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A PRESIDING ELDER'S

SUGGESTIONS

to

THE PREACHERS ON HIS DISTRICT

BY REV. G. R. VAN HORNE, D.D.

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A PRESIDING ELDER'S SUGGESTIONS

TO THE

PREACHERS ON HIS DISTRICT.

As one to whom you look for advice, and who desires your largest possible usefulness, suffer a few suggestions which may aid you in your very important work as a minister of our Lord:

1. In receiving persons on probation, it will help you and save the Church much annoyance if you will familiarize yourself with the directions of the Discipline, and follow them. Whenever it can be done, have the candidates step to the altar; make a few intelligent remarks in regard to our system of probation;
announce their names, places of residence, and the classes to which they are assigned. Place in their hands as soon as possible a copy of "The General Rules," containing the chapters from the Discipline on baptism and the reception of members. During their probation hold a class of instruction in doctrine and Discipline.

2. When probationers are received into full membership, always observe the form of Discipline. Remember you cannot take probationers into full membership on your own recommendation or responsibility. They must be "recommended by the leaders' and stewards' meeting, or, where no such meeting is held, by the leader." On the day of reception call them forward by name. Read the service and propound the questions with the reverence and dignity of your office. Let them answer the questions in an audible voice from the little manual you have previously furnished No. 12.
them. Have the leaders inside of the altar with you, and let them follow you in welcoming these new additions into the family. Make it to those received a red-letter day, and to the church a jubilee.

3. In receiving members by letter, invite them forward and read their letters as you would a certificate of character. Announce where each of them lives, and the class that he will attend. Then in behalf of the Church give them the hand of fellowship. Request the membership to do the same at the close of service. Hand-shaking can be made a means of grace.

4. In conducting public worship observe the form prescribed in the Discipline. The General Conference ordained this, and it is not optional with us. This form is simple, appropriate, and Methodistic. If your choir have an anthem, let it be sung before you announce your first hymn. Let us have uniform-
ity, and also respect the order and authority of the Church. Do not fail to repeat the Lord's Prayer at the close of your own opening prayer—it will comprehend all that you have left unprayed for.

5. When you make your announcements from the pulpit for the week, give special emphasis to the Sunday-school, the class, and the prayer meetings. These are powerful tributaries, not only to the life of the Church, but to your own success. Elevate them, and keep them prominently before the congregation, as pre-eminently ahead of all suppers or festivals.

6. Take all the benevolent collections. That is your duty. Never mind the constitutional croaker who advises you to "drop" a few of them. The croaker will drop you at the slightest provocation. Take them early and systematically. "Waiting will not save you," nor will it meet the apportionments.
7. It behooves you to take good care of the parsonage property. The church places it at your disposal for use and comfort, and not to be neglected or destroyed. See that the house is kept in repair. Many little things you can do yourself. Have things look trim and clean about the entire premises. You will be judged by the passing public as tidy or slovenly as they see how you keep things about the parsonage.

8. Dedicate your morning hours to study and your afternoon to pastoral work. Your success as a gospel minister does not lie in either extreme. Neglect neither, and both will be well done. It is the well-rounded minister, who cares for all departments of his work, who is always in demand. The best appointments are waiting for his coming.

9. Be clear in your religious experience. Keep sweet. Allow the sunshine of the divine Presence to permeate your whole being.
Pray to be a soul-winner. If sinners remain unconverted or believers unsanctified under your ministry, take an introspection. Do not spare yourself. Examine minutely your experience, your methods, and your theology, to ascertain if possible where the defect is, and when found remedy it at once.

10. By all means, as you love your character and value your standing as a minister, keep out of debt. Never leave a charge with bills unpaid. Live within your income, or quit the ministry. This may seem severe, but the Church can do without your services better than to be cursed with your debts.

11. Report at least once a month to your presiding elder the state of your work. This may seem small to you; it will not appear so to him. Keep him informed, and by so doing you place him in constant sympathy with you and your charge. Help him that he may intelligently help you.