scandal just dealt with may be prevented :  
viz., by *caution in ordaining* at first. The  
reference is primarily to presbyters: of  
course extending also in its spirit to all  
other church offices. This reference, which  
is maintained by most Commentators, is  
denied by some others, who understand  
the command to refer to receiving back  
into the church excommunicated persons,  
or heretics, which from later testimonies  
they shew to have been the practice: Huther, rightly rejecting this idea, yet interprets it of laying on of hands as merely  
conveying ecclesiastical blessing on many  
various occasions. But surely this is too  
vague and unimportant for the solemn  
language here used. Regarding the whole,  
to ver. 25, as connected, and belonging to  
one subject, I cannot accept any interpretation but the obvious and ordinary one:  
see especially ch. iv. 14: 2 Tim. i. 6.—  
**Lay hands hastily on no one, nor be par-  
taker in other men’s sins** (as he would do  
by being the means of negligently admitting into the ministry unfit and ungodly persons, being properly held responsible for the consequence of those bad  
habits of theirs which more care might  
have ascertained. The word *sin* points  
to the former expression, *“them that  
sin*”):**—Keep THYSELF** (highly emphatic: not merely others over whom thou  
art called to preside and pronounce judgment in admitting them to the ministry.  
And the emphasis is peculiarly in place  
here, as applying to that which has just  
preceded. If he were to admit improper  
candidates to the ministry from bias  
or from negligence, his own character,  
by his becoming a partaker in their sins,  
would suffer: whatever thou doest therefore,  
be sure to maintain, by watchful care and  
caution, *thyself* above all stain of blame)  
pure (not here to be referred to personal  
purity and chastity, though that of course  
would be the most important of all elements in carrying out the precept: but as above).**—No longer** (habitually) drink  
water, but use a little wine, on account  
of thy stomach, and thy frequent illnesses  
(the question, why this injunction is here  
inserted, has never been satisfactorily answered. Many take it as a modification of  
*“keep thyself pure,”* so as to prevent it  
from being misunderstood as enjoining asceticism. But on our explanation of the words, and I may add on any worthy view  
of the context, such a connexion will at  
once be repudiated. Chrysostom has caught  
the right clue, when he says, “Timothy  
seems to me to have been generally an  
invalid: and this the Apostle shews when he  
says, &c. as here:” but he has not followed  
it up. Timothy was certainly of a feeble  
bodily frame, and this feebleness appears,  
from other hints which we have respecting  
him, to have affected his character. See  
especially 1 Cor. xvi. 10, 11, and note  
there. Is it not very possible, that such  
feebleness, and perhaps timidity, may have  
influenced him as an overseer of the  
church, and prevented that keen-sighted  
judgment and vigorous action which a  
bishop should ever shew in estimating the  
characters of those who are candidates  
for the ministry? If this was so, then  
it is quite natural that in advising him  
on this point, St. Paul should throw in a  
hint, in fatherly kindness, that he must  
not allow these maladies to interfere with  
the efficient discharge of his high office,  
but take all reasonable means of raising  
his bodily condition above them. I feel  
compelled to adopt this view, from the  
close connexion of the next verse with  
the whole preceding passage, and the  
exceedingly unnatural isolation of this,  
unless it bears such a reference).

**24.**] *The same subject continued.* If my  
view of the last verse is correct, the connexion will be found in the fact, that the  
conservation of himself in health and vigour  
would ensure his being able to deal ably  
and firmly with the cases which should  
come before him for decision. To guide  
him still further in this, the Apostle subjoins this remark, indicating two classes of characters with which he would have to  
deal in judging, whether favourably or unfavourably.—Of some men the sins (this