prospect often forced from me the cry of the Apostle, “Who is sufficient for these things?” Upon this all-essential but most difficult department of ministerial employment, I entered with diligence, and my conscience tells me, laboured in it with a sincere desire for your good :

* See Dr. Mason’s speech delivered before Presbytery on de-mitting his charge in 1810.

but I am also conscious of many, very many short comings, and I fear the result has proved that my fond anticipations of usefulness were but the dream of the morning, as false as it is fair. The sick I have never refused to visit. I have approached their bed when pestilence rendered it noisome, and have caught their faint and dying words, when the breath which uttered them threatened poison to my own frame. I have risen at midnight when their extremity has called me. In feuds and family disputes I have aimed at becoming a peace-maker; and, I thank my God, have been blessed in some instances happily and completely to succeed. To the youth of my charge I owed much. Myself young, many of them might be called my companions? I endeavoured to treat them as more, as my brothers and my sisters; and some of them have fully requited my love. To instruct this interesting part of my flock in the doctrines and duties of christianity, I established a catechetical exercise, which I sought to make as fruitful as I could to their understanding, by various queries and illustrations familiarly adapted to their capacities and progress: and the success of these efforts has been one of the most pleasing circumstances attending my ministry. The Lord vouchsafed to me the exquisite satisfaction of leading some affectionate pupils from the catechism class to the communion table. The labours were pleasant, the reward most sweet. I have been charged with neglecting the smaller chil-

dren. It is indeed true that these were not so much attended to; because I have ever considered the instilling of the first fruits of religion into the minds of very young children to be the province of the parent, and not of the minister. The parent can do it best; most easily, most effectually. The mother of such children should be their catechist: at her knee the little child should be trained and fitted for the hands of its pastor. Where this has been done, my instructions were not above their capacity, but were calculated to carry them on to a more extensive and thorough knowledge of scriptural truth.

I have one subject of regret. My course of family visitation has not been so frequent nor so regular as I could wish it had. Some families who live remote may consider themselves as having been slighted; but I am unconscious of having wilfully neglected any; and I must, in justice, also say that I have often been discouraged in the attempt by what had at least the appearance of intentional absence. On these occasions I have tried to be as honest and explicit, and to deal as plainly with all, as my duty demanded. This has rendered the task in some cases heavy, and may have occasioned me the more readily to postpone it, or to suffer the season insensibly to elapse in which it ought to have been attended to.

I established a society for conference and prayer; but after it was begun the members gradually shrunk from taking their part in it; the whole exercise at length devolved upon myself, and became, in time, a regular evening lecture. I am happy, however, that the original plan has since been revived among yourselves, and is still continued with mutual edification.

I have endeavoured constantly to cultivate a friendly social intercourse with all my flock, and to promote to the utmost of my power, the same intercourse between themselves. Some of my friends have apprehended that I went too far in this endeavour; while others who call themselves my friends have accused me of partiality; and a few have called me proud. As to the first objection, I am settled in the opinion that a minister cannot be too much among his people. He should know them every one personally, and be known of them. "I beseech you, brethren, says Christ's servant, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you." It is by personal intercourse alone that they can know them. As to partiality, no charge is more easily made, or in general more readily listened to. A thousand principles of human nature unite their force in rendering the members of a congregation alive to such a suggestion. But, brethren, is it reasonable to debar a christian minister from that sweetest balm

of life, personal friendship? Because he is a public person, does he cease to be a man, constructed like other men? And has any one of you fifty or a hundred bosom friends? No, it is not in your nature. You all have your chosen intimates, you all claim the right to choose them: why has not your minister the same? Yes, I have had my friendships; and the memory of them will be dear so long as this heart continues to beat. Oceans may roll between—the grave may demand and may receive its deposit—but neither distance of place, nor lapse of time, nor revolutions of fortune, nor death, the stern divider, can break the tie that grapples heart to heart, where human affections have been consecrated by divine. Christian friendships are for eternity. To those who call me proud, I answer, my heart is indeed by nature a proud one? it rises at the apprehension of purposed insult or injury?; it spurns the mean, the sordid, the deceitful man? but it has been much tamed by suffering, and God knows how to bring it into the dust. There I would place it, underneath my Saviour's feet; and, for his sake, would lay it down at the feet of his people also. And here, this day, if any of them? have a complaint to urge, if any have felt themselves un? kindly treated, slighted without cause, repulsed when they ought to have been cherished, wounded when they had done no wrong, I humbly entreat them to pardon my infirmity.

And now, brethren, having briefly reviewed the outline of my ministry among you, and thus looked at one side of our mutual relation, I proceed in the next place to consider the other.

And how can I remember, without a mixture of various but tender emotions, the circumstances which made this pulpit mine? Can I ever forget that, before I had been three months licensed, this people, without one dissenting voice, determined to put their best and dearest interests under my inspection and care? that they prosecuted their purpose with zeal, and voluntarily assumed a burden of unusual expense and personal exertion to carry it into effect? While I remained in lodgings with my family, which of you did not bring his free-will offering to increase my comfort and theirs? When afterwards a spot was fixed on for my dwelling, how much labour did you cheerfully undertake in assisting to rear it? I mention these things not on account of their intrinsic value, but as containing the outward indication of that inward treasure, the chief earthly treasure of a gospel minister, his people's love. This love was a cementing bond which seemed for some time to promise a long continuance of our connexion with each other; but the purpose of God had determined otherwise, and his providence soon began to put that purpose into execution. One of the most able and generous supporters of this Church found it necessary to re-

move into a distant part of the United States. The pecuniary pressure, great before, greater now, was still farther increased by the removal of many other families: the infliction of just and necessary discipline alienated more: my stipend fell into arrears: I was perplexed, distressed, irritated? and you had at length to give up a part of my time. Yet the very delicate, tender, and affectionate manner in which this necessity was intimated to me, remains faithfully laid up in my memory, and contributes its share to those many recollections which fill this interview with pain. I will not heighten that pain by tracing the detail of subsequent circumstances. Did I pursue it a little farther, I should have to pass a grave: a grave into which descended as much fatherly goodness, as much simplicity of heart, as much reverence for religion, as generous a love for its public servants, as it has ever been my privilege to witness or my lot to mourn. Brethren, we may weep together over his ashes, he was your father and mine. But he is taken from the evil to come, and I am glad he has been spared the anguish of the present scene. Over the causes which have led to it, I willingly draw a veil. Not that my view of those transactions has undergone the slightest possible change; but I have entirely forgiven, and I hasten to forget them.

Let me therefore close this retrospect by rendering public thanks: first, to this Church in its col-

lective capacity for having fixed its choice upon me to break to it the bread of life. For this honour I am your debtor, and I hope never to forget the obligation. In the next place to my brethren of the Session; brethren with whom I have spent some of my most pleasing and profitable hours; who have shared the burden of my cares, alleviated the sufferings incident to an arduous public station by their personal friendship and their official support, and who have never, in a single instance, differed from me in judgment or opposed me in practice, in matters pertaining to the discipline of the Church. Blessed be Christ, her King, for so wise an institution as that of the Eldership; an institution which gives to his ministry counsellors in difficulty, in danger a shield. I have found my Session both, and I here return them the tribute of my public acknowledgments. To the people of my charge individually, I also tender my gratitude for all the personal kindness they have shown me; for their prayers and good wishes; for their countenance and support; for their hospitality; for their gifts whether small or great; and for the kind manner in which some of them have advocated my character and defended my reputation, when assailed by calumny. In a word, for every degree and every instance of love, whether public or private, shown to me or to mine, by any or by all of my people, I here return them humble and hearty thanks.

And now, beloved, my ministry among you being closed, permit me to ask, (for the question will one day be put by a greater than I,) what has it done for you? For six successive years, (to say nothing of the ten years labour of one whose testimony is in the conscience of every man among you,) for six years you have had in your possession that gospel which is the great means of all spiritual good. Reflecting that if this fails of effect, there is no other mean more promising; that this is God's established mode of gathering his people?; that it has his special promise?; and actually has converted all who have been turned to God?; let me look round this Church and ask for its fruits.—Brethren, where are they?—When the great Proprietor asks me for the fruit of this vineyard, what shall I answer? Whom may I address in the words of Paul, as “my dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown?” What prospect have I that I shall “rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, and laboured in vain?” Twenty-five persons have indeed been added to this Church since I was ordained its pastor? but oh! can I assure myself that each of these has been added to the Lord? While feeding and instructing this Congregation, have I been training up heirs for the kingdom of Heaven—or hypocrites, whose christian name is the loud laugh of hell? You know what a Christian is; are you Christians? Oh God! wilt thou own these men as followers of thy Son? Wilt thou say that

these persons are pilgrims and strangers upon the earth? Oh brethren! could an answer break through the sky, which of you has reason to tremble at the sound? If he who walked among the Churches of Asia were once more to utter his voice, would it say to this Church, "Be watchful and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found thy works perfect before God? Remember therefore, how thou hast received, and heard, and hold fast and repent?" That Heavenly witness walks among the Churches of America: those "eyes of fire" are this hour fastened upon you? the Lord the judge "knows your works." Every sermon you have heard, every vow you have uttered, stands recorded in the everlasting tablets of his memory, and can neither be altered nor effaced. Your privileges have been measured out to you in weight and number; improved or not improved, they will all enter into the final award.

Perhaps when I came to you, some were halting between two opinions; urged by truth and conscience to embrace the gospel, held back by unbelief and the love of sin. Have you chosen? or are you still deliberating whether you will be damned or saved?—Perhaps, (alas that it were no more than a peradventure!) some were resting in a barren profession of Christianity, their hearts wholly devoted to lucre, fully occupied by the world. And

have you not yet found out that there is no magic about the communion table to save men that live in their sins? Will your approbation of the doctrine of election prove that you are elect? Will your bitterness in reprobating your unsound neighbours, demonstrate that you are not yourselves reprobate silver? Oh sirs, it is one thing to have the truths of Christianity on the tongue," and quite another to have their divine influence transfused into the heart. Your noise about orthodoxy will be lost in the thunders of the last day? your tinsel will melt in the crucible of judgment? and when all masks are falling, and all secrets divulging, and all graves emptying, and all wicked hearts trembling; when hell opens, and time departs—you shall find, that though it has been your permitted liberty to mock God, to deceive or to resist him is beyond your power.

Are there any who were babes in this little family who have since grown up into "young men in Christ?" May I, dare I hope that there are any who within this period have been born in our Zion, and to whom I might be permitted to say, "though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, ye have not many fathers?" The thought makes my bowels to yearn, and, could I believe it, would repay my labours and my tears a thousand fold. Fathers, are you any more ripe for heaven? We have often looked together into the grave; are you

any better reconciled to the ghastly countenance of him who waits there for your flesh? Has Christ's victory been set before you in vain? or have I led you round death's dismantled fortress till you have almost ceased to dread his power? Does light return into your faded eye while you sing, "Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed, the night is far spent, the day is at hand?" Have the mourners been comforted? It is the prerogative of Christianity effectually to comfort them: she alone holds in her hands the oil of joy; and to dispense it among the children of sighing and tears, is one of the most loved of all those labours of love with which she intrusts her favoured sons. Have the backsliders been restored? To seek his lost sheep the great shepherd himself did not despise. His command to his servants is, "Let not that which is lame be turned out of the way, but let it rather be healed." To such lost wanderers a frequent and an affectionate invitation has been given. They have heard many messages of mercy: they have had many solemn warnings of their danger. They will not say they have been treated with harshness; they dare not say they have been flattered in their sin. Has all been in vain? Are you "of such as draw back unto perdition?"

My last inquiry is addressed to such as I found destitute of all religion and all religious profession, and who still remain, to all appearance, without

God in the world. Dear fellow-sinners, capable of enjoying eternal blessedness, but in the high road to endless wo, what think you of the gospel? or what is to be thought of your conduct? Have you deliberately made up your mind to live and die without a Saviour? Are you indeed prepared to say, "God, we want not thy mercy and thou Christ, we desire no part in thy blood: depart from us, Holy Ghost, and let us die in our sins?" Your hair rises at this language:—alas it is yours! This is what you are now saying, and have been saying for at least six years. Your conduct says it, it proclaims it as with a trumpet towards Heaven. And yet why so desperately resolved upon perdition? Are you prepared to show that this book is false? if not, how can you stand out against such language as your Maker addresses to you? How strong must be your love of sin, when sooner than part with it, you will consent to leap the gulf of death with all the threatenings of the Bible against you! Under what a deep deception do you lie! You hope for impunity. I warn you to-day, for the last time, that hope is false. Continue to reject the gospel, go on as you have begun, let the future only be like the past—and you will be damned as certainly as there is a God to judge you. That breast which I have so often besieged in vain, to which neither the thunders of the law nor the soothing accents of the gospel could find access—that strong hold of delusion where sin has fixed its

throne, and where pride mocks alike at duty and danger, will prove but a weak rampart against the driving ruin of the last day: the storm of God's fury will speak in other sounds than your mortal ears have ever heard: and while hell opens her immeasurable gulf, all doubt and cavil, all counsel and might, all pride and contest, all help and hope, shall perish in the wrath of the Lamb. Yet, once more I will refresh my soul by crying in your ears, ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters! to-day, to-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Now it only remains that I bid you all a long, to some of you, perhaps, a last adieu. Farewell! friends of my bosom, who have felt for me in trouble, cleaved to me through reproach, fed me when I was in want, prayed for me when I was tempted. To you my thoughts will often turn when I am far away: upon your love and all its proofs, they will delight to dwell; and, in the evening of life's stormy day, to you they will look back even from the borders of the grave, and the prospect of Heaven itself will be more welcome, from the hope that you will be there. Farewell my enemies! if any still retain that character, I forgive you every wrong, and pray God to do you only good.

Farewell my little flock! may God send you a better pastor! Under his ministry may you yet see

good days, and be filled with the blessing of the Lord. Here may he make the horn of David to bud, and ordain a lamp for his anointed. Beloved, live in peace: so that whether I come to see you, or else being absent may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel. Beware of division. Avoid all contention about the past. Do not forsake the assembling of yourselves together, but give yourselves to frequent prayer. I beseech you not to delay another settlement. Be not content with an empty sanctuary; but unite all your strength, join with your brethren, and make the most generous sacrifices to obtain a stated ministry. And may God send you dew from Heaven, keep you, multiply you, stablish you, and make you a large, a holy, and a happy Church.

Elders of this Congregation—my companions through this short and variable hour, with whom I have shared its darkest clouds and its more pleasant moments, I now bid you a last adieu? Stand firm at your post. Guide the little bark which has been committed to you with calmness and courage. Fear no man's frown. Be seduced by no man's flattery. Preserve the discipline of the house of God through all hazards, and at every expense. Never surrender your Master's glory to friend or brother—sacrifice it not to expediency or policy. And if the Church perishes in consequence of such a line of

conduct, let it perish. Better that Christ's spouse should die pure than live polluted.

Youth of my charge ! brothers ! sisters ! my sons ? my daughters ? one that loved you very truly bids you a tender farewell. You, my beloved, you are the Church's hope : she turns her eyes from you to her God, and from her God to you. Will you forsake the religion of your fathers ? Some of them have exchanged the pilgrim's staff for the palm of victory ; but you were in their latest thoughts ; their last earthly anxieties lingered around you. Will you disappoint their dying prayer ? forget their death-bed ? dishonour their ashes ? I speak not to you all : some of you have feasted my eyes with that most welcome sight, the sons of my hope, and of my prayers, at the table of my Saviour and my King. The world does not hold for me a more grateful spectacle. Fulfil ye my joy : go on as you have begun : cultivate every christian grace : submit yourselves to your elders : be filled with modesty : adorn your profession, and strive to win over, by the loveliness of your example, your lingering brothers and your hesitating friends.

Farewell courts of the Lord ! where first I came, an anxious stranger, with all my future lot unknown ? where these trembling lips made their earliest essays in the Church's service, and where those vows were uttered which bound me to a painful glory !

Courts, where his own presence has often shined ; where I have prayed and wept with his people?; where I have also sung loud for joy, and triumphed with his inheritance. I leave you to solitude, I hope not to desolation.

But it is time to close, and the moment is come in which I must utter the last adieu. I leave you, my hearers, and the next messenger from God that addresses you may be death, the king of terrors. Should I visit this spot again, some of you will be lying under those trees. As I walk pensively among their shade, I shall stoop down and read your name upon the stone : then it will be too late to persuade. And is it so, that but a few short years shall glide, and all this assembly shall be sought in vain among the haunts of the living ? Oh ! could I put the whole gospel into one piercing word, and would God lend me, but for this hour, the power of persuasion, how should that word penetrate every breast, and reach like an arrow to every heart. You are dying, you are dying, and the judge standeth at the door? it is but a step, and we shall all be before him : the veil is ready to depart, and Christ shall be revealed. I see him seated on the clouds ; the dead burst the ground?; the trumpet rends the skies ; the heavens depart ; the earth is consumed ; but truth remains ; the law has lost not a jot or a tittle?; its curse rings through all ears, and there is no escape but by the gospel. The cross of Christ,

always great in God's eyes, is now exalted before the view of all. The damned look at it as Adam looked back at the tree of life, and they gnaw their tongues for anguish. Sins unheard of, unsuspected, come forth from the dark womb of conscience in agony. Hell roars beneath, and sends forth its smoke like a pestilence; the universe trembles; and God speaks. Oh brethren, are you ready for this? You shall see it! you shall see it! and when? I depart from this pulpit, it is to meet you there.