

HOME,
THE SCHOOL,
AND
THE CHURCH;
OR THE
PRESBYTERIAN EDUCATION REPOSITORY.

EDITED BY

C. VAN RENSSELAER,

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

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NOTICES.

1. This Magazine may now be considered as *established*; i. e., Providence permitting, it will be issued from year to year, or at such intervals as may hereafter be considered best. "HOME, THE SCHOOL, AND THE CHURCH," or "*The Presbyterian Education Repository*," will endeavour to promote faithfully the interests of the cause to which it is devoted; and, until otherwise ordered, will be published *annually*.

2. The present volume, the second in the series, bears the date of 1852. Although the first bears the date of 1850, there has been only a year's interval between the two. The work is issued so near the end of the year, that we conform to the usual practice among publishers, in dating the present volume in 1852.

3. On account of many pressing engagements, the Editor has not been able to do all he wished in this number. The plans of school-houses, etc., have also been unavoidably omitted, but will be resumed hereafter.

4. Thanks are due to our brethren who have prepared original articles. Article I., by the Rev. JOHN P. CARTER; IX., by the Rev. JAMES W. ALEXANDER, D.D.; XI., by the Rev. JOHN H. BOCOCK; and XII., by the Rev. ARCHIBALD ALEXANDER, D.D., lately gone to his rest, are among the most valuable contributions in the volume. The article by Mr. Boccock was demanded for publication by the West Hanover Presbytery, and at our request was permitted to be printed in this Magazine.

5. We trust that our brethren will find the discussions in this volume of such a character, as to commend the work of education in all its departments to their sympathies, prayers, and active co-operation. The Board of Education, among other instrumentalities, has an important part to perform, under God, in strengthening and enlarging the Church; and it is hoped that every congregation within our bounds will aid in promoting its efficiency.

6. Particular attention is invited to the recommendation of the General Assembly, for the observance, in all our churches, of the *last Thursday of February next*, as a day of special prayer for the blessing of God upon our youth, and upon the institutions of education.

C. V. R.

Philadelphia, December, 1851.

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THE
PRESBYTERIAN EDUCATION REPOSITORY.
1852.

ARTICLE I.

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION AT HOME.

BY THE REV. JOHN P. CARTER, MARYLAND.

IF the importance of a Christian duty is to be estimated by the emphasis with which it is enjoined in the word of God, then the religious instruction of the young demands a degree of attention which, we fear, it does not ordinarily receive.

No sooner had the Lord instituted his covenant with Abraham, by the rite of circumcision (Gen. xviii. 9-14), "to be a God unto him and to his seed after him," than that father of the faithful, "took Ishmael, his son, and every male of his household, in the self-same day, as God had said unto him," and administered unto them the token of the Lord's covenant. And in the following chapter is recorded the testimony of God to parental faithfulness: "I know Abraham, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." (Gen. xviii. 19.)

At the institution of the Passover, commemorating the redemption of God's people from the servitude of Egypt, and in immediate connexion with the ceremonial observances to be attended to in that impressive ordinance, the parent is commanded: "Thou shalt show thy son in that day, saying, This is done because of that which the Lord did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt." "And it shall be when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What is this? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the Lord brought us out from Egypt from the house of bondage." (Ex. xiii. 8, 14.)

And when Moses would impress the people with a deep sense of their exalted privileges, as a nation, in having "Jehovah their God so nigh unto them in all things that they called upon him for;" and having statutes, and judgments so righteous as all that law which he

set before them that day—he adds, “Only take heed to thyself and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thine heart all the days of thy life; *but teach them thy sons and thy sons’ sons.*” (Deut. iv. 8, 9.) Again, when exhorting the people to obedience, in the sixth chapter of Deuteronomy, he says, “And these words which I command you this day, shall be in thy heart, *and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children,* and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.” And the summary of parental instruction contained in this chapter, concludes with these impressive words: “And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as he hath commanded us.” (Deut. vi. 20–25.)

In the 78th Psalm, written, as is supposed, in commemoration of Asa’s victory over the Israelites, when many out of the tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon, were brought back to the pure worship of God, occurs the following passage: “For He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children, that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children, that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments.” (Ps. lxxviii. 5–7.)

The calamities which befell the Ten Tribes that revolted from the house of David, do not exceed what might have been foreseen and predicted by any pious Israelite, as the consequences of the abolition of the divinely-instituted worship of Jehovah, and the setting up of the idolatrous worship of the calves at Dan and Bethel; a measure, in the judgment of Jeroboam, essential to the permanence of his usurped authority. (1 Kings xii. 25–33.) With this change in the national religion, family religion must have experienced a corresponding mutation. For when Jeroboam had cast off the Lord’s priests from executing the priest’s office and had ordained him priests for the high places, and for the devils, and for the calves which he had made, it cannot be supposed that the families adhering to him, would be inclined, or permitted to attend to that injunction of Moses, “Ye shall command your children to do all the words of this law,” which saith, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me;” “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.”

By the event referred to in the 78th Psalm, from which we have quoted above, a portion of the revolted tribes were brought back to their allegiance to Jehovah and to the house of David, by the victorious arms of Asa; and the pious Psalmist, celebrating this triumph, introduces his subject in a style significant and striking: “I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old, which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us; *we will not hide them from their children,* showing to the generations to come

the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done." (Ps. lxxviii. 2-4.)

By the house of Judah likewise, we infer that the duty of parental religious instruction was to a great extent neglected, from the prevalence of idolatry among all classes of the people. For it cannot be supposed that the Lord would have commanded "the fathers to make known His truth to the children," as a means of preventing idolatry (see Deut. iv. 9, *ad fin.*), and then would have suffered the nation to fall into the most degrading forms of idol-worship, unless those *fathers* had forgotten the covenant of the Lord their God, and hidden from their children, "the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works." Although this national sin brought upon them the threatened wrath and displeasure of the Most High; and although they endured the consequences of this guilt in the horrors of the siege, the oppression of conquerors, and finally in their deportation to the bonds and servitude of Babylonish captivity; yet there is reason to apprehend, even after their restoration from that captivity, that there prevailed great inattention to the duty of family religious instruction, and disregard of those high and sacred obligations involved in the constitution of the family; the canon of the Old Testament Scriptures closing with this remarkable language: "Behold, I will send you Elijah, the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord; and he shall turn the heart of *the fathers* to the *children*, and the heart of *the children* to the *fathers*, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." (Mal. iv. 4-6.)

From this brief account of the subject under consideration, drawn from the history of God's people under the old dispensation, it is obvious that the neglect of a duty so plainly enjoined, and upon the faithful performance of which so much depended, *must have been a sin of no ordinary magnitude*. And connected as this sin was, with many of the more flagrant offences of the Jewish people, as a nation and as individuals, it need not surprise us that, in God's dealings with them, it should have met the fearful retribution of his justice, in every age, from the time that Rebecca instructed her son in the arts of deception, to the period when his descendants rejected their Prince and Saviour, madly invoking the malediction, "His blood be upon us and our children."

In the New Testament, which contains the doctrines and institutions of the Christian religion, the duty of parental religious training occupies a position not less prominent than in the Old Testament. In the gospel, truly, "The hearts of the fathers are turned to the children, as well as the disobedient to the wisdom of the just." (Luke i. 17.)

Our Saviour rebuked his disciples for forbidding children to be brought unto him, saying, "Suffer the little children, and forbid them not to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. xix. 13.) And to qualify children and youth for this membership in the kingdom of heaven, so far as education and discipline

can accomplish that end, they are brought into covenant relation to God, on the faith of their parents (1 Cor. vii. 14). Promises are made to them (Acts ii. 39). Special instructions are addressed to them (Col. iii. 20; Eph. vi. 1-3). Parents are cautioned against provoking them to wrath, and are enjoined to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. vi. 4; Col. iii. 21). They were, doubtless, dedicated to God in the baptism of households (Acts xvi. 15, 33; 1 Cor. i. 16). And instances are recorded of their walking in the truth (2 John 4), and of their acquaintance with the holy Scriptures from childhood (2 Tim. iii. 15).

Thus, in both the Old and New Testament, the duty of family religious instruction occupies a position of importance which should bespeak for it the awakened attention of Christian parents and of the Christian Church. Its continued neglect cannot but prove fatal to the usefulness and happiness of families, and disastrous to the prosperity of Zion.

THE MATTER OF INSTRUCTION.

In further consideration of this important subject, we propose to speak of what should be embraced in a course of early religious instruction.

As "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God," the Bible should be the principal text-book in the religious teaching of the young. For this purpose, among others, was this precious volume given to the world. "The entrance of thy word giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple."

The adaptation of the word of God to the purpose in question appears, first in the fact that the reception and contemplation of the truths of revealed religion, more than any other subjects of study, elevate and strengthen the mind. Children, that are for several years conversant only with the ordinary affairs of the family circle or with the common occurrences of life, experience a pleasing expansion of thought and development of mind when they visit places at a distance from home. But the youthful mind, though previously accustomed to retirement, soon comprehends the variety and confusion of a large city, and is presently familiarized with scenes of beauty and grandeur. The mountain range, the cataract, the extended ocean, or the starry firmament, though, perhaps, never viewed without a degree of interest, yet, as they become familiar, gradually lose their power to affect even the youthful mind with those sensations of awe, admiration, or astonishment, which were at first awakened by their contemplation. The same effect upon the mind results from familiarity with the events of history and the demonstrations of science. There appears to be a point beyond which the study of created things ceases to develop intellectual power and to increase the capacity of the mind. Whether the ability of such studies to strengthen the mind is limited by their own essentially finite nature, or results

from the native incapacity of the human mind to investigate such subjects beyond a certain degree, we assume not to decide. No such arrested progress, however, attends the study of divine truth. Acquaintance with the revealed things of God imparts to the mind the desire and the capacity for all that is truly great and good. Familiarity with one truth of revelation invigorates for the contemplation of others more complex, extensive, and profound. As the mind advances, the more is it strengthened for the pursuit of higher attainments in knowledge. Its progress is as the light which beams upon "the path of the just, shining more and more unto the perfect day." In contemplating the deep things of God and acquiring the knowledge of the manifold relations of the creature to the Creator, the immortal spirit enters upon ceaseless astonishment, admiration, and praise; ever approaching the eternal throne; never reaching it, yet ever advancing.

But, in the second place, this invigorating and elevating influence of divine truth is not confined to the intellectual faculties alone; the whole moral nature, also, is by it powerfully developed. For although, in our fallen condition, the law of our natural conscience is so far obliterated as to be unavailable in ascertaining our duty to God, yet there remains the original faculty by which we distinguish right and wrong; and to this faculty, in an especial manner, are the teachings of the word of God addressed. Our innate moral sense, though naturally depraved, is susceptible by education of still further perversion and degradation. It is also susceptible by education of great improvement. The education of which we speak is the aggregate result of all the influences of education and example to which an individual is exposed until his principles are settled, and his habits formed.

Let heathenism, for instance, train a child in her dark places, which are full of the habitations of cruelty, and he will know no higher deity than the elements of nature: he will strangle his aged father as an act of humanity; and conscientiously sacrifice his own offspring to devils. The same child, educated by Romanism, will regard it mortal sin to think for himself on matters of faith: he will yield his body and soul to the polluting domination of the confessional, as the only way of pardon. He will verily believe that the gift of God is to be purchased with money; and that the great and blessed God himself is pleased with vain oblations, pomp, and parade. But the same child, trained under the influence of the gospel and instructed in the great doctrines of the Bible, will manifest a clearness of mind, a tenderness of conscience, and a strength of moral principle which can be produced by no other educational instrumentality: so peculiarly adapted is the word of divine inspiration to operate upon the natural conscience.

"The fear of the Lord," using the term in its usual specific sense, is not only "the beginning of wisdom," but is also one of the most powerful motives that can be addressed to the natural heart. This

sentiment, when once habitual, becomes the master influence of the life. Though it may not cleanse from secret faults, yet it strongly tends to keep back from open and presumptuous sins, such as profane swearing, Sabbath-breaking, fraud, violence, intemperance, and the like. It inclines to the path of duty and is the strength of moral obligation. And yet, while its tendency is to hold its possessor in subjection and obedience to God, it is remarkably adapted to remove from the character the fear of man, and an undue respect for the creature. The existence and majesty of God, his present moral government over his creatures, and the final retributions of his justice, are the truths which tend to cultivate in the youthful mind the controlling sentiment of which we have spoken: and these are the doctrines recognised and inculcated throughout the Bible.

And this influence of sacred truth is not temporary. It grows with the growth and strengthens with the strength. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto, according to thy word." Many a young man has, by this means, been kept from the path of the destroyer, from which he could hardly have escaped, had his childhood been uninstructed in "the admonition and fear of the Lord."

Nor do the advantage and influence of Scripture instruction terminate with the inculcation of sound morality and with the restraining and moulding of the external deportment. The Sacred Scriptures, through faith in Jesus Christ, are able to make wise unto salvation. And the salvation of the soul should be the great and ceaseless aim of the parent, in teaching his child out of the lively oracles of God. Children, at a very early age, can understand their need of a Saviour and the plan of salvation. Their earliest remembrances should be associated with the love of God as displayed in the transactions of Calvary. They should be early familiarized with the name of Jesus; with the holiness of his character, the benevolence of his heart; his sympathy for the distressed, his special regard for children; with the greatness and goodness of his miracles; and above all, with the shedding of his blood in atoning for sin: that he is both able and willing to save sinners. Let the *first great idea* impressed upon the infant mind, in lines of indelible distinctness, be the *idea of the God-Man Christ*: the mighty God over all, the sympathizing friend of sinners; the pattern of their life, their Protector and Help in trouble, their Redeemer, their Judge, their God!

Thus made acquainted, from their youth, with the Holy Scriptures, they are not only kept from receiving "for doctrines the commandments of men;" but in the day of God's merciful visitation to their souls, when they shall be effectually called by His Spirit into the kingdom of his Son, it will not be their part to occupy the room of the untaught, who are necessarily confined to a limited sphere of usefulness, while they are learning what are the first principles of the doctrine of Christ; but with sanctified affections and enlightened

minds, they are qualified to enter at once into the active and efficient service of the Master. The individual, who, in youth, has been thoroughly instructed from the Scriptures and trained in the path of duty by parental faithfulness, needs but the life-giving influence of the Holy Spirit on his soul, to introduce him into a sphere of usefulness, and to invest him with a maturity of Christian character, to which he would have been a stranger, had his early religious training been neglected.

The religious training of our children will be incomplete, however, if they are instructed only in the general principles of Christian faith and practice. They should likewise be thoroughly indoctrinated in *the peculiar views of our Church, and faithfully instructed in her history.*

These subjects have been unfortunately, too often omitted from the early instructions of our children, in order, as it is alleged, "to avoid giving undue importance to non-essentials; and that the youthful mind may not be biased by sectarian prejudices." We apprehend, the Presbyterian Church has not yet fully realized all the evils resulting from this error. We deprecate as much as any, the bad effects of early prejudice; and "the tithing of mint, and anise, and cummin, to the neglect of the weightier matters of the law." And as the most efficient guard against these very evils, we earnestly recommend to the parents of our beloved Zion that they familiarize their children with *the distinctive doctrines and order of the Presbyterian Church*; exhibiting them in their proper place and showing their real importance in the system of divine truth. It will not fail to appear that the truths of the gospel, as held forth by Presbyterianism, "are like apples of gold in pictures of silver." And we need not fear that any one will be a Presbyterian *from prejudice*, who is well instructed in the scriptural authority of that system and in the eventful history which has distinguished its progress.

In recommending that Presbyterian children be instructed in the peculiarities and history of their Church, we assume that their parents believe and love those peculiarities and appreciate that history. Then by what reasons soever the system promulged in the standards of the Presbyterian Church is entitled to our credence, by which we have been induced to profess it publicly, and by which we are justified in holding it forth to the world; by the same reasons are we laid under all obligation to communicate that system to our children.

What system ever held by man is superior to that popularly known as Calvinism, in its power to benefit the world? What other system ascribes the same glory to the infinite Majesty of heaven, and at the same time is so calculated to develop the highest qualities of human nature? By this system the man of distinction and extensive usefulness is made to feel that he has nothing but what he has received, that it is God who maketh him to differ, "working in him to will and to do;" whilst his more humble fellow-servant, no less important in

his appointed sphere, is encouraged to improve his single talent with the utmost diligence. Inculcating the sovereignty of God and his changeless purpose of justice and grace, it inspires the heart of man with high resolves for the glory of God and the good of man; and nerves his arm with invincible prowess for the execution of noble enterprises. And whilst it affords to the believer, effectually called, the assurance that "he shall never perish," being "kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation"—it extends to the impenitent sinner the encouragement which he needs: "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, *but of God that showeth mercy.*" "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is the gift of God.*"

The brightest pages of history derive their radiance from the records inscribed by the principles of our system. In the progressive development of liberty, knowledge, and righteousness, those principles have exercised a controlling influence; and they enrol among their advocates multitudes of the wise, great, and good in every age, that have arisen to bless mankind.

Above all, we believe this system to be the precious truth of God, which he has revealed concerning himself and concerning our duty and destiny. And we may regard him who holds it, as occupying that mountain elevation which commands the radiant bow in full perfection, at once the memorial of justice, and the pledge of mercy. Shall we fail then, to impress upon the minds of our beloved offspring the proper estimation of such a system as this? Shall we not faithfully indoctrinate them in its principles, that they may imbibe its healthful and invigorating spirit and be enriched by its priceless blessings?

Especially is this demanded in such a day as the present, when *this way* is evil spoken of by many contradicting and blaspheming; and a fearful current of infidelity and atheism threatens to deluge the land. "We will not hide it from our children, showing to the generations to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works."

AN APPEAL TO PARENTS.

In the constitution of the family, Divine Providence has invested the parental relation with peculiar authority and influence for the discharge of these duties; and nothing so strengthens that authority and augments that influence as the assembling of a family, morning and evening, to be led in their devotions by parental piety, and to be instructed out of the law of the Lord.

The responsibility of a father is commensurate with the near relation which he sustains to his offspring. God has, for a season, committed to parental stewardship the immortal soul of the child. How much depends upon the manner in which are met the duties involved in that stewardship! To a great extent, success or failure; honour

or degradation in the world ; weal or woe in eternity. And in what terms may we define the turpitude of that parent who fails to acknowledge God before his household and to speak to his children of salvation ? Not only does he deprive himself of one of the richest pleasures known to the sanctified heart, but he defrauds his little ones of a divine inheritance and contemns the authority of heaven. The total neglect of family religion is commonly attended with the decay of personal piety, loss of interest in the cause of religion generally, derangement of secular business, feuds among brethren and sisters, the alienation of children from parents or the untimely breaking up and dispersion of families, and other evidences of God's just displeasure.

The observance of a formal morning and evening service at the family altar, in which the children and domestics take no part, and which is accompanied by no religious instruction, accomplishes little more than to remind the household that a profession of religion is made in their midst. Should the devotions of a family be conducted even with spirit and zeal, but still be unaccompanied by proper instruction, and left unappropriated to the purpose of "training in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," the members of that family will derive from such devotions but feeble ability to withstand the influences which tend to divert them from the path of virtue ; or to correct those false impressions made upon the minds of our youth, by which they are sometimes enticed from the faith of their fathers. On the other hand, when family religion is made to consist in *mere instruction*, however appropriate or orthodox it may be, to the exclusion or neglect of devotional and spiritual duties, and more especially if the instruction relates chiefly to outward ceremonies and forms—those under its influence may be expected to become formalists and bigots ; or in disgust at all religion, to withdraw to the dark and unhappy recesses of infidelity.

The appropriate remedy for all these evils—the efficient guard against results so painful to a Christian parent's heart, is that which we propose in the recommendations of this article : The instruction of our children and households in the truths of the word of God, from the Scriptures, and as they are contained in the standards of our Church ; and the training of them to know their "heavenly Father as a prayer-hearing and a prayer-answering God." The faithful parent, desiring the divine blessing in his habitation, will not only impart this instruction and attend to this training as ordinary duties ; but he will seek frequent occasions to speak to his children *individually and in private*, upon the great concern of their salvation ; warning them affectionately and earnestly to seek God, and to give their hearts to the Lord Jesus in the morning of life. And his anxiety, refusing to be satisfied with warning alone, will conduct them *singly* to the throne of mercy, imploring in their behalf the effectual grace of God to bring them to Christ, to give them new hearts and to adopt them into his family. Nor does his con-

cern for them cease here; but in his secret devotions also, with strong cries to God, will he bear them before the throne upon the arms of a vigorous faith, until it shall appear that "*the children of such prayers cannot perish.*" But while he is thus exhorting and teaching his children and making them the subjects of earnest and constant prayer, he is careful in his daily walk to set before them an example which they may safely follow; to lead them into no temptation; and to place them in no situation where their morals may be corrupted or their judgment perverted. The children of such a parent shall rise up and call him blessed; they shall be as olive plants around his table; and at last, it will be his distinguished blessedness to appear in the eternal Presence, saying: "Behold, I, and the children Thou hast given me."

ARTICLE II.

FAMILY CATECHISING.

[From the United Presbyterian Magazine, Scotland, 1851.]

OF all the periods of human life, youth is the most favourable for religious impression. At first the judgment, though weak, is not pre-occupied; the heart, though depraved, is not yet hardened; and the conscience, though evil, is not yet seared as with a hot iron. Then, like the young sapling, the mind will take any bend you are pleased to give it. But when it has long been inured to sin, it becomes stubborn as the sturdy tree that resists our pressure. We are told, on the best authority, it is as unlikely for one to do good who has been accustomed to do evil, as for the Ethiopian to change his skin, or the leopard his spots. Hence it is that so little can be done with the aged, and many think that few are converted after their twentieth year. It is true we must not limit the Holy One of Israel, and we know he can save even at the eleventh hour. But though a man may be born again when he is old, few, we fear, are changed at this time of life, and most of the aged who are coming to the grave like a shock of corn in its season, are those of whom God says, "I remember the kindness of thy youth."

Since these things are so, can too much attention be paid to the training of the young? And should not every expedient be resorted to for improving the precious season of youth? In what follows, we intend to confine our remarks to one branch of the subject—family catechising. Of the importance of this department of parental duty, we cannot form too high an estimate. A family thus instructed, becomes a little nursery for the church and for heaven. The advantages of the practice have been seen in the lives and in the deaths of multitudes, and yet the day of judgment alone can reveal them fully.

But this practice, so invaluable to the young, has sadly declined

in these degenerate days. The time has been, when no head of a family, who pretended to the name of a Christian would have dared to neglect it; but, as with family worship, what was once the rule has, we fear, become the exception. Nay, there is too much reason to doubt, that rare as is the worship of the family, the family catechising is still more rare; and some who observe the former duty have no relish for the latter. The chief cause of this is, no doubt, the decline of vital religion; but there are particular circumstances at the present day, which cannot be held as evincing such a decline, and yet have had their influence in producing the result we are deploring. Since Sabbath-schools have become so numerous, many parents think the work of family catechising is taken out of their hands. Now this is a great mistake. Sabbath-schools are a blessing, and a great blessing, to the country. But they are at the best but a remedy for a prevalent disease, and if every father could, and would, instruct his own household, Sabbath-schools would be quite uncalled for. No Christian parent is at liberty to devolve on a proxy the religious training of his offspring. And what instruction can be compared to that of a father? The school teacher may be very kind, and deeply concerned for the salvation of his pupils. But the child knows that his parent has far more interest in him than any stranger can have; and if the lessons of the school are not seconded by home tuition, they will in general be in vain. The neglect of this duty we believe to be one great reason of a fact which all Christians deplore, that while Sabbath-schools were never more numerous, juvenile wickedness was never more prevalent.

The frequency of preaching on the Sabbath evenings, especially in towns, may be another cause which has led to this evil. These sermons are extensively placarded and earnestly pressed on attention. The names of the preachers and their particular subjects are diligently advertised and intimated from every pulpit, as if it were some performance where men go to be entertained. Parents think they are well employed when they are hearing the word; and, as this is felt to be much easier than doing their more appropriate work at home, it is often preferred. Now, no head of a family should ever think, in ordinary circumstances, of going to these evening discourses. He is the priest in his own household, and his work at home is far more important than hearing the most popular preacher, on the most exciting theme he can bring before them.

The neglect of the good old way has been most disastrous. It is owing to this that such ignorance now prevails among the members of churches, and that the attainments of most professors are so very circumscribed. None who examine candidates for communion, or parents who are seeking baptism to their children, but must be pained at this. Many people can make but little of sermons, as preachers cannot be always dwelling on first principles; and as church examinations, either from the neglect of the pastor, or the pride of the people, are now almost entirely obsolete, unless the examination be

practised in the family, ignorance must increase. And is it not owing to the same neglect that the grossest errors and wildest views on religious subjects are so rampant in the present day? Though the age be distinguished for shrewdness and acuteness in detecting flaws in science and literature, what monstrous opinions are entertained on religion!

Now, if in early life a systematic view of Christian doctrine were obtained, and digested and stored in the memory, the analogy of faith would be seen; the bearing of one doctrine on another would be apparent, and the pernicious dogmas, which gain assent so easily, would be at once rejected. In times of change like the present, when a respect for all that is sacred is sneered at by many as weakness and superstition, when the march of intellect, as they call it, is the pretext for so much change, and when all the foundations have gone out of their course, how important for the young especially to be rooted and grounded in the truth, that they may not be the dupes of every impostor, and be tossed about by every wind of doctrine!

In catechising a family, much will depend on the mode of procedure. To be efficient, it must be done frequently, seriously, intelligently, affectionately, attractively, and prayerfully.

It must be done *frequently*. Not at rare intervals, as before a communion, or when about to ask admission into the church, or when the visit of the pastor is expected. It must be very regular, and often repeated. For many years it was the custom to require an answer to a question every morning, and the greater part of Saturday was devoted to a revisal of the Catechism. But in this age of bustle and business, when even the day of God is encroached on, and there is time for everything but religion, such important seasons may not be convenient. Yet once in the week is surely not too often, and the evening of the Sabbath may be employed by all.

It must be done *seriously*,—not like some secular exercise, but as a work involving eternal interests. The subjects of examination are all of the most solemn and tremendous moment. And yet how often are the questions repeated with scarcely a solemn sound, and by a thoughtless tongue! Now this is not only hateful to God, but hurtful to the young. On such occasions all levity must be banished from the mind. They must be taught, when examined, that they have now to do with God, and that the place they occupy is like the "holy ground."

It must be done *intelligently*; without this it will be labour in vain. Many have the form of sound words to which they can attach no meaning. They can repeat the questions with the greatest accuracy; but if you vary the language and ask what is meant by the thing expressed, there is no reply but the stare of ignorance. In this matter an improvement has taken place in recent editions of the Catechism. But still there is need for more explanation, that milk may be given to babes as well as meat to the stronger man.

It must be done *affectionately*, in the spirit of the father when

he said, "O my son, if thine heart be wise my heart shall rejoice, even mine;" or of the mother who, leaning over the darling of her heart, exclaims, "O my son, and the son of my womb, and the son of my vows, and the son of my prayers." The young must be drawn with the cords of love as the bands of a man. We cannot compel them to be religious. We may force them to read the Bible, and to repeat the questions, but we cannot compel them to love the Redeemer. In conducting this duty, the father must try to convince his child that he loves him as his own soul, and travails as in birth that Christ may be formed in his heart.

It must be done *attractively*,—not in a scolding, scowling manner, which would discourage children, and beget an aversion to the exercise; not as a task or piece of drudgery, so many questions inflicted as a kind of punishment. Unless the duty is made a delight, it will be little relished. The pious Philip Henry, as his son tells us, made the work of catechising so delightful to himself and his household, that he would sometimes say, at its close on the Sabbath evening, "Well, if this is not heaven, it must be the gate to it."

And it must be done *prayerfully*. The parent who knows anything of true religion, is well aware that all his efforts will be useless without the Spirit of God. He may succeed in imparting theoretical knowledge; his child may be able to answer with promptitude and precision every question he is pleased to put to him; but without the grace of God, it is all like the sounding brass or the tinkling cymbal. The knowledge which is all intellectual may exist in the memory or the head, but it has no communication with the heart. Polish the marble as you please, it may display its spots and its veins, but it is marble still. No father can convert his son. Flesh and blood cannot do this; none but the Father in heaven. While, therefore, the parent questions, he must also pray; and while in the morning he sows the seed, he must look up for the early and the latter rains.

Were the exercise so conducted, might we not expect the most happy results? We know it is corruption and not grace that runs in the blood; and that many a pious father has had a wicked Absalom. But this is the exception and not the rule, and for such exceptions reasons may often be assigned, as in the case of David and Eli. Manasseh had a good father who would take care to instruct him in the things of God; and yet for a while he gave no evidence of profiting from his pious education. But see him caught among the thorns; carried captive to Babylon; lying in the dungeon, and there making supplication to the God of his father. It was his early impressions which were then revived. It was the seed sown into his mind when a child, that then sprung up and produced such a blessed harvest. And such cases are by no means rare. Parents may sometimes think they have laboured in vain. Their instructions may be buried long under the clods of corruption, but their words may be remembered when they are sleeping in the dust, and when their souls are in heaven. They may have occasion to say on hear-

ing of the conversion of their poor prodigal, "It is meet to make merry, and be glad, for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost and is found."

If a parent, then, is reading these lines, we would say—for your own sake, for your children's sake, and for the sake of the Lord Jesus, early instruct your offspring in the things of God. If your children perish through neglect of this, how can you meet them in the other world? "O father! O mother!" they might say, "if you had taught me the Catechism, if you had taken pains to instruct me in the things that belong to my peace, I might not have come to this place of torment. You took care, indeed, to cultivate my mind, and refine my manners; you sent me to every school but the school of Christ; you were careful that I should learn everything but the way of salvation. You often examined me on questions of science, but you had no anxiety to know my attainments in religion. You were proud when you saw me excelling others in branches of literature, but you thought no shame though you saw me ignorant of religion as the wild ass's colt. The things that belonged to my peace you hid from mine eyes, and now I cannot but curse you for ever as the cause of my misery."

But O, how different the meeting when by instructing your children in religion you have not only kept them from error, but become the means of their eternal salvation! Then how will they hail you, as, under God, the parents not of their first only, but of their second birth! And how transported will you be when called to account for your charge, you can say, Lord, here are we, and the children thou hast given to us—given to us first by nature, and then by grace! Happy family in heaven! Here you enjoyed your domestic gatherings, but they were soon over. But now your Sabbath's sun never goes down—your meetings never break up! The Catechism is left behind you, and also the Bible, for now you know even as you are known. But being pious and happy in your lives, in your deaths you are not divided; for they who are a family in Christ are for ever with each other and for ever with the Lord!

ARTICLE III.

THE RELATION OF BAPTIZED CHILDREN TO THE CHURCH.

[From the *New Englander*, 1851.*]

AMID many hopeful signs of the times, there is one alarming characteristic. The homes of our land appear to be degenerating.

* The proprietors of this able Quarterly kindly gave us permission to use any of its articles that suited the plan of our Magazine. The important article, selected for this year, will commend itself to careful perusal and meditation. Its statements will be generally received by Presbyterians, as according "to the law and the testimony." The writer is the REV. JOSEPH ELDRIDGE, of Norfolk, Ct.—Ed.

Is there not a decrease of household piety? and a weakening of domestic bonds and affections? The period of youth, that period once characterized by modesty and diffidence, by regard for parental counsel and authority, and by respect for age and experience, is well-nigh abolished. Children spring up at once into men and women; they are precocious in their desires and passions, prematurely ambitious and avaricious, eager to cast off the restraints of home and set up for independence. A class of philosophers noticing this tendency of the times hail it as an auspicious omen, and anticipate the day when the conjugal relation shall be avowedly, as it now often proves in fact, a temporary arrangement: when the love of parents and children, of brothers and sisters, amiable prejudices and excusable, perhaps useful, in a dark age, will give place to a democratic philanthropy in the strong light of a higher civilization.

To counteract this tendency, to redeem and save our homes, the gracious covenant of God with believers in respect to them and their households, needs to be restored to its legitimate place in the faith and regard of his people.

We propose, therefore, to institute the following inquiry:—What is the actual position of baptized children, under the economy of redeeming grace, as regards the essential qualifications of membership in the church of Christ?

The original covenant made with Abraham was in these words: “And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.” (Gen. 17: 7.)

This covenant included the patriarch and his seed.

In Rom. 11: 16, 17, 18, the following occurs: “For if the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches; and if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; boast not against the branches; but if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.”

Thus the perpetuity of that covenant and the extension of its privileges to Gentile converts are beautifully symbolized.

The original covenant embraced children. That covenant is still in force, and includes children now. This is the ground taken in this article. If it be maintained, then what is the position of baptized children, or in other words, children embraced in this covenant? We answer, that it is such as to justify a strong expectation that they will early give evidence of piety.

It is to be shown *first*, that the Abrahamic covenant is still in force; and *secondly*, that being in force it authorizes the strong expectation that children embraced in it, or baptized children, will early give evidence of piety. It is to be understood, however, that we speak of children whose parents are true believers, not mere nominal Christians, and whose views, sentiments, and influence in

reference to their children, in a good degree correspond with their obligations. The external rite of infant baptism, apart from its connexion with such parental character and conduct, is without value; it is the seal of a bond, the essential condition of which has not been fulfilled.

But before proceeding to the scriptural evidence of the proposition we have undertaken to maintain, we wish to present certain considerations that seem strongly to favour the same conclusion, and to prepare the mind to find such evidence in the Scriptures.

PRESUMPTIONS IN FAVOUR OF THE COVENANT.

First, God in the original constitution of things left the character and prospects for eternity of the whole human race dependent upon the conduct of the first human pair. Their fall involved their posterity in sin and ruin. Every individual of the race enters the world with a vitiated nature, some say with a sinful nature, others say with a nature that uniformly leads to sin when moral agency begins; all say with a nature, that would have resulted in the eternal ruin of all, had not God mercifully interposed with redeeming grace. This merciful interposition was no part of the original constitution of things, according to which the consequences of Adam's disobedience passed over, and affected in so serious a manner his posterity. The constitution itself with this liability of abuse was among the works and arrangements, which God on resting from creation contemplated with entire satisfaction and pronounced very good. With this constitution before us, we shall not deem it matter of surprise to find in the economy of grace, an arrangement of an analogous character by which spiritual blessings are pledged to parents in behalf of their children, and made conditional on their own piety and fidelity.

However, let us not be understood to assert or intimate, that these blessings come through the operation of any natural law of descent. That is not our view. It has been indeed supposed by some, that the direction of this natural law is reversed in the case of children born of believing parents, and that its reversed operation renders it as much a matter of course, that such children should enter the world with a bias to the right, as it is that the offspring of irreligious parents are born with a bias to evil. Although this hypothesis is among possible suppositions, yet it is by no means one that we regard as true. It is referred to, that it may be disclaimed. The point of analogy between the original constitution of things as respects the relation between parents and children, and the economy of redemption in that regard, is the fact of dependence under each of children in reference to spiritual good, upon the character and conduct of their parents. This fact of dependence does not necessarily imply that the mode of sequence is the same in both cases, nor is that important to the argument. This dependence being

known to exist in one divine arrangement does more than obviate any presumption against its being found in another bearing upon the same interests; it creates a rational ground of expectation that it will be found there.

In the second place, in the established course of things in this world, the good character and conduct of parents contribute to the temporal welfare of their children. Every father knows that if he be virtuous in his habits, enterprising and industrious in his calling, and win for himself a name among men, the advantage of such a course will not be confined to himself, but will extend to his children. He knows that their temporal destiny is in an important sense in his hands; that upon him, his character, influence, and exertions, they are dependent for subsistence, for manners, for moral habits, for the means of education, and for position in society; that on leaving the parental roof they will start in the world from the point of elevation to which he may have raised them; that they will go forth guided by his counsels, furnished by his means, and under the auspices and prestige of his name. He knows that on his departure from the earth he shall leave to them whatever wealth he may have gained, whatever honours he may have won, all the temporal results, the accumulated fruits of his whole life. The extension to things spiritual of the principle that underlies this general arrangement in regard to things temporal, might rationally be expected. Such an extension of the principle is what we discover in the gracious covenant into which God enters with believers in behalf of their children.

In the third place, God has placed parents in a position, and invested them with authority in relation to their children, that afford every conceivable advantage for forming the mind and moulding the character. He has commanded them, in the use of those advantages and in the exercise of this authority, to train up their children in the way they should go. Now if they in a spirit of obedience and piety enter heartily into the design of this divine scheme, and in some good degree execute the human part of it—the part assigned to them—will God suffer it to fail of its contemplated result, by withholding on his part that grace which is essential to its efficacy? The manifest importance of this view will justify something more than a passing glance. Let us consider the natural position of parents, and the authority delegated to them in reference to their children.

On entering the world, the infant, a sensitive mass of passive organized matter, inclosing the germ of a spiritual and immortal being, is committed for protection and nurture to the care and offices of its parents. Months elapse ere it can comprehend the import of the simplest word, during which the impressions made upon it are conveyed by the mode in which it is physically treated by them, by the tones of their voices, and the expression of their countenances. And it would be a mistake, we imagine, to suppose that its spiritual

education has not already begun, that as to any effect upon its character, it is a matter of indifference, whether the manifestations to which it is subjected are gentle or rough, whether the tones that fall upon its ears are affectionate and soothing or harsh and irritating, whether the countenances to which it looks up always beam with kindness and love or are frequently lit up with the frown and glare of evil passions. The influence exerted upon it in these ways cannot indeed be fully described or accurately measured. Let it not on that account be set down as of no importance. At length the meaning of words begins to dawn upon the opening understanding, and the period of instruction by verbal statement and precept, and of control by commandment, arrives. *The mind*, naturally inquisitive and thirsting for knowledge, and at the same time docile and credulous, eagerly imbibes whatever ideas are presented for its reception. *Conscience* is unfolding itself and gradually acquiring its rules of right and wrong, the elements of its moral decisions. *The will* is comparatively flexible. *Depravity* has been but partially developed in action, it has not become entrenched in fixed habits of transgression. With all his opening faculties in this absorbent state, the child is submerged in the waters of parental influence. They answer his inquiries, unravel his perplexities, solve his doubts. They are the medium through which the ideas of all things beyond household objects and incidents reach him, they are his oracle on matters of religious truth, their opinion and practice his standard of right on questions of moral obligation.

As time rolls on he comes into more direct contact with persons and things beyond the domestic circle, but still he remains subject to their rule as to the nature and extent of that intercourse. Their will is law as to the methods and means of his education, in respect to labour and amusement, with regard to the books to be read, companions to be cherished, and the thousand other arrangements that constitute the moral world in which he lives and moves and has his being. If occasion should require it, they possess the means of enforcing their authority; they have also the special sanction of God to invest it with weight and solemnity. "Honour thy father and thy mother." "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." "Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to God." Such is the natural position and delegated power of parents from the entrance of their children into the world, through the whole of that portion of their lives during which the character is formed. What a perfect system of influence has God placed at their disposal! To what end he would have them devote it in all its energy, he has not left them in doubt. "Train up a child in the way he should go." "Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Now, if they are obedient and faithful, not perfectly so, but to such a degree as sincere Christian parents may hope to reach, we would ask, will God permit this admirable system to fail by withholding his blessing?

With these considerations in mind, can we think it wonderful that there should be found in the Bible a *covenant* in which God pledges himself to do what we have seen there is independent reason to expect he would do? We now proceed to examine the Abrahamic covenant. What was that covenant, and is it still in force? If so, what is its import in behalf of baptized children?

NATURE AND IMPORT OF THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT.

1. To ascertain the *character* of the covenant, it is necessary to consider several passages in Genesis that refer to it. Gen. 12 : 1, 2, 3 : "Now the Lord had said unto Abram : get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great ; and thou shalt be a blessing : And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee, and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Gen. 15 : 4, 5, 6. "And, behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir, but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them ; and he said unto him, so shall thy seed be. And he believed in the Lord ; and he counted it to him for righteousness." Gen. 17 : 1-11 : "The Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God : walk before me and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face : and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be called Abraham : for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee ; and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession ; and I will be their God. And God said unto Abraham, thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee, in their generations. This is my covenant, which ye shall keep between me and you, and thy seed after thee ; Every man-child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskins ; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you."

These several passages taken together teach that in a series of manifestations, God made, established, and sealed a covenant with Abraham his friend, having respect to blessings temporal and spiritual, the temporal sustaining to the spiritual the relation of subordi-

nate means to a higher end—the relation of scaffolding to the building, of the casket to the treasure.

The temporal blessing promised was a numerous natural posterity, who should have for a possession the land of Canaan, and be distinguished among all the nations of the earth.

The spiritual blessings pledged in the covenant with Abraham were, that Jehovah would be a God to him and his seed after him; that the Messiah in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed, should, as to the flesh, be of his seed, and that he, Abraham, should be the father of many nations. The meaning of this last phrase is explained by the apostle Paul, Rom. 4 : 11–17 : “He (Abraham) received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith, which *he had yet* being uncircumcised: That he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed to them also.” “For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.” “Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all. As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations”—that is, Abraham was to be the patriarch of a spiritual household consisting at first of his own natural descendants, and embracing ultimately the regenerated nations of the earth, and so he would become the heir of the world. Such was the covenant with Abraham. Now the question is whether this covenant having been fulfilled in those particulars which were in their own nature, incidental, subordinate, and temporary, remains in force as to the matters spiritual embraced in it, or whether it has been disannulled or superseded.

Has that covenant, which promised, among other things, a Messiah in the line of Abraham, in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed, ceased to be operative? Have we not now a Saviour who took upon him, not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham—and are not the blessings of his salvation spreading at this hour among the nations of the earth? Has the covenant which promised to the patriarch a spiritual seed among Gentile nations become null and void? Are there not multitudes of those of whom Abraham as to blood was ignorant, and whom Israel acknowledged not, now exercising that faith which he had being uncircumcised; multitudes of Gentiles who are Christ's, and therefore, according to the inference of the apostle, Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise? But, did not the law which came by Moses do away or disannul the covenant made with Abraham?—The covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul that it should make the promise of none effect—saith the apostle Paul.

It was in pursuance of the covenant, that God proceeded in that

matter. He beheld the descendants of his friend in their degradation in Egypt. He heard their groaning, and with signs and wonders and an outstretched arm, he delivered them out of the hand of Pharaoh, and bore them as on eagles' wings to the land promised to their fathers. In pursuance of the covenant he gave them his holy law, and for their spiritual edification established among them a ritual of worship, the shadow of better things to come; he arranged for their government a civil code happily adjusted to the ecclesiastical establishment—the whole system being admirably fitted to their state, and suited to preserve among them the knowledge and worship of the living and true God, and to serve as a high wall of separation between them and the surrounding heathen nations. "He brought the vine," his visible church, "out of Egypt; he cast out the heathen and planted it; he prepared room before it; and caused it to take deep root, and it filled the land."

The law of Moses having answered, in its day, the end for which it was designed, waxed old and vanished away at the approach of Christianity. Now what relation did Christianity sustain to the covenant? It was another and grand step in its fulfilment, it was the coming of the *promised* Messiah, it was the destruction of those embankments that limited the current of its blessings to a particular race, that they might flow abroad unobstructed among all the nations of the earth. On this point the New Testament writers are full, explicit, and glowing. In their view the Old and New Testament churches were identical, founded on one and the same covenant. How clearly this is taught—how beautifully it is symbolized—by the figure of the olive tree! The argument of the apostle is, that the Gentiles now occupy the position in the church of God, which was once filled by the Jews, but from which they fell by unbelief. They, the descendants of Abraham,—the *natural* branches—were broken off by unbelief; the Gentiles—branches from a *wild* olive tree—were grafted in through faith and partake of the richness and fatness of the olive tree. The natural branches may again be grafted into their own olive tree, if they continue not in unbelief. Thus, the church is but one olive tree; there has been no other, there is to be no other. Zachariah, the father of John the Baptist, speaking as he was moved by the Holy Ghost, declares, that Jesus Christ came to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant, the oath which he swore to our father Abraham. This surely is to the point that Christ came not to destroy but to fulfil the covenant. Again, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Brethren, I speak after the manner of men. Though it be but a man's covenant yet, if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto." "Know

ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham."

We are compelled to omit many other equally apposite passages, but the passages cited are sufficient to show that the covenant made with Abraham has not been repealed or annulled—that it is still in full force, and forms the basis of the Christian church. Therefore, he that believes now, or is Christ's, is Abraham's seed, and an heir according to the promise; he comes into the place of Abraham, he stands in the same relation to his child that the patriarch did to his, and is as fully authorized to consider not himself only but his child also, as included in the covenant, and entitled to the application of its seal.

That seal, it is true, has been changed; it was circumcision, it is now baptism. Abraham believed God, and by divine commandment was circumcised; the apostles were directed to baptize those who believed. The import of the seal remains the same, though its form is altered. Circumcision was a bloody rite, it was always a grievous yoke to be borne. It had come to be associated, in the minds of many Jews, with the formalities of Judaism, and had it been retained might have led them to imagine that these also were to be engrafted upon Christianity. The change in the form of the seal did not in the least affect the substance of the covenant, did not disannul any part of it, nor add aught thereto. It is as comprehensive since the alteration as it was before. And being embraced in it, the children of believers are to be sealed now as certainly as they were then—the authority for infant baptism is as clear as was the authority for infant circumcision.

But where is your specific text, demand those who differ with us on this point, in a tone of triumph,—where is your specific text warranting the baptism of infant children? This mode of putting the matter is ingenious, we had almost said, cool. Where is our authority for not mutilating the covenant of God, for forbearing to dissect out a most interesting and important feature of it, for doing what it requires us to do? May not the tables be turned here? Is not a specific scriptural warrant required to justify an opposite course? If it be but a man's covenant—if it be confirmed—no man disannulleth it or addeth thereto.

Yet, the language of the New Testament on the subject is precisely such as we should expect it to be, on the supposition that the views we advocate, are just and scriptural. Infant baptism is alluded to, as something concerning which no doubt existed—no difference of opinion, no disagreement in practice. Specific precepts were not given, because they were not needed. The covenant itself, whose perpetuity was fully argued and clearly settled, was plain, was understood and observed. Incidental statements implying that the children of believers were included with their parents in its provisions, and were baptized, occur here and there. All is natural and easy, and in keeping. A few specimens will suffice.

“The Lord opened the heart of Lydia, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized and her household she besought them—”

To the jailer who asked what he should do to be saved, Paul said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.” The language strikingly resembles that addressed to Abraham, “I will be a God to thee and thy seed after thee.” “The jailer was baptized and all his straightway.”

Paul baptized the household of Stephanas. We cannot comment upon these passages, nor notice the excruciating ingenuity by which their plain import is attempted to be explained away. We quote them to show that the language of the New Testament on the face of it is in entire harmony with the view we have presented, and such as we might expect on the supposition that that view is correct.

The conclusion then is, that the covenant made with Abraham is still in force, that it includes the infant children of believers, and authorizes their baptism.

2. We come now to our second proposition. What is the *import* of this covenant in behalf of children that are thus included and baptized? Does it furnish ground of strong expectation that they will early give evidence of piety? The covenant phrase, “I will be a God to thee,” is to the adult believer a pledge of the eternal favour and friendship of God. On what philological principle can this phrase be understood to mean less when the sentence is continued by adding, “and to thy seed?” To say the meaning is, that God will be his God provided the child believes, is to say the phrase has no meaning at all as a special promise to the believing parent. For God will be the God of those children that are out of the covenant—the seed of the ungodly—provided they believe. “Whosoever believeth shall be saved.” Is it said that the fallen child is not qualified to enjoy the favour and friendship of God? We ask, are there any obstacles to his being qualified which God cannot overcome? The very point is whether the promise can mean anything unless it be understood to justify the expectation that the child will believe,—that he will be qualified to enjoy the favour and friendship of God.

Again, baptism is in reference to the church an initiatory rite. We need not argue this point, as there is no difference of opinion in regard to it. Our Baptist brethren are strong in this conviction. Writers on our side of the question are constrained to admit that baptism introduces the child into the church. Consider now that God requires his church to be holy. The scriptural qualification for admission into it in the case of adults, is genuine piety. This candidates are required to profess, and of this they must furnish credible evidence, before they can with propriety be received. Consider next that God authorizes, nay more, requires believing parents to cause their infant children to be baptized, and so to be introduced into his church. What is the intention of God in thus proceeding?

Is it that these children so introduced into his holy church shall remain in it? How can we doubt that? Any other supposition would lay him open to the imputation of fickleness. Does he intend they shall remain in it without piety? This is not supposable. The only supposition is that He intends to renew them. Is there not ground here for a strong expectation, that such children will early give evidence of piety?

Such, in our view, is the import of the Abrahamic covenant in behalf of baptized children. And we showed at the outset that, if we look outside of the covenant, there is nothing in the constitution of things, nothing in the proceedings of divine Providence, that furnishes any presumption against the correctness of this constitution. Nay, more, it is in harmony with everything in the government of God that might be supposed at all analogous to the matter under consideration.

AN OBJECTION ANSWERED.

There is, however, a single objection to this view which we will notice. It is said that this fine theory is overturned by facts; that few baptized children *early* give evidence of piety; that the majority of them never exhibit such evidence at all; in short, that they are not found to differ from other children. That there is some ground for such a representation we do not deny. Facts of this description very naturally attract the attention of the irreligious; they are described by them in sweeping and exaggerated terms. They also furnish our Baptist brethren with abundant staple for argument, and they have, moreover, lowered the tone of many of the friends of the covenant as to its import, and exerted an influence upon them in their interpretation of Scripture, leading them to adopt such construction of particular passages as they deem most easily reconcilable with this state of things.

In regard to the objection founded on these alleged facts, we observe that it is faulty in point of principle. It is not true, as it implies, that the import of the covenant, or of any promises of God, is to be measured by the degree of benefit *actually secured* by men under it. All his promises are conditional, and their meaning is not lowered because the conditions are not fulfilled. Our unbelief or neglect does not affect their import. Let God be true and every man a liar. Then, as to the facts. Let it be remembered, as it is undoubtedly the case, that many who offer their children for baptism, are destitute of true religion; in some families this is true of both parents, in others of one of them. Let it be remembered also that such as in the judgment of charity are real Christians, while they come short in all things, are often specially deficient in regard to parental obligations. Nor do we hesitate to acknowledge this to be true of clergymen; they are ordinarily better preachers and pastors, we think, than they are fathers. Certainly, these

things deserve consideration before we allow facts, in reference to the actual character of baptized children, to limit the import and meaning of God's gracious covenant. But after all concessions have been made, it is nevertheless true, that piety may be traced in families from generation to generation; it is true that, in the revivals of religion, the majority of subjects are among the young, and belong to religious households. Statistics on this subject, were they to be gathered up, would most clearly demonstrate that God has not forgotten his covenant, and that the blessings of it are bestowed upon the church in as full measure as, all things considered, could be expected.

PRACTICAL REFLECTIONS.

1. This view of the import of the covenant, in regard to baptized children, *invests the rite of infant baptism with dignity and importance.* The complaint is not uncommon nor, we fear, groundless, that there is manifested in our churches a growing indifference to this ordinance. By some parents it is neglected altogether, by others it is observed after urging and expostulation, by others still, voluntarily and promptly indeed, yet, apparently without any very distinct apprehension of its import, or any deep impression of its value. The preparation for the rite consists, we have reason to fear, in too many cases, in deciding upon the name to be given and the robe to be worn. The chief solicitude felt at the time is lest the child should discompose the assembly by his unseasonable cries. The ceremony is performed, the prayer is offered, the occasion passes by, and there, too frequently as a matter of fact, the affair ends. This indifference is to be traced either to the absence of piety on the part of parents, to a low degree of it, or, and as we believe, more commonly, to ignorance of the significance of the ordinance—to want of proper views and impressions of the import and value of the covenant of which it is the seal.

Signs and seals, when they cease to represent anything important or valuable, naturally become matters of indifference. Titles and badges that convey no rank, that invest with no power, are contemptible. Crowns and sceptres, apart from place and authority, are mere baubles. So religious rites, emptied of their meaning, become worthless forms and lose their hold on all but superstitious minds. We see then what is needed in order that the ordinance in question may be restored to its proper place in the estimate and regard of the church. The import of the covenant must be understood; confidence in the faithfulness of God must be strengthened; the appropriate channels through which heavenly blessings flow down upon the children of believers must be opened, and then the ordinance of infant baptism will no longer be neglected or undervalued.

2. Then the *church* would look upon such baptized children as *her charge*; she would regard the Christian family as her nursery; she

would watch over these lambs of the fold with tender care; she would admonish their parents, and encourage and aid them in the work of training them for God; she would expect, and ordinarily would not be disappointed, that in due time they would be found ready to sanction what had been done in their behalf, and to subscribe with their own hands to be the Lord's. Many scenes in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ are fraught with deep interest. Such was that, when waked from sleep by his terrified disciples, he rose from his pillow in the ship on the tempest-tost sea of Galilee, and said to the furious winds and the dashing waves, "Peace, be still, and they obeyed him;" and that is another such scene, when Jesus stood with the weeping Martha and Mary in front of the cave in which lay the corpse of their brother and his friend. We behold first his lips quiver with emotion, and his eyes fill with tears in sympathy, and then we hear the same lips say, "Lazarus, come forth;" and the sheeted dead moves and rises up in obedience. But no scene of his history (the garden and the cross excepted) is more touching than when we hear his clear, mild voice rising above the din of the crowd that surrounded him, and saying, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven;" and then see the multitude divide, and those little children brought to him, and received into his arms and blessed. The baptism of children is a sort of renewal of that scene; it is a covenant-keeping God taking our offspring into his arms, and while he admonishes us as parents, of our responsibility to train them for him, promising on his own part, and setting his seal to the promise, that if we are obedient and faithful, he will be to them a God and portion.

3. Next, a deep practical impression on the minds of *Christian parents* of the import of God's gracious covenant, and corresponding desire and endeavours to secure its fulfilment in behalf of their children, would exert a most happy influence upon *their own religious character*. The parental relation itself enlarges the heart; it presents dear objects of affection; it opens new springs of feeling; it furnishes fresh motives to exertion; it awakens high and boundless hopes. Parents identify their children with themselves—they look upon them as parts of themselves—an extension and multiplication of their own being. Through them the circle of their hopes and fears, of their joys and sorrows, is immeasurably widened. In them they expect to outlive themselves—to survive their own dissolution. Behold that young mother! with what ineffable tenderness she presses her smiling babe to her bosom. She is more delighted with your notice and praise of that than by any compliments on her own loveliness. The father looks on with a countenance beaming with affection, slightly shaded with a feeling of responsibility. O the strength of this love! Hear Jacob say, "It is enough; Joseph, my son, is yet alive; I will go and see him before I die." Hear David cry out in anguish of soul, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

When do men on drawing the sword throw away the scabbard, resolved to conquer or perish? When do they fall, if fall they must, fighting in the last ditch, and to the last gasp of their lives? It is when they feel that they are fighting for their homes, their wives, and their children. God breathed into our hearts this love for our offspring, or rather it is his love to them flowing through our hearts, its appointed channel. The covenant sprung from the same exhaustless fountain of divine love. But this, our natural affection, strong and beautiful as it is, may be perverted to the injury of its objects, and to our own moral detriment: it may generate avarice; it may fan the fire of ambition; it may stir up fierce passions, jealousies, rivalries, competitions—all having respect only to the *worldly* prospects of our children. The same natural affection, guided and sanctified by the spirit of the covenant, embraces children in *all* their interests, in all their relations, and specially as responsible creatures of God and heirs of immortality. It is then it lifts the heart above the world to God—to heaven.

What motives to the cultivation of personal holiness the covenant presents to Christian parents!—that they may always have access to their heavenly Father, that they may be ever ready to lay hold upon it in faith, and to plead for its fulfilment without being condemned of their own hearts, and that their religion may be so deep and habitual, and so pervade the ordinary tenor of their lives, that their unconscious influence may *daguerreotype* only good impressions upon the susceptible minds that surround them in their daily walk. Then their positive efforts to fulfil their covenant obligation will all react favourably upon themselves. This will be the case with their endeavours so to arrange their secular affairs, and so to prosecute the labours of life, that while their system tends to impress ideas and to form habits of order, industry, and frugality in the household, it shall be seen by every one without explanation, and felt even by those too young to reflect on the subject, that the concerns of the present life are and are deemed subordinate to things spiritual and eternal. Parents will be profited themselves by striving earnestly to exercise their authority and judgment, impartiality and equity; to govern without governing too much, without destroying all voluntariness, without turning the household into a machine. The effort to reach the happy medium will be a species of constant self-discipline. It will be a most profitable school; the habitual study, to preserve religion, its duties and exercises, free from every disagreeable association; the study how best to impart religious instruction and give spiritual counsel, to become all things to every individual of the family group; not saying too much or too little, adapting what is said to the age, intellectual and moral peculiarities, and existing tone of feeling of each member; the study to acquire the faculty of turning to good account circumstances and occurrences, joyful events, disappointments, seasons of sickness, the recovery of health, birth-days, the revolution of the seasons, the flowers of spring, the falling leaves

of autumn ; the study to gain the art of shading off imperceptibly things temporal, till the thoughts, without being conscious of any abrupt transition, are raised to things eternal ; the study to become skilful in linking all things in their mind with God, in turning their little trials into submission, their happiness into gratitude, their joy into praise ; the study to make such attainments and accomplish such results, how can it fail to exercise and improve every Christian grace ?

4. Again, a revival of faith and interest in God's covenant among *the ministry*, would *benefit them and augment their usefulness*. One objection to the Catholic clergy is, that they are without domestic affections. Clerical piety is tinctured with a species of celibacy among us. It is almost exclusively concerned with the general interests of religion, rather than with the salvation of individuals ; it is abstract, and consequently vague in its conceptions, and diffused and weak in its affections. The clergyman, while musing over the concerns of whole sects, denominations, and nations, forgets the spiritual condition and prospects of his own children, and of the children of his flock. And then the spirit of the age, about which so much is said, is bustling and mechanical. The intellect is tasked, the affections are neglected : an immense amount of religious matter is produced in sermons, speeches, addresses, and for newspapers and periodicals, to say nothing of the multitude of books that are poured out upon the world. But this matter so abundant is for the most part the fruit of the brain simply, and lacks the bloom and high flavour of those clusters that have sunned themselves into ripeness under the influence of large, warm, holy hearts.

The age is fruitful in expedients to shorten processes—in inventions that abridge labour, and hasten results. Imbibing the spirit and becoming eager to expedite things spiritual, we are in danger of leaving those great natural advantages that result from the constitution of the family, for our own inventions. It seems to be forgotten that there are processes that cannot be hastened. The time required to traverse space may be indefinitely reduced. Cotton may be spun and woven, boards planed and matched, pins made and headed, and various other similar results reached by means and methods more easy and expeditious than formerly. But we believe wheat requires about the same number of months to reach perfection, and we have not learned that the time of the gestation of their young by animals is shortened in any degree, or that the period of full physical development is greatly diminished. These are vital processes, and such in a sense are the developments of character. It would be well for the ministry to consider this, and to rely less upon their own devices and more upon the covenanted grace of God.

After all, it may be said, that this is very well in theory, but it presupposes an elevation of Christian character and a degree of parental fidelity that cannot rationally be anticipated as a general attainment. Such remarks, which, in the judgment of some, smack

of practical wisdom, often serve to cut the sinews of faith in the plainest and most precious promises, and to release the uneasy conscience from the pressure of indisputable obligation. Is there then no hope that the general tone of religious feeling may be elevated? Must we ever live at this poor, dying rate? Beside, the faith and practice of Christians in relation to covenant promises and duties have not come up to the standard reached in other respects. The duty of the church in regard to missions was as plainly inculcated in the Scriptures fifty years ago as it is at this day. The precepts and promises were strewed as thickly and as conspicuously through the sacred volume. They were read and supposed to be understood. But, for some reason, they were practically disregarded. The great change that has taken place in that matter was brought about, not solely by a general advance in Christian character, but by a special waking up to the claims of that particular branch of Christian obligation. The same thing has often occurred in the history of Christianity. Is it too much to hope for something of the kind in respect to the matter under consideration? We confidently expect a great change of this character.

Sin entering the world, and seizing upon and appropriating to its propagation all the constituted laws of descent, has, through them, corrupted all the generations of men, and thus given a terrible illustration of the power of the family constitution for evil. But in the work of redemption, we are persuaded the covenant authorizes the belief that God designs of his grace to furnish a counter illustration of its power for good.

ARTICLE IV.

FIRST REPORT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION ON
PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS. 1847.

THE General Assembly of 1846 referred the subject of parochial schools to the "Board of Education" by the following resolution:

"*Resolved*, That the whole subject be referred to the Board of Education; that they may from time to time report to the General Assembly any further action which may be needed for extending through our churches a system of parochial schools."

The object of the Assembly was to secure the oversight of this important matter, during the interval of their meeting, in some body responsible to their authority, in order that definite action might be recommended to the consideration of the succeeding Assembly. Before proceeding to suggest the action which appears suited to the present position of the Presbyterian Church, the Board feel called upon to attempt to illustrate in their first Report some of the principles involved in this great and important subject.

Religious instruction at home—which is the basis of all good train-

ing—can never render unnecessary or unimportant, religious instruction in schools. The constitution of society demands some system of public education. It is therefore an inquiry of great interest whether that system shall be under the direction of the Church or of the State. The range of discussion would be comparatively limited, on either of two suppositions. If in the first place there existed between the Church and the State a cordial and harmonious union, unbroken by sectarian divisions, public education might be conducted on religious principles without much hazard from political interruption. Or if in the second place an education had reference merely to the intellectual powers, the general supervision of the work might for special reasons be surrendered to the Government without serious disadvantage. Neither of these suppositions, however, can be admitted as elements in the solution of the present problem. In our country, the State repudiates with increasing jealousy all connexion with the Church; whilst the latter is evidently becoming more and more impressed with the necessity of acting upon the principle that *religious* as well as intellectual training is one of the *primary aims* of Christian education.

The common school system, which is now so popular in some quarters, grew up in New England *under circumstances very different from those which now exist*. It had its origin at a period when there was a strong affinity between the Church and the State, and when the people were almost unanimously of one religious creed. Then religion was extensively taught in those schools. The system of the Pilgrims was essentially a parochial system. The Bible and the Shorter Catechism were common-school books; and they are still so used in many parts of New England, although not generally in the thorough manner of the olden time. Within the last thirty or forty years, however, the growth of other churches and of congregations of errorists has conspired with other causes to banish more or less extensively the essential doctrines of Christianity from the schools of New England. The same general history characterizes to a considerable degree the public institutions of New York. Other States have more recently and at different intervals organized a system of public education on principles of state policy, equally latitudinarian and hostile to true religion. The general tendency of things in this country is unquestionably to dishonour the religious element in the system of education under the patronage of the State. This sufficiently accounts for the growing dissatisfaction of Christians, in all parts of the country, with the whole plan of political supervision. A general system of education that shall be a Christian system appears to be a State impracticability.

The *increasing abandonment of the State plan* by various sects of Christians affords a proper occasion for the Presbyterian Church to reconsider her position in regard to the work of Education. The Papists with that church-worldly wisdom which is so pre-eminently theirs, have adopted the plan of educating their own children—and

ours too, as far as they can. Their institutions of learning have all the efficiency of an independent religious organization. Papal colleges, seminaries, and Church schools of every kind are in active operation all over the country and especially at the West. If we would save the lambs of our flock from the St. Mary Christianity of the Man of sin, our schools must engage our efforts and our prayers. The Episcopalians, with characteristic zeal, are also establishing large and small institutions on a denominational basis. Many of their churches have parochial schools, while Presbyterians scarcely know the meaning of the word. The Methodists, in addition to several denominational colleges, have academies in all their Conferences, and are in this respect setting an example of well-manned, popular Church institutions. Whilst other denominations are more and more defining their position in favour of Christian education under their own supervision, Presbyterians are reminded of their obligations to develop the resources of their own Church in this great cause.

Our denomination, in remodelling its school system on the proposed basis, would be only *returning to the good old ways of its former history*. Presbyterian schools, in other times, were religious schools. Religion was much more extensively taught in them than it now is even in what are called "select schools." The education of the country was once in a great degree under our own care; or at least we had the care of our own children. But the encroachments of a false liberality have so far banished Presbyterian and evangelical influence, that the education of our children is now mixed up with the politics of the State and knows nothing of the religion of the Church. It has become so fashionable to be liberal that even "select schools" often dispense with evangelical truth in order to please all Christian denominations! It is high time for the Presbyterian Church to fall back upon her glorious old landmarks; and what we cannot now do for all, we must endeavour to do for ourselves in the matter of thorough Christian education.

But what is meant by a *parochial school*? The term is imported from abroad; and ought to have come in duty free, instead of being subjected to the heavy State tax which now almost amounts to prohibition. The idea of a parochial* or *primary Church school* would with us embrace in general the following particulars:

1. A school under the care of the Session of a Church;
2. Designed for children, say from five to ten or twelve years of age;
3. In which the usual branches of a sound elementary education are taught;
4. *With the addition of daily religious instruction from the Bible;*
5. Under the superintendence of a *Christian teacher*. The probability is that most of the teachers would be females, especially in the country schools.

In addition to these primary schools, others of a higher order

* The term "parochial" has no proper use in this country. It occurs in the present Report, simply because popular usage has so far sanctioned it of late, as to connect it with the system under discussion.

might be needed to supply the wants of some congregations. The completion of the system would demand academies under the care of Presbyteries, and colleges under the care of one or more Synods.

Having made these preliminary observations, the Board will proceed to point out the importance of this system of education in various aspects.

I. COMMON ELEMENTARY EDUCATION.

It is proposed in the first place to exhibit the connexion between PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS AND COMMON ELEMENTARY EDUCATION.

1. The system of Church schools would operate in favour of sound education by its *influence on teachers*. To obtain well-qualified teachers in sufficient numbers is the great difficulty of any system of common-school instruction. One of the great advantages of the Church system is, that it will dignify the calling and raise the qualifications of teachers as well as, in all probability, increase their number. The office of teacher has lost much of its high honour by having been divested of its religious functions by State schools. The elevating inspirations of religion have ceased to a large extent to exert their appropriate power; and this great vocation—second only to that of pastor in the wide range of usefulness—has been left too much to the stimulus of merely worldly motives. If restored by the command of the Church to its native elevation as a religious office, there is every reason to believe that our churches would soon supply competent teachers for our schools. At first, some difficulty might be experienced, but probably less than our fears. There are pious females in many of our congregations who would be willing to commence at once, under the sanction of Church authority. An immense amount of available capacity is now lying dormant and undeveloped in Zion. Our church members, under the influence of religious motives, would undertake what otherwise would never enter their thoughts. There is a principle of political economy which has application in the affairs of the Church, and that is, that *the supply will always equal the demand*. Let the Church by the system of education she shall adopt, create a demand for religious teachers, and the Providence and grace of God will furnish the supply.

Teachers as a class—for there are always illustrious exceptions—will never be what they ought to be in character and influence, and what they might be in numbers, until Church education shall purify the vocation with its holy tendencies and aims.

2. Parochial schools will advance sound education by the *principles and stability of their government*. A day-school, like a community, cannot be effectually governed without the principles of the Bible. The motives and sanctions of religion have a healthful and necessary influence in the government of boys and schools, as well as of men and States. Parochial schools, by taking the word of God for their guide, would occupy pre-eminently the vantage-ground

over the more worldly discipline of State institutions. There is moreover a tendency in the public mind to errors on the subject of education, such as the banishment of the rod as a "barbarity," the frequent change of teachers and books, and other ultraisms and evils which Old-school Presbyterianism would effectually check within its lawful and awful range. Without discussing this point any further, it is believed that the cause of education would be greatly advanced by the better principles and surer stability in the government of Church schools.

3. *The system of instruction* taught in parochial schools will promote the cause of sound education. The text-books, as far as mere intellectual training is concerned, would be at least as good in all respects as those now in use. And they would be better in consequence of the introduction of the religious element. A great deal of the mental training of young children can be done by religious exercises. Probably our Board of Publication would present another evidence of its vast utility to the Church by supplying some deficiencies in the department of elementary school-books. It is certain that works of no inferior merit or doubtful character would be admitted by our Church judicatories. In addition to the use of the best text-books on every topic of human learning, the BIBLE, which is "*the boys' and girls' own book*," would have a prominent place in the daily instructions of the school. Instead of being merely read by the teacher for a few minutes as if to preserve the external appearance of some remaining Christianity, it would be studied by the scholars. Its verses would be committed to memory; its history thoroughly understood; and its great principles brought into prominent view. The influence of the study of the Bible on the mind, as well as on the heart, can never be too highly appreciated. It is a book of the most stirring thoughts, and kindling revelations, and wakeful memories. Creation, History, Geography, Providence, Biography, Redemption, Immortality, embrace its wonders of fact, doctrine, and duty, which children love to read, and cannot read without thought and inquiry. The Bible is the very best text-book the world affords for the mental developments of a daily school. A distinguished writer says: "We shall dwarf the intellect and the conscience of our children, if we let uninspired men take hold upon their youthful imagination before patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs have won their youthful hearts. A better man than Abraham, even could you find one, would not be so sublime to your boys as the 'friend of God,' the companion of angels, and the father of Isaac. A wiser man than Daniel, even could you find one, would be no Belteshazzar to your sons and daughters, unless he had been in the lion's den at Babylon. It is God's men who make boys feel what a man should be." "Tell them by all means everything worth knowing they can bear to hear; but be sure of this, that you can interest them in nothing so much as in the Bible. You can make them talkers

by the little things of simplified science; but you can best make them thinkers by the great things of revelation."

4. The *supervision* of parochial schools guarantees their promotion of the general interests of education. The direction of our schools would be religious instead of political, under the Church instead of the State. And this is the true plan. Religion and Education are natural allies. The guardians of Christianity are *ex officio* the guardians of education. From the time of the Reformation, Presbyterian ministers have been foremost in prosecuting the great work of public instruction. The following is the testimony of the historian, Bancroft, now representing our country abroad: "We boast of our common schools. CALVIN was the father of popular education, the inventor of the system of free schools." Calvin and Knox and the other great men of that illustrious day laid the foundation of a public system of religious education. To a greater or less extent, such a system prevailed in Switzerland, Scotland, France, Holland, and wherever the Reformation wrought its mighty changes. The earlier history of this country also illustrates the natural dependence of education upon religion. The schools and colleges of New England are the memorials of the Pilgrim fathers—too much now alas! like their very grave-stones to remind us of the piety that once was. Our own Presbyterian institutions are indissolubly connected with the names of the Tennents, Blair, Davies, Finley, Graham, Witherspoon, and the Smiths. The ministers, elders, and members of the Presbyterian Church are the very men, in the Providence of God, to manage the education of their own children. Their ancient history proves it; and it is time for them to reintroduce the principles of thorough Christian education in their own schools as well as in their families and their churches.

5. The cause of education would be advanced through parochial schools by *extending its advantages to greater numbers*. In a few States, it is admitted that education is well-nigh universal; but in the vast majority of the States, where the Presbyterian Church is located, it is comparatively limited. There cannot be a doubt, we think, that if every Presbyterian Church had a school, the number of educated Presbyterian children would be vastly increased. And so of every other denomination. The cause of education is itself popular in this country; and if left to the churches, the same zeal which collects congregations in the new settlements would plant the school-house by the side of the meeting-house. In the present posture of affairs, the Church has almost lost her knowledge of the art, as well as of the duty, of education. She has been so little used to this service of late, that, like the warrior whose rusty sword clings to the scabbard, she can scarcely equip herself befittingly in her ancient and terrible armour.

The education that already exists in this country is in fact indebted, with few exceptions, to the religious principle of the community more than to any other cause. Yet this principle is checked

and restrained and circumvented in every possible way by the generality of State institutions. Now we maintain that if the religious principle had free scope on the subject of education, had the responsibility of training the mind as well as the heart, it would adapt its resources to this great work with a zeal and power that would advance simultaneously religion and education.

In addition to the increased number of scholars in parochial or primary schools, there would be an increased number in academies and colleges, to which institutions many talented and promising youth are now not encouraged to aspire, simply because the Church knows little and cares little for her children. On the proposed plan, all the youth would be brought into close contact with the officers of the Church. Our ministers and elders would see that promising young men were sent up to Presbyterial academies and to colleges, to unfold their mental worth for the use of the Church and of the State. The want of means to obtain a higher education would be no impediment; for they would be gratuitously and gratefully furnished. If the Presbyterian Church had a complete system of Christian education consisting of schools, academies, and colleges, under the care of Sessions, Presbyteries, and Synods, it is believed that more of her youth would be educated, that they would be more thoroughly educated, and educated on a higher scale, than on the present plan of State dependency.

The Board have been the more particular in illustrating the influence of parochial schools on sound intellectual education, on account of the misapprehension sometimes entertained in regard to the true aim of the parochial system. Whilst the State plan educates the mind without educating the heart, the plan under consideration does not fall into the opposite extreme, but aims at educating the mind and the heart, the soul with all its powers.

II. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

Let us now turn to consider the connexion between the PAROCHIAL SCHOOL SYSTEM AND THE CAUSE OF RELIGION. This is the point of special interest to those who believe that "man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him for ever."

1. The influence of parochial schools on the piety of the Church must be great; for *youth is the forming season of life*. "The child is father of the man." An eminent writer on education has affirmed that the first five years of a child have more to do in moulding his character than any other equal number of years. Whether this be true or not, the second and the third five years may be very hopefully employed in training him aright. The first five years being the March, the second and third five are the April and May of our Spring. It is the season of hope and promise, all of whose opportunities should be devoted to the high purposes of life and immortality. That children can learn a great deal even at a very early period, is

seen in the facility with which they acquire the knowledge of language—an achievement which almost defies the best efforts of adult foreigners during a lifetime. The difficulty, not to say impossibility, of making up for the neglect of original opportunities demonstrates the necessity of an early, in order to secure a thorough, education. A boy who has not been taught in early years to spell or to write well, will hardly ever recover from the disadvantages of youthful inattention. So it is in everything, especially in *religion*. A neglect on this subject in youth is irreparable loss. It throws a gloom of terror into the valley of the shadow of death. The remark of Dr. Rush is a true one: "Mothers and schoolmasters plant the seed of nearly all the good and evil that exist in the world." The youthful mind is in the highest degree susceptible. Character grows day by day. All things, even the most trivial, assist in unfolding it. Youth is emphatically the time to store the mind with divine truth, to train the conscience carefully under the direction of revelation, and to bring all the resources of religion to bear upon the destiny of the young immortal. The value of early religious impressions may be strikingly illustrated by the memory. The three facts connected with the memory that serve our purpose, are that it is one of the active faculties of childhood, that the knowledge it treasures up goes far to form the character, and that we remember longest what we learned in early life. It is obviously then of vital importance to fill the memory at this accessible period with the things of religion, in order that the thoughts of a child may be his friends and counsellors in the formation of character; and that his future life, even down to old age, may be refreshed by the familiar truth which memory brings up from childhood, as the natural homage which childhood loves to pay to age.

The great aim of an education in early years should be instruction in religion. The teachable disposition of children, their curiosity about the things of the invisible world, their freedom from habits of prejudice, the ease with which they may be commonly made to attend to religious subjects, may be turned to infinite advantage in a course of education. There is in children what Bacon calls "the sparkle of the purity of man's first estate," which can be hopefully retained only during their very earliest years. Our nature, though corrupt, is the least corrupt in childhood. Then is offered the best opportunity of training immortals for glory—before depraved appetites have been cherished, and worldly temptations indulged, and bad habits formed. The neglect of religious instruction in our schools is doing more to nurture infidelity and immorality than ever was in the power of Voltaire and Paine. Human nature is so constituted of God that its destiny for eternity greatly depends on early training. No Church therefore can be doing her duty to the rising generation that neglects their religious education at the very period that usually controls their immortality. Alas, how many children are *common-schooled out of heaven!*

2. *The influence of a day-school is very great—too great to be lost to religious education.* The school hours are the most active hours of the day for improvement. Our too general and sinful practice has been to separate the mind from the heart and conscience; or rather to attempt to cultivate the intellectual whilst the moral powers are left to take care of themselves under the active care of Satan. This exclusive attention to the head, if it make good scholars, will not make good Christians; and in the long run scholarship itself is injured by losing the beneficial influences of religion. Religious instruction sustains to a school something of the relation of the Sabbath to the rest of the week; sanctifying, elevating, and doubly blessing all duties in consequence of the homage rendered to this special divine requirement. The education of the intellect at the expense of the heart is an immorality; it is a perversion of the laws of nature as well as of the commands of revelation. It would be considered monstrous to undertake to cultivate the sense of hearing by shutting up a child in a dark room, and thereby injuring his sense of sight. The child has a right to the development of all his senses. He has a higher right to the development of all the faculties of his soul, moral and intellectual. The Chinese custom of bandaging the feet is not a more effectual encroachment on the perfection of the physical system than our political custom of dwarfing the heart is a dishonour to the moral system. Even if our children were young angels, they ought to be daily taught the truth of heaven. Since they are sinners they need it more. A child should never remember the day “when good things were strangers to his thoughts.”

The idea that Sabbath schools supply the place of daily religious instruction is no more true than that going to church and being devout on the Sabbath is enough religion for all the week. Sabbath schools do indeed *assist* in supplying the unchristian defects of our week-day schools; but their agency is the less effectual on account of the neglected education of the other six days. The Sabbath was never intended to supersede religious instruction day by day. The Lord's day is the perfection of the system of which the other six days form a part. It was intended to give efficacy and impulse to the religious training of the week, by rallying around the six days the sanctifying power of a seventh devoted wholly to God. The design of the Sabbath is misconceived by the attempt to overburden it with the religious responsibilities of the entire week.

The same remarks apply in a measure to religious instruction at home. This is unquestionably the most important and hallowed of all human instrumentalities. Yet it does not dispense with other agencies. On the contrary it invites them. No children are better prepared to profit by a religious education at school than those who are well instructed at home. But *there are multitudes of children who receive little or no religious instruction at home, and still greater numbers who are surrounded only by evil influences.* How important, then, for the Church to provide for the daily teaching of all her

children in the things which belong to their peace! The thorough, old method, "Precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little and there a little," is a fundamental principle in the parochial school system.

3. *The doctrines of grace, which are the peculiarities of revelation and the true groundwork of sound religious education*, cannot be taught through the medium of State exposition and secular agency. The clamorous demands of political and infidel agitation exclude these doctrines from our public schools. They cannot be named in the generality of State institutions; or if named, it is by a bare toleration which may be converted at any time into downright prohibition. We maintain that if our children ought to be instructed in religion at all, they ought to be instructed in the fundamental truths of revealed religion—the doctrines which the Holy Spirit has used in all ages in the conversion and sanctification of the soul, and in "bringing the redeemed of the Lord to Zion with songs and everlasting joy." A diluted, historical religion, or an indefinite State religion is not the religion of Christ. God's method is to employ evangelical doctrine in leading sinners to the cross and to heaven. However much the world may depreciate doctrine, Presbyterians have always considered it necessary to the life of Christianity. At the baptism of our children, the minister publicly announces that there is "an excellent summary of the principles of our holy religion in the Confession of Faith of this Church, and in the Larger and Shorter Catechisms of the Westminster Assembly." These "principles of our holy religion"—the principles of the Bible, of the Reformation, and of the Presbyterian Church—are the principles with which our children should become familiar in early life. This is the very aim of the parochial system. The exclusion, by the "index expurgatorius" of the State, of these principles from the public schools makes it necessary for the Church to organize schools of her own, where religion can be early taught under her own authority. Whilst we "render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," we must "render unto God the things that are God's." Religious instruction had better be any one thing that is good than everything and nothing. Where religion is taught in a by-way, it is very apt to become a by-word. In arranging our system of education, which we are compelled to do in self-defence, Presbyterians will not rest satisfied with any teaching short of "the truth as it is in Jesus." The religion of their fathers must be taught to their children.

4. The influence of parochial schools on *parental and pastoral fidelity* will be a great advantage to the religious interests of the rising generation. Our children have been too much neglected, not only in our schools, but at our firesides and in our sanctuaries. Any movement of the Church on their behalf will necessarily act with power upon all the other sources of influence. Parents will be stimulated to take a new interest in the Christian education of their children by means of a school system that forms a part of the plans of

their Church. Pastors will in like manner be induced to renew their activity in this great cause, so closely connected with the success of their labours. Our Church will, in all probability, be more effectually aroused on the subject of Christian education than at any previous period of our history. Parental and pastoral supervision will readily co-operate by sympathy and by principle with the public efforts of the Church to bless the rising generation.

5. It is evident that children, trained up for God at school as well as at home, and on the week-day as well as the Sabbath, will possess *those attainments in religious knowledge which place them in a favourable position, by God's grace, for the salvation of the soul.* Such youth will in the ordinary course of Providence grow up to respect the Sabbath, to engage in private devotion, to read their Bibles, and to appreciate the instructions of the sanctuary. In a word, they will have been trained up "in the way they should go;" and the promise of a blessing belongs to their parents and to them. The history of the Church proves that those whose characters have been formed most nearly on this model, constitute the vast majority of the hopefully pious. God's ways confirm his word. Even if the early life of persons thus instructed pass away without vital religion, for them there is still hope. Like the girdled forest whose withering pines have been succeeded by a marvellous undergrowth of the majestic oak, so a period of most unpromising youth is often followed on the soil of gospel instruction by a manhood and old age of devoted piety, beneath whose shades children and children's children repose with delight. Dr. Witherspoon remarks as follows:

"The instances of conversion in advanced life are very rare: and when it seems to happen, it is perhaps most commonly the resurrection of those seeds which were sown in infancy but had been long stifled by the violence of youthful passions or the pursuits of ambition and the hurry of an active life. I have known several instances of the instructions, long neglected, of deceased parents at last rising up, asserting their authority, and producing the deepest penitence and real reformation. But my experience furnishes me with no example of one brought up in ignorance and security, after a long course of profaneness, turning at the close of life to the service of the living God." (Vol. II. p. 255.)

One reason unquestionably why so few conversions occur among children and youth is, that their daily religious instruction is so much neglected. There would be more Nathan Dickermans and Mary Lothrop, more babes and sucklings in Christ to perfect His praise, if there were more religious training to lead the soul heavenward. A school system that carefully taught religion day by day, and anticipated, as far as human means can, the developments of human depravity, has the hope of receiving the favour of God. It is a plan so accordant with the sympathies of Jesus, his interest in little children, and the general tenor of his life and word, that it would be accompanied, we verily believe, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Let the two systems of Church and of State education be left to the

decision of divine Providence, be laid up together before the ark of the testimony, and we should soon find the buds, blossoms, and almonds honouring the appointed instrumentality of Zion. We should see piety illustrated in all ages, budding, blossoming, and bearing fruit in the courts of the Lord; and Faith could point to many of our children and youth, exclaiming with the most enlarged meaning, "of such is the kingdom of heaven!"

III. MINISTERIAL TRAINING.

The connexion between PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS AND MINISTERIAL EDUCATION is a subject of very great interest and importance.

It is a fact deserving of special attention that the institutions founded in the early period of our history had a direct reference to education for the ministry. The "Log College" of Tennent, the academies at New London and Fagg's Manor, and Princeton College, which were among our most ancient seminaries of learning, were established with a primary view to this object. With the exception of a few Presbyterian colleges of more recent origin, our institutions of learning seem to have now lost sight of this great aim. Whilst our Church has wisely fostered theological seminaries as auxiliaries in securing a thorough ministerial training, she has almost entirely overlooked the character of the preparatory schools, academies, and colleges. Instead of beginning at the foundation and going up with care, our chief attention has been directed to the finish of the superstructure. Or to use a figure of frequent application, we have completed the upper part of our ecclesiastical edifice and left the basement and the school-room untouched.

1. The children of the Church, who are by God's grace to be her future ministers, will receive a *better religious and intellectual training* in parochial schools than they now receive. It would be well for the Church if she could say of all her ministers "from a child thou hast known the Scriptures." But all mothers are not like Hannah and Eunice, nor are all grandmothers like Lois. The Church cannot trust her children exclusively to parental fidelity, nor would it be her duty to do so, even if that fidelity could be relied upon. The children of the Church should be well educated and religiously educated at school, whatever may be their training at home. Facts demonstrate that the early education of our candidates is very much neglected. Many of them are obliged to go to academies at the age of twenty years and upwards, to learn the rudiments of knowledge. Not only is much precious time thus lost, but time so precious that nothing can supply its loss. Even those ministers who have received a continuous education from their youth up, in existing institutions, might have been trained in Church institutions to far more substantial attainments both in the religious and intellectual qualifications of their profession. There cannot be a doubt that our whole system of ministerial education depends upon parochial schools as its natural, essential, and well-ordered basis.

2. This will further appear when we consider that the parochial system will, with the blessing of God, *give the Church a wider range from which to expect ministerial supplies.* She will not only have better ministers by God's grace, but more of them. In proportion as Christian education exerts an influence on the minds and hearts of the youth of the Church, are the probabilities increased of their turning their attention to the ministry. There is no irreverence in such an anticipation. God employs means in the advancement of his kingdom. As the multiplication of churches secures in the ordinary course of Providence an increase of communicants, so a larger class of youth religiously educated in Church schools will be likely to furnish an increased supply for the sanctuary. The increase of educated youth would, from the nature of the case, be chiefly from among the poor; and this is the class from which God selects most frequently the ministers of his word. Poverty has deprived many a man of his education, and thereby compelled him to work on a farm, or to be a mechanic, or to engage in some other honourable though subordinate employment, whose noble mind might have been expanded and prepared to preach Christ crucified in demonstration of the Spirit and with power. Many a "village Hampden" might have been trained to contend valiantly against the royal foe of the human race; many a gem might have been plucked from the now unfathomed caves of poverty and care to deck with sanctuary lustre the diadem of Jesus.

The following statements in reference to the supplies for the ministry, occur in a report of a committee of the Synod of Kentucky: "In consequence of the Church neglecting the baptized youth, the ministry was ill supplied, while other professions were crowded. From 1620 to 1720, a period when the Church paid attention to her youth, more than *half* of all the graduates of American colleges entered the ministry; from 1720 to 1770 *one-third*; from 1770 to 1800 *one-fifth*; from 1800 to 1810 *one-sixth*, and for several years in the Western country it might be safely said not *one-twentieth*. The irreligious had so managed and taken advantage of the remissness of the Church, as to get into their hands both colleges and elementary schools."*

The history of Princeton College corroborates the above testimony. The number of graduates at this institution who entered the ministry

| | | |
|-------------------|-----------|----------------|
| From 1748 to 1768 | was about | $\frac{1}{2}$ |
| " 1768 to 1788 | " | $\frac{1}{3}$ |
| " 1788 to 1808 | " | $\frac{1}{5}$ |
| " 1808 to 1828 | " | $\frac{1}{6}$ |
| " 1828 to 1841 | " | $\frac{1}{20}$ |

If the Church had no other object in view than simply the increase of the ministry, she would be more than justified in amending and extending her system of education.

* Dr. Davidson's History of Kentucky, p. 809.

3. It is obvious that education under Church supervision would greatly promote the cause of ministerial training as a *safeguard against failures*. The qualifications of candidates trained up from early youth under the watchful care of the Church would be well known in all our congregations and Presbyteries. From the nature of the case, there would be fewer risks encountered. Character would be formed on a superior model; piety would have a more intelligent basis; the nature of a call to the ministry would be better understood; and the general qualifications of candidates would be better known, as well as of a better order. Almost all the failures connected with the Board of Education have been from the class whose early education was neglected. The most hopeful candidates of the Church are those who have drunk in the "sincere milk of the word" with their nursery rhymes and their mother's prayers, and who have been regularly trained in Sabbath and other schools. It must not be supposed, however, that under the best possible system of Church education, we shall be free from failures among our candidates. But we may labour by prayer and by effort of every kind to diminish the number; and it is believed that no improvement upon our existing system would be found so radical and effectual as the education of our future ministers under the care of the Church, from the school to the theological seminary.

4. It is obvious that this system would be *more satisfactory to the Church*, as a means of perfecting the education of her future ministers. The objections to the Board of Education would to a very great extent be removed by a system of Church institutions. Candidates would then never be required to pledge themselves to enter the ministry until they had arrived after all the discipline of a full preparatory course at the threshold of the theological seminary. If our Church were prepared to take the position at once that she would educate all the children and youth in her congregations without reference to profession, it would be the grandest movement of her history and of the age. This position she must ultimately reach under the system of ecclesiastical education. It is a position of glory as well as of power. Then would our indigent youth enjoy from the beginning all the advantages of an intellectual and moral training under the best influences; and when they felt called by the Spirit of Christ to follow him in the regeneration of the world by preaching his gospel, they would still receive aid and enter the theological seminary with all that maturity and stability of mental and religious character which forebode a happy issue. In the mean time the Church must do the best she can with the measures now in operation. She needs ministers too much to dispense with her present plans because not as perfect as they might be. Our existing measures of ministerial education have been wonderfully successful—so much so as to indicate what greater blessings the Church might expect to receive both in the character and number of her candidates, if she commenced with parochial schools and then followed up the work of education

in Presbyterian academies and afterwards in Synodical colleges;—all parts of a regular system strictly ecclesiastical, which terminates, for those who are called by the Spirit, in theological seminaries.

IV. PROSPERITY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

The connexion between PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS AND THE PROSPERITY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH is a topic deserving consideration in analyzing the probable advantages and results of the proposed system of education. If parochial schools, as we have attempted to show, would promote sound education, practical piety, and the interests of candidates for the ministry, the cause of Presbyterianism must be onward. It lives and thrives by the power of truth, holiness, and ministerial fidelity. All that has been said in favour of the contemplated plan of education is a plea for the general prosperity of the Church.

Our denomination has, with the blessing of God, done a good work in the regeneration of the world; but our resources of usefulness have yet to be developed in their capacious reality. Early religious education would be to Zion like the endowment of a new power. Strength accrues to a church by the very act of putting forth new efforts in a good cause. The influences of enterprise, perseverance, and proper self-reliance, so favourable to the formation of personal character, are equally strong in moulding the general character of a Church. A Church awake to the interests of the rising generation, will show a very different front in the army of God's elect from one that has never been disciplined in this elementary service. The incidental benefits of well-directed Christian activity may be seen in the quickening power of the foreign missionary scheme. How many energies otherwise dormant have been aroused into vigorous religious action! How much sympathy, how much prayer, how much self-denial, how much effort of every kind has been put forth for the salvation of the heathen—all returning in Heaven's appointed circle of benevolence to bless the Church with a reflex influence precious and all-pervading! Every new enterprise, like the Board of Publication for example, that works wisely for God, calls forth energies hitherto undeveloped in their true proportion. On the principle, then, that every new element of prosperity exerts a leavening power on the aggregate instrumentalities of the Church, we have every reason to anticipate the most extensive benefits, direct and collateral, from a revival throughout our bounds of a religious interest in the education of children. This interest is both of a household and a public nature. It is identified with the gates of Zion as well as with the dwellings of Jacob. It is part of a grand moral movement that would purify and invigorate all the private, social, and public relations of Christianity.

Parochial schools would have a tendency to cement the bonds of

union between the members of the same congregation, and to bring up the children on terms of social familiarity and sympathy. The teachers of our week-day schools would be superintendents or teachers in our Sabbath schools, throwing a great accession of influence into the department of Sabbath instruction. The power of the ministry would be increased beyond computation by a large band of faithful Christian teachers who co-operated day by day throughout the year in familiarizing the minds of our youth with the doctrines and duties of the Bible. A Church of such aims and resources would, with the blessing of God, have "the work of her hands established" in the raising up of an intelligent, sober-minded, conscientious, useful generation of Christians.

One of the important results to the Church from parochial education, would be the better instruction of our youth in the history of the Church. Our doctrines, imperfectly as they have been taught, are better known than our history. Yet no Church has an ancestry and an earthly inheritance more illustrious and soul-inspiring than our own. Our children should be well taught the history of her true and glorious succession, her agency in the Reformation, her trials and persecutions, her spirit of martyr endurance, her love of liberty, her exaltation of the Bible as the great text-book of Protestantism and especially of Presbyterianism. How full of interest is the history of our Church in Scotland, England, France, Switzerland, and other lands! How many noble lessons of true Christian devotion, of earnest effort to advance the kingdom of Christ, distinguish the annals of the Huguenots, the Covenanters, the Puritans, the Calvinists of every clime and nation and age! Our Church with all her faults has a great advantage in being adapted to conciliate not only Christian hearts by her doctrines, but American hearts by her history. Evangelical truth and civil liberty have been to an honourable degree our characteristics. Such lessons might be made to tell with power upon the rising generation. The combined influence of our Bible truth and of our Providential history, has yet to be fairly tried upon our children as the means of exciting their souls to love their God and their Church. If it be true that men raised among the mountains imbibe the spirit of freedom from their very birth, it is no less true that Presbyterians trained amidst the moral grandeur of their sublime history, would "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free."

Our Church should endeavour to "gird on the harness" for the approaching contest with Antichrist. Every element that can assist in elevating the Christian character of the rising generation, must be brought into requisition. Religious instruction in early youth is peculiarly demanded at a period like this. It is high time for us to awake out of sleep, "redeeming the time because the days are evil." Presbyterians must better prepare to meet the crisis in the destiny of the Messiah's kingdom. They are now comparatively unprepared to meet its contingencies of trial and storm. Their chil-

dren must not be thus left without the full preparation of the gospel of peace, but should be carefully educated by the Church to do their whole duty, "and having done all, to stand."

Our neglect of adequate religious education has been seen in the facility with which some of our youth have been enticed into churches where evangelical truth has lost its divine prominence. "If they are weary in the land of peace, what will they do in the swelling of Jordan?" If they are so easily misled now, what shall guard them in future from the fiercer temptations of Antichrist? God has punished us with defaulters enough to open our eyes to behold our sins; and if we make no effort at effectual reformation, our doom is as certain as our warning. Why is it that Presbyterians have swelled the ranks of other denominations to the disparagement of their own glorious system of gospel grace and liberty? To use the language of a quaint divine: "What may be the cause why so much cloth so soon changeth colour? It is because it was never *wet-wadded*—which giveth fixation to a colour and setteth it in a cloth." This is the reason we lose our members from time to time; they were never "wet-wadded" in our Catechism, were never deepdyed by an early, thorough religious education, which giveth "fixation" to our truth and setteth it in the soul. Who often hears of a Presbyterian in Scotland abandoning the altar and the graves of his fathers for prelacy or popery? The same guardian attention for the education of their children which honours the land of Knox, once characterized all the churches of the Reformation. De Thou says of the Reformed Church of France, two hundred and fifty years ago, "You can scarcely find a boy among them who cannot give you an intelligent account of the faith they profess." A popish theologian sent to convert the Protestants of Dauphiné, declared that it was "hopeless to make proselytes where the children were so well grounded in their creed." Such facts make a common sense appeal to the members of every evangelical communion. We trust they will not be lost to our own. The Presbyterian Church must arouse herself to this great work of training her youth for God. She has forgotten the exploits of the Reformation, and needs herself a reformation, in order to renew her wonders in the service of the Redeemer.

Presbyterians were once honoured in the Providence of God as the chief promoters of Christian education in the country. Their schools and academies which were like "the cedar tree that is in Lebanon" are now like "the hyssop that springeth out of the wall." Our influence is comparatively insignificant. The "Log College" of Tenent would be a greater wonder and glory in these days than it was a century ago. Although its foundations have disappeared, and its little garden is now part of a common wheat-field, yet the spot where it once was is yet known by the luxuriant growth of vegetation which every year renewedly blesses its heaven-favoured locality. The fertility of nature around that ancient seminary of learning is

an emblem of the visible results to be expected from Church institutions planted amidst the harvest-fields of the world. A blessing would be around about them, and their memorial would descend from age to age.

The sure method for our Church to prosper is to "train up her children in the way they should go." School extension is, with the divine blessing, a glorious basis of Church extension. We must not only preach the gospel to those who have grown up, but we must train those who are *growing up* in the truth of the gospel. The Free Church of Scotland, with a high remembrance of her ancestral privileges, has gone diligently to work in building school-houses as defences of the gates of Zion. This policy, sanctioned by the word of God and commended by all experience, will, if adopted by our own Church, cause her to resume her ancient position "clear as the sun, fair as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners."

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

The Board of Education having thus attempted to exhibit the relations of the parochial school system to elementary education, practical piety, ministerial training, and the prosperity of the Presbyterian Church, express the hope that the General Assembly will take action on this important subject.

Difficulties there are of various kinds—many of them of a very serious nature, whilst others are exaggerated and rise up with gigantic aspect to terrify us from the land of promise. No noble enterprise for God was ever set on foot without adverse reports from every side. The times require faith and perseverance, and the hardy spirit of Christian patience and endurance. If the work be a good one, it can be accomplished. *Whatever ought to be done can be done.* Difficulties in a good cause are often the blessings of God in disguise—the merciful interpositions of his Providence to teach his people their dependence, and to arouse within them the energies necessary to hearty co-operation and successful achievement. Obstacles would quickly disappear, if every Presbyterian had it in his heart to say with Caleb, "Let us go up at once and possess the land; for we are well able to overcome it." If we magnify obstacles and murmur against the Lord for bidding us go forward in the midst of difficulties, his righteous judgment may keep us wandering for the lifetime of another generation in the wilderness of State institutions.

The action of the General Assembly, within the acknowledged range of its functions, is deemed all-important. It must, from the nature of the case, be chiefly advisory in its character—be suited to encourage, to lead forward, and to *influence* rather than to command. Any system of education depends so essentially upon public opinion that it would be in vain for the Assembly to attempt to carry into execution measures that did not pre-suppose the local co-operation of the churches. What seems to be peculiarly necessary at the pre-

sent time is to encourage those churches to move forward in this great work, who are in some measure prepared for it, but yet are waiting for a more decisive expression of ecclesiastical sanction. In various parts of our country, the Board are assured that our churches and presbyteries are looking forward with anxious interest to the action of the present General Assembly.

I. The Board of Education, in obedience to the resolution of last year, respectfully suggest that the General Assembly should, in the first place, affirm their sense of the importance of a system of Christian education to be extended as far as possible throughout their congregations. The characteristic PRINCIPLE of the system contemplated would be *religious instruction from the word of God in connexion with sound, intellectual culture*; and the general OUTLINES of the system would embrace *primary schools under the care of churches, academies under the care of Presbyteries, and ultimately colleges under the care of one or more Synods*. The subject of theological seminaries is supposed to be already disposed of in the settled policy of the Church.

The Board deem it suitable in this place to make a few practical remarks on the general outlines of the system which they propose for the recommendation of the Assembly.

As to PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS, they have to encounter difficulties which belong to any other system of education; such as sparseness of population, want of interest in the cause of education, difficulty of procuring teachers, &c. The occasion does not demand any allusion to difficulties which exist in common with all other plans.

The principal difficulty of a practical kind, at least in many places, is supposed to arise from the *expense of supporting teachers* in Church schools. The Board suggest the following considerations to show that the embarrassment from this source will not be so great as to be likely to defeat the project.

1. Many churches can unquestionably support their own schools. The great majority are able to do this without serious inconvenience. The least of all difficulties is really the want of pecuniary means; for God has furnished an abundance of means in the Presbyterian Church to do her whole duty in the conversion of the world. If the Free Church of Scotland, heavily laden with the burdens and responsibilities of her new organization, did not hesitate to add a complete school-system to her other ecclesiastical enterprises, the Presbyterian Church in this country would be unworthy of her ancestry to bring forward so ignoble an excuse on a subject of such vast importance, and at a period of eventful crisis in her history. The fact is that our Church, so far from having reached the point of full expansion in her pecuniary resources, has hardly done much more than to start from the minimum of contraction. Instead of commanding the homage yielded to self-denial, we are suffering in the judgment of the world and in our own consciences the shame of self-indulgence and covetousness. One thing is encouraging, and that is that the more

the Church has multiplied the objects of benevolence, the more have the hearts of the people been opened to give their worldly substance. No undertaking is more likely to become popular in our churches than the education of the rising generation. It ought to be taken for granted that our Church will enlarge her liberality in the Christian and dutiful work of training her own children.

2. The money *now* spent in education would go far to support parochial schools. The funds which are scattered about in different places, would, if collected together, contribute largely to defray the whole expense of Church institutions.

3. Many schools might probably be started with the nucleus of an existing school; and thus a great part of the difficulty be anticipated.

4. A part, or the whole of the teacher's salary might be raised by private subscription, or by monthly, quarterly, or annual collections; and if there were any deficiency, it would be supplied in a great many cases on a renewed appeal to parents.

5. In some places, ministers or members of their families, might assume, at the outset especially, the responsibility of beginning the undertaking. Though an addition to their labours, it would also be an addition to their means of doing good, as well as of obtaining a temporal support.

6. It is not too much to expect that persons would be found to enter upon this work, with small prospects of support at first; but yet who were so impressed with its importance, and had so much faith in Providence as to be willing to make the experiment, even amidst many discouragements.

7. In many congregations, especially in the country, different families might be willing to board the teacher for a time, and thus diminish the expense of the salary.

8. In the course of events, legacies would in all probability be left to assist local schools. No class of benevolent objects seems so suitable to receive the aid of permanent funds as schools, colleges, and other institutions of education. In Scotland, large legacies have sometimes been left for these objects, as also in our own country. It is believed that many would be willing to follow the example of John Calvin, who, although he died poor, being worth only a few hundred dollars, left a legacy in his will to the boy's school in Geneva.

9. A general Church fund might be annually raised, after the manner of our other Church operations, to assist feeble congregations in the salaries of their teachers. On this point more will be said presently.

The preceding statements on the matter of supporting our Church schools are not supposed to meet *every* case that may arise, but are merely thrown out to be applied according to circumstances. It is believed that they will apply so far as to put it in the pecuniary power of a great majority of our churches to have parochial schools.

The *salaries* of teachers would of course vary according to circumstances. In New England, it is understood that the salaries in the common schools are from \$12 to \$20 per month. Each Church would supply its own school according to its own rate and ability.

Nothing has been said in regard to the public money in different States. Although assistance from this quarter is by no means a hopeless expectation, if active measures were persevered in to obtain it, yet there are many considerations which render any reliance upon the State not only precarious but undesirable.

The *method of applying* the money to support the schools must be left to the judgment of each congregation. Some might judge it best to support the teacher on a salary, and to open the school, without charge, to the children of all persons belonging to the congregation. Others might prefer to have each child pay a small sum, and to make up the deficiency, if any, either by private subscription or from the general Church fund, if the congregation were feeble. Experience would soon adjust details of this kind.

The *school-house* might be built at once in many congregations. In others, the lecture-room, or basement of the church edifice, might be used for that purpose. In others, a room might be rented until better arrangements could be made.

The Board believe that in hundreds of our churches parochial schools might be organized during the ensuing year without much practical difficulty. An impression is too apt to prevail that a parochial school is some new wonder, which is to be introduced in a way almost miraculous. Whereas, if the friends of Church education, with the Session of the Church to guide them, went heartily to work, the indistinct and strange vision would in many cases speedily become a Christian reality. In such matters, experience will soon suggest a remedy for local wants and difficulties. Enterprise is the ally of faith; and the blessing of heaven accompanies the prayers and labours of Christian activity in a good cause.

In regard to ACADEMIES under the care of Presbyteries, the Board think that fewer pecuniary and other difficulties would exist in their establishment than in regard to parochial schools. Partly because there is little or no interference with State institutions; partly because the salaries of the teachers would be more easily provided by the tuition and by the liberality of a large district; and partly because there are fewer inherent difficulties. Any Presbytery in the Church, for example, could furnish pupils enough for such an institution. The fact that the Methodists have without difficulty established such seminaries in their various Conferences, shows that the work is feasible in the Presbyterian Church.

Our denomination yet retains nominal possession of many academies, or select schools, as they are sometimes called. Their teachers belong to the Presbyterian Church; but their real value is in a great measure lost to us by the diluted religion taught in most of them. Their object being generally that of worldly gain, the number of

pupils is a very great consideration. In order to conciliate all denominations, nothing distinctive is taught as to the truth of God; and thus Presbyterian children, who are the great majority in many of these schools, are excluded from the privileges of their faith. The Board rejoice to state that the Presbytery of Tuscaloosa has already taken action on this subject, and is resolved to establish a Presbyterian academy. In various Presbyteries *several* such institutions might be successfully carried on. As with parochial schools, the academy might be started with the nucleus of an institution already in operation. The pecuniary affairs of a Presbyterian academy might, in most cases, perhaps, be left to private enterprise. The Presbytery would, however, secure the edifice under their own control; and would always insist upon the right of examining the qualifications of teachers, and of general visitation and supervision.

It deserves consideration whether a female seminary ought not to be aimed at by every Presbytery. However desirable it may be, in the estimation of many, to educate at least their daughters at home, there is unquestionably a demand for female institutions. The Papists, the Episcopalians, and the Methodists have theirs; and Presbyterians, who seek an education for their daughters, should not be obliged to send them among strangers. When the influence of the female sex on the destinies of the Church and the world is considered, this subject may well awaken our anxious inquiries.

Many of our Presbyterian academies might be under the supervision of ministers. Such general control would not interfere so much with pastoral labours as to compensate the loss of a strong religious influence in these institutions. Many of the fathers of the Presbyterian Church laboured zealously for God as teachers as well as preachers; and our Zion would have no occasion to mourn over the repetition of the arduous services of a past generation.

The importance of these Presbyterian academies is enhanced by the fact that they would be the nurseries for the teachers of our parochial schools. They are an indispensable part of a system of Christian education, viewed either in reference to the training up of teachers, of candidates for the ministry, or of educated youth to adorn the Church or the State in other professions or walks in life.

No language can describe the influence on our Church and on the world of one academy in each Presbytery—of one hundred and eighteen institutions to train up our youth for life and immortality. And then were we to double the number for the female sex, it would be a demonstration of the principle that “two would put ten thousand to flight.”

Several hundred Presbyterian academies for the Christian education of youth of both sexes would concentrate in the Presbyterian Church an amount of power, influence, and prosperity unknown in her annals.

In regard to COLLEGES, the Presbyterian Church is perhaps less open to the accusation of remissness than on the subject of schools

and academies. There is great room for improvement, however, here. The number of colleges, strictly under Presbyterian, ecclesiastical control is very small. Danville, Oakland, South Hanover, Davidson, and Oglethorpe, are believed to be the only ones. The Presbyterians have nominal control over various others, as Princeton, Lafayette, Washington, Jefferson, Prince Edward, &c. The rapid growth of our country shows the necessity of organizing more colleges, especially at the West. It is to be hoped that every new institution of this kind will be committed to the management of the Church, instead of to a comparatively irresponsible body of self-perpetuating or State-elected trustees.

With these hints on the various outlines of the system, the Board recommend the Assembly to give their ecclesiastical sanction to the general plan of Christian education, particularly in reference to parochial schools. A definite sanction on the part of the Assembly will, it is believed, go far towards concentrating the attention of the Church on this whole subject, and ultimately bringing out her resources into harmonious and efficient action. Public sentiment in various parts of our country needs more than anything else, the stimulus of the conviction that this system of Christian education is to be the system of the Presbyterian Church.

II. In the second place, the Board of Education suggest to the Assembly the propriety of calling the attention of their Synods and Presbyteries to this great subject. A full discussion in our inferior judicatories of the whole matter in all its bearings, would go far to settle points on which public sentiment is not now matured. Light and truth emanate from the collision of minds. Certainly no subject may be more properly submitted to our Synods and Presbyteries than the religious and intellectual training of the rising generation.

III. In the third place, the Board recommend the appointment of a minister and elder in every Presbytery, whose duty it shall be to collect information about the number and present condition of schools, academies, and other institutions within their bounds; their wants as a Presbytery on the subject of education; hindrances which exist in the establishment of the parochial school system; the number of children under fifteen years of age belonging to their congregations; the state of public opinion on the subject of education; the ability of their churches to sustain teachers and build school-houses; in short, all the statistical information which has any relation to the subject. The above committees to present their reports before the 1st of January, 1848, to the Board of Education, who shall prepare for the next General Assembly a summary view of the matters embraced in them.

IV. In the fourth place, it is suggested that the General Assembly recommend the Board of Publication to take into consideration the subject of school books, and to report to the next Assembly whether anything, and if anything, what can be done in the great and increasingly-important department of Christian elementary instruction.

V. In the last place, the Board suggest that the Assembly authorize the Board of Education to aid, with any funds that may be placed at their command for that purpose, feeble churches in prosecuting a plan of Christian education. The Board have already on hand in their treasury three thousand dollars, which may be applied to this object by the permission of friends deeply interested in this great cause. It is believed that feeble churches, above all others, need the self-sustaining, influential power of Christian schools; and that the Assembly should encourage her members and churches to assist in the great work of school extension as well as Church extension.

The reasons which incline the Board of Education to be the medium of assisting to establish parochial schools among feeble churches, and to attend as far as possible to the general interests of Christian education, are these:

1. Parochial schools, as has been shown, are the corner-stones of the whole system of ministerial training.

2. The operation of parochial schools, if successful, will ultimately transfer from the Board the elementary education of their candidates. Their funds, which would be otherwise withdrawn from service, would be thus brought again into active demand.

3. The Church would realize more the duty and privilege of providing for the education of the ministry, if the training up of *all* her children, in connexion with, and in addition to this particular object, were the grand principle and aim of her education efforts.

4. The fact that Church extension has been managed by the Board of Missions, authorizes the expectation that school extension may be managed by the Board of Education.

5. The expense of the organization of a new Board is a motive to allow the existing Board to attempt to do the work.

6. Public sentiment is not perhaps sufficiently matured to demand a new organization.

7. If the Assembly do not authorize *some* movement on this great subject, there is ground to fear that little will be done for another year.

In addition to these considerations, the amount of funds which the Board of Education have on hand, seems to be a Providential encouragement for them to offer their services.

The Board of Education, however, wish it to be distinctly understood by the Assembly, that the suggestion of their own instrumentality is made only from a sense of obligation to the Church. The duties, cares, and responsibilities which primary schools would add to their existing burdens are not sought, nor are they shunned. If the Assembly shall, on the whole, judge it best to commit these interests to their care, the Board will, with the divine blessing, labour faithfully and zealously to discharge their additional obligations. If, on the other hand, any other course shall be found better adapted to secure the successful commencement of the great work in view, the

Board will most gratefully acknowledge the Providence which has opened a "more excellent way."

Invoking the blessing of God to direct his Church in the prosecution of right measures on this important subject, the Board of Education respectfully submit to the Assembly this their report.

ARTICLE V.

THE TRUE CHRISTIAN TEACHER.

THE INTELLIGENT TEACHER.

BY THE REV. T. WALLACE.

EVERY instructor of children and youth should, beyond question, be marked by his intelligence; by his sound and enlightened views; by his discrimination of thought; by his habit of reading; by his appreciation of whatever is correct in sentiment, or beautiful in character.

An *ignorant* Educator is an anomaly—a perfect contradiction. The very term education implies that the person to whom it refers is one who is *educated himself*; that his mind is well-informed; that his faculties are well-disciplined, in order that he may teach and benefit others. And in the present day, especially, how important it is that the instructor of youth should be well and thoroughly educated; should be in the best sense enlightened. When knowledge is universally diffused,—when the population is so rapidly augmenting,—when the varieties of character are so strongly and vividly unfolded,—when society is undergoing changes so frequent, so extensive, so startling,—when the temptations and dangers of the young are so numerous, subtle, and powerful, how important, how necessary it is that he who professes to be a teacher of the mind should be himself well-taught; should have his understanding well-cultivated, his judgment well-informed and directed, and all his intellectual powers awakened and nicely balanced. It is always most gratifying to us to meet with a truly intelligent teacher, and to converse with him on the discipline of the mind, on the formation of character, and on the best mode of communicating knowledge. When conversing with such an educator, we are invariably interested; we are deeply impressed with a sense of the value of sound intellectual training, and are convinced that the benefits imparted by such an instructor may be to some, perhaps to many, lasting and inestimable.

It is a pertinent and significant inquiry to propose,—what characterizes the Intelligent Teacher? Our reply is concisely the following:

The intelligent Teacher is marked by his good sense. He has nice

perception; his judgment is sound, is unimpeachable; his tact is obvious. He knows what he has to do, and the best manner in which to do it. You can see by his plans, by his conversation, by his habits, by his discipline in the business of education, by his studies, and uniform behaviour, that good sense is his broad and characteristic feature, and one which he is anxious increasingly to develop.

The intelligent Teacher is marked by his intellectual habits. This feature he will invariably express. He will be distinguished by his love of reading, by his disposition for reflection, by his anxiety to improve his mind, and continually to enlarge his resources. He cannot exist without reading, without thought, without inquiry. Every day he wishes to discipline and invigorate his mind, and to augment his intellectual stores. Engaged in communicating knowledge to others, he will ever be solicitous to make acquisitions himself.

The intelligent Teacher is marked by his discrimination of character. He reads his own mind, and the minds of others. He penetrates his own heart, and the hearts of those by whom he is surrounded. He studies human nature, and especially does he look into the volume of character which is unrolled by youth. He observes the quickness of one, the dulness of another,—the seriousness of one, the unconquerable levity of another,—the thoughtfulness of one, the inattention, fickleness, and caprice of another,—the modesty of one, the assurance of another,—the amiableness of one, the unlovely temper of another,—the pliability and docility of one, the inveterate stubbornness of another,—the steady and decisive progress of one, the continually retrograde movement of another.

It is this discrimination of character which is so important to the intelligent educator, and which gives him so superior an advantage over the ignorant and ill-instructed teacher. *The intelligent Teacher is marked by his always making progress.* He cannot recede; indeed, he cannot remain stationary. He is ever correcting some error, subduing some prejudice, acquiring some lesson, supplying some defect, gaining or heightening some excellence, securing some intellectual and moral advance. He cannot bear the idea of not progressing; such a thought to him is associated with nothing but degradation and wretchedness, arising from criminal inattention and neglect. "Onward, onward," is his motto until death.

The intelligent Teacher is marked by his dissatisfaction with himself. He uniformly observes something to lament. There is always seen by him some error to counteract—some deficiency to supply—some prejudice to subdue—some infirmity to remove—some excellence to attain—some evil to annihilate. He reads daily; he is accustomed to reflect; he tasks his mind; he cultivates every useful and valuable habit, in order that he may more effectually accomplish the object which he desires to secure. And after all the discipline he pursues, or the ability he may possess, when he dwells on the knowledge of one teacher, on the sagacity of another, on the superior talent of another, and on the great and extraordinary success

of another, he ever finds how much there is in connection with himself, with his plans, his attainments, his progress, his labours, to be regretted and deplored.

The intelligent Teacher is marked by his desire to communicate knowledge to others, and in the wisest and most efficient manner. He is from principle anxious to impart something of those stores to the inquiring minds of youth, which he himself accumulated. He longs to be the instrument of giving soundness of thought to a child; to aid in forming and invigorating the mind of youth; to teach the boy how to think, compare, discriminate; to imbue him with a taste for reading and reflection, with a love, as he grows up, for literature and science, and with a fondness for everything that is truly instructive and valuable. He has been taught himself, and he wishes to teach others, and to render them, in a great degree, *their own instructors*. While surrounded by the light of knowledge himself, he cannot bear that any should remain in darkness. He considers, and most justly, that a sound and well-directed education is one of the most precious treasures which a young person can command, one whose value will be continually growing, and which cannot be estimated too highly.

These are the broad and uniform characteristics of the Intelligent Teacher, and which are increasingly developed by him in passing through life,—in discharging his high and honourable engagements.

And, above all, Teachers, *understand the Bible*; form clear and large views of Revealed Truth: be well acquainted with its character, spirit, and laws, that you may teach Christianity to your youthful charge,—that you may explain to them the narratives of Scripture; unfold to them the characters of Scripture; elucidate the principles of Scripture; adduce the warnings of Scripture; present the motives of Scripture; and furnish the encouragements of Scripture;—and in this way, by the benediction of Heaven, produce a most powerful, holy, and lasting impression.

Teachers, thus taught, and thus acting, not merely enlighten the youthful mind, but discipline and purify the youthful heart. These are the teachers we everywhere want, and such teachers we cannot too highly value.

THE IMPROVING TEACHER.

BY JOHN MORISON, D. D., LL. D.

The "*stand-still*" class of Teachers can do but little to improve the intelligence of the age. We need not describe this class. It is too well known in all our circles. The stereotyped Teacher is by no means a rare character. He is steady to his point; but he never advances beyond it. He preserves his identity. He is what he always has been—a man below mediocrity, with no passion for improvement. He shrinks from progress, and never dares to innovate

upon himself. What he ever taught, he teaches still; and in the same way as when he first entered on his post of duty.

This class of Teachers must continue to be formidably large, unless the spirit of the age shall rouse, far and wide, the purpose of self-improvement. Our Normal Schools are rapidly providing a better-qualified body of Teachers for the conduct of our Week-day Schools. Ignorance will no longer be tolerated in the chair of instruction. The friends of the people have demanded and secured for their children a better-trained circle of instructors. We are entering on a new era in our country's history. Competent teaching will produce a new series of results. Intelligence begins to spread; and, spite of all folly and bigotry, the best schools will be preferred by the industrial classes for the education of their children.

Among the changes effected by this new state of things will be the revolution which it will necessarily create in our Sunday Schools. Competent week-day instruction will introduce to the care of our Sunday School Teachers a highly improved class of children, accustomed to the best modes of tuition through the week; and unless the qualifications of the Sunday School Teacher are greatly enhanced, it will be impossible for him to keep his standing as in days gone by.

The writer of this paper is much and anxiously exercised on this subject. If Ministers, School Committees, and Teachers, are indifferent to it, they may rest assured that a crisis of a very alarming character will speedily arise in the working of our schools. They will cease to be attractive just at that point where the pupils become able to detect, to any considerable extent, the ignorance or incompetence of their instructors. Zeal and consistent piety may do much to retain the Teacher's hold of his class; but, without a measure of intellectual advancement, the task will be encompassed with growing and formidable difficulty; and impressions will be produced upon the children's minds unfavourable to the accomplishment of the highest objects and ends of instruction.

What, then, is to provide against a crisis which there is reason daily to apprehend? Doubtless it will be indispensable to be more select, in the future than in the past, in the admission of candidates for the Teacher's office. Persons incapable of maintaining their position must, however reluctantly, be held back from the work, at least for a season, until they shall have given evidence that they are susceptible of mental progress.

The *Improving* Teacher, and all Teachers must seek to belong to this class, will not place before him any ideal standard of qualification, but will ponder the spirit of the times; will look around him on the materials with which he has to deal, and will determine, by God's help, to make himself equal to the task which he has undertaken to perform. He will spare no pains to cultivate his mind, to enlarge the sphere of his knowledge, to remove the disqualifications of a defective education, to polish away surface vulgarities, and to

put himself decidedly, and beyond all possible doubt or mistake, ahead of his class.

The *Improving Teacher*, even if he has enjoyed an average share of early training, will, every week, be adding to the list of his qualifications for the work to which he is devoted; and, if it has not been his lot to be thus educated in early years, he will, by the spirit of self-culture, in many instances, raise himself to a level with those who have been more favourably circumstanced.

The *Improving Teacher*, by the very tendency of mind which he cultivates, will be sensitive to his own defects, and will be satisfied with nothing short of their practical removal. Without anything of noise, or conceit, or boasting, he will steadily go forward in the path of improvement; and as he sees the benefit of his own culture, in the progress of his pupils, he will be stimulated and encouraged to persevere, and will hope for yet further advances in the path of useful and sanctified knowledge.

And, above all, the *Improving Teacher* will watch over the *spirit* in which he performs his duty; and will only look for God's blessing on his Sunday labours, as they are performed in accordance with the mind of Christ.

The *Improving Teacher* is unquestionably the great demand of the age.

THE EARNEST TEACHER.

BY THE REV. T. WALLACE.

There are few persons with whom we are more deeply interested, or whose character and labours we more highly appreciate, than the Earnest Teacher.

There may be a comparatively limited range of knowledge, there may be the possession of slender intellectual powers, there may be the development of no superior mental gifts and resources, still we are interested, peculiarly interested, in the character, efforts, and progress, of the man who employs *well* the one talent, or the two talents with which Providence has endowed him—who makes the most of that which he has—and who is assiduous and earnest in the cultivation and improvement of all, for the instruction and benefit of others.

We admire the Earnest Teacher in the Sabbath School, who is alive to the importance of his office—who is full of intense solicitude on behalf of those young immortals who are entrusted to his charge—and who concentrates his emotions, his energies, his affections, for the advancement of their best interests.

We admire, also, the Earnest Teacher of the young in our numerous day schools—our more public and extensive, or our more retired and select, educational institutions.

We admire him, because he illustrates the character which the right-minded and true-hearted instructor of youth should exemplify.

It is obvious, that unless a teacher be in earnest, he is not unfolding the spirit which the educator ought to display; for earnestness, after all, is the main thing which the teacher of youth should uniformly, and under all circumstances, exhibit.

We admire, too, the Earnest Teacher, because he is the person to accomplish the object which he desires, namely, the expansion of the youthful mind—"the drawing out," the "educing," of the youthful intellect—the elevation of the youthful character—and the right disciplining of all the youthful faculties.

The inquiry is often proposed to us, and it is one of deep interest and importance,—"*who is the Earnest Teacher?*" and we at once reply:—

He is the individual who, in the business of education, *acts from principle*, enlightened and high principle. It is principle which regulates all his studies—which prompts all his arrangements—which governs all his procedure—which suggests and moulds all his efforts. He is not the creature of impulse. He does not act from caprice. He is not fitful and uncertain in his plans, and movements, like the April day. He is not the mere hireling, labouring only for his bread. By no means. He is much more dignified. The Earnest Teacher is governed by noble considerations, in pursuing his high calling. Education, with him, is a matter of paramount importance, which cannot be too soberly regarded—too highly appreciated. To train the youthful mind—to elicit the youthful faculties—to invigorate the powers of inquiring youth—to prepare young persons for life, and, above all, to fit them for a fairer, a brighter, a happier world than the present—is an employment of inexpressible dignity and value, and he estimates it as it ought to be prized.

The Earnest Teacher is one who is prompted by love. This is the secret of his earnestness—this induces and feeds it. It is love to his work which makes him assiduous, fervent, untiring—love to the young—love to inquiring, growing, immortal minds—love that is intelligent, as well as ardent—pure and constant in its developments and operations.

He is attached, deeply, warmly, increasingly attached to his undertaking. There is no business, in his deliberate judgment, which is greater, nobler, more sublime. There is no engagement, in his estimation, identified with more elevated thoughts and aims, and which is associated with larger or more permanent results.

He loves the children and youth by whom he is encircled. Their characters he studies. Their varied tempers he marks and ascertains. Their peculiar excellencies he elicits and encourages. Their intellectual powers he seeks to draw out, and to guide, control, strengthen, and mould, in the wisest and most efficient manner. He is never so happy as when he is surrounded by his youthful charge, all looking to him for instruction; all confiding in his intelligence and wisdom; all coming to him, habitually, that their views may be corrected—their views be enlarged—their faculties be disciplined—

and they themselves be prepared to enter on the stage of life, and to fulfil to purpose, to the benefit of themselves and others, its numerous, arduous, and responsible duties.

It is love to them, and his employ, which makes the teacher thus happy in his work—which induces from day to day the pleasure he experiences, when encircled by the interesting group of young immortals surrounding him, and placing confidence in his ability and care.

The Earnest Teacher is one who is ever anxious to benefit those who are committed to his charge. In communicating knowledge, he always seeks to do them good. In recurring to any subjects, whether literary, moral, or religious, he has their interests—their future, their permanent interests—at heart. Whatever plans connected with education he forms—whatever discipline he maintains—whatever punishments he inflicts—whatever encouragements he administers—whatever tasks he imposes—he has only *one* solicitude, namely, the improvement, the steady and decisive improvement, of those who are entrusted to his special care.

Their character he wishes to form. Their judgment he wishes to enlighten and direct. Their understandings he wishes to discipline and expand. Their tastes he wishes to create and foster, and to see that they are pure and healthful. Their faculties generally, he wishes to harmonize and strengthen. In one word, their true dignity and happiness he wishes to secure and increase. He has no other aims. He has nothing else to pursue, or to regard.

The Earnest Teacher is one who cannot be satisfied without realizing the desired result of his labours. He strives from principle, and vigorously, to secure a certain end, most valuable and necessary, and that end, by the divine blessing, he must, in some degree, secure. He studies and endeavours to accomplish a particular design, one of surpassing interest, and that design, he must, to some extent, realize. He cannot be indifferent to the object for which he has been trained—for which he reads, and studiously improves his mind; indeed, for which he lives. He cannot, with his views and feelings, be pathetic with regard to the illumination of the youthful mind—the formation of the youthful character—and the effectual preparation of the young for the occupations, the varied temptations, the multiplied and ever-recurring trials, of life.

He wants to be the useful, the efficient preceptor, and to perceive that his plans are accomplished—that his wishes are gratified—that his prayers are answered—that his labours are crowned with success: hence he is in earnest, and must discover that he is in earnest.

Teachers, valued Teachers, throughout the kingdom, in educating the young, be in earnest—and show clearly and habitually, that you are in earnest. If you are not in earnest, who should be? Vigilantly guard, we beseech you, against indifference, coldness, apathy. In the Day or Sunday School we must have no frigid, cold-hearted teachers. That is not the place for such persons, nor is this the age.

We now want true men and women; noble-minded and earnest teachers:—and remember, unless you are in earnest in your work, you cannot exemplify the character, which, on every account, you are bound to display.

You cannot be respected by the intelligent, by the active, by the virtuous, by the benevolent, by the pious. In one word, you cannot *be useful* to your young and invaluable charge. Indeed, without earnestness, as teachers, you will *do harm*, incalculable harm—to those entrusted to your care in the school. They will soon observe your coldness, and be injured. They also will become indifferent—for *the indifferent teacher creates the careless pupil*, and the result of the whole will be, that the minds of the young will not be disciplined—their character will not be elevated—their progress in what is excellent will not be manifest, their best interests in relation to the future will not be secured.

Again, then, we say to you, plainly, affectionately, warmly,—Teachers! Teachers! everywhere, *Be in earnest! Be in earnest!* you have a great work to do, therefore, *be in earnest!*

“Let trust, and love, and zeal, combine,
To fan and feed the flame divine.”

THE PRAYING TEACHER.

“ENTER INTO THY CLOSET.”

“The teacher in his closet!” What precious thoughts this little title suggests. “Enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.” Delightful promise!

O brother, sister, Christian fellow-labourer! whoever thou art that readest these words, take courage; let not thine heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Thy Father seeth thee; he waiteth to receive thy prayer. Enter into thy closet; shut out the world and worldly thoughts; pour forth thy sorrows, and doubt not that thou shalt be comforted.

Are thy abilities small? and dost thou fear that thou art of no use? Remember that the work of conversion is the Lord's. Thou art but his instrument: a weak one it may be, but he maketh the weakness of man to work mighty things. Ask of him, and he will give thee understanding. “Delight thyself in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.” Is thy learning great—thine intellect powerful?—then great is thy need of the closet. Beware lest thou depend upon thyself; lean not on thine own understanding. Enter into thy closet; forget thy learning, thy intellect; and lowly kneeling at the throne of grace, prefer thy prayer for deep humility.

Art thou disheartened because thou labourest much, and seest no

fruit? Be not disheartened; it is God's work, and in due time thou shalt reap, if thou faint not.

It may be, thou hast not sought a blessing from that source whence only thou hast a right to expect it.

Hast thou entered into thy closet, and prayed to the Lord of the harvest to bless the seed thou hast sown? No? Then how canst thou expect to see the seed spring up and bear fruit? Yes? Then let patience have her perfect work; fear not, in his own good time God will bless thy labour which proceedeth of love.

THE GLORIFIED TEACHER.

BY THE REV. J. B. MACDUFF.

The Glorified Teacher! What a joyful word! Honoured fellow-labourer with God! does not the thought cheer thee amid the manifold discouragements of thy work! "Weeping," we well know, and that too often, in proportion to thy faithfulness, "endureth" during many a night of apparently hopeless toil *here*. But dry thy tears! think of the joy which, as a glorified teacher, is awaiting thee in the morning of immortality! "*The Glorified Teacher!*" How cheering *then*, to stand on the threshold of eternity and take a retrospect of thy humble but now complete labours! to see *then*, that no tear was shed in vain, and no prayer uttered in vain, and *no night spent in vain!* That often when with heavy heart and downcast spirit you left your school with the desponding question, "who hath believed our report?" *that* was the very night when the angels of God carried up the tidings that a grain of the precious seed had taken root! What a demonstration *then* will be made of the real glory of the work in which you are now engaged! They may, indeed, be the smallest of gems you are polishing for your Lord's crown. But *what* gems! They are of undying lustre! They may be the smallest cedar trees you are preparing for the adornment of the spiritual temple, but still shouldst thou reckon thyself no more than a "hewer of wood and drawer of water." What an honour to contribute, even in the feeblest measure, to the manifestation of thy dear Redeemer's glory! He will be the first to own thy work. "Inasmuch as ye did it to *the least of these*, ye did it unto me!"

It is sweet on earth to have our labours owned and blessed. We believe there are few among you who are strangers to the joy of hearing those you have instructed in youth in the way of peace, rising up and "calling you blessed." But if the work of teaching thus brings its own recompense and reward on *earth*—what must be the joy of that *eternal* reward which is awaiting you in *Heaven!* Picture *that* scene and *that* day, when, taking your stand before the "Great White Throne," with your rejoicing group of young Immortals, you can triumphantly say, "Behold! I! and the children whom thou hast given me!" Think of that gladdening response—

that joyous benediction, "Well done, good and faithful servant." Think of your lowly dwelling on earth—the village schoolhouse it may be, or the humble cottage—where you gathered the little company and cast, in humble faith, your "bread upon the waters." "The Lord shall count when he writeth up the people, that this child and that child were born *THERE!*" Think of your relationship through eternity to those rejoicing bands of ransomed scholars! they will remember with holy gratitude your earthly tears and prayers. Oh! how will it enhance the sweetness and fervour of your own everlasting song to hear those voices whom you were privileged on earth first to tune in praise, mingling their ascriptions with your own, of "honour and power and blessing" to Him that sitteth on the throne and to the Lamb for ever and ever!" We think we can already see the happy groups! Teachers, and children, still loving to walk together to the "living fountains of water," and delighting to speak together apart of the earthly school which was the birthplace of their souls—their nursery for Eternity! Yes! dear Teacher, if we can venture to apply the words to your children, *you will then* be able, in some feeble measure, to enter into the wondrous joy of your adorable Redeemer, when he exclaimed with regard to *this* ransomed family, "*I am glorified in them.*" True, the glory of their beatified state is all *His*. *You* will be the first to own this, and to rejoice in this. Your ascription with regard alike to yourself and to them will be, "Not unto me, not unto me, but unto *Thee*, O Saviour God! be *all* the glory!" Still, in the subordinate sense, you will be able also to enter into the exulting challenge of the greatest of Teachers, "What is our hope or joy or crown of rejoicing? are not *YE* in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ?"

Go on in thy blessed work, honoured child of God! It is not until thou hast become a Glorified Teacher, that thou wilt know the greatness of thy privilege. *Privilege!* Yes! thy work is one in which angels themselves would rejoice to engage! bringing trophies to the feet of Jesus, "sons and daughters to glory!" The archangel nearest the throne knows no higher privilege than this, promoting the glory of that God at whose feet he bows!

Go on in thy blessed work! Soon must that work be done, soon will "the Master call thee!" and the account of thy stewardship be required! Oh "*work* while it is called to-day!" Let thy motto be—"always abounding." Your talents may be mean—your influence small—your sphere limited—and what may depress you more, your faith may be weak—your spirit languid! But thy God has an encouraging word for thee,—"*My grace is sufficient!*" You may be going forth now, "weeping, bearing your precious seed," but you will doubtless, as a glorified teacher, "come again with rejoicing, bringing your sheaves with you." Go forth with the sickle of faith in thine hand, and this promised harvest before thee. "Be not faithless but believing!" And if thy work in the eyes of the world, or of thy friends, is dishonourable and dishonoured, remember Him who hath

said, and "he is faithful who hath promised," "Them that honour *Me*, I will honour!" Go on in thy blessed work, and let the sweet spirit-stirring strains which you have oft heard on the tongues of your children on earth, carry you forward to the blessed day when their feeble words will be gloriously realized.

ARTICLE VI.

THE PLACE OF THE BIBLE, IN A SYSTEM OF
EDUCATION.

BY THE REV. CHARLES HODGE, D.D.

"The entrance of thy words giveth light."—Ps. cxix. 130.*

WE all recognise the Bible as the source of everything which distinguishes us from the heathen. It is the fountain of knowledge, happiness, and holiness. When we consider how admirably it is adapted to produce these results, the question forces itself on our attention, why has such a book, though known and read for centuries, hitherto accomplished comparatively so little? The general answer to this question is, no doubt, to be found in the depravity of men. But there are specific causes of this lamentable fact which should be pointed out, and, if possible, counteracted or removed. To one of these, it is the object of this discourse to call your attention. It cannot be denied, that it is only a comparatively small portion of the inhabitants of Christendom, even, which has hitherto been brought under the direct and well-applied influence of the word of God. It is in this fact that we find one of the principal causes of the little effect which the Scriptures have hitherto produced on the character and condition of men.

In every country there are three classes of persons who, in very different degrees, are influenced by the prevalent religion. The first includes those who sincerely receive its doctrines, and endeavour to live according to its precepts. The second embraces those who, although acquainted with all their religion professes to teach, do not make it practically the standard of faith or rule of conduct; and the third consists of those who, being ignorant of its doctrines, are only indirectly affected by its influence. The first of these classes is always small, and the last large, in proportion to the truth and excellence of the religion. Because the clearer the light, the more do those who love darkness recede from it. In Christian countries, accordingly, the number of those who in faith and love embrace the religion of the Bible is very small; while the number of those who

* This discourse was delivered before the "American Sunday School Union," in 1833. It was shortly after republished in Calcutta.

are only indirectly brought under its influence is very large. We do not mean to assert that this indirect influence is a matter of little moment. We believe, on the contrary, that it is difficult for any man to live in a Christian community, no matter how remote he may keep himself from all direct means of religious instruction, without having more correct views of the Supreme Being, of moral obligations, of the nature and destiny of the soul, than were ever enjoyed in heathen lands. He is, therefore, brought under a higher moral influence, he is elevated as a rational being, and freed from the degrading tendencies of the thousand absurdities which enter into every false system of religion. Notwithstanding, however, the extent and value of this indirect influence of the Bible, the effect is slight, compared to what may reasonably be expected from its being brought to bear directly and constantly on the character and conduct of men. It is to effect this object, to bring the word of God to bear effectually on the formation of the human character, and the regulation of human conduct, that is the end of all Christian institutions and efforts. We wish to subject the minds, the hearts, and lives of men to the Bible, that is, to truth and righteousness. This is the goal of our race, the prize of our high calling, the consummation and reward of all our labours.

How, then, is this object to be accomplished? How is the Bible to be brought to bear most effectually on the intellectual and moral character of men? We venture to answer, by employing it in the education of the young. We do not mean to disparage the preaching of the gospel, or any other means of religious instruction, but we mean to say that, if we can learn anything from the nature of moral causes, or from the general course of God's providence, if men are to be subjected to the Bible, they must be educated by the Bible; it must be made the great instrument of their intellectual and moral culture. That this has never yet been extensively effected, is an anomaly in the history of our race, and the opprobrium of Christendom. Ever since the revival of letters we have employed, in the early stages of education, heathen fables; and in the more advanced stages, heathen poets, historians, orators, and moralists. These have been, and still are, the instruments most extensively employed in the education of Christian youth. Need we wonder at the result? Notwithstanding partial exceptions, it is certainly true, that the Scriptures have been systematically excluded from the places of education; and that the great majority of Christian youth have been brought up more under the influence of heathen minds and models, than under the inspired minds and models of the word of God. We have said it was an anomaly, that the professors of one religion should employ, mainly, works imbued with the spirit and principles of another in the education of their children. This assertion will hardly be questioned.—Every Mohammedan child, who is taught anything, is taught the Koran, from the Straits of Gibraltar to beyond the Ganges; wherever the religion of the false prophet pre-

vails, there the standard of religion is the great instrument of education. The result is what might have been expected. The religion of the land is really the religion of the people. Its influence is diffused through all departments of society, and its spirit and precepts are practically regarded. The fact, that the followers of Mohammed employ thus extensively their sacred writings in the business of education, is not to be accounted for on the supposition that their literature is confined to the Koran: the reverse is notoriously the case. In romance, in poetry, in history, in original and translated works, their authors have been abundant and successful. But believing the Koran to be of God, they have acted accordingly. They have not professed one religion, and brought up their children under the influence of another.

The general neglect of the Bible, for the purposes of education, cannot be accounted for on the ground of its want of adaptation for this work. The object of education is to fit man for his duties and destinies; so to exercise his intellectual faculties, and so to mould his moral feelings, that he may be prepared to do and suffer what God requires at his hands. For this purpose, it may be shown the Bible is pre-eminently adapted. It is, in fact, the history of God's plan of educating the human family, and therefore furnishes us at once with the model and the means of intellectual and moral culture. The Bible commences with the simplest truths; communicating knowledge in the form of history, interspersing biographical details with general narrative; employing symbolical actions and instructive parables; reducing general principles to sententious maxims; at one time reasoning with men in a manner to tax all their powers, at another addressing them in such strains of sublimity or beauty, as to waken up all the finer feelings of the soul. It everywhere addresses the moral feelings as the attributes of our nature. It thus furnishes us with all the materials we need for this great work. The memory, judgment, imagination, may here all be exercised. Every power of the soul finds endless and boundless matter for the most strenuous effort, while every sympathy and feeling of our nature is brought under the purest and most effective influence.

We would now call your attention to some of those special considerations, which should secure for the word of God that place in the education of the young, from which it has been so long and so generally excluded.

1. The word of God is truth. It is truth in opposition to fiction in history, to error in doctrine, to false principles in morals, to all exaggeration in description. As every other production must, to a greater or less extent, abound in misstatements of facts, or erroneous views of truth, or false principles of action, or false models of character, need the question be asked, whether it is not desirable to avail ourselves of a book, so well adapted for the purpose in every other respect, of which, and of which alone, it can be said, it is truth?

2. The word of God is not only truth, but it is infinitely important

truth. The history which it gives is the most important of all histories. It gives us an account of the creation, fall, and redemption; it traces the development of the purposes of God's mercy from the first promise through all the institutions, events, and prophecies of the old dispensation. It unfolds the history of the birth, life, death, and resurrection of the Redeemer, and the establishment of his kingdom in the world. Is it meet that Christian youth should be sedulously taught the history of ancient kingdoms, or modern dynasties, and left ignorant of this history of the origin, apostacy, and redemption of their race? And yet, thousands who learn the one never learn the other.

Again, the doctrines of the Bible are beyond comparison important. They relate to the nature and works of God; to the nature, character, and destiny of man; to the rule of duty and the method of salvation. Are these topics less worthy of investigation than the laws of motion, or the opinions of philosophers? And yet, Christian men become skilled in the sciences, though they remain ignorant of God and themselves.

3. The contents of the word of God are not only true and important, but their influences are all healthful. As the great object of education is the adequate development of all the faculties of our nature; the great desideratum is the discovery of means by which the intellect may be exercised, while the moral susceptibilities are properly impressed. The great majority of the subjects of study, in the ordinary course of education, either do not address themselves at all to the moral feelings, or their tendency is deleterious. The natural sciences may be considered neutral; as a man may become an adept in them all, without having one moral emotion called into exercise. Ancient literature, the poets, historians, and orators of classic paganism, is in many respects positively injurious. In the Bible we find truth, adapted at once to enlarge the intellect and purify the heart. The idea of God, in the infinitude of his perfections, cannot enter the mind without expanding all its capacities, while it sheds into the inmost recesses of the soul its sanctifying influence. As in the rays of the sun, light and heat are inseparably blended, and by being thus blended create and reveal all the beauty of creation, so the knowledge of God at once enlightens and purifies the soul. I speak as unto Christians, judge ye what I say. Is it not when you have the clearest conceptions of the divine character, that you have the most ardent aspirations to be like Him? Is it not by beholding His glory that you are transformed into His image? It is, then, under the same influence we would have every infant mind to expand. We would not attempt to raise flowers in a cave, nor make smoky torches a substitute for the sun. We would let the light of heaven in upon the soul.

There is probably no one idea of so much consequence, in its influence on character, as the conception of God, none which acts so powerfully on the moral feelings of men. It is therefore of the

last importance that, from the first, this knowledge should be imparted to the mind. In the Holy Scriptures it is so presented, that a child can understand, though Gabriel cannot comprehend it.

Though the same remark, as to the purifying tendency of divine truth, might be made in reference to all the doctrines of the Bible, we specify the description which it gives of the character of Jesus Christ. It has long been admitted that truth, when exemplified in the life of an individual, is more effective than when stated in abstract propositions—that biography is more useful than moral essays. It is more intelligible, more interesting, and more exciting. It enlists other feelings than the moral ones on the side of virtue. We love the man as well as his excellencies.

We believe Christianity is as much indebted to the superhuman loveliness of the character of Jesus Christ, as to any one of its doctrines. There is in this faultless model of human excellence, a moral power which few are able to resist. The lips of the most abandoned infidels have generally been closed when this was the theme. They could revile his apostles as impostors, but deliberately to speak evil of the Son of God, requires a degree of depravity to which few have ever attained. Let the child, then, be made acquainted with the Saviour, let him learn his history, let him contemplate all the varied exhibitions of his character, let him see how he felt towards God, and how he acted towards men; how he treated the poor, the afflicted, the ignorant; how he bore afflictions, and sustained injuries; how he lived, and how he died—and he will know more of morals than all the world can teach him; he will have an evidence of the truth of Christianity more persuasive than all external testimony; and he will have a more salutary moral influence constantly operating in his mind, than all the systems of morals can exert.

Again, the Bible contains a perfect rule of moral duty, and on this account is adapted to exert the happiest influence on the mind. God has created the human soul with moral susceptibilities, which are as much an original part of its constitution as its intellectual faculties. Both classes of our constitutional powers need to be cultivated to secure their being rightly exercised. Were it possible for a man to live without any thing to inform or exercise his intellect, his mental powers would be almost dormant; and if they were as much neglected as his moral sense commonly is, he would be as dull in his perceptions, as imbecile in judgment, as erroneous in his inferences, as he is insensible or perverse in his moral sense and judgments. But as it is impossible for a man, placed in an active world, to avoid having a thousand objects which daily exercise his intellectual faculties, so it is impossible for him to escape the influence which the circumstances in which he is placed, and the opinions of those around him exert over his conscience. In every age and nation, therefore, we find that the character of men, their moral sentiments and course of conduct, are determined partly, indeed, by individual peculiari-

ties, but mainly by the tone of the society of which they are members. Such has been the effect of these circumstances in diversifying the moral judgments of men, making one class regard as virtues what another condemns as vices, that many have been led to doubt whether conscience was really an original part of our constitution. But the diversity is no greater here, than on other subjects. What is truth to one mind is error to another, what is beauty to one eye is deformity to another. But, as to all men some things are true and others false, as to all eyes some things are beautiful and others the reverse, so to all hearts some things are right and others wrong. The diversity is not as to there being a difference between right and wrong, for this sentiment is absolutely universal, but as to what is to be considered right or wrong. How is this all-important subject to be determined? As the class of intuitive truths is very small, so the class of acts intuitively right or wrong is small. Conscience can no more infallibly decide on duty, than reason can on truth. As, therefore, reason must be instructed, so must conscience. And as conscience is one of the most powerful and imperative of our principles of action; as it, of necessity, decides in favour of what the understanding perceives to be right; and as the character and destiny of men depend on the correctness of its decision, it is of infinite importance that it should be rightly directed. This, however, is a difficult task. We need not advert to the state of degraded tribes or individuals, to illustrate the fact, that the moral sentiments of men are frequently erroneous; it is rare to find, in the most refined and Christian societies, a man whose moral sense is on all subjects rightly informed.

If, therefore, there be anywhere revealed a perfect rule of duty, it is self-evident that it should be universally known. This rule is found in the Bible, and nowhere else. It is there presented in every form. It is reduced to one all-comprehensive principle, love to God and man. It is summed up in ten perspicuous commandments. It is expanded into innumerable special precepts and prohibitions, so as to meet every supposable case. That such a rule should be so neglected, that men should be carefully instructed as to other matters, and left to learn as they may, what is sin and what is duty; what will secure the favour of God, and what his frown, is indeed strange. It is the more strange, because all men need this knowledge, and they all are susceptible of this acquisition. Moral truth contains its own evidence; as soon as it is clearly presented to the mind, it is perceived to be truth, and at once and for ever enlists conscience in its support. The moral law, moreover, comes not only in its own self-evidencing light, but with the authority of God. It is pronounced in the ear of conscience by that voice which alone conscience feels bound to obey. Its penalty (which is included in the very nature of law) is, therefore, viewed, not as a result probable from the operation of moral causes, but as fixed and inevitable from the purpose of Jehovah.

Obedience to this law is solicited, by motives addressed to every right principle of our nature ; to the dread of misery and degradation ; to the love of happiness and excellence ; to a sense of duty ; to gratitude and benevolence. These motives are not only diversified ; they are each the highest in its kind. The evil threatened is infinite ; the good promised is eternal ; the duty enjoined is obvious ; the appeal to gratitude, when apprehended, irresistible. If one died for all, then are all dead, that they which live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him that loved them, and gave himself for them. This is the peculiar and most powerful motive of the gospel. It is one of the principal means by which the doctrine of redemption operates on human character and conduct. Did the Bible contain no other doctrine, and present no other motive, it would embody more moral power than all other books besides. The Bible, then, sheds on the soul all the influences of heaven. Shall we shut these influences out ? Shall we carry our children out of their range, and place them under those perverting, blinding, and degrading influences which from all other sources act upon them ?

4. We have said the word of God should be employed in the education of the young, because it is truth, important truth, and truth of the most purifying moral tendency ; we now add, it is divinely authoritative truth, resting not on the deduction of reason, nor on the testimony of men, but the authority of God. The effect of this consideration is great and varied. Its influence on the mind of a child is in all respects favourable. It produces the habit of relying on the testimony of God, which is one of the highest acts of obedience of an intelligent creature, and the best preservative from that fatal spirit of scepticism, which destroys all peace of mind, and unsettles all principles of action ; which makes its victim the miserable creature of circumstances. It produces, therefore, a fixedness of character, by presenting a firm foundation for all our most important opinions. It confers the inestimable blessing of a settled faith, which is in no way so likely to be attained as by being brought up in habitual converse with a book recognised as of divine authority. By giving certainty to all the declarations of the Holy Scriptures, it adds immensely to their power. It is not a matter of conjecture that God is, and is what the Bible represents him ; that the soul is immortal and responsible ; that Christ died, the just for the unjust, to bring us unto God ; that the threatenings and promises of God are expressions of his purposes ; but these are settled truths in view of such a mind. It tends also to produce humility ; to destroy the spirit of self-dependence and self-confidence, so characteristic of those who walk each under the guidance of his own taper.

If the ingenuity of man had been permitted to decide on what would be the most desirable of all books by which to form the human character, it would probably have said, it should be one whose contents are true, important, of a good moral influence, and, if possible, of divine authority. These are the attributes of the Bible, and of

the Bible alone. If it is desirable that such a book should exert an influence at all on men, it is self-evident that it should be brought to bear on the mind in its earliest years. Then, opinions are adopted, habits formed, feelings moulded, principles fixed. If all this is done under evil influence, the evil and injury can never be entirely remedied. On this subject, however, there can scarcely be any diversity of opinion. We must all admit that it is desirable to have our children brought up under the influence of the Bible. The question is, how is this to be accomplished? It is not very easy, in a country like ours, to answer this question. It is probable that no one plan will ever be proposed adapted to the purpose, but we shall have to avail ourselves of various methods, according to the peculiar circumstances of different sections of the country. The object, however, should be constantly kept in view, and frequently presented in its magnitude and importance. It should be the definite purpose of every Christian and philanthropist to do all he can to have every child in the land, every child in Christendom, and every child in the world, made acquainted with the word of God. This is the great result. For this end, every Christian parent should see that adequate provision is made in reference to his own children. But as the number of parents who have leisure and inclination to attend to this subject is very small, if left to be accomplished in this way it will never be done. Ministers of the gospel have a larger field, and a higher responsibility. I presume not to say how the duty must be performed; but that every pastor of a flock is bound to see that every child within his charge is taught the Holy Scriptures, will hardly be denied. He may do this through the instrumentality of personal instructions, or by Bible classes, and Sunday-schools. In whatever way, it is evidently one of the most imperious of his duties, that the thing should be done.

There are, however, so many who do not stand in relation to any particular congregation, that a large portion of the children of the country will grow up ignorant of the word of God, if nothing more than pastoral instruction be resorted to. This has, hitherto, been the main reliance of the Christian Church: the melancholy results we everywhere discover. It is probable, not more than one-half, perhaps not a fourth, of the inhabitants of Christendom, or even of this country, are regular attendants on public worship; that the children even of this portion are very imperfectly instructed in religion, whilst those of the remainder, on this plan, are left, and have been left, almost entirely unprovided for. Relying on parental or pastoral instruction, the church has permitted the great majority of the children born in Christian lands to grow up ignorant of the contents, and emancipated from the influence of the word of God. This, which after all is the most crying evil of the Christian world, can, we doubt not, by steady and wise efforts, under the blessing of God, be corrected. In a Christian community there is such a general respect for the Scriptures, that the cases are comparatively rare

in which any serious opposition would be made to their introduction, as a regular subject of study in the common schools: not merely to be read, but to be studied as they now are in our Sabbath-schools. Let any one imagine what would be the influence on the population of this country, if one hour a day should, in all the common schools of the land, be devoted to this purpose. What an amount of Christian knowledge would be communicated, and what a healthful moral influence would be exerted. Every child who is taught to read would be taught to know God, and Jesus Christ; the rule of duty, and the plan of salvation. As there is nothing wrong in this plan, as it contemplates no evil, as it is adapted to do immense good, we have little doubt it would soon enlist the support of the community in its behalf. As the parents of the children make choice of the teacher, there seems to be no room for the misgivings of sectarian feelings.

In our higher schools the same plan should be continued: if children learn history, let them include the history of the Bible; if they learn geography, let them study the geography of the Bible. Is it not preposterous, making the professions which we do, that we allow our sons and daughters to be taught the history and geography of profane antiquity, but make no provision for what we acknowledge to be of far greater importance. In classical institutions a regular exercise on the Holy Scriptures, in the original, might be introduced with equal advantage. And in our colleges, the study of the Bible is already, to a certain extent, attended to, and, as far as we know, without exciting in any quarter the least objection.

Though these, and other means may, and we think ought, to be adopted, to secure the grand object of raising up a generation of scripturally educated youth, yet the main reliance seems to be placed at present on the system of Sabbath-school instruction. A system peculiarly adapted to the wants and circumstances of the country, and which has already been crowned with the most encouraging success. The managers of the American Sunday-school will be able to report 500,000 children every week brought under the influence of divine truth, instructed by 80,000 teachers. It is the very object of this institution to do what has so long and so lamentably been neglected: to bring the light of divine truth to bear upon the opening minds of children. The work, however, is far from being accomplished: a large proportion of the children, even of this country, are still left to grow up, in a great measure, ignorant of God, and of the Scriptures. And when we look to other and less favoured lands, the prospect is appalling. We should, therefore, contemplate the reasons which demand renewed exertion to promote biblical instruction.

1st. Its influence on individual character and happiness. If the remarks we have already made, as to the necessity of moral culture to the right exercise of conscience and the proper formation of moral principles, be correct, it is evident that the only possible way in

which virtue can be maintained is by knowledge. And knowledge, not of speculative truth, which imparts no light, and exerts no influence over the moral sense, but such knowledge as the Holy Scriptures alone contain—the knowledge of God, of the moral law, of the plan of salvation, and the retributions of eternity. Such is the universality and power of the corrupt passions of our nature, that no external force can restrain their exercise. The power must be the moral power of truth, and the Spirit of God. Such, too, is the sluggishness of all good feelings, that no excitements other than those which flow from the Scriptures, are adequate to call them into exercise. The effect on the individual of the knowledge of the Scriptures is to expand his mind, to purify and restrain his moral feelings, to raise him in the scale of intellectual and moral being. Go into the abodes of ignorance; contrast the state of the immortal minds there presented, with that of those on whom the word of God has exerted its appropriate influence. How vast the difference between spirits of the same nature and of the same powers. The benefit, however, is not confined to this general elevation and improvement. It is the best possible preparation for the saving reception of the Gospel. This is a fact which rests on long-continued and often-repeated experience. The power and success of the Gospel in the ordinary course of God's dispensations (which is to guide our conduct), are uniformly, where other things are equal, in exact proportion to the attention bestowed on the religious instruction of the young. It is from the class of scripturally educated youth that the church receives her largest and most valuable accessions. It is in those districts, countries, and ages, in which children are best instructed, that true religion most prevails. If this were not the case, it would be an anomaly in God's government; it would destroy all incentive to duty, which he has enjoined, to bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; it would be falsifying the declaration of his own word, as to the general result of moral culture, and dissolving the connexion which he has established, in the moral as well as the natural world, between causes and their appropriate effects. Of all the advantages which one man can bestow upon another, none can be compared with securing for him an education under the influence of the Bible. Of all the injuries which one man can entail on others, the greatest is to shut out from them the light of truth; to allow them to grow up far from the influence of the word of God. Let your minds rest upon this point. Let the conviction fasten itself upon you, that you can in no way do so much good, in no way more effectually promote the salvation of your fellow-men, than by educating them by the Bible. He who feeds and clothes the body does well, but he who furnishes the soul with the aliment of truth, and the habiliments of righteousness, does infinitely better. We are bound, therefore, in view of the value of the human soul, considered as an intellectual, moral, and immortal being,

to do all we can to bring the truth of God to bear on the forming stage of its existence.

2d. Influence on society. The soul of man is not formed to commence and run its everlasting career between high walls; neither influencing others, nor receiving impressions from them. No individual is thus isolated. He acts, and is acted upon, in ten thousand ways; and the character of society is the result of this reciprocal influence of its members. The only way in which we can promote the virtue and happiness of the community, is by operating on the individuals of which it is composed. Every well-instructed and pious mind which we are instrumental in raising up, becomes a source of knowledge and healing influence to all around. Our own interests, and the interests of our children, and of the world, are deeply concerned in the increase of such morally educated men. On them, the order, purity, and happiness of society depend. In this country, where the majority of the people have in fact, and of right, all power in their hands, it is self-evident that our political existence depends on the moral character of the people. This is a sentiment on every man's lip, and should be in every man's heart. As the influence of free institutions, in elevating the intellectual character, and the social condition of the mass of the people, in developing their resources, and increasing their power of usefulness, is undeniable, it becomes a moral duty to ourselves, and to our country, and to the world, to do all we can to perpetuate them in the midst of us. We now stand forth the prototype of nations, imparting impulse and direction to their efforts. If we fail, and fail we must, unless our youth be made acquainted with the Scriptures, we shall be accountable for all the evil that failure must occasion.

The position of our country, however, is not only interesting, as it exhibits the first extended experiment of free institutions, but as here the church and religion are unencumbered, and left to sustain themselves, under God, upon their own moral power. We have not a doubt of the ultimate success of this trial. We would not for the world have it otherwise. If Christianity cannot live and thrive unsustained by the state, it is not of God. But how it shall live, and to what extent it shall flourish, God has wisely and mercifully made to depend on the fidelity of his people. It is through them he works in sustaining and advancing his cause. On us, therefore, rests the tremendous responsibility of carrying on this work. If we do not our duty, the cause cannot, according to God's appointment, prosper. And in no way can we so effectually subserve its interests, as in promoting the cause of biblical instruction.

The career which we are destined to run as a nation is lofty. From our relative position; from our extent of territory; from the character of the people; from the nature of our institutions; from the identity of our language; from the state of civilization—our influence among the nations, and on the world, must be unprecedentedly great. Shall it be for weal or woe? Shall it be to disseminate error

and vice, or truth and virtue? Shall it be to lead on the van in the moral conquest of the world, or shall it be to oppose the progress of its Redeemer, until we ourselves are cast off, and trodden under foot? The answer depends on the character of the young; and this, on the mode of their education, unless God means to convert the world by miracles.

We commend this subject to your hearts and efforts. We hold up the cause of Sunday-schools as intimately connected with that of religious education; as one of the main hopes of our country. We call on all who love the cause of the Redeemer, who desire the virtue and happiness of their fellow-men, and the salvation of their souls, to address themselves to this great work, in humble dependence upon God, and in the full assurance that their labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.—Amen.

ARTICLE VII.

EDUCATION IN THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

ADDRESS BY THE REV. DR. CANDLISH.*

On February 8th, 1846, a crowded meeting was held in Free St. Andrew's Church, Dundee, for the purpose of hearing an address from Dr. CANDLISH upon the Educational Scheme of the Free Church.

The MODERATOR briefly stated the object of the meeting.

Dr. CANDLISH then came forward. You have rightly stated, Sir, he said, that this is the beginning of a series of efforts, which we propose to make throughout the country, for the purpose of fulfilling the task imposed on us by the General Assembly,—namely, the giving of information in reference to the Educational plans of the Free Church, and endeavouring to awaken an interest in that cause. Allow me now, in introducing my subject to you, to make a brief reference to the past. Let me briefly review the way in which the Lord has led the Church hitherto, in order to show how clearly the Providence of God has shut us up to this educational movement.

I cast my eyes back along the period of my own ministry—a period of not more than twelve years—and I find in that brief period a succession of what may be called eras in the history of the Church of Scotland. When I began my ministry in that Church, she might be said to be in the position of a *reviving* or a *revived* Church. In

* This able and instructive Address from one of the most gifted men, whom God has raised up to bless the Free Church of Scotland, will command the attention of our readers. The introductory remarks are retained on account of their historical value. It will be seen that the Church of John Knox has not embraced the absurd dogma that education is exclusively a *Government* affair. The Free Church of Scotland has set up *religious* schools under *her own care*. Their number at present amounts to about 500, besides two Normal Schools, one at Edinburgh and one at Glasgow, and a College at Edinburgh.

the year to which I refer, the year 1833 or 1834, we might say that the Church was enjoying the benefit of that blessed revival which it pleased God to bestow upon this country about the beginning of the present century—I refer of course to the revival of Evangelical preaching, and the increase within the Church of Evangelical Ministers. During the last century the Church of Scotland had her full share of the blight which came over all the Churches of the Reformation in this land. She lapsed into deadness and formality, and the preaching of very many of her ministers was little better than a half-Christianized heathenism. But it pleased God, about the beginning of this century, to grant a revival of the evangelical spirit. The number of her evangelical ministers who faithfully preached the word and laboured for souls was greatly increased. So much so, that at the time to which I refer, they became the majority in her courts, and, instead of the days when there was only a comparatively small remnant who faithfully preached the doctrines of grace, we saw a majority of ministers, who, according to human judgment, preached faithfully the gospel of the grace of God. This, Sir, I call the reviving period or era of the Church, and to that succeeded the *second* era, viz., the *Reforming*. It followed from the principles which the evangelical ministers always held, that the moment they became the majority and obtained the management of the church's affairs, they should set themselves to carry out the work of reformation. And, accordingly, the first step which they took was to establish, so far as it was in their power to do, the rights of the Christian people. During this period the evangelical majority reformed many abuses in the Church. They restrained the exercise of patronage, they sought the settlement in parishes of pastors according to the mind of God. During this period, too, they rectified a great abuse,—namely, the separation which had been made of the pastoral work from the government of the Church, and they admitted all the ministers of the Church to seats in her courts: and during the same period the Church fully established her great missionary undertakings to the Jews and to the Gentiles. Well, this work of reformation was going on, but it pleased God that it should now give place to another work, which I might call the work of *Contending* or of *Testifying*. For as the reformation proceeded within the Church—as the great work went on and prospered—the enmity of the powers of this world was aroused, and an arrest was laid upon the Church's progress and amendment. And then the position of the Church was changed, and what I may call the era or period of *Testifying* or *Contending* began. During this period the Church was called to contend with the civil power in maintaining those privileges which Christ has conceded to his Church, and which we thought the civil government had also ratified in this land. That work also came to an end—the time of *Contending* came to a close, and the fourth period, the period of *Protesting* began. Having exonerated our consciences by all competent means, and maintained our privileges to the last, nothing re-

mained but to renounce our connexion with the civil government, and to depart from that alliance with the State which could be no longer maintained without sin. And God, blessed be his name, gave us grace to maintain our testimony, and, after our separation from the State, called us to be a Witnessing and testifying Church—witnessing for Christ, for the crown rights of the Redeemer, as supreme Lawgiver of his Church on earth, and against the encroachments made upon the constitution of the Church by the inroads of the civil power. But, blessed again be the name of our God, he did not leave us long, not even for a day, occupying the position of a mere testifying or witnessing Church—a position eminently fitted to engender spiritual pride and spiritual sloth; God in his providence brought us through that position, and made us not merely a witnessing but a *Working* Church. He gave us work to do, instant, immediate, which could not for a single day be postponed. He gave us from the commencement an adherence of the people of Scotland large beyond our most sanguine anticipations—he gave us all the missionaries to the Jews and to the Gentiles—he gave us many teachers, whom we were bound to support, and to our people he gave a spirit of liberality which made them ready to come forward to the help of the Lord. In these circumstances we had no time to pause. The Church was thrown at once into her new position, and called to labour diligently at whatsoever her hand found to do. And according to the grace with which God has blessed us, churches have been built, and ministers, so far as God has given them, have been planted in congregations. And now God in his providence is calling the Church to enter another era or period. Our work hitherto has been one of self-preservation, of self-provision. But now God has given our Church stability—in so far as any institution in these days can be called stable—God has given us stability in the land, and we are no longer to care merely for ourselves—we are called now to care for coming generations. This is precisely the era at which the Church of our Fathers has arrived. We have passed through the era of Revival, the era of Reformation, the era of Contending, the era of Testifying and of Protesting, the era of working merely for our own immediate subsistence, and now we are called to another period, viz., the period of consulting for the *permanence* of the Church in this land, and for her continuance to the generations yet to come. And on this plain principle, brought out by this brief review, I base my advocacy of the Educational Scheme of the Free Church of our Fathers.

Another remark which I shall make here in connexion with this review is, that it shows the time to be fully come for the Free Church to take up her present position in reference to education. It has been often felt by all who have been to any extent engaged in the recent strugglings and contendings, and workings of the Church—our minds and hearts, I say, have often been greatly relieved by the consideration, that at almost every step we were driven from our

own devices, and shut up without an alternative to the course which Providence indicated. I might relate many instances of what we aimed at not being realized—of our being shut up to a step from which we would most earnestly have shrunk. Often, yea, almost always, the thing we arrived at was not what we were aiming at, but something quite different, which God had appointed for us, and we were often shut in by God, in a position which we ourselves would never have chosen, but in which, as honest and conscientious men, we had no alternative. I might begin with the law against intrusion, and, passing through the various steps which the Church afterwards took, might make it plain that she was forced to take all these steps, and in the very order in which she took them. And, assuredly, the last step of all was a step from which we shrunk with alarm, which we sought by every expedient to avoid, which we would have tried any lawful scheme to avert. It was sheer compulsion of conscience alone which drove us forth from the Establishment. The same remark applies to the Educational Scheme which we are now taking up. Some friends may think, and I am not sure but that I agree with them, that we ought to have taken this scheme up in all the extent, and with all the vigour we now propose, at the moment we left the Establishment. But I do not regret the delay, for it only makes it more and more plain that in this matter we are following the dictates and leadings of Divine Providence. We did not make haste—and that is a remarkable fact which ought to be remembered—we did not make haste to send a flood of Free Church schoolmasters over the land. We thought at the Disruption we had enough to do in building churches and supporting ministers, and upholding the missionary schemes of the Church. We thought our hands were full enough, and the utmost which we contemplated then was to take up those Assembly teachers who were formerly supported by the Church, to continue to support them, and perhaps gradually and slowly to extend our educational apparatus. But God, in his holy and wise Providence, shut us in to another course. He put it into the hearts of the party from whom we had separated to place into our hands successive relays of teachers whom we could not refuse to support. The party first began to move in the parochial schools. They did it of their own accord. It was in no way our doing. Our parochial teachers did not volunteer to come out, and we did not ask them to come out. They felt that they could continue without a violation of duty, and we did not see that it was imperative upon them to retire, as it was upon us. But what did the other party do? They drove out every teacher who did not adhere to the Establishment, thus converting the parish schools into sectarian institutions, and laying an obligation upon every Free Church schoolmaster to come forth from his school. Thus an addition of about eighty was made to our list. But even this was not all.

[The Rev. Dr. then related similar proceedings in regard to the teachers of the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge. He next stated the number of teachers at

present in the employment of the Free Church at 410 or 420. He then referred to the allocation of the teachers, and read the following to show that teachers are supported by the Committee in those districts which most urgently require them—viz., Teachers in the Presbytery of Dingwall, 11; Tain, 15; Dornock, 13; Tongue, 5; Caithness, 20; Lochcarron, 8; Skye and Uist, 6. The Rev. Dr. then proceeded to plead the cause upon its own merits.]

My first remark is, that long before the Free Church was formed in its separation from the State, the discovery—the melancholy discovery—had been made, that Scotland, instead of being the educated country which it was supposed to be, was, in point of fact, but a half educated country, if so much. I might refer here to a pamphlet published some ten years ago by an excellent friend of mine, and one of the ministers of the gospel in this town—the Rev. Mr. Lewis, in which it was proved by well ascertained facts and indisputable statistics, that the boast of Scotland was then gone—even then—and that it was a great delusion to believe Scotland the best educated country in the world. Even then it was discovered that the state of education was very low—low in point of amount, still lower, if possible, in point of efficiency. It was proved then, by examples of teaching, that many of the teachers were far from being the men of high standing and education which every teacher of youth ought to be. If this was the case so far back, what must it be now? The population has been immensely increased since that time—in towns increased very much indeed, and in many country districts, entire new towns have sprung up. Well, what has been done? Why, not a single additional parish school has been erected, or scarcely one, and little has been done for increasing the Assembly's schools. So that even if we were in the position of recognising the education provided by the law, and provided by the Established Church as sufficient, so far as it goes, still there is ample scope and verge enough for the energies of the most living, and spiritual, and enthusiastic branch of Christ's Church.

But this is not all. I remark, *secondly*, that we are now in the position of having lost all confidence in the education provided by the State and by the Established Church. We are in the position, I say, of having no confidence in that education. I am not here to impeach that education as worthless. It is not my business to disparage that education. Let it be good so far as it goes. But be it ever so good, I say that upon the principle on which it is now conducted, it does not deserve, and it shall not have the confidence of the ministers and people of the Free Church. (Applause.) For the principle it proceeds upon is in plain terms—and let the country know it—the principle of sectarianism and proselytism. It is right the country should note this. It may be retorted upon us that our scheme also is sectarian, and seeks to train up the children in the principles which we hold. But it is one thing to determine what we ought to do, having the education of our youth in our own hands, and another and very different thing to decide the question whether we can avail ourselves of the education provided by

the State, or by another branch of the Church. All I say is, that the education provided by these bodies is not an education to which it is safe to leave the children of our communion. I say this upon the ground that these schools are on the footing of an intimate connexion with the Establishment, of whose principles we disapprove. That is all that it is necessary for me to maintain. I do not say how far the State may be to blame, or how far the Established Church may be to blame. I do not say how far a modification of the parish school system, by which these schools would be left open to our teachers, would be safe or prudent. I do not say how far it is the duty of the Establishment to furnish an education which should be open and free to us. I only say that in point of fact they have not done so. They have made it close and exclusive; and since they have made the education provided by the State and by the Established Church, an instrument to be wielded for the suppression of our principles, no man can find fault with us if we take our own measures to secure the right education of our own children, and the godly upbringing of our youth in our principles. (Applause.) We are doing no more than exercising the right of private judgment when we say that the education provided by these two bodies is not an education which we can trust, and that we feel compelled to provide an education of our own.

But this is not all. I remark in the *third* place, and it is the most emphatic of all arguments, that God has put into the hands of the Free Church an opportunity for accomplishing a great and blessed work. Never, I venture to say, has he given to any church an opportunity such as he has now given us of conferring a glorious boon upon our native land. Sir, we are now in circumstances to carry out the glorious, the wise, the sagacious scheme of our reforming ancestors. We are now in circumstances to provide for the people of this land—for all, that is, who wish to have it—we are in circumstances to provide them, not with such an education as we might tolerate, but with an education which we can thoroughly recommend, as in accordance, so far as our judgment goes, with the Word of the living God. We are not called upon to consider the question, How far we can do with such and such a scheme of education? If a scheme were offered to us by a third party, we might have to consider how far we should be able to tolerate it. But we are now in circumstances to command the optimism of education—to realize and carry out not a tolerable scheme, but the very best scheme which the light of experience, and of recent experiment enables us, by the blessing of God, to devise; and surely when we are thus honoured by God, it is not for us to hesitate.

I remark, *fourthly*, that the permanence as well as the prosperity of the Church depends upon this scheme. We have no time and no room for hesitation. How stands the matter? The present generation has been honoured to contend for the principles of their fathers. But that generation will soon pass away; we and our

compeers will soon be mouldering in the silent tomb. Another generation will arise "which know not Joseph," another people will dwell in this land to whom the tidings of the Disruption will be as tidings from a far country. And in what position will that generation be? We know that the hopes of the Establishment and its supporters are built upon the next generation. They have given up the hope of reclaiming the adult population. They confess that the present generation is gone, but they look to our children, and say, "Wait till these children grow up and mingle with our children at our schools, and attend the teachers of our week-day and Sabbath schools, and forget the Disruption and all its events, and become familiar with the Establishment, they will become ashamed to be stigmatized as Dissenters, and will be glad to return to the bosom of the old and venerated Church of their fathers." (Laughter.) Such is their language, and such their hope. They have notoriously given up the present generation, but they look to the influence of those motives upon our children,—and are not these motives which do influence children? Do we not see enough of it around us? Do not we see it among the English Dissenters? For often when a young Dissenter grows up and gets introduced to Churchmen, and gets accustomed to the pomp and ceremony of their worship, he becomes ashamed to be stigmatized as a Dissenter, he grows enamoured of the fashionable religion, and thus he is led back to the Establishment. And no wonder, Sir, that it is so, for the Dissenters of England have left their children uneducated. It was the fatal fault of the Dissenters of England that they did not provide for the education of their youth—that they did not set up schools, and grammar schools, and colleges in abundance, and that they did not stamp with sufficient respectability and eminence those they had. If, when they were driven out by the act of the infamous St. Bartholomew's day, these noble Nonconformists had set themselves to consult for the coming generations—if they had given to every parish a school, and to every considerable town a college,—if they had offered to England an education of the highest order, based on sound and spiritual principles—if they had established seminaries which should vie even with Cambridge and Oxford themselves—and why not, Sir?—what was to hinder these noble Nonconformists from establishing seminaries, in whose presence the glory of even these famous institutions should have paled? But they omitted to do this. They suffered the opportunity to slip, and what has been the result? Their cause has suffered grievously from this circumstance, and many of their children have been seduced into conformity with the Establishment. Now, Sir, with God's help, we are prepared to avert such a calamity from this Church and this country. We are prepared to establish a system of education so elevated in point of intellect, and so thoroughly efficient, that it shall be deemed a pride and an honour for a young man to have received a Free Church education—(applause)—a system of education which shall enable a young man to take his

stand alongside the Senior Wranglers of the English Universities, and the optimates of the Colleges of Scotland.

These, Sir, being the principles upon which this scheme rests, I proceed next to explain its practical workings. And here there are two things to be attended to. The first may be indicated by a term which has become familiar to us from its use by our venerable father Dr. Chalmers—I mean the optimism of the scheme; the second its practice. The first is what we are ultimately to aim at, the second what we are to seek immediately to obtain. It is good for a man to have a high ideal, to set before him a good model. It is poor and mean for a man to set out with a low aim. In the Christian course it is ruinous to aim at low things—we must have a high model of conduct to imitate. It is a poor and a miserable thing for a Church to have a low ideal; therefore, we pitch high—our ambition is great.

Let me speak, *first*, of the extent of the education which we wish to provide. As to this, I do not wish to say very great things, lest in the end we be found guilty of boasting. We aim, then, at providing for the children of our own communion an education such as we can thoroughly commend. And when I speak of the children of our own communion, I mean not only the children who are actually in our own congregations—they are perhaps safe enough at any rate, but the children also of all the people whom we seek to superintend and influence, and whom we seek to draw to our churches and Sabbath-schools. And here, if any man ask me why we limit our scheme to these, I beg in the mean time to decline answering that question. Our undertaking is wide enough for the present. Let us first accomplish this great object before attempting more. We are not nearly within sight of it yet. We have, as I have told you, 410 teachers, or thereabouts, but you know the congregations in the Free Church are somewhere between seven and eight hundred, and there are about a hundred preaching stations nearly ripe to be recognised as ministerial charges. This is, therefore, not more than half the ratio of one school to every Free Church congregation, and surely that is the very least and lowest which we could contemplate. But this would not be enough even for the children of the Free Church. In many parishes where there is a great extent of ground and a widely-scattered population, several schools must be provided. Now, to accomplish this, we would need the present number of teachers to be tripled or quadrupled, so there is ample room and verge enough for our labours in the mean time, and after we succeed here, by the help of God, and the liberality of the people of Scotland, we shall consider what is next to be done. Meantime, such is the *extent* of our plan.

As to the *kind of teaching* which we mean to provide, let me advert to the highest qualification of a teacher of youth—a qualification which can be secured only by the outpouring of the Spirit of

God—a qualification, however, which it is our bounden duty to aim at, and to pray for—I refer to *personal piety*. I am aware of the difficulty of touching upon this topic. I am aware that it is difficult to ascertain the presence of personal piety, or true and living spirituality, in a man's soul. But it is not difficult to lay down a general principle, upon which, so far as human infirmity permits, men are to act. I believe, then, the principle of our scheme to be substantially this:—That the teachers of youth should be as decidedly spiritual men as the ministers of the gospel themselves. (Applause.) To this qualification little attention has been hitherto paid. But there is one circumstance which is most encouraging to us. The teachers we now have are—I do not say all spiritual men, for many of them were chosen before the Disruption, without any consideration being given to this qualification, and many of them appointed since without sufficient reference to their possession of spirituality. But I say that the existing teachers of the Free Church of Scotland have been weeded and made to pass through an ordeal of conscience, and we have now in our employment the men and the women, the male and the female teachers, who have been subjected to a test, and who have been enabled to stand that test. I do not say that this secures their spirituality. I do not say that it proves the spirituality of a minister that he came out at the Disruption. But I say it is a fair argument in point of fact, that the Free Church of Scotland has for ministers men who, one with the other, have undergone an ordeal and passed through a probation—an ordeal and a probation, infinitely a better test of principle than any examination which the wit or wisdom of man can devise. (Applause.) It forms a fair presumption that the Free Church did start with a number of spiritual pastors above the ordinary average, because she started with a body of men who had been weeded by a process of separation, and made to pass through the testing ordeal of a case of conscience. I am far, Sir, from saying these things in a spirit of boasting. God forbid that I should. I speak them in a spirit of deep humiliation. They do not give us any ground for boasting. No; but they lay the ministry and the people of the Free Church under a responsibility enhanced a hundred, aye, a thousand fold. If it be true that God gave us a body of ministers sifted and tried, and therefore, presumably, upon the whole, more spiritual than falls to the lot of churches in ordinary circumstances, then will not that render the judgment of God upon this Church a hundred-fold more severe, if, by our negligence or unfaithfulness, or by our restraining prayer to the Lord of the harvest, we should ever suffer a race of men to come into possession of our pulpits who are cold, and lifeless, and dead? The same remark applies to our teachers. At the start of our schools we have this security, that our teachers are a body of men who have stood a test of principle. And we desire to stand pledged before God to aim at obtaining spiritual men as our teachers.

O, Sir, a great delusion has gone abroad upon this subject, and it

has been thought that we could so fence the teaching in our schools—that we could so lay down rules—could so enforce the reading of the Word and prayer—that it did not matter what the teacher was. A delusion has gone abroad that our children were safe in these schools because there was a rule that the Bible should be read in them—that they should be opened and closed with prayer, and that the Catechism should be taught. Do I undervalue these securities, Sir? God forbid. I prize them as fences, but as nothing more. Of what avail is it that your children are fenced in with prayer and reading the Bible and the Catechism, if the pasture into which they are fenced is without the blessing of God, and if the shepherd who feeds them is a shepherd who will kill their souls? Sir, I trust we will start with the conviction that the excellence of a school lies in the school-master. Rules are nothing—the man is everything. Tell me what the man is.—Is he a man of God, a man of prayer, a man who makes the welfare of his pupils the subject of daily supplication at the throne of grace? Tell me, is your school-master such a man, and I do not care what the rules may be; I place my child without hesitation under such a man. I wish it, then, to be distinctly understood, that, from first to last—in training up our teachers, in putting them to the Normal School, in licensing them, and in getting them appointed to schools, so far as our judgment goes, personal piety will be an indispensable requisite. And I may remind you that it is not human wisdom which avails us here, but, in so far as the instrumentality of man goes, human prayer. We depend upon the prayers of God's people. We know that many make it a business to pray for spiritual pastors; we urge them to pray also for spiritual teachers. Many recognise a duty in the former, but neglect it in the latter. Many pray for us, and for a blessing on our instructions, but few pray for the teachers of their own children, that God would send among the lambs of the flock a shepherd after his own heart.

Our second object is to make the *profession of teacher thoroughly respectable, thoroughly honourable*. Our first business is to see that the teacher is personally a spiritual man; our next to make his profession respectable and honourable. And I remark that the two objects are more closely connected than a superficial observer would think. So long as the teaching of youth is made a by-job—a business which any man not fit for anything else can take up—you have no right to expect the blessing of God upon the work, or to expect that men of high respectability and liberal attainments will engage in the work. It is a great matter to raise the status of the teacher's profession. I rejoice at the sentiment recently propounded in high places upon this subject—I rejoice at the voice given forth by Lord John Russell upon the degraded position which teachers generally occupy, and the high position to which they ought to be elevated. But I advocate it not for the reasons which he has stated. I advocate it because it is an important step towards the securing of

a thorough system of education. In the first place, it is a discharge of your duty, and, in the second place, it raises the teacher more beyond the reach of temptation, and to a level with those with whom he ought to associate as an educated Christian man. You have no right to expect God's blessing upon the teaching of your children, unless you do your duty in supporting liberally, as he ought to be supported, the man who undertakes the arduous and responsible task. On the other hand, by raising the teacher far above the sordid cares of poverty, you elevate his thoughts, enhance his respectability, and enable him to associate with those who can support and encourage him in the things which belong to his peace. It is our intention, then, to aim at providing liberal salaries for our teachers. For the present year our scale is £.20, £.30, and £.45, to be determined according to certain rules. This is a considerable advance upon past years, but it is still far short of what we desire. I trust none will go away with the notion that this is a scheme for the mere aggrandisement of teachers, and that to increase their comforts is to make them more indolent. A notion is abroad that it is better the teachers should be left to depend altogether upon the fees—that if you give them a salary you diminish their motive to exertion. There is something in this notion, but it must not be carried too far. It would not be proper to give teachers such an amount of salary as would pamper sloth and indolence. But it is proper to give them such an amount as will lift them out of despair and give them hope and energy. Tell a man that he has nothing to depend on but a wretched pittance wrung from the parents of a few poor children, and you sink him in despair. But give him something additional to depend upon, and you animate hope and stimulate all his energies.

As in the first place, we propose to seek spiritual men for our teachers, and, as in the second place, we propose to make the profession honourable; so in the third place, we shall aim at making *the preparation* for that profession *thorough and efficient*. To propose to raise the salaries of teachers without increasing their qualifications, would be liable to grave objections. But, at the same time that we propose to make the profession more honourable, we propose to make the preparation for the profession thoroughly efficient. In order to accomplish this, we intend not only to keep up Normal Schools, but also to establish grammar and model schools in different parts of the country, at which young men will be brought forward in their profession, and we hope in this way soon to obtain a body of men who shall be able to pass a most searching examination and be licensed as men are licensed for preachers, out of whom the congregations of the Church may choose their teacher. I feel that this part of the scheme must be commended to the good sense and good feeling of the people. We are at a disadvantage here. The people are asked to contribute increased salaries to the teachers, and they see teachers of a comparatively low grade—they see a man who has

become a teacher at random, who has gone through no preliminary education and passed no trial, who has become as it were a teacher at his own hand—and they say that for such a man the support given at present is good enough. But we hope to see soon the commencement of a better order of things. We hope to turn out a body of men highly qualified for their work, highly educated and trained in the art of teaching; and when we present the country with a specimen of the class, we hope to receive a cordial support. But we cannot wait for that. We must have support on faith. You must allow us to try for a year or two, and see how far we will be able to realize our plan, and turn out a superior order of teachers. Give us your confidence, and I venture to say we will not betray it. And it is our object to secure not only a thorough training for our teachers before they enter upon their duties, but also to secure a stimulus after they have entered. We have taken a leaf out of the book of a body which has done great good in Scotland—I mean the Trustees of the Dick Bequest. That bequest is a legacy for increasing the salaries of teachers in certain shires; and it is managed, and admirably managed, too, by a committee.

[The Rev. Dr. here explained the rule by which salaries are to be granted to teachers. Before being licensed, all teachers are to be examined, and according to a man's qualifications he is to be entitled to the first, second, or third rate of salary. Still farther, periodical examinations are afterwards to be held, at which a teacher who was originally placed in the first or second class will be advanced according to the attainments which he has made during the interval. "So that no man will be unfairly dealt with, but the highest salary which the profession allows will be open to all." After remarking that he had now about exhausted all that he considered it necessary to say, and briefly recapitulating the points upon which he had touched, Dr. C. proceeded.]

I have a sanguine hope, Sir, that the people of Scotland will not consider the scheme which I have now explained unworthy of their confidence. Without boasting, I take leave to think that it would have received the approbation of the Reforming fathers of our Church, and that it is not unworthy the approbation of their children. And I now call upon parents, upon presbyteries, upon ministers, to look out promising and suitable youth to fill the office of teacher in the Free Church. I call upon parents, presbyteries, and ministers, to look out men of personal piety. Let them be sure that the young man whom they wish to train for the office is—so far as human judgment can go—under the influence of the Spirit of God. I call upon them to look out young men of talent for this work. Let them tell young men of high intellectual attainments that the office of teacher is no longer beneath them in point of respectability. Let them tell these generous youths, that it is the thorough determination of the ministers of the Free Church to make the teachers fellow-workmen and associates with themselves; that if it is their ambition to serve God in the gospel of his Son, they need not aspire to the occupation of a pulpit, but may be honourably employed in the teacher's desk, and no longer be separated by the line which has separated them before from the minister, and rendered the ministerial

office the object of their envy; and that they will find the ministers of the Free Church determined to receive the teachers as men, respectable and honourable as themselves, and to hold them, out and out, as fellow-workers in the Lord's cause. On our female friends we also call, for they can lend us valuable help. We do not consider our institutions complete unless they have an industrial as well as a scholastic department; that is, a department for teaching to work as well as to read and write. We would desire to have female teachers in all our schools, and we consider them entitled to a liberal support. We have many already enrolled in our cause, and we long for more, we ask for more. And I shall only say that if the first duty which the Free Church was called to discharge, was the duty of providing the ministry of gospel ordinances for her people, the second is that which she is now setting about, viz., the godly upbringing and careful training of the young in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

ARTICLE VIII.

ON EVANGELIZING A COURSE OF LIBERAL
EDUCATION.

BY THE REV. DR. ASHBEL GREEN.*

DEEPLY sensible, as the writer is, that no attainment in science can ever compensate for the loss, or the lasting injury of moral principle and purity, still he is not prepared to go the length of those, who would proscribe the reading of the ancient classic authors, in a course of liberal education. Without the careful reading of these authors, it is in vain to expect that classical literature will ever be fully acquired; and it is this literature which furnishes, at once, the best basis for the superstructure of all liberal knowledge, and the key by which many of the apartments must be unlocked, in which some of its richest treasures are lodged. Reasons of the most conclusive kind are necessary, to justify the rejection or disuse of the means, by which such advantages are to be acquired. Reasons of this character the writer has never yet heard alleged. The objection which is commonly taken from the heathen mythology, has with him little weight. He rather believes that a full acquaintance with that mythology, is not calculated to impress the youthful mind with any sentiments in its favour; but, on the contrary, to show impressively the sottishness of idolatry, and the infinite importance and value of divine revelation. Some passages of gross impurity are

* These brief hints are taken from the Appendix to Green's Discourses, published in 1822. No man contributed more to evangelize a course of liberal education than Dr. Green, when he was President of Princeton College. In his latter days, he approved of the aims of the Church, in providing for the more thorough inculcation of religious truth in her institutions of learning.—Ed.

very properly omitted in the best editions of the ancient classics which are intended for youth ; and other omissions may be made, at the discretion of a judicious teacher.

The mischief chiefly to be apprehended from a familiarity with these writings is believed to be the very same which may be produced, and often is produced, by reading many publications of literary merit, in our own language.—The reader is in danger of imbibing the sentiments and spirit of the authors that he frequently peruses and greatly admires. From this cause, probably, it has not seldom happened, that an immoderate thirst of fame has been contracted ; that the heroic military character, with all its vices and vileness, has been approved and emulated ; that the principles of pride, of resentment and revenge, or worldly honour and unbounded ambition, have been implanted and strongly radicated ; that licentious pleasures and indulgences have no longer been esteemed criminal, but have come to be regarded and sought, as the proper appendages of a fashionable character and an aspiring mind ; in a word that a system of views and opinions has been acquired and cherished, directly and malignantly hostile to the entire spirit, principles, and doctrines of the Gospel. Here, it is believed, is the real danger ; and a danger it certainly is, of a very serious and alarming character. The inquiry is, how shall it be avoided or counteracted ? Can it be avoided by always keeping youth, whose business it is to read and extend their knowledge, from perusing those writings from which the danger arises ? Nay, if it be, as it certainly is, from educated men that we are to expect the correction of error and vice, how, it may be asked, can they be qualified to administer this correction, without some accurate knowledge of the sources and nature of the errors and vices which prevail ? Ought not even a candidate for the Gospel ministry to be well acquainted with the heathen mythology, and with the spirit and opinions of the heathen writers generally ? It will not be fair to say, that the answer which the writer plainly intends should be given to these questions, will go to justify the perusal of all the books of uncleanness, or of blasphemy, to which a scholar may gain access. Such compositions, at least among us, must be *searched after*, or they will not be found. The authors and publishers of such works ought to receive the heaviest punishment due to the corruptors of society ; and the youth who seeks for them, manifests a disposition to vice and a strength of depravity, which call for the most rigorous restraint and discipline. The reading from which the writer believes that studious youth cannot, and ought not to be precluded, is that which has literary taste and reputation on its side, and without which the weapons of virtue themselves cannot be wielded to the greatest advantage. It is that which the scholar who should attempt to avoid, must not merely shun the ancient classics, he “*must needs go out of the world*”—

“*Est modus in rebus ; sunt certi denique fines,
Quos ultra, citraque nequit consistere rectum.*”

If, then, it is no longer worth while to inquire whether it would not be better if a youth should never see a book of the kind contemplated, since the thing is impossible—the only remaining inquiry is, whether he would not better meet his danger under the guidance and protection of a discreet and pious leader, than be left to encounter it afterwards, by himself. The writer thinks that it ought to be a part of his education, to show him his danger distinctly, and to teach him how to escape it; and he believes that the most effectual way to accomplish this, is to mingle the study of the Bible with the study of the Greek and Roman classics.

If, indeed, scholarship alone were in question, why should not the oldest, and in every view the best book in the world, be studied, in a course of liberal education? Why should not the antiquities—the manners and customs, the history and poetry, of the Hebrews, as well as those of the Greeks and Romans, be considered as an important attainment for every scholar? Why should he not be made acquainted with the source from which many of the laws and usages, as well as the whole religion of his country, have been derived? Will he always acquire a sufficient knowledge of the Sacred Scriptures in his domestic education, or by a perusal of them as a matter of his own choice? Alas! it is a fact equally notorious and shameful, that men of liberal education are sometimes more ignorant of the Bible, than of almost any other book of reputation.

As a corrective of the erroneous principles, not only of the Greek and Roman writers, but of many in our own, and perhaps in every modern language, the study of the Holy Scriptures is important beyond estimation. They afford a pure and perfect standard—the only one which exists—of moral principle and action. If the youthful mind be thoroughly imbued with the doctrines which they teach, and be rationally convinced—as it may, even without practical piety, be convinced, of the unspeakable superiority of the revealed system to everything which is hostile to it in the productions of uninspired men, the best possible security will be provided against the danger in contemplation. Nay, we may safely go farther and affirm, that the very reading which otherwise might have been pernicious, will now, probably, become in a high degree useful. It may not only be the source of much valuable information and improvement, which every scholar ought to possess, but may serve strikingly to demonstrate the necessity of a divine revelation, by showing into what monstrous absurdities and errors the human mind has always been betrayed, on the subject of religion and morals, when left to its own unaided efforts; and how men of the most powerful intellect are sure to mistake, and to mislead others, whenever they are ignorant, or forgetful, or regardless of this unerring guide.

If during the whole period of a classical education, those parts of the Christian Sabbath which are not occupied in public worship, and in other exercises proper to the day of sacred rest, should be employed in the study of the sacred writings, as much knowledge of them would be obtained as would be amply sufficient for all the pur-

poses to which the writer has here supposed that the knowledge of them should be applied; provided only that the application be immediately, and assiduously, and discretely made, by the teachers of youth. Let the teacher remark to his pupils, in the most engaging and impressive manner he can devise, on all the erroneous principles and sentiments which occur in classical reading. Let him show their unreasonableness and their evil tendency; let him point out their contrariety and their inferiority to the holy doctrines and precepts, and to the faultless morality of divine revelation. When the Scriptures are recited, let obscurities and difficulties be explained, and the lessons of practical instruction, derivable from the particular portion before the student, be clearly educed and affectionately inculcated. Let the peculiar doctrines of the New Testament be often stated, and its pure, and meek, and gentle, and forgiving, and patient, and benevolent spirit, be set in contrast with the direct opposites of such a spirit, as exemplified and recommended in other compositions. Let the perfect character of the Redeemer of the world be often exhibited and dwelt on; and let the example of the holy apostles and other eminent saints, as recorded in the sacred writings, be recommended to the attention and imitation of the young. Let this be done with fidelity and perseverance, and it is believed that not only will the reading of the ancient classics be without injury, but that the most effectual means will be used to neutralize all the deleterious matter which liberally-educated youth will meet with in the various books which they may and ought to peruse. A seed of divine truth will, moreover, be implanted in their minds, which, in some season of seriousness, and under the life-giving influence of the Spirit of all grace, may spring up, and bring forth fruit unto life everlasting. That the plan here recommended will require patient and laborious efforts to carry it into effect, is admitted; but the object sought is surely worth all the pains and endeavours which are necessary to obtain it.

In what the writer has here said on the study of the Holy Scriptures, he has not been proposing a mere speculation, or an untried and uncertain theory. He has stated what he has, for himself, made a matter of experiment; the good effects of which he has seen, and in which he hopes to rejoice in the most solemn crisis of his existence. He here bears his testimony to the practical efficacy and manifest utility of this plan, of mingling the study of the Sacred Scriptures with all the other studies of a literary institution. And with the utmost deference, he earnestly recommends the serious consideration of it, to all who have the sacred charge of directing the reading and forming the minds of youth. Among the means which are used to evangelize the world, it is his belief that one of the most powerful would be, to **EVANGELIZE THE COURSE OF A LIBERAL EDUCATION**; and he hopes the day is approaching when this will be generally seen; when the salt of revealed truth shall so heal the fountains of science, that all the streams which issue from them "shall make glad the city of God."

ARTICLE IX.

ADDRESS TO CHRISTIAN TEACHERS ON AN INCREASE
IN THE NUMBER OF GOSPEL MINISTERS.

BY THE REV. JAMES W. ALEXANDER, D.D.*

FROM every side the complaint is heard, that the existing ministry is insufficient to meet the demand of the times. The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few. The country is large, and perpetually increasing; the population of the old states is augmented in a fearful ratio; and new states and territories are opening their resources, in all the mighty West, and even beyond the Rocky Mountains, and the Sierra Nevada. The simple but alarming truth is, that the ministers now in the field are altogether unequal to the present necessity; and the rate of increase is such as gives little hope of future supply. Without attempting any colours of rhetoric, our statement is laid before you, that we must have more ministers of the gospel, or our cause must go backward.

This undeniable posture of our affairs would be less formidable, if large numbers of our young men were seen to be seeking the ministry. Such however is not the case. Without undertaking to account for it, the fact stares us in the face, that the Church cannot procure as many suitable candidates as she stands ready to support and educate. There are colleges in which, among hundreds, not one is known to be looking to the sacred office in our communion. Young men of promise are aspiring to other professions in great numbers, including many who make public acknowledgment of their faith in Christ. Sons of the church, descended from godly parents, baptized in their infancy, and dedicated to God, are preferring worldly callings, instead of coming up "to the help of the Lord against the mighty." From among the world, a smaller proportion than in some former years is brought into the ranks of holy warfare. This unvarnished statement of uncontrovertible facts gives unfavourable augury for the times that are coming.

While this aspect of our affairs ought to arouse every pious heart to labour and pray for the outpouring of the Spirit, and the widespread revival of religion in general, it ought also to lead us to renewed exertions in particular. No means should be left untried to increase the number of our ministers. No class of persons is exempt from this obligation, which weighs with special force on ministers, elders, and parents. But to what class can we turn with more lively hope than to those who are engaged in the instruction of youth? In their hands, and that by thousands, are the very persons from whom the levy must be made for the recruiting of our wasted forces. To teachers, then, of every class, who love the Lord

* This article was written by Dr. J. W. Alexander, at the request of the Board of Education, and is stereotyped and published in a Tract form for general distribution. It may be had gratuitously on application.

Jesus, and more particularly to those who are attached to our own doctrines and order, we address this familiar but earnest plea.

You are engaged, beloved brethren, in an arduous and responsible work, which tries your gifts and your patience, and which too often meets but poor requital in any worldly sense. Our main end would be gained, if we could engage your assent to the principle, that in all these toils and self-denials you should regard yourselves as labouring primarily and directly for the Lord Jesus Christ. This would almost insure the increased ministry which we need. If every instructor were urging forward his daily efforts with this intention, our point would already be gained. It is the absence in many of this high Christian motive which results in the present sterility of our schools, hundreds of which may be visited before you encounter one youth who is sighing for the work of the Lord. This ought not to be the case in a Protestant land, where the great Reformation principle should be universally prevalent, that schools are the nurseries of the Church. And it will not be the case, in a day when teachers awake to a sense of their accountability and their privilege, and employ the means which are abundantly placed in their hands. For as there is obviously no class of persons who have the youth of this generation so fully under their moulding influence, so there is none so happily situated for educating talent and instilling principle, and holding up motive, and fostering desire with regard to the ministerial work. Within certain limits, the character of teachers will determine the character of children; in other words, the character of the next generation. If Christian preceptors never suggest the importance of this work, and never foster the gifts which it demands, it is no marvel if thousands of youth pass through schools and colleges with purely secular aims and plans, and if the ministry be to a certain extent deserted.

Let this preliminary topic be seriously laid to heart by Christian teachers. Open your minds, respected brethren, to the expostulation of love. Submit your daily routine of action, and your ruling principles as instructors, to a faithful scrutiny. Observe how far you pursue your calling with an eye to Christ's cause and to the great award. You have professedly made an unreserved surrender of your all to the Lord Jesus Christ. You will not for a moment claim to exempt your chosen employment from this dedication. The honourable business of your lives is undertaken in subservience to the kingdom of God; and you own the obligation of making all your acts tend to the promotion of the gospel work. You are not your own, but are bought with a price. In other words, you are to regard yourselves in all the business of instruction as teaching for Christ. Let this find its place among your governing maxims, and our argument has a fulcrum which cannot be shaken.

From what has preceded, it is but a step to the further consideration, that *Christian teachers have a great work before them, in giving increase to the number of our ministers.* You have seen the neces-

sity for such increase; we pray you to consider your own possible agency in supplying it. You have under your daily charge, by tens, by scores, or taking years together, by hundreds, a body of young persons. Among these are children of admirable gifts, to whose bright faces you are wont to turn for refreshment and hope amidst annoyances and disappointments. What we would seriously press on your consideration, is the duty of seeking to bring some of these into training for the ministry. If this single truth were sunk into every teacher's heart; if this single duty were everywhere performed, we might fairly look upon the battle as won. If even every school in our Presbyterian territory contained one candidate for the ministry, it would give a promise like the universal blossoming of our orchards in the spring. We are persuaded that this duty has failed to reach the minds of teachers, or to fix their attention in any due proportion to its importance. Could the wants of the world, and the necessity for gospel labour, break upon your minds with half their real light, you would bless God for putting you into an office where you may so immediately and powerfully contribute to this supply. No men in the world, not excepting parents, or even ministers, can do more for training up preachers for the country than those who in every part of the land are engaged in teaching.

It scarcely needs enlarged remark to show that the first duty of an instructor, in this affair, regards such scholars as give some evidence of piety. Not every sincerely religious boy is fit for the work. It is no part of a teacher's duty to aid in thrusting drones or dunces into the Lord's vineyard. There are cases in which even the ardent desires of worthy but ungifted young men are to be repressed; though it is a point where great discrimination is needed. But if you have under your charge those who make a credible profession of their faith, and at the same time are discreet and apt at learning, these, *these* are the precious jewels which should be brought into the sanctuary, and *you*, brethren, are the very persons to bring them in. On this interesting point some details may be expected in the sequel; let a statement of the general duty suffice here.

Your regards, however, need not be confined to those who are already converted. You have other pupils of equal or greater promise, whom God may yet convert, and from whom he may call ministers of the word. We cannot go too far in training the universal talent of our youth. We know not whom the Lord may call. It is your privilege to labour incessantly for the salvation of your beloved charge. Providence has greatly multiplied instances of general awakening in Christian schools. In your own experience, it is to be hoped, you have seen some such fruit; if not, it is time to pray for it, and to strive after it. If you conduct all your labours as the servants of Christ, counting it your highest honour to be instrumental in promoting his kingdom, you will look on every scholar as one who may yet do service in the building of the house of the Lord.

The duty, then, which with affectionate faithfulness we would urge upon all instructors, through the length and breadth of the land, is that of reckoning all other aims subordinate to that of *honouring Christ by training youth to his glory, in the service of his church, and especially in the ministry of reconciliation.*

Having thus stated in general terms the duty of Christian teachers, we shall proceed to suggest some motives which may impel to the performance of it.

MOTIVES.

I. *The prospect of labouring so directly for THE INCREASE OF THE MINISTRY should be inspiring to every Christian heart.* Let us limit our view for a little to the question of *number*. How may we hope to add to the number of ministers? In no way, we are convinced, so reasonably as by engaging pious teachers to renew their covenant with Christ, by dedicating afresh their powers, their time, their teaching, and their scholars. The great matter is to reach the minds of our youth, and to persuade them, on scriptural grounds, to prepare for the work of preaching. In this way a blessed and peaceful conscription may be made for the Lord of hosts. Out of this multitude some will be enlisted, if the means be used. But who is to go to these scattered groups on the important errand? You, brethren, who have them at your very doors! There is no method half so promising. You already constitute a corps of missionaries in behalf of church-education. There need not be a single specific appointment for this end. Vastly better is this than any separate detachment of men for the purpose. Suppose, for example, we should try to effect the same by particular agents. It would remove these from other labours; it would be expensive; it would be difficult to obtain the men; any number whom we could secure would be unable to reach all our schools, or to reach them oftener than once in several years; and even if they could reach them, with how much less impression would they come to them than the well-known and affectionate instructor! In the teachers now in the field we have a body of men this moment on the ground, in immediate proximity with the youth contemplated, and able to operate upon them not once a year, but every day. This is a point too obvious to be mistaken, but too important to be omitted; the existing teachers of our schools constitute an agency prepared to enter on this work without delay.

Statistics are wanting, to show how many of the instructors within our congregations are communicants in the Presbyterian Church. Some observation in different States encourages us to believe that the number is far greater than is thought by most. In the kind providence of God pious young men, rather than others, are disposed to engage in the work of teaching. Some large congregations have within their bounds five or six schools, and there is scarcely one

which cannot claim a single school. It will be a very moderate basis of computation to reckon one school for every church, and to consider one in three of the teachers as professing faith in Christ. We believe this to be much below the truth. But even this gives us eight hundred and sixty-five pious teachers. Add private tutors and the principals and professors of colleges and high schools, and we may safely claim a thousand agents in the field. One recruit annually from each of these would give us a thousand candidates every year. The proportion may seem too large; but it would not be so, if teachers were plying this work with zeal and prayer. Then we are to consider, that some of these institutions, instead of being handfuls, rate their scholars at fifty, a hundred, and even two hundred; and that in the course of the year, Divine grace is wont to shed forth converting influences on schools and colleges perhaps more liberally than on any communities, bringing in great numbers at once to the communion of the church. By proper instructions and persuasions the teachers of the land may do more than all other persons to place promising youth in the path which leads to the ministry. All that is wanting is a just view of the subject, and proper feeling with regard to it. And your personal attention to this momentous duty in the course of your daily labours, is what we would earnestly endeavour to secure.

II. *Instructors of youth may thus aid in furnishing a ministry OF THE RIGHT CHARACTER.* That is to say, they may contribute not only to quantity but to quality. Our ministers will be better ministers for such labours. We cannot begin too early to form the mind of the future preacher. If suitable in other respects, the sooner a young man begins to regard the work of proclaiming Christ the better. It is true that many of our most estimable pastors and missionaries came late to the work, and a still larger number did not recognise their vocation until their studies were somewhat advanced; but these will be the very first to acknowledge how much better it would have been if they had made this dedication of their powers at an earlier date. They would then have taken every step and made every attainment, with a direct view to that great and glorious work: and this, in ordinary circumstances, would have saved them from many losses, and conferred a hallowing influence on their studies and employments. Teachers are the very persons to do most in giving this determination to the character. They gain the earliest glimpses of mind and heart; they are perpetually with their juvenile charge; they possess their confidence, and can lay the plastic hand upon their manners and habits. Surely it cannot be a matter of indifference, that those who are to minister in holy things should from the earliest years be under the tuition of men who tremble for the ark of God.

It is not meant that means should be used by teachers to entrap boys into premature decisions. This it is possible to do, to the great detriment of the individuals and the church. There are many rea-

sons for thinking that hasty pledges should be avoided, and that a purpose to enter the ministry should be left to that gradual and healthful growth which belongs to so momentous a determination. But it is nevertheless the privilege of the teacher to hold out before his scholars all evangelical inducements to be preachers of the gospel. Some of these, even in early youth, will secretly form the purpose to serve Christ. Now what we maintain is, that all such will greatly profit by being under the care of instructors who rejoice in this kind of dedication; and under such instructors the number of these youth will be most likely to increase. If in the daily employments of your school-room or your class, your eye is constantly looking abroad to espy some who may be useful ministers, and if you place the glory of Christ above all the other rewards of your profession, then it is impossible that there should not be an influence going forth to all under your charge, which will make itself known to those among them who shall actually preach the word; and this is a motive to the work we recommend.

III. *Faithful teachers will aid in raising up men to serve the church* IN OTHER LABOURS THAN THOSE OF THE MINISTRY. All good men are not ministers, nor is it desirable that they should be. We need good elders, deacons, Sabbath-school superintendents and instructors; we need presidents, professors, and principals; physicians, lawyers, judges, farmers, and merchants; in short, there is no sort of earthly business in which we do not require more educated and holy men. Christian instructors may be assured, therefore, even if in many cases they fail to introduce men into the ministry, that their labours are not in vain in the Lord. It may well animate the mind of many an humble believer, amidst the cares and disquietudes of his school, that he is helping to rear a generation who shall serve the Lord, and that those who pass from under his hands will be everywhere the upholders of sound order, temperance, truth, and piety.

IV. *The labours of instruction conducted on these principles will tend to SAVE THE SOULS OF MANY PUPILS.* Here is a motive which might well make every pious heart throb with anticipation. Suppose you should gain no one for the ministry; suppose even that your pupils should all die before manhood; yet if you are the means of introducing them to heaven—what a blessedness! Now the very same method of life and line of instruction which promises the advantages already mentioned, promises also this. Enter on the work of teaching, and pursue it with a single eye to Christ's glory, toiling and enduring for him, and regarding every youth placed under your guardianship as a jewel which may adorn his crown, and the likelihood is great that you will see constant tokens of the Divine presence in your school. Hundreds are now living, and thousands are in heaven, who could, under God, ascribe their awakening or their conversion to the faithful instructions which they received in school, or from their preceptors. The history of the Reformed Churches is full of such pious instructors, from the days of Calvin's schoolmaster,

MATURINUS CORDERIUS, whose Colloquies were once read by every Latin scholar. This is a topic of incalculable moment, even independently of the main argument which now engages us. It comes home to the conscience and affections of every teacher. There can be no greater object held before you in your profession, than the saving of souls; and for this you have advantages possessed by few others.

V. *These views of duty add DIGNITY TO THE TEACHER'S OFFICE.* The business of instruction may be conducted in two very different ways. On one hand, it may be a low, unhonoured, almost mechanical routine, pursued for the sole purpose of gaining a livelihood; on the other hand, it may be one of the noblest functions discharged by a human being. To confer on it this glory, which some may deem extravagant, all that is necessary is that it be viewed as the training of immortal souls, and as subsidiary to the publication of gospel truth. It is the gospel which dignifies the school. This was the aspect in which the Reformers beheld the subject. Thus it was in Scotland, where the same acts which made provision for preaching, made provision for teaching; where every parish church was accompanied with a parish school, both being equally under the supervision of the Presbytery. To both preacher and teacher belonged what in ecclesiastical phrase was called "the cure of souls." The complaint is often made, and not without justice, that due honour is not conceded to faithful and laborious instructors. But here is "honour that cometh from God alone," and which will not be disregarded by those who prefer heavenly to earthly rewards.

VI. *High Christian views MAKE THE WORK OF INSTRUCTION DELIGHTFUL.* The teacher's office is not a sinecure. His labours have little intermission, and are sometimes such as put his utmost patience to the test. Inculcation of rudiments, with perpetual iteration, is itself irksome; to this must be added the incapacity, or idleness, or frowardness of children; and not unfrequently ignorance, ill-nature, or ingratitude on the part of parents. Unless a teacher is buoyed up by some active principle, he will find his days heavy and almost intolerable. We know, indeed, that the work of teaching affords of itself some sources of pleasure to generous minds, who rejoice in watching the development of youthful intellect and morals. Yet this is trifling gratification when compared with that which springs from connecting every part of the daily lessons with the service of Christ, and with the wonders of eternity.

He who feels that in his humble measure he is furthering the salvation of mankind, by adding to the number and the qualifications of the ministry, and by rearing up men who can be useful in other departments of the church, has a confidence which casts its beams over all the dull and leaden prospect of the scholastic field. Here a most important principle of our nature comes into play, namely, that *Love sweetens all labour.* We observe it in the mother, suffering and serving beside her babe; the daughter, watching over the

decrepitude of her parent; and the wife, making sacrifice of youth, health, and refreshment for her husband. Love is equally operative in the higher sphere of religion. When terminating on the Lord Jesus Christ, it causes every service, however menial in itself, to be welcome. The otherwise intolerable anxieties and fatigues of a school will be alleviated by the reference of every act to the Lord whom we serve.

VII. *Such teaching will meet with its REWARD.* In this world no profession is less generously remunerated than that of the teacher. Even those parents who settle their dues sometimes give the pittance grudgingly. It is much better to look beyond the present life, to that recompense which shall take place at the resurrection of the just. Here we might easily be tempted to wander beyond the just limits of our present subject, and treat of the blessedness which will be granted to those who have spent a lifetime in training up children for God, and of the exquisite joys attendant upon meeting those in heaven whom they had instructed upon earth. But we must leave this to your private meditations. In this, as in all other pursuits, you will gain a new stimulus, and a happier elevation, by bringing in the power of a heavenly motive; and will find many an hour of sloth quickened, many an impatient murmur hushed, and many a sorrow assuaged, by looking forward to the day of Christ's coming.

After this survey of the motives to the work, it is not, we trust, too much to believe that you will readily attend to some hints as to the way in which it may be performed.

MEANS.

Bearing in mind that the general duty here urged as incumbent on the teachers of youth, is to use all means to reinforce the Christian ministry, we shall endeavour to point out what these means are; and for the sake of brevity as well as clearness, we beg leave to do this chiefly in the way of direct address. At the same time we would seek to avoid all that is harsh or dictatorial, using that freedom which belongs to respectful and affectionate entreaty. To such of our brethren, then, as are engaged in this responsible work, we offer the following suggestions, by no means novel, how much soever they may have been neglected in practice.

I. **SEEK OUT YOUTH WHOSE GIFTS PROMISE USEFULNESS IN THE MINISTRY.** Your situation is eminently favourable for this. From year to year numbers pass under your observation, and in circumstances which facilitate correct judgment. Capacity and genius are often latent; they will be diligently sought out by the wise teacher. Among your pupils there are certainly some whose aptitude and talent rise above the common mark; it is your delight to instruct them, and you sometimes forecast their future usefulness and distinction. Let the question daily present itself, Who among these are likely to be preachers of the gospel? Attention will of course be

due, in the first place, to any who by Divine grace are already numbered among the Lord's people. Happy is that preceptor (and through infinite mercy there are many such) who can look over his interesting group of boys, and discern several who offer evidence of a renewed mind! It will quicken your exertions on their behalf, to consider that you may be training those whom God may largely own in the conversion of souls. It will guide you in all your management of their case, and will suggest many a topic of instruction and remark. You will, in this view of the subject, watch over their habits and progress with redoubled solicitude, and will seize every occasion to apply those gentle but effectual touches that may lead them into a work which you so much desire for them. A pious professor, or other teacher, is scarcely fulfilling his duty, who allows himself to remain ignorant of the temper, talent, and bias of youthful brethren consigned to his charge, or who allows them to remain ignorant of his ardent wishes that they should consecrate themselves to the work of the Redeemer. Is it not worthy of being considered, whether you have not already been delinquent in this particular?

But there is another class of pupils on whom your eye will daily fall. They have quickness of parts, are docile and proficient; but as yet they are unconverted. In regard to these your duty is twofold. First, you are called upon, as before stated, to labour unceasingly for their conversion; and, secondly, you are to employ special diligence in giving them all the discipline of the soundest education, in the hope that if not immediately, yet at some future day, God may subdue them to himself and make them "able ministers of the New Testament." They are therefore not excluded from that observation, search and care, which has for its object the increase of the ministry. It will be a happier day for our Church, when every instructor shall have his list of beloved youth, every one of whom gives tokens of usefulness in preaching the everlasting gospel.

II. RENDER ALL THE AID IN YOUR POWER TO THOSE WHO ARE EXPECTING TO BECOME MINISTERS. Here the field of usefulness is wide; and we rejoice to know that such aid has been afforded by none more generously than by professional teachers. Ever since there was a Christian ministry on earth, pious instructors, loving the cause of the Redeemer, have been forward to give a helping hand to indigent boys of piety and promise. They have done this by lowering their little fees, or by remitting them altogether; in many cases they have furnished them with books; and sometimes they have undertaken their entire support. Where this has been beyond their slender means, they have made interest with benevolent persons of wealth. All these methods are recommended to your attention. It is generally to public teachers that we must look for the discovery of such cases; it is safer so to do, than to be governed by the importunities of the young men themselves. Instructors could be named, who, through a large part of their lives, have never been without some young men dependent on their bounty; and it is de-

lightful to consider how large a number of successful ministers have thus been lifted over obstacles in their way to the sacred office, which otherwise would have been insurmountable. Important as this point is, there is really no one which it seems more superfluous to urge.

III. MAKE THE CHARACTER OF YOUR PUPILS A CONSTANT STUDY. It is only in this way that you can learn who among them are deserving of special care, and who are in possession of the requisite talents. And even after you have determined that such and such persons bid fair to do the Church service, your work of discrimination is not ended. There are wide differences even among pious youth, in discipline, habit, and disposition. One of the great advantages of the method which we are recommending, is that it applies the influences at the earliest moment, and when the subject is most malleable and ductile. There are even in renewed minds obliquities of temper, which would in maturity unfit for ministerial work, but which, early taken into the forming hand of a wise and dexterous preceptor, may be rectified. There are gross defects in knowledge, which may by seasonable assiduity be fully supplied. There are negligences of method and unhappy customs which may be safely removed; while, in regard to personal piety, there are a thousand healthful lessons to be gained from Christian tuition. But none of these things can be done without a sedulous and penetrating study of individual character. If such caution is observed in the office of the Inspector-General, with regard to all recruits for our army, extending to every quality of constitution and limb, how much more should we be vigilant as to the qualifications of those who aspire to be ministers of the gospel.

IV. IN ALL YOUR INSTRUCTIONS GIVE THE FIRST PLACE TO RELIGION. Then, if you are true Christians, your heart and your work will go together all the day long. Your rule is, "Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God and his righteousness." How is it possible for a teacher to acquit himself of a sort of religious treason, who dwells all his year among the heathen classics, and the merest secularities of this perishing life, and never breathes to his pupils a syllable as to the way in which they should go? Many of them, it is probable, come from households which are negligent, irreligious, erroneous, heretical, or even infidel. O, respected brother, how great is your privilege! You may introduce these souls to Christ and thus pluck them as brands out of the burning. Perhaps it is the only way in which some of them are likely to arrive at the knowledge of the truth.

Do not content yourself with a low standard of religious training. The Bible is read in your school; it is well; your school would be heathenish if it were not: but this is not enough. The exercises are opened and closed with prayer; it is well; but you are called to more than this; and you will do more if you keep Christ and the judgment continually in view. No week should pass without a

regular lesson in the Scriptures, accompanied with remarks which may reach the conscience and affections of your pupils. Indeed, we know no reason why a short exercise of this kind might not form a part of every day's work. In the old Presbyterian schools the Shorter Catechism was regularly taught. Where no objection is made, this practice should be diligently kept up. At all events, that incomparably formulary may be learned by all children and youth whose parents do not express some disapproval.

Not only religious instruction, but a religious spirit, should reign in your school. This will depend on the life of piety in your own soul. Your example, as to words, demeanour, and temper, will manifest this spirit, and have its influence on the very youngest of your scholars. Pious parents will send their beloved children to your school, as into a holy atmosphere, with an humble confidence that they shall there be enjoying the means of grace every day. The morals of your literary household will be secured upon the highest evangelical motives. Discipline will become a gentle process, seldom demanding the rigors of threatening or punishment. And you will probably have your reward in seeing a number growing up to dedicate themselves to the labour of gospel love.

V. KEEP THE SUBJECT OF THE MINISTRY BEFORE YOUR OWN MIND AND THE MINDS OF YOUR PUPILS. After all that has been said, this may at first seem superfluous. But you will remember, that a truth may be believed, and may even be considered important, and yet may fail to dwell upon the mind distinctly, constantly, and with the cogency of a practical motive. What we would press upon you, is the habit of viewing all your instructions as subservient to the work of the Lord; and accounting it the most desirable fruit of your teaching to prepare ministers to go before the face of the Lord. The more deeply this sinks into your mind, the more direct and operative will be your endeavours to attain the object. You will then "run, not as uncertainly;" you will fight "not as one that beateth the air." And while you charge home these considerations on yourself, you will embrace every opportunity of laying them before your pupils; by casual hints and more formal discourses; by reading, extract, and anecdote; by rehearsing the wants of the world, the excellency of ministerial work, and the glory of gospel grace. For it is by such considerations that persons, young or old, are induced to follow Christ and preach the gospel; and when schools abound with such lessons, churches will abound with ministers.

VI. CONVERSE WITH YOUR PUPILS ON THIS SUBJECT. Of all the influences which an instructor exerts on learners, perhaps the most important is one which many neglect; it is private conversation out of school hours. A word fitly spoken falls with weight on the individual ear. It reaches further than the general address or lecture. By such conferences you are enabled, as before recommended, to study character and to guide inclination. Who knows but among the very youth who now look up to you for information, there may be

one who has secret longings to know Christ's will, and who will be unspeakably relieved and benefitted by your timely counsel? You may draw forth the diffident spirit, at some happy moment, and fix determinations that are never to be moved. As this means of influence is known to have a great bearing on the conversion of the soul, it is likewise powerful in respect to the choice of a profession. A teacher would do well, who should allow no day to pass without close, faithful, and affectionate personal conversation with some one of his charge.

VII. LET THIS SUBJECT ENTER INTO YOUR PRAYERS, WITH AND FOR YOUR PUPILS. "*Pray ye,*" says our blessed Master, in connexion with this very matter, "*Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.*" Matt. ix. 37. It is to be remarked, that the precise thing which our Saviour enjoins upon us in view of the whitening fields is *to pray*. If this is incumbent on believers in general, how peculiarly incumbent is it on those who spend the greater part of their days in the company of the very persons who might take the sickle and gather the golden sheaves. Conscientious teachers pray with their scholars. We mean something more than a cold, hurried, formal service, often little else than a notice that school is opened, or that it is closed. When there is grace in lively exercise, the pious instructor will feel that to be a moment of solemnity and tenderness in which he stands, surrounded by his beloved youth, and tries to lead them upwards in devotion.

At such a time, when you draw near the throne of mercy, let the increase of the ministry come before your remembrance, and earnestly ask of God that he would vouchsafe to take some of those whom he has entrusted to your tuition, and make them heralds of his saving truth. But not only may you offer these intercessions in public. Your closet will witness, that in secret devotion you bear on your hearts those who are submitted to your guardianship. Here, alone with God, you may press the humble claim, for his name's sake, with greater fulness and importunity, entering into particulars, and uttering the very names of those who are already enlightened, and of those for whom you desire this grace. What a change would be wrought in all our ecclesiastical prospects, by this revival of prayer on the part of pious teachers!

VIII. LET THE PROSPECT OF SUCH RESULTS LEAD YOU TO THOROUGHNESS IN THE WORK OF INSTRUCTION. A stronger motive could not be presented. Labours of love are not slighted. Regard for Christ affords impulse and solace, and turns wearisome tasks into pleasure. A holy oil will distil upon every wheel of your daily operations, when you look at the possibility of adding new labourers to the harvest-toils. You will aspire to make these labourers as thoroughly furnished to all good works as your diligence can render them. As learning is employed by the Master in his ministry, you will strive to give a training which shall be extensive and thorough;

laying deep foundations, making patient advances, using improved methods, applying wise repetition, carrying up the structure with honesty and caution in the details, shunning every slight and superficial device, and despising all vain display; seeing that "ye serve the Lord Christ." And as you know not which it may please God to call, you will dispense these cares to every one within your influence; giving especial and affectionate attention to those who already desire the "good work." Not for a moment will the Christian teacher forget, that his instructions should be all the more solid and enriching because of his Christianity. The proper application of this principle will have this certain result, that Christian schools will be everywhere seen to be the best schools; and no man will be able to object, that in seeking the prevalence of religious feeling you have made any sacrifice of learned accomplishment. There is no danger that our ministry will be too well educated; and the earlier the stage in which this thorough work is undertaken, the better will be the consequences for posterity.

IX. KEEP YOUR EYE ON THOSE PUPILS WHO HAVE PASSED FROM UNDER YOUR IMMEDIATE CARE. The influence of a good teacher is not ended when a young man leaves school. It is almost universally found, that when the little annoyances of discipline are forgotten, the scholar remembers acts of kindness and faithfulness with more tender regard. The authority of such a teacher is sometimes as lasting as life. Follow your pupils with your attention, and counsel, and prayers, into college, and other places of improvement. Watch for tokens of reformation and faith. Maintain such intercourse and correspondence as may be permitted. Add your counsels, on all important subjects, and especially in regard to the work of the ministry. Remember that the period in which most young men decide upon their future calling is that which follows their preparation for college. At such critical moments, a word from the honoured instructor will often suffice to turn the scale. Thus, even if never allowed to preach the gospel yourselves, you may be continually adding faithful men to the number who are making "full proof of their ministry."

In these ways, and in ways like these, it is confidently believed that the instructors of our youth may contribute, in a very high degree, to supply that lack of service under which the Church at present so loudly laments.

These remarks will meet the eye of several classes of teachers, who will acknowledge a special relation to their own case. First, *those who are placed over church-schools*, parochial, presbyterial, or synodical, will feel doubly bound to perform the duties recommended; seeing it is the very intent of these institutions to aid in promoting evangelical truth, in our view of it. They will at the same time enjoy facilities and freedom, unknown to others, for carrying out all our suggestions in their fullest extent. Secondly, *candidates for the*

ministry, of whom great numbers are temporarily occupied with instruction, cannot fail to admit the force of the foregoing considerations. Having been themselves so lately in the seat of the learner, having so lately yielded to the claims of Christ's ministry, and having the great and delightful work so nearly in prospect, they must, more than most, be in sympathy with such of their youthful associates as begin to feel these motions stir within them. Thirdly, and above all, *ministers of the gospel*, who have the care of schools, or who instruct in colleges, scarcely need our word of exhortation. We would rather invite them to co-operate in promoting the manifest object of this address. Through them, particularly in their own pastoral charges, the arguments here presented can best find their way to other teachers. While in their own circles of instruction, they may of themselves be endeavouring to increase the number of ministers, they may exercise a happy influence upon all around them who have the care of youth.

The whole subject is respectfully submitted to teachers of every class. May the Lord of the harvest add his blessing to this earnest attempt to increase the efficiency of his Church! And to his name be the glory!

ARTICLE X.

MINISTERIAL REVIVAL.*

HOW MUCH MORE WOULD A FEW GOOD AND FERVENT MEN EFFECT IN THE MINISTRY THAN A MULTITUDE OF LUKEWARM ONES. This was the remark of Ocolampadius, the Swiss reformer. It was the remark of one who had been taught it by experience, and who has recorded his observation for the benefit of other churches and other days. It is a remark, however, the *truth* of which has been but little acknowledged and acted on: nay, whose *importance* is to this day unappreciated even where its *truth* is not denied. The mere multiplying of men, calling themselves ministers of Christ will avail little. They may be but "cumberers of the ground." They may be like *Achans*, troubling the camp; or perhaps *Jonahs*, raising the tempest. Even when sound in the faith, yet, through unbelief, lukewarmness, and slothful formality, they may do irreparable injury to the cause of Christ, freezing and withering up all spiritual life around them. The lukewarm ministry of one who is theoretically orthodox, is often more extensively and fatally ruinous to souls than that of one grossly inconsistent or flagrantly heretical. "What man on earth is so pernicious a drone as an idle minister?" said Cecil.

* From the Scotch *Presbyterian Review*, 1842.

And Fletcher remarked well, that "lukewarm pastors make careless Christians." Can the multiplication of such ministers, to whatever amount, be counted a blessing to a people? Our fathers in the earlier days of our Church, acting upon this principle, preferred keeping a parish vacant, to appointing over it an unsuitable pastor. And when our Church returns to these former days,—or better still to primitive example, and, walking in apostolic footsteps, seeks to be conformed more closely to the inspired models, allowing nothing that pertains to earth to come between her and her living Head,—then will she give more careful heed to see that the men to whom she entrusts the care of souls, however learned and able, should be yet more distinguished by their spirituality, and zeal; and faith, and love.

In comparing Baxter and Orton together, the biographer of the former remarks, that "Baxter would have set the world on fire while Orton was lighting a match." How true! Yet not true alone of Baxter or of Orton! These two individuals are representations of two classes in the Church of Christ in every age, and not least in our own Church and in our own day. The latter class are far the more numerous; the Ortons you may count by hundreds, the Baxters by tens; yet who would not prefer a solitary specimen of the one to a thousand of the other.* "When he spake of weighty soul-concerns (says one of his contemporaries, of Baxter), *you might find his very spirit drenched therein.*"† No wonder that he was blessed with such amazing success! Men felt that, in listening to him, they were in contact with one who was dealing with realities, and these of infinite moment. This is one of the secrets of ministerial strength and ministerial success. And who can say how much of the overflowing infidelity of the present day is owing not only to the lack of spiritual instructors,—not merely to the existence of grossly unfaithful and inconsistent ones,—but to the *coldness* of those who are reputed sound and faithful. Men cannot but feel that if religion is worth anything, it is worth everything; that if it calls for any measure of zeal and warmth, it will justify the utmost degrees of these; and that there is in reality no consistent medium between reckless atheism, and the intensest warmth and most absorbing enthusiasm of religious zeal. Men may dislike, detest, scoff at, persecute the latter, yet their consciences are all the while silently reminding them that, if there be a God and a Saviour, a heaven and

* "The Nazarene (one of the primitive Christians), was one of those hardy, vigorous, and enthusiastic men among whom God has, in all times, worked the revolutions of earth, and above all of religion: who are formed to convert, because formed to endure; men, whom nothing discourages, nothing dismays. In the fervour of belief they are inspired and they inspire. Their reason first kindles their passion; they force themselves into men's hearts, while they appear to appeal to their judgment. Nothing is so contagious as enthusiasm. It moves stones. It charms brutes. It is the genius of sincerity! and truth accomplishes no victories without it."—*Last Days of Pompeii*, vol. i. p. 145.

† Sylvester's Funeral Sermon for Baxter.

a hell, anything short of such life and love, is hypocrisy, dishonesty, perjury! And thus the lesson they learn from the lifeless discourses of the class we are alluding to, is, that as the men evidently do not believe the doctrines they are preaching, there is no need for their hearers believing them; if ministers only believe them because they make their living by them, why should those who make nothing by them scruple about denying them? The inconsistencies of the Popish priesthood has made Italy a land of infidels; and ought we not to search ourselves and see how much of modern infidelity may be traced to the indolence, the coldness, the *cold orthodoxy* of the Protestant ministry at home?*

It is not merely unsoundness in faith, or negligence in duty, or open inconsistency of life, that mars the ministerial work and ruins souls. A man may be free from all scandal either in creed or conduct, and yet may be a most grievous obstruction in the way of all spiritual good to his people. He may be a dry and empty cistern notwithstanding his orthodoxy. He may be freezing up or blasting life, at the very time that he is speaking of the way of life. He may be repelling men from the cross even when he is in words proclaiming it. He may be standing between his flock and the blessing, even when he is, in outward form, lifting up his hands to bless them. The same words that, from warm lips, would drop as the rain or distil as the dew, fall from his lips as the snow or hail, chilling all spiritual warmth, and blighting all spiritual life. How many souls have been lost for want of earnestness, want of solemnity, want of love in the preacher, even when the words uttered were precious and true!

We take for granted that the object of the Christian ministry is to *convert sinners and edify the body of Christ*. No faithful minister can possibly rest short of this. Applause, fame, popularity, honour, wealth,—all these are vain, if souls are not won,—if saints are not matured. The question, therefore, which each of us has to answer to his own conscience, is, “Has it been the end of my ministry,—has it been the desire of my heart, to save the lost and guide the saved? Is this my aim *in every sermon* I preach, in every visit I pay? Is it under the influence of this feeling that I continually live, and walk, and speak? Is it for this I pray, and toil, and fast, and weep? Is it for this I spend and am spent, counting it, next to the salvation of my own soul, my chiefest joy to be the instrument of saving others? Is it for this that I exist, and to accomplish this would I gladly die? Have I seen the pleasure of the Lord prospering in my hand? Have I seen souls converted under my ministry? Have God’s people found refreshment from my lips, and gone upon their way rejoicing? Or have I seen no fruits of my labours, and am I content to remain unblest? Am I content to preach, and yet not know of one saving impression made,—one sinner awakened? Can I go contentedly through the routine of ministerial labour, and

* “*Rash* preaching disgusts; *timid* preaching leaves poor souls fast asleep; *bold* preaching is the only preaching that is owned of God.”—*Rowland Hill*.

never think of asking how God is prospering the work of my hands and the words of my lips?"

Nothing short of positive success can satisfy a true minister of Christ. His plans may proceed smoothly, and his external machinery may work steadily, but without actual fruit in the saving of souls, he counts all these as nothing. His feeling is, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you." And it is this feeling which makes him successful!* The resolution, that in the strength and with the blessing of God he will never rest without success, will insure it. It is the man who has made up his mind to confront every difficulty,—who has counted the cost, and, fixing his eye upon the prize, has determined to fight his way to it,—it is such a man that conquers!

We cannot better draw this brief article to a close, than by throwing together at random the following pregnant sentences from Baxter's Reformed Pastor. May they be as "sharp arrows of the mighty," finding their way into the conscience and heart of every minister of Christ who reads these lines! It is high time to awake out of our sleep,—to arouse ourselves, and be in earnest in the pursuit of souls!

"1. Will you show your faces in a Christian congregation as ministers of the gospel, and there pray for a reformation, and pray for the conversion and salvation of your hearers, and the prosperity of the Church, and when you have done, refuse to use the means by which it must be done?"

"2. God will uncase the hypocrites ere long, and make them know to their sorrow what it was to play fast and loose with God. Woe to them when they must be accountable for the blood of souls!"

"3. Seeing all these things lie upon our hands, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy endeavours and resolutions for our work. This is not a burden for the shoulder of a child.

"4. How many sleep under us, because our hearts and tongues are sleeping, and we bring not with us so much skill and zeal as to awake them.

"5. One proud, surly, lordly word, one needless contention, one covetous action, may cut the throat of many a sermon, and blast the fruit of all that you have been doing.

"6. If you will lead on the troops of Christ against the face of Satan and his followers,—if you will engage yourselves against principalities and powers,—if you will undertake to rescue captive sinners,—do not think that a heedless, careless minister is fit for so great a work.

"7. The more of God appeareth in our duties, the more authority will they have with men.

"8. Oh, if we did but study half as much to affect and amend our own hearts, as we do our hearers', it would not be with many of us as it is.

"9. What an excellent life is it to live in studying and preaching Christ!—to be still searching into his mysteries, or feeding on them,—to be daily in the consideration of the blessed nature, or works, or ways of God! Others are glad of the leisure of the Lord's day, and now and then an hour besides, but we may keep a continual Sabbath. O, were but our hearts more suitable to this work, what a blessed, joyful life should we live! How sweet would the pulpit be, and what a delight would our experience of these things afford!

"10. I have observed that God seldom blesseth any man's work so much as his whose heart is set upon success.

* "Ministers are seldom honoured with success, unless they are continually aiming at the conversion of sinners."—*Owen*.

" 11. You can no more be saved without *ministerial* diligence and fidelity than they or you can be saved without *Christian* diligence and fidelity.

" 12. Were there but such clear and deep impressions upon our souls of those glorious things which we daily preach, O, what a change would it make in our sermons, and in our private discourse!

" 13. O, the gravity, the seriousness, the incessant diligence that these things require. I know not what others think of them; but for my own part, I am ashamed of my stupidity, and wonder at myself that I deal not with my own and others' souls, as one that looks for the great day of the Lord.

" 14. I seldom come out of the pulpit, but my conscience smiteth me that I have been no more serious and fervent. It accuseth me not so much for want of human ornaments or elegance, but it asketh me, how couldst thou speak of life and death with such a heart? How couldst thou preach of heaven and hell in such a careless, sleepy manner?

" 15. Is this all thy compassion for lost sinners? Wilt thou do no more to seek and save them? Is there not such and such an one? O, how many are round about thee that are yet the visible sons of death! What hast thou said to them, or done for their recovery?

" 16. I confess to my shame, that I seldom hear the bell toll for one that is dead, but conscience asketh me, what hast thou done for the saving of that soul before it left the body? How can you refrain, when you are laying a corpse in the grave, from thinking, here lieth the body, but where is the soul, and what have I done for it before it departed? It was part of my charge; what account can I give of it?

" 17. What have we our time and strength for, but to lay both out for God? What is a candle made for but to burn? Burnt and wasted he must be; and is it not more fit it should be in lighting men to heaven, and in working for God, than in living to the flesh? What comfort will it be at death, that you lengthened your life by shortening your work? He that works much lives much. Our life is to be esteemed according to the end and work of it, and not according to the mere duration."

In the fifth and sixth centuries, Gildas and Salvian arose to alarm and arouse a careless church, and a formal ministry. In the sixteenth, such was the task which devolved on the Reformers. In the seventeenth, Baxter among others, took a prominent part in stimulating the languid piety and dormant energies of his fellow-ministers. In the eighteenth, God raised up some choice and noble men to awaken the Church, and lead the way to a higher and bolder career of ministerial duty. The nineteenth stands no less in need of some such stimulating influence. We have experienced some symptoms of life, but still the mass is not quickened. We would require some new Baxter to arouse us by his voice and his example. It is melancholy to see the amount of ministerial languor and inefficiency, that still overspreads our land. The uncultivated or blighted vineyards of Scotland, present a sad spectacle to the spiritual eye. How long, O Lord, how long!

The infusion of new life into the ministry, ought to be the object of more direct and special effort, as well as of more united and fervent prayer. To the students, the preachers, the ministers of our Church, the prayers of Christians ought more largely to be directed. It is a LIVING ministry that the Church needs; and without such a ministry it cannot long expect to escape the judgments of God. WE NEED MEN THAT WILL SPEND AND BE SPENT—THAT WILL LABOUR AND PRAY—THAT WILL WATCH AND WEEP FOR SOULS.

ARTICLE XI.

THE INSTRUCTED SCRIBE.

A PLEA FOR THOROUGH MINISTERIAL EDUCATION.

BY THE REV. JOHN H. BOOBOOK, OF VIRGINIA.

THE scribes among the Jews seem to have been aptly compared by Josephus to the philosophers among the Greeks. It was their business to acquaint themselves with the law, civil and religious, and to teach it to others. In short, they were, to a great extent, the living souls which God placed, as instruments of communication between his written word and other living souls. They were then what ministers of the gospel are now, in the nature of their office. And the Saviour's description of an instructed scribe: *Every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old* (Matt. xiii. 52), is for all times and all testaments, ancient times and modern times, Old Testament and New Testament.

We have then, on divine authority, the principle that every living soul which is placed as an instrument of communication between the written word of God and other souls, should be a CULTIVATED SOUL—an instructed scribe—one capable of bringing out from his treasure, like a provident householder, things new and old. And the apostle Paul seems to base his rules for the ministry on this rule of his Divine Master, taking it as the foregone foundation, and adding another stone, when he says: *Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

A poetical antiquity tells us of "the pipe whose virgin gold befits the lip of Phœbus." But the pipe through which the God of revealed religion will discourse to lost man, is a living soul, fitted by thorough instruction in knowledge, human and divine, to speak the word of God. And on this simple principle, of the highest authority, and of a very wide and decisive practical application, we base our present plea for the thorough education of the Christian ministry.

It seems time indeed to discuss this subject with all plainness and candour. No denomination of Christian brethren, here known, are opposed to it. All the denominations now have some men who bring the learning of the instructed scribe to the aid of their piety and their principles. In maintaining this cause we are not now placing ourselves in a sectarian attitude, as might have been thought some years ago, but we are only placing ourselves shoulder to shoulder, where we would wish to be, with at least some friends of Christ of every name.

A prophet was one into whose mouth God put probably the very

words he was to utter. And it would seem that the prophet himself did sometimes no more understand the meaning of those words than other persons. To the prophet the necessity for a cultivated mind was not probably so great. But the scribe's office was different. He was to read in the book of the law of God, distinctly, and give the sense, and cause the people to understand the reading, as we see in the case of Ezra, the distinguished scribe after the captivity. As prophet, man seems sometimes to have been little more than the articulating voice of God. As scribe, human thought came in. A human mind was intercessor between the mind of God, as written in the book, and the minds of the audience. The piety and the cultivation of that human mind, in the case of the scribe, became of more importance. Perhaps something of the same difference is to be discovered between the inspired man and the preacher in the new dispensation. It was the Apostles' work as *inspired men*, to write as God dictated, though it is clear that Divine inspiration in them did not set aside the qualities and peculiarities of their individual thoughts. It was the Apostles' business as *preachers*, and the business of all who are successors of the Apostles in the uninspired part of their office, the work of preaching, to read distinctly in the book of the Law, and give the sense, and cause the people to understand the reading. Wherever, in all God's dealings with man, a human mind has come between the lips of God and the soul of man, as an instrument or vehicle to convey from one to the other the words of salvation, that human intercessor has been required to be a CULTIVATED SOUL, a scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven so that he could teach others also.

It will be necessary to meet at once an objection to this great principle, which perhaps occurs to some readers on the very announcement of the principle. It is that the *Apostles* were not learned men, though they were the chosen preachers of their times;—and as they found piety without learning sufficient for their work as preachers, so piety without learning may be held to be sufficient for the work of the ministry in our day also. But it is a syllogism not more safe than modest, to say, the Apostles did thus and thus, and therefore I may do the same. Modern men are under a mistake in more respects than one about their equality with the Apostles. It is about as if the gentle knight of the sham tournaments beginning to be held at some of our watering places (the Fauquier and the Huguenot springs), should become smitten with their own glory in the deeds of chivalry, and should imbibe the swollen conceit that they are the true successors and equals of the grim iron horsemen of the olden time—the successors of Roland and of Oliver, of Tancred and Rinaldo, of Godfrey and of Richard of the Lion Heart:—a conceit which would justly end in their becoming the legitimate heroes of some new Virginian Don Quixote.

But the objection is founded on a mistaken view of the facts of the case. Those very Apostles who are made shields for modern

ignorance, had three years' regular training in the school of a Master who spake as never man spake. The verses accompanying the passage above cited, from the thirteenth chapter of Matthew, show the Apostles in the very act of receiving that training. The Master had been speaking and explaining parables. *Jesus saith unto them, have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord. Then said he unto them, therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.* The only exception to this remark is the apostle Paul, who did not enjoy this instruction;—and in introducing a man into the apostleship under his circumstances, one who had not enjoyed the benefit of the Saviour's personal teachings, the providence of God, as is well known, selected a man well versed in Hebrew and in Grecian learning, and upon that learned man, thus selected, as one born out of due time, far greater honours were conferred than upon any other of the apostles.

But there is a yet deeper mistake in the reasoning which alleges the apostles as apologies for a modern uneducated ministry. It is of Peter and John that the remark is made in Scripture. Of those two apostles it is said that the priests saw that they were "*ignorant and unlearned men.*" This may be intended to express the view which the priests took of their character, because they knew but little of the vain inanities of the Jewish traditions. But who were these men?—the apostle John and the apostle Peter? We are not dependent on the opinions of the Jewish priests, their enemies, for their characters. One of these men is the author of one of the Four Gospels. It is that one of the four which contains most doctrinal discussion, and pours most light on the subtleties of the Greek philosophy. He is also the author of three of the Epistles of the New Testament—and he is the author of the final book of the canon, the sublimest of all prophetic revelations. The other of the two apostles is the author of two Epistles of no small force and sublimity. And as was before said, we must admit that inspiration to write did not abolish or change intellectual character. We could have much patience with unlearned men in our days, who bore such fruits as these. These very men, Peter and John, whom the Jewish priests called *ignorant and unlearned men* were specially favoured too, in the personal teachings of the Saviour. The very priests themselves on the same occasion from which the objection is drawn, *took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus.* Men who could write as these men have written, and who had the school of Divine instruction which these men had, were not the sort of "*ignorant and unlearned men*" they are sometimes thought to have been;—they are not the apostolic apologies for stupidity they are sometimes represented to be.

We find then no stumbling-block in the cases of Peter and John, in the way to the great principle that whatever living soul stands as

an instrument between the written Word of God and the living souls of other men (especially if he be charged with the duty of explaining the word and giving the sense), should be a *cultivated* as well as a *pious* soul, able to bring forth from his treasure things new and old.

We may now proceed with the direct proof and illustration of that great principle.

I. THAT THE INSPIRED SCRIPTURES ARE IN LANGUAGES WHICH ARE NOW DEAD LANGUAGES seems to be some fair argument for an educated ministry. That Spirit which gave the apostles utterance on the day of Pentecost, to speak with other tongues, so that Romans, and Jews, and Parthians, and Medes, and Cretans, and Arabians, and the men of other nations then assembled, heard them speak each in his own tongue, in all the various languages there represented, that Spirit could as easily have given them the inspiration of tongues to multiply *written* translations of the Bible as he could do what he did that day. He could have taught men to *write* with other tongues as easily as he taught them to *speak* with other tongues. But he did not see fit to do so. He has left us the Old Testament embalmed and enshrined in the Hebrew, and the New Testament in the Greek language. These and these alone are the inspired Old and New Testament. There are many excellent translations of these, it is true; among which, one of the best is admitted to be that racy stream from the "pure well of English undefiled," the English Bible. Still it is but a translation, and not the very words of God. Those words which are the very words of God are old hallowed Greek and Hebrew words, locked up like ancient coins of precious metal and of curious inscription, in the closets of profound learning, requiring the keys of deep study to open them to inspection. He who has not read these old and hallowed words, has not seen the inspired Word of God in its native form. He has not seen the original portrait of God's will as drawn by the finger of God himself. He has only seen a second-hand copy, a man-made copy of that portrait. He who has not read, and cannot read the original Scriptures, has, strictly speaking, never heard the word at God's mouth, as the guide of souls is required to do; he has only heard it attempted to be exactly stated in other words by a translator who was human like himself. He has not heard the oracle itself; he has only heard a repeating voice at the door of the temple, express in another tongue what meaning he deemed the oracle to have.

That Providence which has locked up the very words of inspiration in old, hallowed, learned languages, does look like a Providence which patronises learning and not stupidity among those who are to be the guides of the souls of others. It does look like a Providence which patronises the great principle, that the living spirit which intercedes as an instrument between the written Word of God and the living souls of other men, ought to be a *cultivated* as well as a *pious* soul—a scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven.

In our Lord's description of the instructed scribe, already referred

to, two things are required: 1. The ability to bring forth new things from the treasury of the mind, and, 2, the ability to bring forth old things.

II. The *second* point in this discussion is based expressly on the authority of that text; it is this:

1. Cultivation is necessary for the man who is TO BRING FORTH PROPERLY FOR CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTION THE OLD THINGS of the treasury of truth.

The scribe so instructed as to be able to bring forth both the new things and the old things, rightly divided and distributed, is the scribe whom Christ there approves.

It has been said that repentance toward God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, are things so simple in their nature that it requires no human learning to utter them from the pulpit in the ears of the people,—and that these are the main things after all, as they are the old and sacred and unchanging terms of salvation, and that a ministry which plainly utters these things in the ears of the people is a ministry sufficient for the salvation of the people. This appears to be about the amount of the common reasoning on the subject. But it is reasoning which dispenses with the Christian ministry altogether. The simple *reading* of the Bible alone would announce to the people repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. And the simple reading of the Bible to the audience would probably be better than an uneducated ministry. But this reasoning sets at naught the Divine Wisdom in the appointment of a living ministry—the Divine Wisdom in sending us the news of salvation by a living voice—the Divine Wisdom in pressing our eternal interests upon our attention by the medium of our brother man, with all his common interests, his living sympathies, his kindred affections, and his repeated persuasions. The counsel of God in the appointment of his ministry was to bring into his service not only the voice of the ministers in the mere utterance of truth, but also their powers of persuasion, their sobriety of character, their soundness of speech, their knowledge of the means of influencing others, their sense of propriety in rightly dividing the word of truth,—in short, all that constitutes them *men* and not mere *voices*.

The rules laid down in the Bible clearly show that such was the Divine counsel. They are rules for the formation of a human character, and not mere rules for the emphasis and modulation of the voice: *A bishop must be blameless as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre, a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate, holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.*

These are requirements which certainly go farther than the mere power to stand up and repeat the same threadbare tale from Sabbath to Sabbath, however precious and important may be the fundamental truths thus monotonously repeated. The Scripture rules for the

ministry seem designed to form and govern the whole man, with his whole intellectual and moral nature, and to bring all his powers of all descriptions into the service of the Master. He is to serve God with his head and his heart, his memory and his imagination, his sensibilities and his passions, as well as with his lungs and his lips. He is solemnly bound to testify repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. But he is also as solemnly bound to *study to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.* He is bound to use line upon line and precept upon precept, ever adhering to the great fundamental truths of the Gospel, which time and place and circumstance can never change. But he is as solemnly bound to use *sound speech that cannot be condemned, that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of him.* He is bound, for ever to preach repentance, and faith, and good works, and the sovereignty of God, and the divinity of Christ, and the power of the Divine Spirit. There can be no true religion without these foundations, any more than a Gibraltar could exist without the foundation-rock on which the fortress stands. But he is bound for ever also, to lay these foundations together with skill, and clasp them with links of illustration and argument, and make them acceptable by their fitness and their polish, as far as is consistent with their eternal moment and importance. There is hardly any acquirement that can be stored away, after profound research into the richest treasures of human learning, which may not, peradventure, be of great use, at some day or other, and to some audience or other, in stating the simple doctrines of repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. A scribe, instructed unto the kingdom of God, will have no treasures of learning to spare, even in the statement of the old fundamental truths. Even the most thoroughly cultivated spirit will have none too much cultivation for his use, as he stands, in one sense, mediating from Sabbath to Sabbath between God and man.

Who indeed is sufficient for these things, however thoroughly cultivated he may be? Who is not constrained to feel that his sufficiency is of God at last, though he may be a model of close application to study, or may rival Paul or Apollos in zeal and eloquence? The promise of Divine assistance is made, in general, to such as diligently use the means; and it is not made to those who neglect the means. Who then can be found so sufficient for these awful responsibilities, as to rush under them without having employed the means of human cultivation, and therefore without a clear right to appropriate to himself the promise of Divine support? No man on earth is sufficient to preach from the pulpit, from Sabbath to Sabbath, the oldest points, the simplest foundation-truths of the Gospel, who is not a scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, and even with that, it is of God that he has any sufficiency after all.

Moreover, there are some things in the Bible which can never be rendered pleasant to the taste of fallen man. Some of the simple

fundamental doctrines are offensive and humiliating to the carnal mind. Just as surely as Christ himself hung on a cross, just so surely there is a cross amid the doctrines of the Gospel, which must always remain there; or else man must change; or else the Gospel will be spoilt. When the offence of the cross ceases to be heard from the pulpit, then the benefit of the cross ceases also, in a great measure, to be derived from the pulpit. There are things in the Bible, which every one can see to be there, as clearly written as a sunbeam could inscribe them, which filled men with anger when Christ himself preached them, which provoked from man replies against God when an apostle wrote them, and which must always be offensive to the carnal mind of man. These things are a part of God's message to man, and must be delivered from the pulpit in their proper times and places. Yet at many a time and place, a sharp trial of his fidelity and a hard struggle with his love of ease, must be encountered by the preacher in bringing out the offence of the cross. Much wisdom and discretion are oftentimes requisite, to know what is *unnecessary* offence, and therefore ought to be avoided, and what is *necessary* offence, and cannot be avoided—to know the times and seasons when to avoid offence and when to abide by offensive truths—to understand the moods and vagaries and epidemics of the human mind. No ordinary skill and prudence are sometimes requisite to know how to *become all things to all men*, in the just sense of those words, when the circumstances do not demand the crossing and humbling power of offensive truth, and yet when the offence of the cross ought to be felt, to know how to utter it with calm confidence in Him whose omnipotence will cause the heavens and the earth to pass away before one jot or one tittle shall fail;—to know how to trust unshaken in Him who says that, though the heathen rage and the people imagine a vain thing, though the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, yet He, who does not do things to be undone, has set *His* King upon *His* holy hill of Sion. And when the unbelief of men has been borne with until forbearance ceases to be a virtue, there is awful need of great wisdom in the minister of God to know when to throw himself upon the hidings of God's eternal power, who will *break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel*.

Surely if cultivation in the most perfect schools of mental discipline be necessary, as all admit it to be, to furnish the statesmen and heroes who are pilots of the civil state, with the calm judgment, and the tenacity of right, and the fortitude under adversity, which are demanded by the weighty trials which they must encounter in life, then at least as much if not more, is cultivation in the most perfect schools of mental discipline needed by the man in the pulpit, that he may understand the signs of the times in the spirits of men, and that he may wisely shape his own course, in every mood and tense, between the gentlest dealing with the smoking flax on the one hand,

and the sternest rebuke of the independent God against the stiff-necked reprobate on the other.

2. According to the Saviour's account of the instructed scribe, he must know how to bring forth from his treasure **NEW THINGS ALSO**. *The instructed scribe*—he says—*bringing forth out of his treasure things new and old*. We have here divine authority for both, the old things and the new things. The old things have been spoken of; the new are now to be spoken of.

These new things which the instructed scribe is to bring forth, are not new schemes of doctrine, or new speculations, or new inventions of his own in rivalry of the revealed will of God. But he will have an acquaintance with the richness of the Scriptures as an ever fresh and unexhausted treasury of instruction, which the smatterer cannot have. He will trace the endless variety and beauty of the figurative language of the Bible, and its wonderful fitness for illustrating truth, from ever novel and striking points of view, as if that figurative language was a wardrobe of the best and most fitting and most shining garments for all the forms of thought into which divine truth, may be moulded. The instructed scribe will have his spirit, deeply impressed, also, with the solemn majesty of the *scenery* which the Bible brings to view: the creation, the crucifixion, the resurrection, the judgment, the marriage-supper of the Lamb, the grand assemblies, the striking transactions, and tremendous pomps and processions and triumphal splendours of God's government, as it advances in its mighty march through time and eternity. He will also acquaint himself with the ever new and varying modes of contact between the human mind and revealed truth as these modes of contact show themselves in society. He will observe under what circumstances truth and the soul are most willingly wedded together; and under what circumstances they repel each other; examining diligently the keen and minute sensibilities of the soul, and the keen and minute pungencies of the truth, to discover all modes of promoting the alliance between the two where offence can be avoided. Such things as these, and not the vain novelties of speculation, are the new things of the instructed scribe. And they are things which do now require and must always require the best and most thorough culture of the mind.

But our scribe must deal in future with yet other new things besides these.

Recent discoveries and inventions have so much stimulated the spirit of human science, that she is now stretching forth her hand to grasp the secret wonders of nature, whether they are found in the wide spaces and revolutions of the starry heavens, or in the fossil records of primeval ages in the earth's bosom, or in the caves of the invisible forces which float over the earth's surface, with a bold audacity of grasp of which past ages never dreamt. Men are obstinately and fiercely questioning nature in their laboratories, with their exploring hammers, and with their telescopes, in a spirit which is

and will be independent of religion, whether it ought to be so or not. If religious education will go hand in hand and step for step with secular and scientific education, then secular and scientific education cannot refuse the companionship of religious education if it would. But if religious education fails in its duty, and does not go hand in hand, and step for step, with secular and scientific education, then it is a fact which has been several times proven by experience, that secular and scientific education will turn against religion her telescopes, and exploring hammers, and laboratories, which might have been the allies of religion.

What may be called an expansion of the mind of society has also taken place around us recently, growing out of the speed and facility with which men travel from place to place and from continent to continent. We may devoutly hope that the prophecy of Daniel, *many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased*, has its fulfilment, in part, in the great enterprise of colportage combined with the work of missions. But it has certainly another fulfilment also in the great increase of common current knowledge, good and bad, which passes from mind to mind, where so many meet and mingle in the highways of life, to be inflamed by the excitements of the day. In such an age of roving, the range of the common thought of society widens, men's expectations rise, their ambition is inflamed, the demands which they make of those who would instruct them advance. The men of one region of country quickly discover the advantages of their more favoured neighbours. They speedily demand similar advantages for themselves; they speedily require the same things to influence them, by which those favoured neighbours are influenced.

Even should it be granted that an ignorant ministry answered a good purpose in days which are past, yet for all that it may be true, and seems really to be true, that in the times to come, an ignorant ministry would be treason, and in its consequences the worst of treason, to the cross and the crown of Him whom we serve. There is too much thought awakened in the popular mind by the increase of knowledge, too much of the love of intellectual triumph engendered by the past achievements of science, too much of a wilder and keener than Grecian curiosity awakened by the speed, the romance, the wonders of travel; the spirit of civil life is becoming too vehement and too vivid in the festive gloryings and rejoicings with which it marks the events of senate-halls and battle-fields, there is too much of the zest and wine of social existence among our people, their demand for cultivation in their teachers of all descriptions is too certainly and too justly on the rise, and the causes which have produced this rise are too certain to continue, and that too with increasing force, to leave one sprig of hope for the days to come from a ministry which does not keep fully abreast with the advancing wave.

And whenever there is a class of men in the pulpit who are ignorant men in comparison with those in other professions, so that the

men of the world can look down upon the feeble herd with patronising pity mingled with contempt, then farewell to genteel respect for divine worship, and farewell, sacred majesty of truth as it is in Jesus, and farewell, reverence for the bleeding Lamb of God among men of other educated professions. The dignity of religion will be judged of by the dignity of her ministers; and on the hustings, in the representative chamber, and at the printing press, she will receive a patronising smile for a time from men who see that that smile is but the forerunner of a more effectual method to dispose of her. We shall see infidel clubs composed of a new spawn of reptiles of the Paine and Voltaire species, again banded together to *crush the wretch!* (as they may again presume to speak of the Son of God), and to crush Him too with scientific and religious tracts wrested from the feeble hands of his own friends. Close behind that pitying smile of contempt for the ministry we must again expect to see infidel professors in our seats of learning, infidel editors in our editorial chairs, infidel representatives in our halls, and infidel judges on our benches, brooding like cormorants around the tree of knowledge. In that day, if it come, we cannot hope that there is any way in which Christ can be dishonoured, in which his honour along with that of his ministers will not roll in the dust beneath the feet of a wicked and adulterous generation. That generation will be made doubly wicked by the belief that it has achieved a **SECOND GREAT VICTORY OF INFIDELITY** over religion. The first great apparent victory of infidelity, in the times of the French revolution, seems to have been intended to teach the need of *piety* along with learning; for it came at a time when we do not know that there was a special lack of learning; but it was also a time when Moderatism and Liberalism, and Latitudinarianism, and Formalism had eaten out piety, and spread death over the purest churches of Christendom. A second great seeming triumph of infidelity may be necessary to teach men the need of *learning* along with piety, and may come when men are trusting too entirely in their religious and missionary zeal and activity, so that the volumes of sound and thorough scholarship are strangers both to their daily and their nightly hands.

Let those who live in that day, if it come, look sharp for things which may well "sear the eyeballs" of the Christian world.

In these days we do not fear that the sacred things of our Zion will be turned into mockery at any such feasts as that of Belshazzar in his palace at Babylon of old; we do not trouble ourselves with the fear that the streets of any of our American cities may witness scenes like that which Paris presented on the famous night of St. Bartholomew; we do not realize that there can ever be hunted Covenanters on our mountain-sides, fleeing from the dragoons of a Sadducean tyrant, because our present liberty seems to go before us, like an eagle, and sweep such things out of our future path, and because the invincible prowess in arms of this land of freedom appears to be an eternal protection from the iron heel of the despot. But let our

liberty be once lost, as lost full well it may be, amid our tangled politics and from the constant, imperceptible revolutions in the spirits of the people, and let the Church of Christ lose its power to command respect and exert influence over the popular mind—then we may see Covenanters hunted by dragoons and staining with their blood the strongholds of mountains nearer to us than those of Scotland; we may see martyr-blood flowing in torrents down the gutters of cities nearer to us than that in which

“ Good Coligny’s hoary head was dabbled with his blood.”

We may see feasts of mockery at the holiest things of Zion celebrated in palaces nearer to us than the palace of Belshazzar in Babylon.

And when that dark day shall have come, and Zion shall be suffering, through the neglect of her friends, the evils which she fondly thought she could suffer only through the malice of her enemies, when her liberties are gone, and her enemies are her own countrymen—and when she shall look back with sighs of regret for the blessings she enjoyed even in the ancient days of despotism, and could almost pray for their return over all the world, that some Queen Elizabeth or some Protector Cromwell might again champion her cause the world over—*then* it shall appear that the very invincible prowess in arms in this land of ours, in which we now feel so much security, as it protects us from foreign *harm*, will be her most dreadful evil, because it will erect around her a wall of iron to imprison her from foreign *help*. And the myrmidons of sin and perdition will then shout aloud with a bolder note of triumph than ever, that Christianity has been, as they think, fairly tried in a land of complete freedom and found wanting.

CONCLUSION.

1. Will not fathers and brethren, who hold the keys of ordination to the sacred office, permit these things to stir them up to new purposes of fidelity to that trust? Is there not too much involved in the character of the ministry in coming years to leave any excuse for slovenly examinations, or unconstitutional liberality, or any other feeling or conduct which may be easy to the shrinking flesh at the moment, but which is to produce evil effects hereafter?

2. It would seem that any hand which is ever opened at all in Christian liberality ought to be opened in this cause. It would seem that any heart which ever indulges itself at all in the luxury of good deeds, may find that luxury here; that whoever feels for the generations who are to succeed us in this land, that deep and wise anxiety for their spiritual health which the Christian must feel, or that deep and wise anxiety for their social well-being which the patriot ought to feel, could find no better, no more rational, and no more hopeful way to express that anxiety than by employing his substance to promote the thorough education of the Christian ministry.

ARTICLE XII.

EXCELLENCE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE OFFICE OF
THE GOSPEL MINISTRY.

BY THE REV. ARCHIBALD ALEXANDER, D.D.*

THE idea of an office instituted by God himself, has in it something awful as well as sacred. All civil and secular offices, however dignified, owe their existence to human authority; but the preacher of the gospel acts under a commission from heaven. Supposing the existence of the Church as an organized body, officers are necessary. Indeed they enter essentially into the organization of such a body. The Church is Christ's school, and all Christians, of whatever age, are disciples, that is, learners; and where there are scholars, there must be teachers.

Christ himself is the GREAT TEACHER; but he employs subordinate instructors to publish and explain the lessons which in his word he has given. When Philip asked the Ethiopian nobleman, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" he candidly answered, "How can I, except some man teach me." The people need, not only to have the Holy Scriptures in their hands, but they need some qualified persons to expound them, that they may understand what they read. And it is evident that no person has a right to assume the office of teacher in the school of Christ, unless appointed mediately or immediately, by himself. What is said of Aaron is true universally of all sacred offices, "No man taketh this honour on himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." And this rule is by the apostle applied to the priesthood of Christ himself. "So also Christ glorified not himself to be made a high-priest, but He that said unto Him, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." Those, of old, who ran without being sent of God, were false prophets, against whom the heaviest woes are denounced; and under the New Testament, there were "false apostles,"—men who corrupted the word of God, and for filthy lucre, taught such things as they ought not. And the Church has been solemnly warned both by Christ and his apostles against false teachers, who are compared to wolves in sheep's clothing, who by enticing words and fair speeches endeavour to inveigle simple souls, and to lead away disciples after

* This venerable servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, lately called to his rest, worked to the end. No service, that it was proper for him to undertake, was declined. He practised on Calvin's motto, "*Prompte et sincere in opere Domini.*" In response to an invitation to contribute an article to the pages of our Magazine, if Providence permitted, he promptly forwarded this article. Although in the 80th year of his age, the manuscript was written in a clear, bold, running hand. He was a minister of few promises, but of great performance. The cause of ministerial and of general Christian education, always found in him a zealous advocate, an enlightened counsellor, and a liberal benefactor.—ED.

them. Though such present themselves to the Church in sheep's clothing,—though they make great show of love and devotion,—yet there is one mark by which they may be detected: “By their fruits shall ye know them.” As in heart, they are wicked men, and have some selfish and sinister end in view, their true character cannot long be concealed: their prevailing motives will become manifest by their conduct.

Prophets and apostles were called to the ministry immediately; either by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, or by the authority of Christ, while upon earth; but since inspiration and miracles have ceased, men, possessing the requisite qualifications, are inducted into the sacred office of the ministry by those already in office. And, that unsuitable persons might not be ordained, particular directions are given in the word of God, in regard to the character and qualifications of those who should be introduced into the ministerial office. And it behooves Presbyteries to feel their solemn responsibility to the Head of the Church, in the execution of this part of their trust. No more important duty can devolve upon any set of men, than the conferring on others the sacred office of rulers and teachers in the Church of Christ. The sacred deposit of divine truth should not be committed to novices, but to faithful men, able to teach others, and to convince or silence gainsayers.

That man who possesses the requisite qualifications, and whose heart God has inclined to seek the office of the ministry, ought to be considered as called of God; neither can we consider any particular impulse or impression other than this, as now necessary to a call to the ministry. Any other doctrine leads to enthusiasm, and should not be inculcated. No doubt the exercises of different individuals are very different in relation to the sacred office; some are much more deeply impressed with the awful responsibility of the office, and experience much more solicitude about their call; and the desire of the office is much stronger in some cases than in others; but the main inquiry should be, “Do I possess the prescribed qualifications? Are my motives pure? Do I seek the glory of God as my supreme end in aspiring to the ministry? Am I influenced by sincere love to my fellow-men? Am I willing to encounter difficulties, and undergo sufferings, in order to promote the salvation of perishing sinners?” When these questions can be honestly answered in the affirmative, candidates for the ministry need not vex their souls with anxious doubts about their call to the sacred office.

But, our object in this discourse is not to treat of the nature of a call to the gospel ministry: but to speak of the excellence and importance of the work. “He that desireth the office of a bishop desireth a GOOD WORK.”

The excellence of the work may be inferred from what has been said; namely, that the office is *instituted by the King of Zion*: and also from the fact, that those entering upon it rightfully, are *called of God* to undertake the work, and by his Spirit and Providence have *acquired the requisite qualifications*.

The dignity and excellency of the office of the holy ministry, may also be inferred from the *titles* given to ministers in the Scriptures. They are called "stewards of the mysteries of God." The office of a steward is one of trust and responsibility. He has deposited in his hands the most valuable goods and property of his master, which he is bound in honour and honesty to keep safely, and see that it suffers no injury. It is also his duty to dispense the goods placed in his hands wisely, and impartially, and faithfully, according to the directions of his lord; giving to all, in proper season, that which is due. This officer, therefore, has a striking similarity to that of the minister of the gospel; for he has a sacred treasure committed to him, which he is laid under solemn obligations to preserve from all adulteration or loss. And from this treasury his duty is, to draw forth whatever may be suitable and profitable to the people of his charge. It is evident, therefore, that fidelity and wisdom are the traits of character which should be prominent in stewards. And the ministers of the gospel, having the precious treasure of the gospel committed to them for safe keeping, fidelity is especially requisite, that the truth of God should be preserved, and transmitted to posterity unadulterated and in its simple purity. And as their office is to dispense the truth to their hearers, they should do this with impartiality and skill; rightly dividing the word of truth, so that all may receive their portion in due season. No work of man requires more wisdom and faithfulness, than the preaching of the word: and that office, instituted for the purpose of preserving and dispensing the word, must be excellent and important above all others.

But ministers of the gospel are ambassadors—ambassadors of Christ. They are so called, because they are commissioned by the Son of God to negotiate a treaty of peace with rebellious men. "All things," says Paul, "are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now, then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." As the reason why Paul and his coadjutors are called ambassadors, was not on account of any miraculous gifts, but because they were sent to reconcile men to God by proclaiming the gospel, it is evident that this title was not peculiar to the apostles or other inspired men, but common to all ministers of the gospel; for to all who are called to this work, the ministry of reconciliation is committed.

Let ministers remember, then, their high and honourable mission: they are commissioned ambassadors from the court of heaven. And let the people to whom they are sent, consider that the ambassador comes clothed with the authority of his Sovereign, so that whoever despises or rejects the ambassador, will be considered as despising

and rejecting the King of kings, according to the words of our Saviour to his disciples, "He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me, and he that despiseth me despiseth Him that sent me." How little do many think in what an important transaction they are engaged, while hearing the preaching of the gospel! How few of the multitude of hearers consider that they are parties to a negotiation, which in its issue involves life or death to every individual. As Paul says, "We are a sweet savour unto God, in them that are saved and in them that perish; to the one, we are a savour of life unto life; and to the other, of death unto death." The thought of his awful responsibility, led the apostle, on making this statement, to cry out, "And who is sufficient for these things?" This view of the importance of the ministerial office, should lead the people to reverence those who are invested with it. Veneration for the ministers of the gospel has greatly diminished, even since the first remembrance of the writer. Formerly, preachers of the gospel were treated with much more reverence than of late years. The fact is certain, and is a sad sign of degeneracy; but it falls not within our design to investigate the causes of the change. Christ's ambassadors ought, undoubtedly, to be highly respected for his sake, in whose name they come to offer to the people gracious terms of reconciliation: and if they should be maltreated, or their message rejected, we are assured that He will resent the affront. But if any who bear this office act unworthily of their high and sacred calling, so as to bring it into contempt with the world, they incur a weight of guilt which we have not words to express. It were better for them, if a mill-stone were tied round their neck, and they cast into the depths of the sea, than thus to lay a stumbling-block in the way of sinners; yea, it had been better for them never to have been born.

The true method of estimating the excellence and utility of any office or work, is to consider the end which it aims to accomplish—its efficiency in producing that end—the means which it employs—the benefits which incidentally flow from the discharge of the duties of the office, and the benefits which accrue to the persons who faithfully perform these duties.

Let us then, in the first place, consider *the end* of the gospel ministry. At what does it aim? Why was the office instituted? The most important offices among men, have for their object the temporal welfare of the human race: their health, their reputation, their property, and their peaceful abode. These are all valuable objects, while men reside upon earth; but their importance is limited by the short time which men are permitted to remain here below. But here is an office, which aims at the everlasting welfare of men; which seeks to rescue them from the bondage of iniquity, to redeem them from the curse of the law, to renovate their character, and to conduct them to an inheritance in heaven.

Who can estimate the value of a single soul? Eternity alone can

declare it. And what an honour, what a privilege is it, to be the instrument of saving, not merely one, but many immortal souls! Oh that ministers felt, as they ought, the excellence and efficiency of that gospel which they preach! If they did, they would be incessant in their labours, "instant in season, and out of season, reproving, rebuking, and exhorting, with all long-suffering and doctrine." How delightful the feelings of that minister, who, in heaven, shall be surrounded by a multitude of saved sinners, brought to the knowledge of the truth by his ministry. These will, indeed, be as jewels in the crown of glory which will encircle his brow. To save one soul from the pains of the second death, from everlasting torment, and to raise it to the height of heaven for ever,—to rejoice in the favour and love of the Redeemer, is of infinitely more value than all the honours and riches of this world; but the gospel will be the means of rescuing from eternal misery a multitude which no man can number.

That the gospel is indeed *the efficient means* of communicating life to souls dead in sin, is evident from many plain declarations of Scripture. It should be remembered, however, that the efficiency of the word is not in itself, but in the Holy Spirit, who attends it by his divine influence, rendering it "quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Christians are represented as "being born again, not of corruptible, but of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." "Who, of his own will, begat us by the word of truth." It is evident from these and many other Scriptures, that the word or gospel, which ministers preach, is made the efficient instrument of communicating spiritual life. No other instrumentality is attended with such effects. The office of those, therefore, who are appointed to preach the word, is the most excellent and important of any in the world. The most excellent endowment of man is spiritual life, and this is communicated by the word preached,—for "faith comes by hearing." Not but that the word read may be blessed to the conversion of souls, but God's usual method is to honour the ordinance of preaching with his divine blessing.

And as the word is the instrument of *conversion*, so it is of *sanctification*. The life at first communicated, like natural life in infancy, is at first feeble, and needs to grow to maturity, by that nutriment which is adapted to it. Christ is the bread of life. His flesh and blood, spiritually apprehended, afford nourishment to the soul. But Christ is nowhere found by the believer but in the gospel; there we learn who Christ is, and what he has done. This knowledge is intimately connected with growth in grace, as we learn from the exhortation of the Apostle Peter: "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." That sanctification is by

the word, is manifest from the prayer of our Lord: "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth." Hence the Saviour's gift of all classes of teachers in the Church, is declared to be "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, until we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." (Ephes. 4 : 12, 13.)

Not only is strength derived from the word, but it is the channel through which divine *consolations* are received by mourners in Zion. Ministers are honoured with the agreeable office of being comforters of the distressed. They must not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax; God's message to them is, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people." The Apostles and early ministers were comforted in all their troubles: "Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." (2 Cor. 1 : 4.) There is no peace enjoyed on earth, comparable to that which Christ bestows on his sincere disciples, through the promises of the gospel, which are exceeding great and precious, and all and all, "yea and amen, to the glory of God in Christ Jesus." These divine consolations ministers of the gospel are privileged to dispense by their preaching, and by their conversation. The excellence of this part of the pastoral office will appear more evidently, if we consider, that, by means of these gracious words of promise, pastors are the instruments, not only of comforting the afflicted and drying the mourner's tears, but of preparing the soul for its departure out of the body, and for its entrance into the world of glorified spirits. When the art of the physician has failed; when the dark shadows of death hover around the dying Christian, then the precious promises of God's word, administered by the minister of the gospel, have cheered with lively hope, and comforted with the bright prospect of future felicity, thousands of souls, who have by this means been able, not only to resign themselves into the hand of God, and submit themselves to his will, but to rejoice in hope of the glory of God, and to sing in the language of triumph, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

The excellence of the pastoral office will moreover be manifest from the benefits which it confers *on all those who enter it with sincere piety*, and perform its duties with fidelity and diligence. If candidates for the sacred office had regard merely to temporal advantages, they would choose some other profession. In our country, this office does not usually lead to wealth and ease, or to dignities and honours. Much self-denial is required of all true and faithful servants of Christ. But their reward does not consist in worldly honour and prosperity, but in intellectual and spiritual blessings. All their studies, and all their employments have a tendency, when rightly pursued, to elevate, to strengthen, to sanctify, and comfort the minds of those engaged in this high and holy calling. The

motives to a cultivation of piety, and the means of growth in grace, are greater to the minister than to others. His mind becomes enriched with sacred literature, and his heart enlarged by the benevolence which the gospel inculcates and inspires. If he is not wiser and better than most other Christians, it must be his own fault. What pleasure does the true servant of Jesus Christ enjoy, in dispensing the precious truths of the gospel! When the preacher's feelings are in harmony with the truths which he delivers, the very exercise of preaching is delightful: no work on earth affords so much genuine pleasure. And when his labours are crowned with any measure of success,—when he sees the word taking effect on the minds and hearts of his hearers, and beholds careless sinners awakened and converted to God, and backsliders reclaimed, and the people of God edified and comforted, his spirit rejoices with the joy of the Holy Ghost. Certainly, taking the ministers of the gospel as a class, they excel all other classes of men for wisdom and piety. And though subject to many anxieties and sorrows, yet they probably have more pure, spiritual comfort than any other men. And the more unreservedly they are devoted to their Master's work, the greater the benefits they will derive from the office, and the happier they will be. I am of opinion, that there are no happier men on earth, than faithful missionaries. But the pious minister does not expect to receive his reward in this life. He entertains the joyful hope of being crowned with a crown of life, in the world to come. Hear Paul, when a prisoner in chains, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." "They that be wise shall shine as the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars, for ever and ever."

The excellency of the ministry *in promoting the order, morality, and prosperity of civil society*, is far greater than mere politicians are willing to allow. How much force is given to human laws, by the religious impressions which the gospel makes on the minds of many who never embrace it, cannot be estimated. No doubt the light given to the conscience, in ten thousands of instances, prevents crimes which otherwise would have been perpetrated. Indeed, the restraints of religion, on those who attend the preaching of the gospel, is far greater than the fear of civil penalties. Civil rulers should therefore do all they consistently can to promote religion, and especially the preaching of the gospel. Compare that portion of society who are regular hearers of the gospel, with those who neglect it altogether, and what a remarkable difference!

The incidental benefits which the Christian ministry confers on society are great. The advantage which civil government derives from the influence of religion on the minds of men, by which they are, in thousands of instances, restrained from perpetrating acts of

iniquity, has already been brought into view; but there are other things intimately connected with the administration of justice,—the good order of society, which derive much of their force and utility from the public instructions given to the people from the pulpit. Among these there are two which deserve a special notice. The first, the sacredness of an oath. Unless men can be brought, in giving evidence in courts of justice, to speak the truth, justice and right cannot be maintained. Not only so, but by false testimony, the lives, the property, and the reputation of men may be sacrificed under the forms of administering justice. Now, it is found that the sanctions of a solemn oath,—which is the calling God to witness the truth of what we say, with an imprecation of his just vengeance if we knowingly speak what is false,—has a mighty influence on the minds of most men; especially when the oath is administered with due solemnity. We are aware that among some, as the Romans, for example, the oath was regarded with much reverence; and this had a mighty influence both on citizens and soldiers, in the last days of that commonwealth. But true religion, as exhibited in the Holy Scriptures, will have a much more salutary effect on the minds of a people, than a false religion. It has been objected, that the testimony of Quakers, Mennonites, and others, who refuse an oath, is as credible as that of those who swear on the Bible or with the uplifted hand. To which it may be answered, that a solemn affirmation, in which an appeal is made to the omniscient and heart-searching God, is an oath, only wanting the outward ceremony, which is no part of its essence. And it may be true, that if all persons who are called to give testimony, had received as careful a training as the children of the sects referred to, the necessity of a solemn oath would not be so necessary; but taking men as we find them, an oath though not effectual in every case, has a powerful tendency to elicit truths which are necessary to the impartial administration of justice. And in every community, much depends upon the standard of morality which is established, and on the public reproach which follows certain crimes. The preaching of the gospel, undoubtedly, produces a deeper feeling of moral obligation than would exist without it.

The other institution, which receives much of its sacred character from the precepts of the gospel, is marriage. How much this single institution contributes to the peace, purity, and good order of society, it would take a volume to show in all its extent. The prohibition of licentiousness, to which the corrupt nature of man is so strongly inclined, is a matter of great importance to the health, increase, and morality of any people. And especially when adultery is held up to view in all its turpitude and enormity, as is the fact whenever the gospel is faithfully preached, the beneficial effects of the ministry must be acknowledged by all considerate persons; but still one half the benefits derived from it are not appreciated, because they are of the negative kind, and consist in the prevention of evils, which but

for this restraint would have poured forth their deleterious influences like a flood. If those Socialists, who wish to do away with this sacred institution, should ever prevail in any country so far as to abolish marriage, and introduce their genuine principles, it will be seen how important is the institution of marriage, and how corrupt and wretched will be the state of that society in which no such institution exists, or where its inviolable and sacred nature is disregarded.

One other benefit of the order of the holy ministry ought not to be passed over in silence. I mean its tendency to preserve and promote good education, and to foster and preserve in purity institutions of learning, and the productions of the press. Who that has any acquaintance with history, does not know that in all ages, the clergy have been the repositories of the learning of their respective ages, and also the principal instructors in all schools and universities? Even in the dark ages, when few could read, what little learning there was, existed in the cells of the monks and among the secular clergy. And above all others they have been the chief labourers in publishing books useful to the public, both before and since the invention of the art of printing.

And at this time we are more indebted to the ministers of the gospel for books of salutary instruction on religion and morality than to all other classes put together. And even in matters of literature and science, they have contributed their full share. And if it had not been for the ministers of the gospel, our higher seminaries of learning would scarcely have now an existence; or if founded, competent teachers would have been sadly deficient, if the clergy had not assumed the important duty of giving instructions in these institutions.

The object of the foregoing remarks in showing the importance and excellency of the holy ministry, is not to induce ministers to think highly of themselves, but of their office; as Paul says, "I magnify mine office." The more highly they think of the dignity and value of the office with which they are invested, the more solicitous will they be to possess the requisite qualifications, and the more zealous and conscientious in performing with diligence and fidelity the arduous duties of their sacred office. Where there is found the proper temper and feelings in ministers, every consideration of this subject will tend above almost every other thing to produce humility; and also to excite to diligence and fidelity in the discharge of the duties of their office.

And in the close, we would bring to the view of ministers and candidates for the ministry, that *glorious reward* which will be graciously bestowed on every faithful labourer in the gospel harvest. Christ, when he shall come in his glory, will confer on them such honours and rewards as will fill their hearts with unutterable and everlasting joy. He will say unto them, "Well done, good and

faithful servants, enter into the joy of your Lord." Paul anticipated this reward, when he said shortly before his departure, "I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing."

"Be faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

ARTICLES XIII., XIV., XV.

INAUGURATION EXERCISES

AT THE OPENING OF THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, AT PRINCETON, N. J.

[We intended to preface the Discourses which follow, by the history of the Theological Seminary, established by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, at Princeton, N. J. It is with *great reluctance* that the historical sketch is postponed for another year; but the pressure of many engagements has prevented its preparation in season for the present number of this Magazine. It is a part of our plan to give the history of all our Theological Seminaries, and to reprint the various Inaugural Discourses which have been delivered from time to time.

The Services at the Inauguration of ARCHIBALD ALEXANDER, D.D., as Professor of Didactic and Polemic Theology, were as follows:

I. The duty of the Church to take measures for providing an able and faithful ministry: a Sermon, delivered at Princeton, August 12, 1812, at the Inauguration of the Rev. Archibald Alexander, D.D., as Professor of Didactic and Polemic Theology, in the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church, by Samuel Miller, D.D., Pastor of the Church in Wall Street, New York.

II. An Inaugural Discourse, delivered in the Church at Princeton, New Jersey, in the presence of the Directors of the Theological Seminary, on the 12th of August, 1812, by Archibald Alexander, D.D.

III. Charge to the Professor and Students of Divinity, by Philip Milledoler, D.D.

The Discourses were delivered in the Presbyterian Church at Princeton, N. J., on August 12th, 1812.

The publication of the Discourses was made by authority of the Board of Directors, according to the following extract from their Minutes: "The Directors of the Theological Seminary, desirous of making known to the Christian public the views and designs with which the Institution under their care has been founded, and is now open for the reception of pupils; and believing that these views and designs cannot be better explained, than by the publication of the Discourses this day delivered, at the Inauguration of the first Professor:

"Resolved, That the thanks of this Board be given to the Directors and Professor who delivered those Discourses, and that they be requested to furnish copies for the press.

"Dr. Romeyn and Mr. Zachariah Lewis were appointed a committee to superintend the printing, distribution, and sale of the impression.

"A true extract.

JOHN McDOWELL, *Secretary.*"

The following is the title, in full, of the Pamphlet, which contains 122 pages:—

"The Sermon delivered at the Inauguration of the Rev. Archibald Alexander, D.D., as Professor of Didactic and Polemic Theology, in the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church, in the United States of America. To which are added, the Professor's Inaugural Address, and the Charge to the Professor and Students. Published by order of the Board of Directors. New York: Published by Whiting and Watson, Theological and Classical Booksellers, No. 96 Broadway. J. Seymour, Printer, 1812."

The above has been recited in detail, on account of the historical interest of the pamphlet.—Ed.]

ARTICLE XIII.

THE DUTY OF THE CHURCH IN PROVIDING AN
ABLE AND FAITHFUL MINISTRY.

BY THE REV. SAMUEL MILLER, D.D.

“And the things which thou hast heard of me, among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”—2 Tim. 2 : 2.

THE Apostle *Paul* received both his knowledge of the Gospel, and his commission to preach it, immediately from the great Head of the Church. Yet, notwithstanding the extraordinary circumstances which attended his theological instruction, and his official investiture, that *all things might be done decently and in order*, he submitted to *the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery*, before he went forth on his great mission to the Gentiles. In like manner, *Timothy*, his *own son in the faith*, to whom the exhortation before us is addressed, was set apart to the work of the holy ministry, by *the Presbytery*, in which body, on that occasion, the Apostle himself seems to have presided.* *Timothy* was now at *Ephesus*; and being the most active and influential member of the Presbytery which was constituted in that part of the Church, his spiritual father directed to him, as such, and in him to the Church in all succeeding times, the rules and instructions contained in the Epistles which bear his name. Among these we find the passage which has just been read: *And the things which thou hast heard of me, among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*

It is impossible, within the limits of a single discourse, to do justice to a portion of scripture replete with such various and important matter, as the slightest attention will discover in this text. Of course, much of what properly belongs to its illustration, must be either wholly omitted, or very briefly noticed, on the present occasion. That the Christian Ministry is an institution of Jesus Christ; that this institution is essential, not only to the well-being, but also to the very existence of the Church, as an organized body; that Christ has promised that there shall always be a succession of ministers in his Church, to the end of the world; and that none have a right to enter on the appropriate functions of this sacred office, without having that right formally and officially “committed” to them, by men who are themselves already in the same office; are great elementary principles of ecclesiastical order, which are all fairly implied in the passage before us; but which, I trust, it is not necessary for me to attempt either to establish or to illustrate before this audience. They are so plainly laid down in scripture, and so evidently reasonable in themselves, that I shall, at present, take them for granted.

* Compare 1 Tim. 4 : 14, with 2 Tim. 1 : 6.

Neither will it be deemed necessary, at present, to dwell on the numerous and important *benefits* of an able and faithful ministry. It may be said, without exaggeration, that every interest of man is involved in this blessing. The order, comfort, and edification of the Church; the progress in knowledge, the growth in grace, and the consolation of individual believers; the regularity, peace, polish, and strength of civil society; the extension of intellectual and moral cultivation; the glory of God; and the eternal welfare of men; are among the great benefits which an able and faithful ministry is, ordinarily, the means of promoting; and which, without such a ministry, we cannot hope to attain, at least in any considerable degree. If it be acknowledged that the sanctions of religion exert a mighty, and most benign influence on the order and happiness of society; if the observance of the Christian Sabbath be as really a blessing to the world as it is to the Church; if the solemnities of public worship, be a source of moral and temporal benefit to millions, who give no evidence of a saving acquaintance with the power of the gospel; if the weekly instructions of the sanctuary have a native tendency to enlighten, refine, and restrain, those whom they are not the means of converting; and if it please God *by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe*; then, it is evident, that an able and faithful ministry, next to the sanctifying operations of the Holy Spirit, is the greatest benefit that can be conferred upon a people. And if these great institutions of heaven, are likely, other things being equal, to be beneficial, in proportion to the clearness, the force, the wisdom, and the fidelity with which they are exhibited, as both common sense and the word of God evidently dictate; then it is plain, that the *more* able and the *more* faithful that ministry, with which any people is blessed, the more extensive and important are likely to be the benefits resulting from it, both to the Church and the world. The father of a family, as well as the professor of religion, has reason to desire the attainment of such a ministry. The patriot, as well as the Christian, ought earnestly to wish, and be ready to contribute his aid, that the Church may obey the precept of her head and Lord: *the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*

I say, that the CHURCH may obey this divine precept; for it is, undoubtedly, a mistake, and a very grievous mistake, to imagine, as many seem to imagine, that precepts of the kind before us, are addressed to ministers alone. It is freely granted, that ministers are the appointed agents for training up those who are to succeed them in this holy vocation; and for imparting to them the official powers, which they have themselves received. Yet it is, unquestionably, in the *name*, and as the constituted *executive* and *organ* of that part of the Church which they represent, that they perform this service. If, therefore, as I take for granted all will allow, the design of the precept before us did not cease with *Timothy*; if both its reason and its obligation be permanent; then the Church of Christ, at this hour,

is to consider it as directed to her. It is the Church that is bound to take order, that *what she has received be committed to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*

The doctrine of our text, then, is, THAT IT IS THE INDISPENSABLE DUTY OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST, IN ALL AGES, TO TAKE MEASURES FOR PROVIDING AN ABLE AND FAITHFUL MINISTRY.

The great FACT, that this is the duty of the Church, I shall consider as sufficiently established by the plain and unequivocal precept before us; and shall employ the time that remains for the present discourse, in inquiring,

What are we to understand by an able and faithful Ministry?

And,

What are the means which the Church is bound to employ for providing such a Ministry?

I. WHAT ARE WE TO UNDERSTAND BY AN ABLE AND FAITHFUL MINISTRY?

It is a ministry, at once *qualified* and *disposed* to perform, with enlightened and unwearied assiduity, all the duties, whether of instruction, of defence, or of discipline, which belong to ambassadors of Christ, to pastors and rulers in his Church.

This general character implies PIETY, TALENTS, LEARNING, and DILIGENCE.

1. The *first* requisite to form a faithful and able minister, is PIETY. By this I mean that he be a regenerated man; that he have a living faith in that Saviour whom he preaches to others; that the love of Christ habitually constrain him; that he have himself walked in those paths of humility, self-denial, and holy communion with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, in which it is the business of his life to endeavour to lead his fellow-men.

I shall not now speak of the necessity of piety, to a minister's personal salvation; nor of its inestimable importance to his personal comfort. I shall not dwell on the irksomeness, nay, the intolerable drudgery, of labouring in a vocation in which the heart does not go along; nor on the painful misgivings which must ever attend preaching an unknown Saviour, and recommending untasted hopes and joys. Neither shall I attempt to describe, tremendous and overwhelming as it is, the aggravated doom of that man, who, from the heights of this sacred office, shall sink into the abyss of the damned; who, *after having preached to others, shall himself become a cast-away.** But my object is, to show the importance, and the necessity, of this best of all attainments, in order to *qualify* any man for discharging the duties of the ministerial office. It is to show, that, without piety, he cannot be an *able* minister. He cannot be a *workman, that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, and giving to each his portion in due season.†*

How can a man who knows only the theory of religion, undertake

* 1 Cor. 9 : 27.

† 2 Tim. 2 : 15.

to be a practical guide in spiritual things? How can he adapt his instructions to all the varieties of Christian experience? How can he direct the awakened, the inquiring, the tempted, and the doubting? How can he feed the sheep and the lambs of Christ? How can he sympathize with mourners in Zion? How can he comfort others with those consolations wherewith he himself has never been comforted of God? He cannot possibly perform, as he ought, any of these duties, and yet they are the most precious and interesting parts of the ministerial work. However gigantic his intellectual powers; however deep, and various, and accurate his learning, he is not *able*, in relation to any of these points, to *teach others*, seeing he is not taught himself. If he make the attempt, it will be *the blind leading the blind*; and of this, unerring wisdom has told us the consequence.* It were rash, indeed, and unwarranted, to say, that a man who knows nothing of the power of godliness, may not be employed, by a sovereign God, as the means of saving benefit to others. God undoubtedly may, and probably sometimes does "by way of miracle, raise a man to life by the bones of a dead prophet."† He may, and, there is reason to believe sometimes does, "honour his own word so far as to make it effectual to salvation, even when it falls from unhallowed lips." The ministry even of *Judas Iscariot* was, probably, not without its benefit to the Church of Christ. But such a result is not, in ordinary cases, and certainly not in any considerable degree, to be expected. When unsanctified ministers are introduced into the Church, we may generally expect them to prove, not only an offence to God, but also a curse to his people. Piety, orthodoxy, practical holiness, and all the spiritual glories of *the household of faith*, will commonly be found to decline in proportion to the number and influence of these enemies in disguise.

And here I cannot help bearing testimony against what appears to me a dangerous mistake; which, though it may not be common, yet sometimes occurs among parents and guardians of the more serious class. I mean the mistake of *destining* young persons to the gospel ministry, from a very early period of life, before they can be supposed, from any enlightened view of the subject, to concur in the choice themselves; and before they give any satisfactory evidence of vital piety. Brethren, I venerate the parent who desires, and daily prays, that it may please God to prepare and dispose his child, to serve him in *the ministry of reconciliation*. Nay, I think that parent worthy of the thanks of every friend to religion, who solemnly devotes his child, even from the earliest period of life, to the service of the Church, and avowedly conducts every part of his education with a view to this great object; provided the original consecration, and every subsequent arrangement, be made on the condition, carefully and frequently *expressed*, as well as *implied*, that God shall be pleased to sanction and accept the offering, by imparting

* Matt. 11 : 15.

† 2 Kings 13 : 21.

his grace, and giving a heart to love and desire the sacred work. But there is a wide difference between this, and resolving that a particular son shall be a minister, in the same manner, and on the same principles, as another is devoted to the medical profession, or to the bar, as a respectable employment in life; without recognising vital piety, and the deliberate choice of the ministry, from religious motives, as indispensable qualifications. This kind of destination to the sacred office, is as dangerous as it is unwarranted. Let the Christian parent, however solemnly he may have devoted his child to the work of the ministry, and however fondly he may have anticipated his entrance on that blessed work; if he find, at the proper age for deciding the question, no comfortable evidence of a heart regenerated, and governed by the Spirit of grace; let him deliberately advise,—though his heart be wrung with anguish by the sacrifice,—let him deliberately advise the choice of another profession. When young men begin to enter the gospel ministry, because they were early destined to the office; because it is a respectable profession; or because they wish to gratify parents and friends; rather than because they love the office and its work, and have reason to hope that God has been pleased to *call them by his grace, and reveal his Son in them*;* we may consider the ministry as in a fair way to be made, in fact, a *secular* employment, and the Church a prostituted theatre for the schemes and ambition of worldly men.

So deeply and vitally important is piety in forming a faithful and able ministry; and so often has it appeared to be forgotten, or, at least, undervalued, amidst the brilliancy of more splendid accomplishments; that there cannot be too strict a guard placed on this point, both by public sentiment, and by ministerial fidelity. Many very excellent men, indeed, have felt a jealousy of Theological Seminaries, as such, as if they were calculated for training up learned and eloquent, rather than pious ministers. Though I believe that this jealousy has been sometimes indulged unjustly, and often carried to an unwise and mischievous extreme; and though there appears to me no other ground for it, than the melancholy fact, that the best human institutions are liable to perversion and degeneracy; yet I cannot find in my heart to condemn it altogether. Nay, I trust that a portion of it will always be kept alive, as a guard, under God, against the evil which it deprecates. For I persuade myself that every minister of the Presbyterian Church, in the United States, is ready to adopt the language, with a little variation, of that great and excellent man, who, for near thirty years, adorned the American Church, and the presidential chair of this College. “Accursed be all that learning which sets itself in opposition to vital piety! Accursed be all that learning which disguises, or is ashamed of vital piety! Accursed be all that learning, which attempts to fill the

* Gal. 1 : 15, 16.

place, or supersede the honours of vital piety! Nay, accused be all that learning, which is not made subservient to the promotion and the glory of vital piety!"*

But piety, though it holds the first place among essential qualifications here, is not *all* that is necessary. It is not every pious man, nay, not every fervently pious man, that is qualified to be a minister, and far less an *able* minister. Another essential requisite to form the character of such a minister, is,

2. TALENTS. By which I mean, not that every able minister must, of necessity, be a *man of genius*; but that he must be a man of *good sense*; of *native discernment and discretion*; in other words, of a *sound respectable natural understanding*.

When our blessed Lord was about to send forth his first ministers, he said unto them; *Be ye wise as serpents, as well as harmless as doves.*† And, truly, there is no employment under heaven, in which wisdom, practical wisdom, is so important, or rather, so imperiously and indispensably demanded, as in the *ministry of reconciliation*. A man of a weak and childish mind, though he were pious as *Gabriel*, can never make an able minister, and he ought never to be invested with the office at all: for with respect to a large portion of its duties, he is utterly unqualified to perform them; and he is in constant danger of rendering both himself and his office contemptible.

No reasonable man would require proof to convince him, that good sense is essential to form an able physician, an able advocate at the bar, or an able ambassador at a foreign court. Nor would any prudent man entrust his life, his property, or the interests of his country, to one who did not bear this character. And can it be necessary to employ argument, to show that interests, in comparison with which, worldly property, the health of the body, and even the temporal prosperity of nations, are all little things, ought not to be committed to any other than a man of sound and respectable understanding? Alas! if ecclesiastical judicatories had not frequently acted, as if this were far from being a settled point, it were almost an insult to my audience to speak of it as a subject admitting of a question.

Though a minister concentrated in himself all the piety, and all the learning, of the Christian Church; yet if he had not at least a *decent stock of good sense*, for directing and applying his other qualifications, he would be worse than useless. Upon good sense depends all that is dignified, prudent, conciliatory, and respectable in private deportment; and all that is judicious, seasonable, and calculated to edify, in public ministrations. The methods to be employed for *winning souls*, are so many and various, according to the taste, prejudices, habits, and stations of men: a constant regard to time, place, circumstances, and character, is so essential, if we desire to

* See *Witherspoon's Sermon on Glorifying in the Cross of Christ.* † Matt. 10 : 16.

profit those whom we address: and some tolerable medium of deportment, between moroseness and levity, reserve and tattling, bigotry and latitudinarianism, lukewarmness and enthusiasm, is so indispensable to public usefulness, that the man who lacks a respectable share of discernment and prudence, had better, far better, be in any other profession than that of a minister.* An *able* minister he cannot possibly be. Neither will anything short of a sound judgment, a native perception of what is fit and proper, or otherwise, preserve any man who is set to teach and to rule in the Church, without a miracle, from those perversions of scripture; those ludicrous absurdities; and those effusions of drivelling childishness, which are calculated to bring the ministry and the Bible into contempt.

3. A third requisite to an able and faithful ministry, is **COMPETENT KNOWLEDGE**. Without this, both piety and talents united are inadequate to the official work. Nay, without cultivation and discipline; without a competent store of facts and principles, to regulate the mind, the stronger the talents, the more likely are they to lead their possessor astray, and to become the instruments of mischief, both to himself and the Church.

The first ministers of the gospel were divinely inspired; and, of course, had no need of acquiring knowledge by the ordinary methods. They were put in possession by a miracle, and perhaps in a single hour, of that information, which, now, can only be gained by years of laborious study.† It were well if this fact were remembered and weighed by those who plead, that, as the gospel was first preached by *fishermen* and *tax-gatherers*, so it may be as well preached, at the present day, by persons of fervent piety, and plain sense, who have never enjoyed any greater advantages of scholastic learning, than the apostles did. The supposed fact, which these vain and ignorant pleaders assume, is utterly unfounded. The apostles were *not* an illiterate ministry. They were the soundest, and best informed divines that ever adorned the Christian Church. So indispensable did it appear to infinite wisdom, that they should be such, that they were thus accomplished by the immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost. And we have reason to believe, that men, before unlearned, were chosen to be the subjects of this inspiration, in preference to others, that the miracle might be the more apparent; that it might be the more clearly seen that *the excellency of the power was of God and not of man*.‡ Let this inspiration, confirmed as it then was by miracle, be now produced, and we will acknowledge it

* Though a *Christian* would have expressed himself in different language, there is much weight in the maxim of the heathen satirist, *Nullum numen abest si sit prudentia*.—*Juv.*

† There is no intention here to exclude daily, or frequent *conversations* with our Lord, as one important means of instruction which the apostles enjoyed. This, however, though not, strictly speaking, a *miraculous* mode of acquiring knowledge, was yet wholly *extraordinary*.

‡ 2 Cor. 4 : 7.

as more than an adequate substitute for the ordinary method of acquiring knowledge, by books and study.

But if, as we all allow, the age of inspiration and of miracle be long since past; and if it be still necessary, notwithstanding, that the preachers of the gospel possess, substantially, the same knowledge that the apostles had; then, undoubtedly, it is to be acquired in a different way from theirs, that is, by the diligent use of ordinary means. If ministers must be *apt to teach*, as the Spirit of God has declared,* they ought to be *capable* of teaching. If the *priest's lips* ought to *keep knowledge*,† he certainly ought to *possess* knowledge. And if *Timothy*, though he lived in the days of inspiration, and was the immediate and favourite disciple of an inspired man, was yet enjoined, by that very inspired man, to *give himself to reading*, as well as to *exhortation*; to *meditate upon these things*, and to *give himself wholly to them*, that his *profiting might appear to all*;‡ how much more necessary are similar means of acquiring knowledge, to those who are called to labours of the same nature, and quite as arduous, without possessing the same advantages!

But what *kind*, and what *degree* of intellectual cultivation, and of acquired knowledge, may be considered as necessary to form an able minister of Jesus Christ? That we may give a more enlightened answer to this question, let us inquire, what such a minister is called, and must be qualified, to perform? He is, then, to be ready, on all occasions, to explain the Scriptures. This is his first and chief work. That is, not merely to state and support the more simple and elementary doctrine of the gospel; but also to elucidate with clearness the various parts of the sacred volume, whether doctrinal, historical, typical, prophetic, or practical. He is to be ready to rectify erroneous translations of Sacred Scripture; to reconcile seeming contradictions; to clear up real obscurities; to illustrate the force and beauty of allusions to ancient customs and manners; and, in general, to explain the word of God, as one who has made it the object of his deep and successful study. He is *set for the defence of the gospel*;§ and, therefore, must be qualified to answer the objections of infidels; to repel the insinuations and cavils of sceptics; to detect, expose, and refute the ever varying forms of heresy; and to give notice, and *stand in the breach*, when men, ever so covertly or artfully, depart from *the faith once delivered to the saints*.|| He is to be ready to solve the doubts, and satisfy the scruples of conscientious believers; to give instruction to the numerous classes of respectful and serious inquirers; to *reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine*.¶ He is to preach the gospel with plainness, dignity, clearness, force, and solemnity. And, finally, he is to perform his part in the judicatories of the Church, where candidates for the holy ministry are examined and their qualifications

* 1 Tim. 3 : 2, and 2 Tim. 2 : 24.

† 1 Tim. 4 : 13, 15.

|| Jude 3.

† Malachi 2 : 7.

§ Philip. 1 : 17.

¶ 2 Tim. 4 : 2.

ascertained; where a constant inspection is maintained over the faith and order of the Church; where the general interests of Zion are discussed and decided; and in conducting the affairs of which, legislative, judicial, and executive proceedings are all combined.

This is but a very brief and imperfect sketch of what a minister is called to perform. Now, it is evident that, in order to accomplish all this, with even tolerable ability, a man must be furnished with a large amount of knowledge. "He must," (and on this subject I am happy in being able to fortify myself with the judgment, and to employ, for the most part, the language of the General Assembly of our Church,) "he must be well skilled in the *original languages* of the Holy Scriptures. He must be versed in *Jewish and Christian antiquities*. He must have a competent acquaintance with *Ancient Geography*, and *Oriental Customs*. He must have read and digested the principal arguments and writings, relative to what has been called the *Deistical Controversy*. He must have studied, carefully and correctly, *Natural Theology*, together with *Didactic, Polemic, and Casuistic Divinity*; and be able to support the doctrines of the gospel, by a ready, pertinent, and abundant quotation of *Scripture texts* for that purpose. He must have a considerable acquaintance with general *History and Chronology*; and a particular acquaintance with the *history of the Christian Church*. He must have studied attentively the duties of the *Pastoral Office*; the form of *Church government* authorized by the Scriptures; and the administration of it as practised in the Protestant churches."* He must have become well versed in *Moral Philosophy*, as an important auxiliary in studying man, his constitution, the powers and exercises of his depraved and sanctified nature, and his duties thence arising. To all these, he must add, a respectable share of knowledge, in *general Grammar*, in *Logic, Metaphysics, Natural Philosophy, Mathematical Science, Geography, Natural History, Polite Literature*.

Several of these branches of learning are, indeed, only *auxiliary* to the main body, if I may so express it, of ministerial erudition. But they are important auxiliaries. No man, it is true, can be a complete master of them all; and it were criminal in a minister to attempt so much. The time requisite for this, must be taken from more important employments. Of some of these departments of knowledge, general views are sufficient; and of others, perhaps, an acquaintance with nomenclatures and first principles ought to satisfy the theological pupil. But so much of them ought to be acquired, as may enable their possessor the better to understand the Scriptures, and the better to defend the gospel. I repeat it, every branch of knowledge is helpful and desirable to the Christian minister. Not to enable him to *shine*, as a *man of learning*: this were infinitely beneath the aim of an ambassador of Christ; but to make him a more accomplished and useful teacher of others. For it is certain

* *Constitution of the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church. Article 4th.*

that the more he attains of real, solid science, provided it be sanctified science, the more clearly will he be able to explain the sacred volume, and the more wisely and forcibly to preach that *Gospel which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.**

4. Once more, it enters into the character of a faithful minister, that he is ACTIVE, DILIGENT, and PERSEVERING in the discharge of his multiplied and arduous duties. However fervent his piety; however vigorous his native talents; and however ample his acquired knowledge; yet, if he be timid, indolent, wavering, easily driven from the path of duty, or speedily discouraged in his evangelical labours, he does not answer the apostle's description of a *faithful man*. The minister who is, in any good measure, entitled to this character, is one who carefully studies to know, and to the best of his knowledge, *declares the whole counsel of God*, without fearing the frowns, or courting the smiles, of men; who shrinks not from any self-denial, labour, or danger to which the will of his Master, and the interests of religion, evidently call him; who abhors the thought of sitting down in inglorious ease, while thousands are perishing around him; who does not allow himself to be diverted by secular or minor objects from his grand work; who is *instant in season, and out of season*, in all the diversified and momentous labours of his holy vocation; and the object of whose steady exertion, as well as supreme desire, it is, that the Church may be built up; that souls may be saved; and that *Christ in all things may be glorified.*†

Such is a faithful and able minister. A minister fervently pious; eminently wise, discerning, and prudent; extensively learned, especially *mighty in the Scriptures*; abounding and prevalent in prayer; a bold, energetic, instructive, experimental preacher; a zealous, affectionate, condescending, laborious pastor; a friend to revivals of religion; a firm and persevering contender for the truth; one, in short, who devotes all his talents, all his learning, all his influence, and all his exertions, to the one grand object,—*fulfilling the ministry which he has received of the Lord Jesus.*

Such a minister, to select an example, was the apostle *Paul*. With a heart warmed with the love of Christ; with an understanding vigorous, sound, and comprehensive; and with a store of various and profound knowledge, he went forth to meet and conciliate the enemies of his divine Master: and in the course of his ministry, he manifested the importance of every qualification with which that Master had furnished him. Let us follow and observe him a little in the discharge of his ministerial labours. “Now we see him reasoning with Pagans, and then remonstrating with Jews; now arguing from the law of nature, and then from the Old Testament scriptures; now appealing to the writings of heathen poets and

* Rom. 1 : 16.

† 1 Peter 4 : 11.

philosophers, and then referring to *the traditions of the fathers*, of which he had been *exceedingly zealous*: now stating his arguments with all logical exactness, and then exposing the sophistry and false learning of his adversaries;”* now pleading with all the majesty and pathos of unrivalled eloquence, upon *Mars-hill*, and before *Felix and Agrippa*, and then instructing, from house to house, the young and the aged, with all the tenderness of a father, and all the simplicity and condescension of a babe. And what was the consequence? With these qualifications, he laboured not only more *abundantly*, but more *successfully*, than all the apostles; and has probably been the means of richer blessings to the Church and the world, than any other mere man that ever lived.

But you will, perhaps, ask, “Ought *all* these qualifications to be considered as *indispensable* for *every* minister? For example, ought no one to have the ministry ‘committed’ to him, unless he have acquired, or be in a fair way to attain, the *whole* of those literary and scientific accomplishments which have been recounted as desirable?” It is not *necessary*, perhaps it is not *proper*, at present, to give a particular answer to this question. My object has been to describe an *able* and *faithful* ministry. To my description I am not conscious of having added anything superfluous or unimportant. Such a ministry it ought to be the *aim* and the *endeavour* of the Church to train up. Yet, it is certain that under the best administration of ecclesiastical affairs that ever existed, since the days of the apostles, or that is ever likely to exist, all ministers have not been alike *able* and *faithful*: and it is equally certain that cases have occurred in which individuals with furniture for the sacred office inferior to that which is desirable, have been, in a considerable degree, both respectable and useful. But still a character something resembling that which has been drawn, ought to be considered as the *proper standard*, and exertions made to attain as near an *approximation* to it, in all cases, as possible. And after all that can be done, exceptions to a rigid conformity with this standard, will be found in sufficient number, without undertaking to lower the standard itself, in such a manner as to provide for their multiplication. But,

II. WHAT ARE THE MEANS WHICH THE CHURCH IS BOUND TO EMPLOY, FOR PROVIDING SUCH A MINISTRY? This question was assigned as the second subject of inquiry.

And here, it is perfectly manifest, that the Church can neither *impart grace*, nor *create talents*. She can neither *make men pious*, nor give them *intellectual powers*. But is there, therefore, nothing that *can* be done, or that *ought* to be done by her? Yes, brethren, there is much to be done. Though Jehovah the Saviour has *the government upon his shoulder*, his kingdom is a kingdom of means; and He is not to be expected to work miracles to supply our lack of exertion. If, therefore, the Church omit to employ the means which

* *Stennett's Sermon before the Education Society*, p. 12.

her King and Head has put within her power, for the attainment of a given object, both the *sin* and the *disgrace* of failing to attain that object, will lie at her own door.

What, then, are the means which the Church is bound to employ for providing an able and faithful ministry? They are such as these: looking for, and carefully **SELECTING** young men of piety and talents, for the work of the ministry; providing **FUNDS**, for the temporary support of those who may stand in need of such aid; furnishing a **SEMINARY**, in which the most ample means of instruction may be found; and, having done all this, to guard, by her **JUDICATORIES**, the entrance into the sacred office, with incessant vigilance.

1. The Church is bound, with a vigilant eye, to *search for, and carefully to select, from among the young men within her bosom, those who are endowed with piety and talents, whenever she can find these qualifications united.* Piety is humble and retiring; and talents, especially of the kind best adapted to the great work of the ministry, are modest and unobtrusive. They require, at least in many instances, to be sought out, encouraged, and brought forward. And how, and by whom, is this to be done? The *children of the Church* are, if I may so express it, *the Church's property.* She has a right to the services of the best of them. And as it is the part, both of *wisdom* and *affection*, in parents according to the flesh, to attend with vigilance to the different capacities and acquirements of their children, and to select for them, as far as possible, corresponding employments; so it is obviously incumbent on the Church, the moral parent of all the youth within her jurisdiction, to direct especial attention to such of them as may be fitted to serve her in the holy ministry. And it may be asserted, without fear of contradiction, that whenever young men are found, who unite *fervent piety* with *talents* adapted to the office, it is the duty of such to seek the gospel ministry; and it is the duty of the Church to single them out, to bring them forward, and to endeavour to give them all that preparation, which depends on human means, for the service of the sanctuary.

2. The Church is bound to *provide funds for the partial or entire support of those who need this kind of aid, while they are preparing for the work of the ministry.* Some of the most promising candidates for this holy work have not the means of supporting themselves, while they withdraw from the world, and give up its emoluments, for the purpose of becoming qualified to serve God in the gospel of his Son. These persons must either abandon their sacred enterprise altogether, or receive, from some other source, adequate aid. And from what source can they so properly receive it, as from their moral parent, the Church? Nature, reason, equity, parental affection,—all conspire in pointing to this parent, as the most suitable provider. The aid which flows only from the hand of individual and occasional bounty, may be withdrawn, or grudgingly continued: but the Church can never be weary, as long as ability is given her, of providing for

her beloved children. The aid which individuals, as such, furnish, may excite, in delicate minds, a painful sense of dependence: but children *ought* to feel, *can* feel, no pain in receiving from the hand of parental affection.

Nor is it any valid objection to the furnishing of this aid, that the objects of it may not always be found, when their character shall be completely developed, either ornaments to the Church, or worthy of so much exertion and expenditure. As well might parents according to the flesh decline to provide for the support and education of their children, in early life, lest peradventure they might afterwards prove neither a comfort nor an honour to them. In this respect, every faithful parent considers himself as bound, in duty and affection, to take all possible pains for promoting the welfare of his offspring, and having done so, to leave the event with God.

Neither ought the Church to consider this provision as a burden, or imagine that, in making it, she confers a favour. It is as clearly her duty—a duty which she as really owes both to her Master and herself, as the ordinary provision which she makes for the support of the word and ordinances. Or rather, it is to be lamented that she has not been accustomed always to consider it, as an essential part of her ordinary provision for the maintenance of the means of grace.

3. A further, and the last mean which I shall mention, which the Church is bound to employ for providing an able and faithful ministry, is, *furnishing a Seminary in which the candidates for this office may receive the most appropriate and complete instruction, which she has it in her power to give.* In vain are young men of fervent piety, and the best talents, sought after and discovered; and in vain are funds provided for their support, while preparing for the ministry, unless pure and ample fountains of knowledge are opened to them, and unless competent guides are assigned to direct them in drinking at those fountains. This, however, is so plain, so self-evident, that I need not enlarge upon its proof.

But perhaps it may be supposed by some, that there is no good reason why these means of education should be provided by the Church, as such. It may be imagined, that they will be as likely to be provided, and as well provided, by private instructors, as by public seminaries. But all reason, and all experience, pronounce a different judgment, and assign, as the ground of their decision, such considerations as these.

First, when the Church herself provides a seminary for the instruction of her own candidates for the ministry, she can at all times inspect and regulate the course of their education; can see that it be sound, thorough, and faithful; can direct and control the instructors; can correct such errors, and make such improvements in her plans of instruction, as the counsels of the whole body may discover. Whereas, if all be left to individual discretion, the preparation for the service of the Church may be in the highest degree

defective, or ill-judged, not to say unsound, without the Church being able effectually to interpose her correcting hand.

Again; when the Church herself takes the instruction of her candidates into her own hands, she can furnish a more extensive, accurate, and complete course of instruction than can be supposed to be, ordinarily, within the reach of detached individuals. In erecting and endowing a Seminary, she can select the *best instructors* out of her whole body. She can give her pupils the benefit of the *whole time*, and the *undivided exertions*, of these instructors. Instead of having all the branches of knowledge, to which the theological student applies himself, taught by a single master, she can *divide* the task of instruction, among several competent teachers, in such a manner as to admit of each doing full justice both to his pupils and himself. She can form one ample *Library*, by which a given number of students may be much better accommodated, when collected together, and having access to it in common, than if the same amount of books were divided into a corresponding number of smaller libraries. And she can digest, and gradually improve a system of instruction, which shall be the result of combined wisdom, learning, and experience. Whereas those candidates for the sacred office, who commit themselves to the care of individual ministers, selected according to the convenience or the caprice of each pupil, must, in many cases, at least, be under the guidance of instructors who have neither the talents, the learning, nor the leisure to do them justice; and who have not even a tolerable collection of books, to supply the lack of their own furniture as teachers.

Further; when the Church herself provides the means of instruction for her own ministry, at a public seminary, she will, of course, be furnished with ministers who have enjoyed, in some measure, a *uniform course of education*; who have derived their knowledge from the same masters, and the same approved fountains, and who may, therefore, be expected to agree in their views of evangelical truth and order. There will thus be the most effectual provision made, speaking after the manner of men, for promoting the *unity* and *peace* of the Church. Whereas, if every candidate for the holy ministry, be instructed by a different master, each of whom may be supposed to have his peculiarities of expression and opinion, especially about minor points of doctrine and discipline, the harmony of our ecclesiastical judicatories will gradually be impaired; and strife, and perhaps, eventually, schism, may be expected to arise in our growing and happy Church.

It is important to add, that when the Church provides for educating a number of candidates for the ministry at the same seminary, these candidates themselves may be expected to be of essential service to each other. Numbers being engaged together in the same studies, will naturally excite the principle of emulation. As *iron sharpeneth iron*, so the amicable competition, and daily intercourse of pious students, can scarcely fail of leading to closer and more

persevering application ; to deeper research ; to richer acquirements ; and to a more indelible impression of that which is learned, upon their minds, than can be expected to take place in solitary study.

Nor is it by any means unworthy of notice, that, when the ministers of a Church are generally trained up at the same seminary, they are naturally led to form *early friendships*, which bind them together to the end of life, and which are productive of that mutual confidence and assistance, which can scarcely fail of shedding a benign influence on their personal enjoyment, and their official comfort and usefulness. These early friendships may also be expected to add another impulse to a sense of duty, in annually drawing ministers from a distance to meet each other in the higher judicatories of the Church ; and, which is scarcely less important, to facilitate and promote that mutual consultation, respecting plans of research, and new and interesting publications, which is, at once, among the safeguards, as well as pleasures, of theological authorship.

These, brethren, are some of the considerations which call upon every Church, to erect, and to support with vigour and efficiency, a Theological Seminary for the training of her ministry. If she desires to augment the number of her ministers ; if she wishes their preparation for the sacred office to be the best in her power to give, and at the least possible expense ; if she desires that they may be a holy phalanx, united in the same great views of doctrine and discipline, and adhering with uniformity and with cordial affection to her public standards ; if she deprecates the melancholy spectacle of a heterogeneous, divided, and distracted ministry ; and finally, if she wishes her ministers to be educated under circumstances most favourable to their acting in after life, as a band of brethren, united in friendship as well as in sentiment : then let her take measures for training them up under her own eye and control ; under the same teachers ; in the same course of study ; and under all those advantages of early intercourse, and affectionate competition, which attend a public seminary.

In favour of all this reasoning, the best experience, and the general practice of the Church, in different ages, may be confidently urged. "It has been the way of God," says the pious and learned *Dr. Lightfoot*, "to instruct his people by a studious and learned ministry, ever since he gave a written word to instruct them in." "Who," he asks, "were the standing ministry of *Israel*, all the time from the giving of the law, till the captivity in *Babylon* ? Not prophets, or inspired men ; for they were but occasional teachers ; but the Priests and Levites, who became learned in the law by study. (Deuteronomy 33 : 10 ; Hosea 4 : 6 ; Malachi 2 : 7.) And for this end, they were disposed into forty-eight cities, as so many universities, where they studied the law *together* ; and from thence were sent out into the several synagogues, to teach the people." They had also, the same writer informs us, "*contributions made for the*

support of these students, while they studied in the universities, as well as afterwards when they preached in the synagogues." He tells us further, in another place, "that there were among the Jews, authorized individual teachers, of great eminence, who had their *Midrashoth*, or *Divinity Schools*, in which they expounded the law to their scholars or disciples." "Of these Divinity Schools," he adds, "there is very frequent mention made among the Jewish writers, more especially of the schools of *Hillel* and *Shammai*. Such a Divinity Professor was *Gamaliel*, at whose feet the great apostle of the Gentiles received his education."*

Under the Christian dispensation, the same system, in substance, was adopted and continued. At a very early period, there was a seminary of high reputation established in the city of *Alexandria*, in which candidates for the holy ministry were trained up together, and under the ablest instructors, both in divine and human learning; a seminary in which *Pantænus*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Origen*, and others, taught with high reputation. *Eusebius* and *Jerome* both declare, that this seminary had existed, as a nursery of the Church, and had enjoyed a succession of able teachers, from the time of *Mark* the evangelist.† Writers on Christian antiquities also assure us that there were seminaries of a similar kind very early established at *Rome*, *Cæsarea*, *Antioch*, and other places;‡ and that they were considered as essential to the honour and prosperity of the Church.

At the period of the Reformation, religion and learning revived together. The Reformers were not less eminent for their erudition, than for their piety and zeal. They contended earnestly for an enlightened, as well as a faithful ministry; and, accordingly, almost all the Protestant churches, when they found themselves in a situation to admit of the exertion, founded Theological Seminaries, as nurseries for their ministry. This was the case in *Geneva*, in *Scotland*, in *Holland*, in *Germany*, and, with very little exception, throughout reformed Christendom. And the history of those seminaries, while it certainly demonstrates, that such establishments are capable of being perverted; demonstrates, with equal evidence, that they have been made, and might always, with the divine blessing on a faithful administration, be rendered extensively useful.

And what have the most eminently pious and learned ministers, that ever adorned the American Church, thought on this subject? Let yonder venerable walls tell! Yes, brethren, it was because *Tennent*, and *Dickinson*, and *Burr*, and *Edwards*, and *Davies*, and *Finley*, and *Blair*, and other champions of the cross, were deeply impressed with the truth, that learning and talents, united with piety, are of the highest importance to the Christian ministry, that they laboured and prayed so much for the establishment and support of *Nassau Hall*. May their spirit and their opinions revive, and

* *Lightfoot's Works*, vol. i., 357, 574.

† *Euseb.*, Lib. v. c. 10; *Hieron.*, Oper. i. 105.

‡ See *Bingham's Origines Ecclesiasticae*. Book III. Chap. 10.

more and more pervade our Church, until the dawning of the Millennial Sabbath!

In establishments of this kind, in more recent times, our Congregational brethren, in *New England*, and our brethren of the *Dutch* and *Associate Reformed* churches, have gone before us, and set us noble examples. We have, at length, awoke from our sleep; and with tardy, but, as we hope, with firm, with well-advised, and with heaven-directed steps, have begun to follow them. In the name of Jehovah Jesus, the King of *Zion*, we lift up our banner! May his blessing descend, and rest upon the transaction of this day, as a pledge that he is about to visit our Church in his abundant mercy!

4. The last means of providing an able and faithful ministry, on which I shall insist, is *fidelity on the part of the Judicatories of the Church in guarding the entrance into the sacred office*. It is our happiness, that, according to the truly apostolic and primitive constitution of our Church, the power of licensing candidates, and of setting apart to the work of the holy ministry, is not given to any individual, by whatever name he may be called. Nay, while the Church provides a seminary for the instruction of her candidates for the sacred office, she does not give even to the conductors of that seminary, however pious, learned, or venerable, the right ultimately to judge of the qualifications of those candidates, and to admit or reject them at their pleasure. This is the prerogative of her appropriate judicatories; and the manner in which it is exercised, is all-important. However vigilantly and perseveringly other means for attaining the object proposed, may be employed, if there be a failure here, the most calamitous consequences may be expected. If presbyteries be superficial in their *examinations* of candidates; if they be too ready to lay hands on the *weak*, the *ignorant*, the *erroneous*, or those of *doubtful piety*; or if, for the sake of attaining an occasional purpose, or meeting a temporary difficulty, they at any time suffer the barriers which have been erected for excluding the incompetent or the unworthy, to be removed or trampled down, they are taking the direct course to bring the ministry and religion into contempt.

I know that, on this subject, pleas are often urged which it is extremely difficult to resist. Some good qualities in the candidates; private friendships; an unwillingness to give pain; the scarcity of ministers; and the necessities of the Church, are all alternately employed as arguments for the admission of unsuitable characters into the ministry. But it is a most important part of fidelity in the work of the Lord, to oppose and reject every plea of this kind. Private friendships ought not to interfere with a supreme regard to the Redeemer's kingdom. It is better, much better, to inflict pain for a time, on an individual, than to wound the Church of Christ. And by introducing into the ministry those who are neither *faithful* nor *able to teach*, judicatories are so far from supplying the wants of the Church, that they rather add to her difficulties, and call her to

struggle with new evils. To be *in haste* to multiply and send out unqualified labourers, is to take the most direct method to send a destructive blast on the garden of God, instead of gathering a rich and smiling harvest.

On the other hand, when judicatories, with enlightened vigilance, and fidelity, guard the entrance into the sacred office; when they exert the authority committed to them, to keep out of the ministry, incompetence, heresy, levity, and worldly-mindedness; they obey a divine precept; they support the real honour of the gospel ministry; they constrain those who are looking toward that blessed work, to take a higher aim, and to seek for higher attainments; they give the churches *bread instead of a stone, and fish instead of a serpent*; and though they may appear, to those who *make haste*, to be tardy in supplying the public demand for ministers, they are taking one of the most effectual methods, under God, for raising up a *numerous, as well as an able and faithful ministry*.

Let us now turn our attention to some practical inferences from the foregoing discussion. And,

1. If the representation which has been given be just, *then our Church has been, for a long time, almost entirely, and very criminally, negligent of a great and important duty*. While she has directed much laudable attention to other objects, she has, in a great measure, suffered the most promising means of providing an able and faithful ministry, to take care of themselves. Other churches have also been guilty, in a considerable degree, of similar negligence; a negligence for which, alas! our country mourns; and would mourn much more, if the importance of the subject were understood and appreciated as it ought to be; but **OUR CHURCH HAS BEEN PRE-EMINENTLY GUILTY!** Though among the largest Christian denominations in the United States; though possessing, in its individual members, perhaps more wealth than any other; though favoured, in many respects, with ample means for every kind of generous ecclesiastical enterprise; and though often and solemnly warned on the subject; she has yet been among the very last of all the evangelical denominations among us, to commence a course of efficient exertion for raising up a qualified ministry. We have slumbered, and slumbered, until the scarcity of *labourers in our harvest*, has become truly alarming! God grant that we may testify by our future conduct, that we remember, with unfeigned humiliation, our former negligence; and that we are resolved, as his grace shall enable us, to make amends for it, by redoubled zeal and diligence in time to come!

2. From what has been said, it appears, that *the solemnity to attend on which we are this day assembled, is a matter of cordial and animating congratulation to each other, and to the Church of Christ in the United States*. We are convened, under the authority of the General Assembly of our Church, to organize a **THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**, and to inaugurate the **FIRST PROFESSOR** in that seminary.

Though later, much later, in commencing this establishment than we ought to have been; we trust it is about to commence under the smiles of the great Head of the Church; and that we may confidently regard it as a token for good to the Redeemer's kingdom. Yes, brethren, we have more reason to rejoice, and to felicitate one another, on the establishment of this seminary, than on the achievement of a great national victory, or on making a splendid addition to our national territory. It is the beginning, as we trust, of an extensive and permanent system, from which blessings may flow to millions while we are sleeping in the dust. Let us, then, *rejoice and be exceeding glad*; and in the midst of our joy, let us look up to the Source of blessing, who can cause the walls of our *Zion* to rise even *in troublous times*.^{*} While we congratulate each other, let our petitions ascend, with our praises, to the throne of grace, that the seminary this day established, and, as we verily believe, founded in faith and prayer, may be a fountain, the *streams of which shall make glad the city of our God*; flowing in every direction, and abundantly watering the abodes of *Zion's* king, until all flesh shall taste his love, and see his glory!

3. If what has been said be correct, *then those who are more immediately charged with conducting this Seminary, whether as Directors or Professors, ought to consider themselves as honoured with a very solemn and weighty trust*. The design of the supreme judicatory of our Church, in founding this Seminary, is nothing less than to train up an ABLE AND FAITHFUL MINISTRY; a ministry on whose piety, talents, and learning, the temporal and eternal welfare of thousands, now living, may, speaking after the manner of men, depend; a ministry, whose character may have a commanding influence, in forming the character of others, and they again of those who may successively fill the same office, until the end of time! The design is interesting beyond expression; and the task of those who are appointed to carry it into execution, is serious and important to a degree which mortals cannot estimate. When I cast an eye down the ages of eternity, and think how important is the salvation of a single soul; when I recollect how important, of course, the office of a minister of the gospel, who may be the happy instrument of saving many hundreds, or thousands of souls; and when I remember how many and how momentous are the relations, which a Seminary, intended solely for training up ministers, bears to all the interests of men, in the life that now is, and especially in that which is to come; I feel as if the task of conducting such a seminary, had an awfulness of responsibility connected with it, which is enough to make us tremble! O my fathers and brethren! let it never be said of us, on whom this task has fallen, that we take more pains to make polite scholars, eloquent orators, or men of mere learning, than to form

^{*} War had been declared, by the *United States*, against *Great Britain*, a few weeks before this discourse was delivered.

able and faithful ministers of the New Testament. Let it never be said, that we are more anxious to maintain the literary and scientific honours of the ministry, than we are to promote that honour which consists in being *full of faith and of the Holy Ghost*, and the instruments of *adding much people to the Lord*. The eyes of the Church are upon us. The eyes of angels, and, above all, the eyes of the King of Zion, are upon us. May we have grace given us to be faithful!

4. This subject *suggests matter for very serious reflection to the Youth, who are about to enter as students in this Seminary, with a view to the gospel ministry.* Behold, my young friends, the high character at which you are called to aim! You have come hither, not that you may prepare to shine; not that you may prepare to amuse men by philosophic discussion, or to astonish them by flights of artificial eloquence: but that, by the blessing of God, upon the use of means, you may become *faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also*; that you may become *wise in winning souls to Christ*; that you may prepare to go forth, defending and proclaiming the messages of grace to guilty men, and persuading them *to be reconciled to God*. *Seek to excel.* It is noble to excel. But let it be always *for the edifying of the Church*. THIS, my young friends, THIS is the object which is recommended to your sacred emulation. We charge you, in the presence of God, to let all your studies and aims be directed to this grand object. Seek with humble, persevering, prayerful diligence, to be *such ministers as you have heard described*; and you will neither disappoint yourselves nor the Church of Christ. Seek to be *anything else*; and you will be a grief and a curse to both. May God the Saviour bless you, and prepare you to be *workmen that need not be ashamed!*

5. From this subject we may derive *powerful excitements to young men of piety and talents, to come forward and devote themselves to the gospel ministry.* We trust no young man will ever think of that holy vocation, until he has first given himself up *a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God*, by Jesus Christ. We would not, for any consideration, be accessory to the sin of alluring into the sacred office, those who know nothing of the power of godliness, and who, on the most favourable supposition, can be nothing better than miserable retailers of cold and unproductive speculations. But while we say this, and repeat it, with all the emphasis of which we are capable, we assert, with equal confidence, on the other hand, that wherever fervent piety appears, in any young man, united with those talents which are adapted to the office of an ambassador of Christ, it is incumbent on their possessor, without delay, to devote himself to the work of the *ministry*. There are only two questions which need be asked concerning any youth on this subject. "Has he a heart for the work? And has he those native faculties, which are susceptible of the requisite cultivation?" If these questions can be answered in the affirmative, I hesitate not to say, that in the present state of

the Church, it is his duty to seek the ministry. Young men of this College! have none of you any desire to serve your fellow-men, and to serve Christ, in this exalted office? You have but one short life to live in this world; and you must, in a very little time, decide how you will spend that life. "We confidently pronounce, that it can be spent in no manner so desirable, so noble, so godlike, as in the gospel ministry. If then, you love the Lord Jesus Christ, come—we affectionately invite you to come, and take part with us in the ministry of the grace of God. The example of Christ invites you to come; the tears of bereaved churches, who can find none to break unto them the bread of life, entreat you to come; the miseries of wandering souls, who find none to lead them to heaven, plead with you to come. Come, then, and take part with us in the labours and rewards of the *ministry of reconciliation!*"*

6. Finally, if the representation which has been given be correct, *then the Church at large ought to consider it as equally their privilege and their duty to support this Seminary.* If one may judge by the language and the conduct of the generality of our Church members, they seem to consider all regard to institutions of this kind, as the province of *ministers* only. They readily grant, that ministers ought to be prompt and willing, to give their time, their labours, and, where they have any, their substance, for this end; but for themselves, they *pray to be excused.* They either contribute nothing toward the object; or contribute in the most reluctant and sparing manner, as if they were bestowing a *favour*, which they have a perfect right to withhold. My dear brethren, it is difficult to express in adequate terms either the *sin* or the *folly* of such conduct. Seminaries of this kind are to be founded and supported BY THE CHURCH, as such. It is THE CHURCH that is bound to take order on the subject. It is THE CHURCH that is responsible for their establishment and maintenance. And if any of her members, or adherents, when called upon, will not contribute their just portion of aid for this purpose, the Head of the Church will require it at their hands. Professing Christians! look upon the alarming necessities of the Church; upon destitute frontier settlements; upon *several hundred vacant congregations*, earnestly desiring spiritual teachers, but unable to obtain them. Look upon the growing difficulty with which the most eligible and attractive situations in the Church are supplied; and then say whether those who still remain idle can be innocent? Innocent! Their guilt will be greater and more dreadful than can be described. Come, then, brethren, humbled by the past, and animated by the future, rouse from your lethargy, and begin to act in earnest! Your *Master* requires it of you! The *aspect of the times* requires it of you! The *cries of the neglected and the perishing* require it of you! *Your own privileges and blessings* require it of you! Yes, ye who

* See *Address of the Presbytery of New York*, on educating poor and pious youth for the gospel ministry. 14.

call yourselves Christians! If you love the Church to which you profess to belong; if you possess a single spark of the spirit of allegiance to her divine Head and Lord; nay, if you desire not a *famine of the word of life*; if you desire not the heaviest spiritual judgments to rest upon you, then come forward and *act*, as well as *speak*, like friends of the Redeemer's kingdom. Come forward, and give your influence, your substance, and your prayers, for *the help of the Lord against the mighty*.* AMEN!

ARTICLE XIV.

AN INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

BY THE REV. ARCHIBALD ALEXANDER, D.D.

HIGHLY respected and venerable Directors of the Theological School; and other learned and respectable auditors, convened on the present solemn occasion:—

The institution and commencement of a Theological Seminary, under the patronage and direction of the General Assembly of our Church, ought to be a subject of mutual congratulation to all its members. But it cannot be concealed, that the same causes which have operated to render such an institution urgently necessary, have also opposed serious obstacles in the way of carrying it into effect. The deficiency, among us, of that kind and extent of learning requisite to confer dignity and respect, as well as usefulness, on the professor's chair, is too obvious to require remark. But every important institution must have its infancy and growth, before it can arrive at maturity; and however long we might have deferred this undertaking, the same difficulties would probably have met us at its commencement, which we are now obliged to encounter. The sentiments and emotions by which my own mind is agitated, in consequence of the new and important station in which I find myself placed by the choice of my brethren, and especially, the deep sense which I entertain of my insufficiency for the work, I shall not attempt to express. If the design be of GOD, he will prosper the undertaking, notwithstanding the weakness of the instruments employed in carrying it on; and will crown our feeble efforts with success. On HIM therefore may our hope and confidence be firmly fixed; and may "his will be done on earth as in heaven!"

I have selected, as the subject of the discourse now required of me, the words of our LORD, recorded in the 5th chapter and 39th verse of the gospel according to John:

Ἐρευνᾶτε τὰς γραφάς. *Search the Scriptures.*

The verb here used, signifies, to search with diligence and atten-

* Judges 5: 23.

tion. Its literal meaning appears to be, to pursue any one, by tracing his footsteps. Thus it is employed by *Homer*, to express the lion's* pursuit of the man who had robbed him of his whelps, by his footsteps; and the dog's† pursuit of his game, by his track. The precise meaning of the word, therefore, both in its literal and figurative application, is expressed by the English word, *investigate*. It may be read, either in the indicative or in the imperative mood. Doctor *Campbell*, in his new translation of the Gospels, prefers the former, and renders the passage, "*Ye do search the Scriptures;*" but *Wetstein* and *Parkhurst* consider it to be in the imperative, agreeably to our version: and certainly this rendering gives more point and force to the sentence, "*Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me.*"

Although the word, *γραφαίς*, *Scriptures*, is of such general import, as to include writings of any kind; yet there can be no doubt but what the *Scriptures* of the Old Testament were here intended. This phrase is used in the New Testament, as we use the word *Bible*, which, though literally signifying any book, yet is now appropriated to designate the volume of inspiration.

The history of the origin of alphabetical writing is involved in considerable obscurity. The first notice which we find of the existence of such an art, is contained in the command given to *Moses*, in the xvii. of *Exodus*, to write a certain transaction in a book;‡ and soon afterwards we read that the law was written by the finger of *JEHOVAH*, on the two tables of testimony.§ To me, it appears very probable, therefore, that it was about this time a subject of revelation to *Moses*. As a precise pattern of the tabernacle was shown to him in the Mount, and as certain persons were inspired with wisdom to fit them for the execution of that work, why may we not suppose that this wonderful art, so necessary for recording the revelations received from God, for the use of posterity, was also made known to *Moses*? One thing is certain; that all the alphabets of the western portion of the globe, and probably those of the eastern also, have had a common origin: and we have no authentic account of the invention of an alphabet by any people; so that whenever this art of writing may have had its origin, I am persuaded it was no invention of man, but a revelation from GOD.

With respect to the antiquity of these writings, I know of none which can bear any competition with the Pentateuch. Some, indeed, have supposed, that some part of the *Vedas* of the *Brahmins*, was written before the books of *Moses*; but there is no historical evidence on which we can depend in support of this opinion. And we are too well acquainted with the fraudulent pretensions of the *Hindoos* to antiquity, to place any confidence in their assertions. The ultimate opinion of that incomparable scholar, Sir *William Jones*, on

* *Il.* xviii. line 321.

‡ *Exodus* 17 : 14. כתב זאת זכרון בספר.

† *Odys.* xix. l. 486.

§ *Exodus* 34.

this subject, was, that the writings of *Moses* were the oldest of any in the world:* and a more competent and impartial judge could not easily be found.

As the words of the text are indefinite, they should be considered as imposing an obligation on all sorts of persons, according to their ability and opportunity, to search the Scriptures. We cannot help therefore being struck with the impiety, as well as absurdity, of the practice of the Papists, in withholding the Scriptures from the people.

Will it be said, that when they misinterpret and pervert them, they should be taken away? But such was the conduct of the persons here addressed by Christ. They were so blinded by prejudice, that they could not perceive in the Scriptures, that person, who was the principal subject of them. But does the divine Saviour forbid them the use of the Scriptures, on this account? No: he enjoins it on them, to *search them*. To study them with more care, and with minds more free from prejudice.

Though the duty of searching the Scriptures is common to all Christians, yet there are some on whom it is more peculiarly incumbent. Teachers of religion, and candidates for the sacred office, are bound by an obligation of uncommon force to attend to this duty. In particular relation to such, I propose to consider the subject, in the sequel of this discourse. But before I proceed further, I would observe, that although the words of our Lord, in the text, refer to the Old Testament (for at the time of their being spoken there were no other Scriptures extant), yet the reason of the command will apply with full force, to other inspired writings, as soon as they are promulgated. We shall therefore consider the Scriptures of the New Testament, as well as the Old, embraced within the scope of our Saviour's command.

It will be important to bear in mind, that there are two distinct things comprehended in the object of this investigation. First, to ascertain that the Scriptures contain the truths of GOD: and, secondly, to ascertain what these truths are.

I. Let us now suppose the two volumes containing the Old and New Testaments, the one in the original Hebrew, the other in the Greek, to be put into the hands of the theological student, accompanied with the command of Christ, *search the Scriptures*. Investigate these volumes with diligence. What should be the first step in this investigation? Ought he not to be well satisfied with the identity of these books, with those which formerly existed? Here is a Hebrew volume; but does it contain the same writings to which our Saviour referred? And does this Greek volume comprehend the very books which were received as inspired in the apostolic age? In this inquiry, the biblical student may obtain complete satisfaction. With respect to the canon of the Old Testament, one fact will be

* See *Asiatic Researches*, vol. 1 and 2.

sufficient to remove all doubt. These books have been in the possession of both Jews and Christians, ever since the commencement of the gospel dispensation; and they now agree in acknowledging the same books to be canonical; which, considering the inveterate opposition subsisting between them, is a convincing evidence, that the canon of the Old Testament has undergone no change, since the introduction of Christianity. And that it had undergone none before that period, may be proved from this circumstance, that although our Lord often upbraids the Jews with having *perverted* the Scriptures, he never insinuates that they had *altered* or *corrupted* them.

In confirmation of what has been said respecting the canon of the Old Testament, we might adduce the testimony of *Josephus*, and of the Christian Fathers; who not only agree with one another in their catalogue of the books of the Old Testament, but with the canonical list which we now hold. The books called *Apocrypha*, were never received into the canon by the Jews, nor by the earlier Christian Fathers and councils, and have therefore no just claim to be considered as belonging to the Old Testament.

With regard to the New Testament, the evidence is equally convincing. The Christian Church was, in a short time, so widely extended, and embraced so many different languages and nations, that a universal agreement, in this whole body, through all the successive periods of the Church, in acknowledging the same books to be canonical, must satisfy every impartial mind that our New Testament is the very same which was received and held sacred by the primitive Church. To strengthen this conclusion, it may be added, that at a very early period, these books were translated into many different languages; several of which early translations, either in whole or in part, have come down to our times; and some of them have been preserved among Christians unknown to their brethren of other countries, for many centuries.

In addition to this, it may be observed, that accurate lists of the books of the New Testament were made by early ecclesiastical writers, and also by general councils, which are still extant, and agree with our catalogue of canonical books. It deserves to be mentioned also, that the churches in every part of the world held copies of these Scriptures, which they preserved with the utmost vigilance; and quotations were made from them, by all the Fathers; so that a large portion of the New Testament might be collected from the works of the early ecclesiastical writers. Besides there are still extant manuscript copies of the whole, or a part of the New Testament, from twelve to fifteen hundred years old, which contain the same books that are comprehended in our printed volumes.

What has now been asserted, respecting the universal consent with which the books of the New Testament were received by the ancient Church, in all its parts, must be admitted, with the exception of those few books, which have been termed *Antilegomena*, because

their divine authority was denied or disputed by some. Impartiality requires us also to state, that these books are not found in some of the oldest versions, as the Syriac, for instance; and therefore it must be admitted that the evidence for their canonical authority is not so complete, as of the rest, which were ever undisputed. At the same time, it ought to be observed, that the chief reason of doubting, was, because these books, for a while, were not so generally known to the churches: but as soon as they were accurately examined, and their evidence weighed, opposition to them ceased; and at no late period, they obtained an undisturbed place in the sacred canon.

II. The theological student, having obtained satisfaction respecting the perfection of the canon of Scripture, the next step in his investigation should relate to the *integrity* of the sacred text. For it is possible that the canon might be complete, and yet the text might be so corrupted and mutilated as to leave it uncertain what the original of these books might have been. It is of importance, therefore, to be able to prove, that the Scriptures have suffered no material injury, from the fraud of designing men, or from the carelessness of transcribers. In the former part of the last century, this was a subject of warm altercation in the Church. For whilst some maintained that the sacred text had not received the slightest injury from the ravages of time, others boldly asserted that it was greatly corrupted. The agitation of this question led to a more extensive and accurate examination and collation of manuscript *codices* than had been before made, and gave rise to that species of biblical criticism, which has, within the last half century, assumed so conspicuous a place in theological science. Distant countries were visited, the dark cells of cloisters and monasteries explored, and all important libraries ransacked, in search of copies of the Scriptures. Learned men, with unparalleled diligence, employed their whole lives in the collation of manuscripts, and in noting every, even the smallest variation in their *readings*. Their indefatigable labour and invincible perseverance in prosecuting this work, are truly astonishing. It has indeed, much the appearance of laborious trifling; but upon the whole, though not always so designed, has proved serviceable to the cause of truth. For though the serious mind is at first astonished and confounded, upon being informed of the multitude of various readings, noted by *Mills*, *Wetstein*, and *Griesbach*, in the *codices* of the New Testament; and by *Kennicott* and *De Rossi*, in those of the Old; yet it is relieved, when on careful examination it appears that not more than one of a hundred of these, makes the slightest variation in the sense, and that the whole of them do not materially affect one important fact or doctrine. It is true, a few important texts, in our received copies, have by this critical process been rendered suspicious; but this has been more than compensated by the certainty which has been stamped on the great body of Scripture, by having been subjected to this severe scrutiny. For the *text* of

our Bibles having passed this ordeal, may henceforth bid defiance to suspicion of its *integrity*. And with respect to the disputed texts referred to above, one thing should ever be kept in mind; that, granting that the evidence from the present view of ancient manuscripts, is against their genuineness, yet this may not be decisive. The learned *Cave* lays it down as a rule to direct us, in judging of the comparative excellence of the editions of the Fathers, "That the older the editions are, by so much the more faithful are they."* And assigns this reason for the rule, that the first editions were made from the best manuscripts, which were commonly lost or destroyed, when the edition was completed. And I see not why the same reason will not equally apply to the early editions of the Scriptures. In fact, there is historical evidence, that the manuscripts used by Cardinal *Ximenes*, in his Polyglott, have been destroyed, and they appear, from several circumstances, to have been both numerous and ancient: and I am persuaded also, notwithstanding what *Wetstein* and *Michaelis* have said to the contrary, that some of those used by *Stephanas*, in his editions of the New Testament, have also been lost. We cannot tell, therefore, what the evidence for these texts might have been to these learned editors. Certainly very strong, or they would not have inserted them.

III. The next step in this investigation, would be, to ascertain, that these books are genuine: or were written by the persons whose names they bear; but as this appears to me to be substantially answered, by what has been already said, and by what will be added under the next article, I will not now make it a subject of particular discussion; but will proceed to inquire into the *authenticity* and *inspiration* of the Scriptures. I join these two things together, because, although a book may be authentic without being inspired; yet if the Bible be authentic, it must have been given by inspiration, for the writers profess that they were inspired.

The truth of this point may be established by several species of evidence, quite distinct from each other.

It may, in the first place, be demonstrated by proving the truth of the facts recorded in the Scriptures. These facts, many of them, being obviously of a miraculous nature, if admitted to have existed, will indubitably prove, that those persons by whom they were performed, must have been sent and assisted of God: for, as the Jewish ruler rightly reasoned, "No man could do these things unless God were with him." Now the truth of these miracles may be established by testimony, like other ancient facts; and also by the history of them being so interwoven with other authentic history, that we cannot separate them: and especially, by that chain of events depending on them, and reaching down to our own time, which has no other assignable origin but the existence of these miracles. For, to believe in the events which the history of the Church presents to us,

* *Historia Literaria Proleg.* Sec. v. R. 1.

and yet deny the miracles of the gospel, would be as absurd, as believing that a chain which hung suspended before our eyes had nothing to support it, because that support was out of sight. As to the witnesses of these facts, they are such, and deliver their testimony under such circumstances, and in such a manner, as to *demand* our assent. The impossibility of successfully impugning this testimony, obliged the most insidious enemy of Christianity to resort to the principle, "that no testimony is sufficient to confirm a miracle:" but the absurdity of this position, has been fully demonstrated by *Campbell, Vince*, and others, and it has also been shown by an ingenious writer,* that the gospel was true, even upon this author's own principles, because its falsehood would involve a greater miracle than any recorded in it.

The next species of evidence in support of the proposition under consideration, is derived from prophecy. If the Scriptures contain predictions of events which no human sagacity could have foreseen; if they have foretold events the most improbable, which have occurred in exact conformity with the prediction; and if they have described a person combining in his character and life, traits and events apparently incompatible and inconsistent; and yet a person has appeared answering literally to this description, then certainly the writers of these predictions were inspired. But such is the fact. "This sure word of prophecy" is, indeed, like "a light that shineth in a dark place;" but it is also like the light of the dawn which "shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Other evidence may lose something of its force by the lapse of time, but this grows brighter and stronger with every revolving year; for the scope of prophecy comprehends all ages; and new events are continually occurring which had been long foretold by the oracles of God.

The third species of evidence for the authenticity and inspiration of the Scriptures, arises out of their contents. The extraordinary and superlatively excellent nature of the Christian religion, proves that it could not have been the production of impostors, nor of unassisted fishermen; nor indeed, of any description of uninspired men. Its doctrines exhibit that very information, which is necessary to satisfy the anxious inquiries of man, conscious of his guilt and desirous of salvation. Its precepts are so sublimely excellent, so marked with sanctity and benevolence; and at the same time so perfectly adapted to human nature and human circumstances, that the brightest wit can detect no flaw, nor suggest any improvement. "The heavens declare the glory of God;" and so does the holy page of Scripture. It bears the stamp of divinity in its face; and breathes a spirit which could originate nowhere else but in heaven.

Another evidence, but connected with the last, is the blessed tendency and holy efficacy of the gospel to reform the hearts and lives

* *Vide Brit. Encyclop.* vol. 14.

of men, and to produce peace and joy in the mind and conscience; which effects never could result from any false religion.

The success of the gospel, in its commencement, is also an important consideration. When we contemplate the resistance which was to be overcome, both external, from religious and civil establishments, and internal, from the inveterate prejudices and vices of men; and then take into view the means by which all these obstacles were surmounted, we cannot refuse to admit that the power of the Almighty accompanied them.

The beneficial effects of Christianity on those nations which have received it, is a striking fact, and furnishes a strong argument in favour of the authenticity and inspiration of the Scriptures. Under their benign influence, war has become less sanguinary and ferocious; justice has been more equally distributed; the poor have been more generally instructed, and their wants supplied; asylums have been provided for the unfortunate and distressed; the female character has been appreciated and exalted to its proper standard in society; the matrimonial bond has been held more sacred; and polygamy, the bane of domestic happiness, discountenanced. In short, the whole fabric of society has been meliorated; and real civilization promoted by Christianity, wherever it has been received: and the above mentioned effects have borne an exact proportion to the purity in which this holy religion was preserved, and the degree of conformity to its precepts which has existed among any people.

IV. The next question which should engage the attention of the theological student, is, for what purpose were the Scriptures given? In answer to this, we are ready to agree that they were intended to be a guide to man in matters of religion; *a rule of faith and practice*. But here several important questions occur. Are the Scriptures the *only* rule? Are they a *sufficient* rule? Are they an *authoritative* rule? And were they only designed to guide us in matters of religion?

Our first controversy is with the Romanists, who maintain that *tradition* is also a rule of faith; and that the Scriptures without tradition are neither a sufficient nor intelligible rule. But this opinion takes away all that fixedness and certainty, which a written revelation was intended and calculated to give to religion. Wherein consists the advantage of having a part of the will of GOD committed to writing, if the interpretation of this depends on the uncertain and varying light of oral tradition? We might as well have nothing but tradition, as be under the necessity of resorting to this uncertain guide to lead us to the true meaning of the written word. But had it been intended to make this the channel of communicating the divine will to posterity, some method would have been devised, to preserve the stream of tradition pure. No such method has been made known. On the contrary, the Scriptures predict a general and awful apostacy in the Church. It could not be otherwise, but that during this period, tradition would become a corrupt channel of

information. This apostacy has taken place; and the stream of tradition has, in fact, become so muddy, and so swelled with foreign accessions, from every quarter, that Christianity, viewed through this medium, exhibits the appearance of a deformed and monstrous mass of superstition. But, if we should admit the principle, that the constant tradition of the Church should be our guide, where shall we go to look for it? To the Greek, to the Latin, or to the Syriac Church? To the 4th, 9th, or 14th century? For there is no uniformity; not even in *the infallible Catholic Church*. Every one in the least acquainted with ecclesiastical history, must know, that not only has the practice varied, at different times, in very important matters; but also the Bulls of Popes, and Decrees and Canons of Councils, have often been in perfect collision with one another: and, what is worst of all, have often been in direct hostility with the word of GOD. For the same thing has happened to tradition in the Christian, as formerly in the Jewish Church. "*It hath made the word of God of none effect,*" "*teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*"

But whilst we reject tradition as a rule of truth, we do not deny the utility of having recourse to the early practice of the Church, for the illustration of Scripture, where there is any doubt respecting apostolic practice or institution.

There are two other opinions, by which the sufficiency and authority of the Scriptures, as a rule of faith and practice, are invalidated. These, though held by persons erring on opposite extremes, agree in derogating from the respect due to the Scriptures.

The first is, the opinion of those who will not believe anything, though contained in Scripture, which does not correspond with their own reason. If, for instance, a thousand passages of Scripture could be adduced, explicitly teaching the doctrine of *the Trinity, of original sin, of efficacious grace, of vicarious sufferings, or eternal punishments*, they would not admit them, because they have determined all these to be contrary to reason; and therefore the Scriptures *must be* so interpreted, as to exclude all such doctrines; and the texts which support them, must be tortured by the critical art, or perverted by the wiles of sophistry, until they are silent, or speak a different language. Now, the only mystery in the religion of these sons of reason, is that they should want a revelation at all. Certainly it would be more consistent to reject Christianity wholly, than whilst professing to receive it in the general, to deny almost all the particular doctrines of which the general system is composed. For my own part, I cannot consider Socinianism in any other light than Deism masked. At any rate, they are *nearly related*. If *that* has a little stronger faith, *this* has the advantage on the score of consistency.

The other opinion referred to, is that of fanatics in general, who, whilst they confess that the Scriptures are divinely inspired, imagine that *they* are possessed of the same inspiration. And some, in our

own times, have proceeded so far, as to boast of revelations, by which the Scriptures are entirely superseded as a rule of faith and practice.* Now, the difference between these persons, and the holy men of God who wrote the Scriptures, consists in two things. First, the inspired writers could give some external evidence, by miracle or prophecy, to prove their pretensions; but enthusiasts can furnish no such evidence: and secondly, the productions of the prophets and apostles, were worthy of God, and bore his impress; but the discourses of these men, except what they repeat from Scripture, are wholly unworthy their boasted origin, and more resemble the dreams of the sick, or the ravings of the insane, than the "words of truth and soberness."

But, on the other hand, there have been some who believed, that the Scriptures not only furnish a rule to guide us in our religion, but a complete system of *philosophy*; that the true theory of the universe is revealed in the first chapters of Genesis; and that there is an intimate connexion between the natural and spiritual world, the one containing a sort of emblematical representation of the other; so that even the high mystery of the Trinity is supposed to be exhibited by the material fluid, which pervades the universe, in its different conditions, of fire, light, and air. *John Hutchinson, Esq.*, of *England*, took the lead in propagating this system, and has been followed by some men of great name and great worth. *Jones, Horne, Parkhurst, Spearman, and Bates*, would be no discredit to any cause. But, although, we acknowledge, that there is something in this theory which is calculated to prepossess the pious mind in its favour; yet it is too deeply enveloped in clouds and darkness to admit of its becoming generally prevalent. And if what these learned men suppose, had been the object of revelation, no doubt, some more certain clue would have been given to assist us to ascertain the mind of the Spirit, than the obscure, though learned, criticisms of *Hutchinson*.

V. The next question which occurs, in the course of this investigation, is very important. How should the Scriptures be interpreted, in order that we may arrive at their *true* and *full* meaning? The obvious answer would be, by attending to the grammatical and literal sense of the words employed, to the force and significance of the figures and allusions used, and to the idiom of the languages in which they are written. But here we are met by a very important and embarrassing question. Is the literal meaning of Scripture always, or generally, the principal and ultimate sense; or, are we to suppose that under this, there is a recondite, spiritual meaning contained? Most of the Fathers considered the Scriptures to contain a double sense; the one literal, the other mystical or allegorical; and they regarded the first very little except in relation to the second. The

* Vide "*The Testimony of Christ's Second Appearing.*" By the people called SHAKERS.

Romanists maintain an opinion very similar; but the mystical sense they divide into several parts. And among Protestants, there are many who discover a strong predilection for this mode of interpretation.

But this principle, admitted without limitation or qualification, has a direct tendency to overthrow all certainty in divine revelation. For, as there is no certain key to this mystical or spiritual meaning, every man makes it out according to the liveliness of his own imagination: and weak men by their fanciful expositions greatly degrade the dignity and mar the beauty of revealed truth.

The followers of Baron *Swedenborg*, not contented with two, maintain that the Scriptures contain three senses, the *celestial*, *spiritual*, and *natural*, which are connected by *correspondences*. This doctrine of correspondences, is, according to them, the only key to open the true meaning of Scripture; which was, for many ages, lost, but recently was made known to this extraordinary nobleman. Notwithstanding the extravagance of this system, it has charms for some persons, and these not of the illiterate vulgar. It is a sort of refined mysticism, which corresponds with the peculiar turn of some minds that are fond of novelty, and disdain to walk in the old beaten track. Reasoning or argument, with those who profess to hold familiar intercourse with angels, would, I presume, be superfluous. We shall leave them, therefore, to enjoy their visions of a *terrestrial* heaven, without interruption, whilst we proceed to observe,

That among the orthodox themselves, there is no small difference of opinion respecting the *extent* which may be given to the meaning of scripture. The celebrated *Cocceius* laid it down as a rule, that *scripture should be considered as signifying all that it could be made to signify*. The whole of the Old Testament, in his opinion, was either typical or prophetic of Messiah and his kingdom. Here, as in a glass, he supposed the future destinies of the Church might be viewed. The learned *Grotius* verged to the very opposite extreme, in his ideas of the interpretation of scripture. This gave rise to a saying which became proverbial, respecting these two great men; and which is highly creditable to the piety of the former: "*Grotium nusquam in sacris literis invenire Christum, Cocceium ubique.*" "That *Grotius* could find Christ nowhere in the Bible, *Cocceius* everywhere."

This rule of *Cocceius*, however, is liable to great abuse; and as *Limborch* justly observes, "is calculated to make of the Scriptures a mere Lesbian rule, or nose of wax, which may be bent into any shape; and seems to be no other than the old allegorical method of interpretation, introduced under a new name."

But, on the other hand, it is certain, that many of the *persons*, *occurrences*, and *ceremonies* of the Old Testament are typical; and some things are thus interpreted in the New Testament, which we never should have conjectured to possess any meaning beyond the literal, unless we had been otherwise taught by inspiration. Be-

sides, all judicious commentators are forced to admit, that many of the prophecies have a primary and secondary reference, even the most important of those which relate to Messiah are of this description. Those who insist that one meaning and no more belongs to every text, are greatly at a loss how to reconcile with their opinion, the quotations made from the Old Testament in the New, where they are expressly said to be fulfilled, though certainly, many of them not in their primary and literal sense. Under the guidance of sound sense and just criticism, we should pursue a middle course between these two extremes. But although we cannot admit the rule of *Cocceius* in all its latitude, nor go the whole way with his followers; yet it is but justice to acknowledge, that some of them deserve to be ranked with the first expositors and theologians who have appeared in the Church. As long as truth, piety, and solid learning shall be held in esteem, the names of *Witsius*, *Vitringa*, *Burman*, *Van Til* and *Braunius*, will be dear to the theological student.

Upon the whole, our conclusion respecting this matter, is, that every particular passage of Scripture should be interpreted according to the peculiar circumstances of the case: the literal should be considered as the true and only meaning, unless some remoter sense be indicated by some peculiar aptitude, correspondence, or fitness in the words and ideas of the text; or unless it be referred to something else in the Scriptures themselves. Good sense and the analogy of faith are the guides which we should follow in interpreting the Bible.

VI. We come now to consider the *helps* which the biblical student needs, to enable him to search the Scriptures with success. The volumes which we have already supposed to be put into his hands are not written in our vernacular tongue. We have, it is true, an excellent translation of the Scriptures; but this was not made by inspiration, and cannot therefore possess the same authority and infallibility with the originals. We admit the lawfulness and utility of translations for the use of the people; but nothing can be more evident than that the expounder of Scripture should be well acquainted with the very "words by which the Holy Ghost teacheth" us the will of God. The knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek languages, therefore, is a necessary pre-requisite to the successful study of the Scriptures. I think I may venture to assert, that this single acquisition will be of more importance to the theological student, than all the commentaries which have ever been written. By this means he will be able to see with his own eyes; and will be qualified to judge for himself.

Every person who has had experience, will acknowledge, that even in reading the plainest texts, there is a satisfaction and advantage to be derived from the original, which cannot easily be explained. It becomes, therefore, a duty incumbent on all who are candidates for the sacred office, or invested with it, to endeavour to become acquainted with the *original Scriptures*.

But in all writings, and especially such as contain historical facts, there are frequent allusions to the existing customs of the country, and to the prevailing opinions of the people where the book was written. The same is found to be the case with the Scriptures. Many passages would be quite unintelligible, without some acquaintance with Jewish antiquities. The customs and manners of that people should, therefore, be studied with particular attention.

And as Scriptural history frequently refers to the condition, character, and transactions of cotemporaneous nations, it is of importance to be well acquainted with their history, as delivered to us by profane authors. There is, however, a more important reason why the biblical student should be well versed in history, ancient and modern; and that is, because *there* he must look for the accomplishment of many important prophecies. Even the fulfilment of the remarkable prediction of Christ respecting the destruction of *Jerusalem*, is not recorded in Scripture, but must be sought in the *Jewish* and *Roman* historians.

Chronology and geography are also requisite helps to enable us to understand many parts of Scripture. These have been called the eyes of history; and they are not more so of civil, than sacred history.

Even modern travels have been turned by some learned men, to a very important account in explaining the Scriptures. For oriental customs and modes of living have not been subject to the same capricious changes, which have prevailed in the western nations. And therefore, by observing carefully what oriental customs are, at this day, a very probable opinion may be formed of what they were two thousand years ago. This observation holds good, particularly in relation to such Eastern nations as have never been conquered, nor incorporated with any other people; as the Arabs, for instance.

Indeed, to speak the truth, there is scarcely any science or branch of knowledge which may not be made subservient to theology. Natural history, chemistry and geology, have sometimes been of important service in assisting the biblical student to solve difficulties contained in Scripture; or in enabling him to repel the assaults of adversaries, which were made under cover of these sciences. A general acquaintance with the whole circle of science is of more consequence to the theologian than at first sight appears. Not to mention the intimate connexion which subsists between all the parts of truth, in consequence of which important light may often be collected from the remotest quarters; it may be observed, that the state of learning in the world requires the advocate of the Bible, to attend to many things which may not in themselves be absolutely necessary. He must maintain his standing as a man of learning. He must be able to converse on the various topics of learning with other literary men; otherwise the due respect will not be paid to him; and his sacred office may suffer contempt, in consequence of

his appearing to be ignorant of what it is expected all learned men should be acquainted with.

But next to the knowledge of the original languages, an acquaintance with early translations is most important. The Septuagint, the Chaldaic paraphrase, the Syriac, and the Vulgate, deserve to be particularly mentioned.

The Septuagint is an invaluable treasure to the student of sacred literature. Most of the Fathers, and several learned moderns, believed it to have been made by inspiration; and others, as well as these, have preferred it to the Hebrew original. But this is certainly attributing too much to it. The fabulous account of the miraculous manner in which it was executed, given by *Aristeas*, which misled the fathers, is now generally exploded; and this was the principal ground on which the opinion of its inspiration rested. It has been pleaded also, that this version was constantly quoted by Christ and his Apostles; but our Lord himself could not have used it, as he spoke and conversed not in the Greek, but the Syriac language. And although it is true, that the Apostles and Evangelists commonly quote from it, yet not uniformly. Sometimes they differ from it, and give a better translation of the original. It has also been plausibly, stated, that the manuscripts from which this version was made, must have been much more perfect than any now extant, after the lapse of two thousand years. But it ought to be remembered, that the copies of the translation have been as liable to the injuries of time, as those of the original: and indeed much more so; for providence raised up a set of men, who watched over the Hebrew text with unceasing and incomparable vigilance. The *Masorites* devoted their lives to this object; and to prevent all possibility of corruption or alteration, they numbered not only the words, but the letters, of every book in the Bible. No such means were employed for the preservation of the text of the LXX; and accordingly the various readings in the copies of this version, are far more numerous and important than those of the Hebrew original. But whilst we reject the high claims for this version, which go to place it on a level with, or give it the preference to, the original; we willingly acknowledge its importance; and what is remarkable, is, its utility is greater in relation to the New Testament, than the Old; for it is written in that very *dialect* of the Greek language, in which the books of the New Testament are written; that is, the words are Greek, but the idiom Hebrew. It is therefore of more importance in assisting us to understand the language of the New Testament, than all other Greek authors beside.

This version has, by the consent of all, been considered the oldest extant; but a recent writer in *The Christian Observer*,* asserts that the Syriac translation of the Old Testament, contains *internal marks* of an antiquity superior to that of the Septuagint. The evidence of

* No. for July, 1811.

the fact, if it be so, must be *internal*; for I believe it is certain, that there is no external testimony which will support this assertion.

The Chaldaic paraphrase has commonly been referred to the time of Christ's advent, or to a period a little earlier; but the above-mentioned writer asserts that it is nearly as old as the time of *Ezra*. Without stopping to inquire into the validity of this opinion, I would observe, that these paraphrases are of no small importance to the interpreter of scripture, as they serve to show how the Jewish doctors understood certain passages prior to the birth of Christ; and clearly prove, that they referred to the expected Messiah, all or most of those prophecies, which we apply to Christ.

The Syriac version of the New Testament is very valuable, on account of its antiquity; and has some shadow of claim to the authority of an original; for it is written in the same, or very nearly the same language, which our LORD used when he delivered his sermons and instructions to the people; and may therefore be supposed to contain, in many instances, the identical words which he uttered. In the opinion of some, it was made at the close of the Apostolic age, or at furthest some time in the second century: but others refer it to the third, fourth, or even the fifth, century. However these things may be, it cannot be doubted, but that much advantage may be derived from this version of the Scriptures; and accordingly much use has been made of it by the learned, of late, in solving difficulties and in elucidating obscure passages, which occur in the New Testament: and being written in a language possessing a near affinity with the Hebrew, it is easily accessible to the Hebrew scholar.

The Vulgate is commonly supposed to have been made by *Jerome*, and to have succeeded to older Latin versions. It was, for many ages, the only medium through which the revelation contained in holy Scripture, was viewed in the western part of the Church. The Romanists considering that this version could be made to favour their pretensions and corruptions, more than the original, bent all their force to the support of its authority; whilst at the same time, they let slip no opportunity of disparaging the Hebrew text. At length they proceeded so far as to decree, in the Council of Trent, "that it should be reckoned as *the authentic standard by which all disputations, preachings, and expositions should be judged; and that no person should dare to reject its authority on any pretext whatever.*" The more liberal Catholics themselves, are ashamed of the unblushing effrontery of this decree; and what slender foundation there was for so high a claim, may be conjectured from this circumstance, that a learned man* of their own communion declares, that he had himself noted *eighty thousand* errors in this version. But, nevertheless, it may be useful in many ways to the biblical student, and being written in Latin, is accessible to every scholar. And here I will take

* *Isidore Clarius.*

occasion to remark, the great importance of a familiar acquaintance with the Latin language, to the theologian. Although no part of scripture is written in that language, yet it is almost essentially necessary to pass through this vestibule, in order to arrive at the knowledge of any other ancient language; most valuable grammars and dictionaries being written in Latin: and almost all theological works, not designed for the immediate use of the people, were composed in this language, prior to the middle of the last century, a very small portion of which have been translated into English. The course of theological study would indeed be very much circumscribed, if we were destitute of this key to unlock its rich treasures. It would lead me into a discussion too long, to consider, what assistance may be derived from the writings of the Fathers; what from the Schoolmen; what from the Reformers; and what from more modern commentators and critics, in the interpretation of the Scriptures. The time allotted for this discourse, would be entirely insufficient to do justice to this subject. I shall therefore leave it untouched, and proceed to mention,

A HELP, which, though put in the last place, in this discourse, is of more real importance than all the rest; and that is, *the illumination and assistance of the Holy Spirit*. Illumination differs from inspiration in this respect; that whereas by the latter we are made acquainted with truths before unrevealed, or unknown, by the former we are enabled to discern the beauty and real nature of the truths contained in a revelation already made. It is obvious, that in the study of Divine truth, much depends on the temper and condition of the student's mind. A proud and self-sufficient person, however endowed with acuteness of intellect, and furnished with stores of literature, is continually prone to fall into pernicious error; whilst the humble man occupies a station from which truth may be viewed to advantage. Prejudice, proceeding from education or passion, blinds the mind, and warps the judgment; but the sincere and ardent love of truth disposes us to view the whole evidence, and impartially to weigh the arguments on both sides of any question. As much therefore depends upon preserving our own minds in a proper state, as upon the diligent use of external means of information. The conclusion from these premises is, that the student of sacred literature should be possessed of sincere and ardent piety. He should be a man "taught of God," conscious of his own insufficiency, but confident of the help of the Almighty. Indeed, when we consider the weakness of the human intellect, and the various prejudices and false impressions to which it is constantly liable, we must be convinced, that without Divine assistance, there is little hope of arriving at the knowledge of truth, or preserving it when acquired. He, who would understand the Scriptures, therefore, ought not to "lean to his own understanding," but by continual and earnest prayer, should look unto the "Father of lights," from whom proceedeth every good and

every perfect gift; and who hath promised to give wisdom to those who lack it, and ask for it.

There is no person who needs more to be in the constant exercise of prayer, than the theological student: not only at stated periods, but continually, in the midst of his studies, his heart should be raised to heaven for help and direction. A defect here, it is to be feared, is one principal reason why so much time and labour are often employed in theological studies with so little profit to the Church. *That knowledge which puffeth up is acquired; but charity, which edifieth, is neglected.*

When the serious mind falls into doubt respecting divine truths, the remedy is not always reasoning and argument, but divine illumination. The mind may be in such a state, that it is rather perplexed than relieved by mere human reasoning; but at such times a lively impression made by the Spirit of truth, banishes all doubt and hesitation; and then, the same texts or arguments which were before unavailing to our conviction and satisfaction, exhibit the truth in a light as clear as demonstration. This may appear to some to savour of enthusiasm. Be it so. It is, however, an enthusiasm essential to the very nature of our holy religion, without which it would be a mere dry system of speculation, of ethics and ceremonies. But this *divine illumination* is its *life*, its *soul*, its *essence*. It is true, this influence is not peculiar to the theologian. Every sincere Christian, in his measure, partakes of this "anointing," by which he is taught to know all things; but the teacher of religion needs a double portion of this spirit. How often does the minister of the gospel labour and toil with all his might, without producing anything of importance, for edification! But if he receive the aid of the Spirit, his text is opened and illustrated, without any painful exertion of his own. He is conscious, indeed, that he is a mere recipient. The train of thought which occupies his mind, appears to originate in some occult cause, which he cannot trace. And happy would it be for preachers, happy for their hearers, if there were more dependence on divine assistance, not only in the composition, but in the delivery of sermons! When God shall appear in his glory, to build up Jerusalem, he will raise up, I have no doubt, a race of preachers, who shall partake of this heavenly gift, in a much higher degree than has heretofore been common. He will bring forward to the sacred office, men possessing *boldness*, founded on their reliance upon divine assistance; *clearness*, proceeding from divine illumination; and that *unction* which flows from the sweet and lively experience of the truth delivered, in the heart of the preacher. The solicitous, and often unsuccessful, effort to rise to some artificial standard of oratory, shall then yield to nobler motives; and the preacher, like *Paul*, shall be willing to make a sacrifice of his own reputation for learning and refinement, at the foot of the cross: and to count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his LORD. Gospel simplicity and sincerity, shall then be preferred by the man of

God, to all the soaring flights of eloquence, and to all the splendid trappings and tinsel of human science. May it please the Lord of the vineyard speedily to send forth many such labourers into his harvest ; *for the harvest is great, and the labourers are few !*

VII. I will now bring this discourse to a conclusion, by offering some motives to excite the theological student to diligence in the perusal of the Sacred Scriptures.

A book has a claim upon our time and study, on account of the authority by which it comes recommended, the excellency of the matter comprehended in it, and the interest which we have involved in the knowledge of its contents. On all these accounts the Bible has the highest possible claim on our attention. It comes to us, as we have proved, authenticated as the word of God ; stamped as it were with the signature of heaven ; and recommended to our diligent perusal by the Lord Jesus Christ. The matter which it contains, is, like its origin, divine : *truth*, pure, glorious, and all-important truth, constitutes the subject of this Book. The saying ascribed to *Mr. Locke*, when he took leave of a beloved relation, shortly before his end, was worthy of that profound genius ; "Study," said he, "the Sacred Scriptures ; they have God for their author, truth without mixture of error for their matter, and eternal life for their end." If we should take the lowest view of the subject, and form our opinion of the Scriptures by the same rules by which we judge of human compositions, they will be found to transcend the highest efforts of human genius, as far as the heavens are above the earth. Hear on this subject, the decision of a scholar, in whom learning and taste in their highest perfection were combined : "I have regularly and attentively read these Holy Scriptures, and am of opinion that this volume, independently of its divine origin, contains more sublimity and beauty, purer morality, and finer strains of poetry and eloquence, than can be collected from all other books, in whatever age or language they may have been composed."* But the excellency of the Scriptures cannot be appreciated by the rules of human criticism. As well might we think of judging of the proportions of the celestial arch, or the location of the stars in the vast expanse, by the rules of architecture. The word of God, like his works, is on a plan too vast, too sublime, too profound, to be measured by the feeble intellect of man.

Fully to explain how worthy the Scriptures are of our attention, on account of the matter comprehended in them, would require us to exhibit all the truths which they contain ; but as this cannot be done in one, or a few discourses, I will now content myself with mentioning a few leading points, on which the Scriptures furnish us with information of the most important kind.

In the first place, then, it is here, and here alone, that we can

* Found written in his own hand, on a blank leaf of *Sir William Jones's Bible*, after his death.

learn the true character of God. The indistinct outline, which may be traced in the works of creation, is here filled up. The knowledge of God, which could be derived from a view of his works, would not be sufficient for man, even in a state of innocence; and much less so when he is fallen into sin. None have ever been able to form just conceptions of the Deity from the light of nature alone. A revelation was absolutely necessary to teach man what God is; and the Bible contains all the information which we need on this subject. Here the divine glory is revealed. The moral attributes of Deity, especially, are represented in the clearest, strongest light. Truths respecting the divine nature, are here revealed, concerning which, reason and philosophy could never have formed a conjecture. The glorious and mysterious doctrine of a Trinity in unity, is taught from the beginning to the end of the Bible; a doctrine offensive to the pride of man, but one which will afford subject for profound contemplation through eternity. From the Scriptures we learn, not only that God is holy, just, merciful, and faithful; but we behold these attributes harmonizing in a work which, according to all the views that finite wisdom could have taken of it, must have placed them in a state of complete variance; that is, in the justification and salvation of a sinner. In the redemption of Christ these divine perfections not only appear harmonious; "*mercy and truth having met together, and righteousness and peace having kissed each other*;" but in the cross, are exhibited with a lustre and glory, which, according to our conceptions, could not have been given to them, in any other circumstances. If we would know *the only true God*, then, we must "search the Scriptures."

In the next place, we obtain from the Bible a satisfactory account of the origin of evil, natural and moral. Not, indeed, an explanation of the reason why it was permitted; but such an account of its introduction, as is perfectly consistent with the honour and purity of the divine government. We here learn that God created man "in a state of innocency, with freedom and power to will and do that which was well pleasing to himself, but yet mutable, so that he might fall from it." This liberty was abused by man: sin therefore owes its origin to the creature, who is wholly chargeable with its blame; although it did not take place without the knowledge, nor contrary to the purpose, of the infinite God. The first man being the root of all his posterity, and being appointed to act for them as well as for himself, they are involved with him in all the consequences of his fall; for "*they sinned in him and fell with him in his first transgression*." All the streams of sin and misery in the world, flow from this original fountain. And so deep and dreadful is this fall of man that he is utterly unable to recover himself from the guilt and depravity into which he is by nature sunk.

The last mentioned article of information would be only calculated to plunge us into the depths of misery and despair, were it not, that the Scriptures teach us the consoling doctrine of *redemption*. In-

deed, the whole Bible may be considered as a history of Redemption. Here we can trace the wondrous plan up to its origin, in the eternal counsels of peace. Here we read of the early development of this plan, after the fall, in paradise. The incarnation and victory of the glorious Redeemer was clearly intimated in the promise, "*that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head.*" To this object, the faith of the pious was directed, by every new revelation and institution. Prophets, in long succession, with lips touched with hallowed fire, described and predicted *Immanuel*. Although their prophecies are often expressed in dark symbolical language, yet sometimes, from the midst of this darkness, there are vivid coruscations of light, which exhibit the promised Messiah as visibly, as if he had already come. At length the fulness of time arrived, and "*God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law.*" "*God was now manifest in the flesh.*" And He, "*who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.*" The redemption of the Church by the blood of the Son of God, is a subject on which angels look with wonder; and it is a subject, which, through eternity, will furnish a theme for the songs of the redeemed of the LORD.

But the Scriptures give us information, not only of the work of the Redeemer in procuring for us an "everlasting righteousness;" but also of the work of the Spirit, in uniting the redeemed soul to Jesus Christ; in regenerating, sanctifying, supporting, guiding, and comforting it; until it is "made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

Another important article of information which we find in the Scriptures of truth, is a clear expression of the will of God, in relation to the duty of man. There are, it is true, traces of the law of God still remaining on the heart of every man; but these are far from being sufficient to show him the full extent, and the spiritual nature, of the duties required of him. And what might be known from honestly inquiring of our own consciences, respecting our duty, is often missed through the influence of false principles, instilled into the mind by a defective education, and by customs become universally prevalent, through the corruption of human nature. But we need be no longer at a loss about the law of God. He condescended to publish it, with his own voice, in the hearing of all *Israel*; and to write it with his own finger, on tables of stone. To explain this law, we have many comments from inspired men; but especially we have the lucid exposition of the Lawgiver himself; and, what is more important, we behold it fully illustrated and exemplified, in the obedience which HE, in our nature, and for our sakes, rendered to it; so

that, if we now wish to know our duty, we have only to contemplate the character of Jesus Christ. If we wish to do it, we have only to walk in his footsteps.

Finally, the Scriptures contain distinct and full revelation of futurity, as far as it is necessary for us to know what is to be hereafter. In them, "life and immortality are brought to light." Full assurance is given, by the testimony of one who cannot lie, that "an exceeding great and eternal weight of glory" is reserved for the people of God in another world. In the New Testament, we are made familiar with heaven, by the frequency with which it is mentioned and described. The existence of a future world is no longer left to be collected by uncertain reasoning, and probable conjecture. It is now a matter of testimony. Faith has a firm ground on which to rest; for this truth is linked with every fact and doctrine of the gospel; is seen in every promise and threatening under the new dispensation. But the Scriptures reveal not only a heaven of glory, but a hell of horror; a dark and "bottomless pit," where "the worm dieth not, and where the fire is not quenched," and where "there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth." They give us the certain assurance, also, of a day being appointed in which God will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; and in which they that are in their graves shall rise, some to everlasting life and glory, and others to everlasting shame and contempt.

From this brief survey of what the Scriptures teach us, we must be convinced of the great importance of being well acquainted with them. Our own salvation is involved in the right knowledge of this book; and if we are teachers of others, how important is it, that we "as good stewards of the mysteries of GOD," be "able rightly to divide the word of truth, giving to every one his portion in due season." We should, therefore, "meditate on these things, and give ourselves wholly to them, that our profiting may appear unto all." We must "take heed unto ourselves, and to our doctrine, and continue in them; for by so doing we shall both save ourselves and them that hear us."

But we shall not only find the Scriptures to be a source of profitable instruction; a rich mine of truth which has never yet been fully explored; but also a source of pure and permanent delight.

As the natural light is pleasant to the eyes, so is truth to the understanding, unless some moral disease renders its approach unacceptable. "They whose deeds are evil, love darkness rather than light:" but the regenerate soul "rejoices in the truth." Food to the hungry is not more pleasant, nor cold water more refreshing to the thirsty, than evangelical truth to the pious mind. It is, indeed, the bread of life which cometh down from heaven; the hidden manna, with which the spiritual Israel are fed, whilst they sojourn in this wilderness. The person who has been taught of God, prefers the truths of his word to all earthly treasures, and to all the sweets of

nature. "More are they to be desired than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb." "The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver." "Thy statutes have been my song in the house of my pilgrimage." How delightful must it be to sit as a disciple at the feet of Jesus, and with a child-like docility, imbibe precious instruction, from his word and Spirit! When we fall under the power of some overwhelming temptation, or when dark clouds of adversity thicken around us, in the truths and promises of our GOD we find our only refuge. In the sanctuary, when the oracles of God are delivered, doubt and unbelief, sorrow and despair are driven away. Here the divine beauty beams with mild effulgence on the soul, and the troubled spirit is charmed to rest. "*One day in thy courts is better than a thousand.*" "*One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord, all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord.*"

When Jesus joins himself to his disconsolate disciples, how soon is their sorrow turned into joy! And whilst he "opens their understandings to understand the Scriptures, how do their hearts burn within them!" That which above all things makes the Scriptures precious, and the study of them delightful, is, that there we can find *Jesus Christ*. We have no need to say, "who shall ascend into heaven, that is, to bring Christ down from above; or who shall descend into the deep, that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead?" For, "the word is nigh us, even in our mouth, and in our heart; that is, the word of faith which we preach." "Christ and him crucified," is the centre of the Christian's religion, the foundation of his faith and hope, and the perennial spring of all his pleasures and his joys. When, at any time, it pleases GOD to shine upon his word, whilst the believer reads its sacred contents, what a divine glory illuminates the holy page! What attractive beauty draws forth the best affections of his heart! What wonders do his opened eyes behold in the cross! He seems to be translated into a new world, and is ready to exclaim, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee." "Old things are passed away, and behold, all things are become new." O! could the pious reader of the Scriptures constantly retain these spiritual views, and these holy impressions, heaven would be begun. This wilderness would "bud and blossom as the rose," and paradise be renewed on earth. But "this is not our rest, it is polluted;" that *remaineth for the people of God*; even "*an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in the heavens for us, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.*"

But whilst we are on our pilgrimage to this promised land, the Scriptures will be "a light to our feet and a lamp to our paths." They will answer the same purpose to us, which the pillar of cloud and of fire, did to the Israelites. They will guide us in the right

way, through all our journey. Let us, then, be persuaded diligently "to search the Scriptures."

I beg leave to conclude this discourse in the words of the pious *Weller*, the friend and disciple of *Luther* :

"I admonish you again and again, that you read the sacred Scriptures in a far different manner from that in which you read any other book : that you approach them with the highest reverence, and most intense application of your mind ; not as the words of a man, nor an angel, but as the words of the Divine Majesty, the least of which should have more weight with us, than the writings of the wisest and most learned men in the world."*

ARTICLE XV.

CHARGE TO THE PROFESSOR AND STUDENTS OF
DIVINITY.

BY PHILIP MILLEDOLER, D.D.

REVEREND AND DEAR BROTHER:—

The engagements you have formed this day, are peculiarly solemn and affecting. The charge devolving on the Pastor of a congregation, in entering upon the duties of his office, is deeply interesting, but not so interesting as yours. You are not called by a particular branch of our Church to minister in holy things, but by her highest ecclesiastical judicatory, to superintend the education of her sons. Under the direction, we trust, of the great Head of the Church, you have been invited to train up for her service, bands of intelligent, intrepid, and faithful champions of the cross. The characters you are to form for active service, are the flower of our youth ; young men from whose lips, at some future, and not far distant period, multitudes of souls may receive instruction ; who may be destined to fill the chairs of *teachers* and professors in our schools, and on whose fidelity, under God, may depend the future peace and prosperity of the Church, and the salvation of thousands, perhaps millions, yet unborn.

Suffer me, under these circumstances, to give a brief exhibition of the views of the General Assembly in founding this institution, and to point out some duties incumbent on you, in the accomplishment of those views. The Assembly, in founding this school, are desirous of securing and perpetuating to the Church, a learned, orthodox, pious, and evangelical Ministry.

We want a learned Ministry.

Whatever mischief has been done to the world by philosophy,

* *Consilium De Studio Theologiae.*

falsely so called, we are persuaded that true learning has never injured the Church, and never will. Such is the harmony subsisting between the works and word of God, that discoveries in the former will never cease to promote our regard for the latter. It has been said, that ignorance is the mother of devotion; that aphorism we utterly and indignantly reject. To instruct others, and especially in divine things, men must first be instructed themselves. On this principle God himself has acted from the beginning of the world to the present day. In former ages, he himself spake directly to the prophets. The messages they delivered were formed under the immediate influence of his grace, and the inspiration of his Spirit. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."*

At the entrance of our Saviour upon his Ministry, he chose twelve disciples. These were prepared by himself for their work, and that too, especially in the first instance, by a regular course of instruction and discipline. It was after that course of instruction, and not before, that they were sent out to evangelize the world. Of completing the designs of God toward our race, in their day, these servants of Christ had no expectation. Their number was small, their lives precarious, the opposition they met with, powerful and constant; and their influence confined to regions which, however extensive in themselves, were yet small when compared to the whole world. They were therefore solicitous to provide for the future wants of the Church, and took immediate steps for transmitting their power and authority to others. Hence that charge of *Paul to Timothy*: † "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." Thus early provision was made for the supply of the Church with an able and faithful ministry. Beside the instruction they had received from their Lord, the Apostles and their immediate successors were qualified in a miraculous manner for their work. They were endowed with the gift of tongues. Devils fled at their rebuke; diseases, the most inveterate, were healed by a word or by a touch. They had also the power of discerning spirits; ‡ a power which gave them no small advantage over ordinary teachers. All these gifts, from their extraordinary nature, and the well-known disposition of mankind, were calculated to excite curiosity, to attract attention, to draw men within the sphere of the Gospel, and to carry home, by divine grace, irresistible conviction to their understandings and hearts. They enjoyed another advantage: they were under the influence of the Spirit of God, to a degree, of which now, alas! owing to our most awful supineness, we can hardly form a conception. This influence of the Spirit gave dignity to their manners, intrepidity to their zeal, and a general character to their ministry, which commanded the admiration of both friends and foes. With

* 2 Pet. 1: 21.

† 2 Tim. 2: 2.

‡ 1 Cor. 12: 10.

such advantages, it is not to be wondered at, that they towered with eagles' flight above the philosophers of their day, and outstripped in their progress all the wisdom of the sages, and all the eloquence of the schools. But the gift of tongues, with other miraculous endowments of the Holy Spirit, began gradually to disappear with the extension of the Gospel. This circumstance had a considerable influence in changing the face of the Church, and especially in regard to the education of her ministers. That the Scriptures might be read in the languages in which they were originally penned, or translated into the tongues of foreign nations; that young Gentile converts might become mighty in the Scriptures; and that the sons of the Church might be qualified to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, against learned and subtle adversaries without, as well as against sectaries in her own bosom, it was soon perceived that a learned as well as pious, ministry, was indispensably necessary. The most distinguished of the primitive fathers were advocates for a learned ministry. They well knew that learning without piety might be abused to the worst of purposes; but they were unwilling to allow that the abuse of what is good in itself, can ever detract from its intrinsic value. In this view of the subject, they were followed by the Reformers; and it is a principle which has been acted upon, and contended for, from that day to the present, by the best and purest churches in Christendom. In the careful instruction, then of our youth, dear sir, for the work of the Gospel Ministry, you will neither stand upon new or untenable ground. And, assured as you may be, that you are doing the will of Christ, you may safely employ in it all the stores of your learning; all the resources of your genius, and all the powers of your soul. But whilst there can be no doubt, either of the lawfulness or expediency of such a work, it is not to be concealed, that it is a task of great labour and difficulty. To say nothing of that diversity of disposition, taste, and intellect, in students themselves, which renders the art of teaching, as well as government, so exceedingly intricate; waiving also at present all observations on *methods* of instruction, I will venture to say, that the work itself is one of the most arduous in the world. The Scriptures are a mine of inexhaustible wealth, but to be enriched with their treasures will require close and constant application. To exhibit divine truth in a lucid and systematic manner; to show the unity of Scripture in the connexion and dependence of its parts; to make of our young men sound biblical critics, and able casuists; to furnish them with gospel armour of proof, offensive and defensive; to give them an extensive acquaintance with Church history and government; but especially so to indoctrinate, and, if I may use the expression, leaven them with heavenly truth, that they may ever after hold, and defend it for themselves, as well as communicate it to others; is a work indeed of no small magnitude. In this work you will soon, we hope, be aided by faithful colleagues; but a large and important part of it will still rest, under God, upon yourself. To cultivate such a field as this, dear sir, will be sufficient

to call forth the exertions of the most active and enterprising mind ; it will therefore behoove you, notwithstanding *all* your present acquirements, not only to cherish the attainments you have already made, but also further to enrich your mind with the spoils of science, and to extend your inquiries into almost every department of literature, sacred and profane.

Another charge devolving upon you with peculiar weight, dear brother, is the faithful maintenance of that system of doctrines handed down to us by our fathers, and for which in numerous instances they have sacrificed "their fortunes, their liberties, and their lives." Strongly attached to the doctrines of the Reformation contained in her standards, jealous of innovation, and anxious to transmit the truth as it is in Jesus inviolate to posterity, the Presbyterian Church will expect, and permit me to add, sir, after the signal mark of her confidence reposed in you, will have a right to expect, that her doctrines, and especially her distinguishing doctrines, will be taught in this school without adding to, or taking aught from them in any wise, or under any pretext whatsoever. It is also expected that these doctrines will be explained in terms used by her best writers from almost time immemorial, and which from long use have become familiar to, and are best understood by, her members. By observing this plan, there will be an agreement of theological terms used in the instruction of our youth, with those used in our standard books, as well as an agreement of terms used by our future licentiates and ministers, with those to which our congregations are accustomed. An object this, of no small importance to the future harmony of our churches. The Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church, and Form of Government connected with it, will be an important book in this seminary. Containing a form of sound words drawn from the lively oracles of God, and tested by experience, it has long served, and will hereafter serve, as a bond of union to the churches. As every minister in our connexion is required to subscribe this Confession, they should be well acquainted with its contents. When adopted, it cannot be renounced without renouncing our communion ; nor invaded, without a species of sacrilege. If important doctrinal errors are ever introduced into our churches, they will be introduced by a gradual departure from our standards. These should be guarded, therefore, with inviolable care. Is any man dissatisfied with them, he is not bound to receive them ; and if he does receive them, he is by that very act sacredly bound to cherish and maintain them. To surrender truths deemed of *minor importance* is only to prepare the way for other demands, and greater sacrifices ; and if first attempts are not repelled, they will soon be followed by others, till all is gone that is worth contending for. To give our young men an early acquaintance with these standards, is therefore an object of primary importance, and should they be required, during their theological course, to commit to memory the greater part, if not the whole, of our Confession and

Book of Discipline, it would be attended with incalculable advantage. It would not only give them a decided superiority over others in ecclesiastical councils, but would also tend to guard them against error, as well as to secure their attachment to the truth. Peculiarly set for the defence of the Gospel, it will be expected of you, dear brother, that you will stand as a bulwark for truth against the encroachments of error. In this respect also, the Assembly have deposited in your hands a most sacred trust; and one, we are persuaded, that will never be abused. With pleasure we anticipate the period when the youth of our seminary will not only exhibit sound principles themselves, but will also be disposed, and prepared to hand them down inviolate to others.

And as it is desirable that we should have a learned and orthodox, so we also need a pious and evangelical, ministry. Whatever may be the talents of ministers, they are like, without personal piety, to be of no lasting advantage to the Church; nay, such characters have often inflicted upon it deep, and almost incurable wounds. That they are utterly unfit for the sacred office, is manifest. How shall they feed the flock of Christ purchased with his blood, who have no interest in that purchase? How shall they sympathize in the sufferings of God's people, who have no spiritual feeling? Or how shall they speak a word in season to weary and tempted souls, who themselves never felt, and therefore never mourned, under the awful pressure of their sins? Their godly hearers can be satisfied with them no longer than they shall have address enough to conceal their real characters, and they not unfrequently become the scorn even of the careless and impenitent. We hope the time is far distant, when our churches will be satisfied with mere exhibitions of learning, or eloquence, or with the substitution of dry moral lectures for the preaching of the cross. The apostle Paul was determined to know nothing among his hearers but Jesus Christ, and him crucified. He was convinced that nothing under heaven could exhibit the divine character in a clearer light, and that nothing had equal influence on the human mind, to control, reform, and change it into the image of God. He had fairly made the experiment, and hath taught us, both by precept and example, that the true ministry of reconciliation must be pious and evangelical. In preparing such a Ministry for the Church, it is desirable that such, and such only, should be sent forward to the school as are hopefully pious. What remains to the professors of the institution, is continually to insist upon the necessity of it, to cultivate it where it exists, by precept and example; to honour it with marked respect: and in every instance in which they shall be satisfied of the want of it in any pupil, to take effectual steps to prevent his entrance upon an office, for which in such case he is so evidently disqualified.

Thus, reverend and dear brother, I have endeavoured to mark out your glorious work, and have ventured a few thoughts on the best means of its accomplishment. We want a learned, orthodox, pious,

and evangelical ministry. To such, and such only, can we confidently and comfortably commit the affairs of the Church; and to leave another ministry in it, if we ourselves are faithful, would plant thorns in our dying pillows. As no greater curse can fall upon a people than to commit its spiritual interests in the hands of weak and unskilful, but especially of unprincipled, men; so, on the other hand, we are persuaded that an able and faithful ministry, is one of the most distinguished blessings to the world. Its influence in the Church must be obvious to all; and its benign influence on our schools, as well as on the general good order and happiness of society, will be denied only by the thoughtless, or the profligate. This seminary then, even in its infant state, is an object of public interest; an object not only calculated to call forth the good wishes of our own Church, but of the Church at large, and even of the nation. Though its origin be small, the voice of its sons, we trust, will one day be heard to advantage from one extreme of these United States to the other; nay, the time may not be far distant, when they will vie with their transatlantic brethren, in carrying the lamp of eternal truth, and planting the standard of the cross, on the remotest shores of heathen lands. The blessings that flow from such a ministry, are not blessings of a day, of a year, or even of an age. These men will in due time transmit their knowledge and authority to others, and these again to their successors, to the final conflagration of the globe. In this view of the subject, Reverend Sir, you will feel a weight of responsibility upon you sufficient to bow the shoulders of an angel. The infant state of the institution will add to that weight. The General Assembly have stamped it with grand and impressive features, but they have only drawn the great outlines of its character. Much yet remains to be done. The perfection of their plan will be the result of time and experience, and will greatly depend on the wisdom and diligence of their professors. In all this work, dear brother, you will have the eyes of God, of angels, and of men, upon you; but you enter upon it with encouragement. You may promise yourself the good wishes and prayers of the whole Church of God. You may also promise yourself the cordial co-operation of your brethren in the Lord. In their personal friendship, as well as interest in the work, you will find pledges of future consolation and support. But above all, you may promise yourself, if faithful, the constant blessing of the great Head of the Church: there lies your strength, your wisdom, your every qualification for the work. The promise, "Lo, I am with you always," has never been forgotten by him, and never will. I have only to add a wish that, when the book shall be opened that records the transactions of this day, you may have cause to rejoice in them for ever.

Permit me, also, young gentlemen, on this solemn occasion, to address myself to you. You will have the honour of being the first whose names are enrolled in the register of this Seminary. They will stand, we hope, at the head of a host of worthies, whose future

labours shall bless the church of God, and do honour to their country. As you are first in order of time, so we pray, that you may be numbered with the first, in devotion to God, and usefulness to mankind. The studies in which you will be engaged, are not only delightful to the pious mind, but are also calculated to enlarge your souls; to enoble and transform them into the very image of God. The privilege you will enjoy, of consecrating your time to the study of the Scriptures, and your persons to the service of Christ, is too great for expression. You are now, young gentlemen, to lay the foundation of your future character and usefulness in life; and, in some measure at least, as connected with it, of your future and eternal felicity. Permit me then to urge, with all possible earnestness, a diligent improvement of time and opportunities afforded you in the good providence of God. Your stay in this seminary may seem long in prospect, but it is really short; short in itself, and especially so, when compared with the work you have to do. Observe the plan of education marked out by the Assembly, and you will see at once, that the most diligent application will barely suffice to give you, not to say a perfect, but even a competent knowledge of the subjects it embraces.

If any suppose that occasional application, or superficial reading, will constitute an eminent divine, they are exceedingly mistaken. In searching after, illustrating, or defending truth, the whole circle of the sciences may be pressed into the service of Christ. The study of the Scriptures, especially in their original languages, is a work of time, as well as of deep research. To obtain an accurate knowledge of Scripture types, prophecies, and doctrines; to be acquainted with the sophistry of enemies, and qualified to expose it; to be well informed in church history and government; and to acquire facility in collecting, judgment in arranging, and gracefulness in the delivery of your thoughts, will all require time and labour.

But whilst I thus urge preparation for the altar in the acquirement of useful knowledge, let me also insist, particularly insist, on the cultivation of personal piety. As you are now to lay the foundation of solid learning, and literary eminence, so also of good character. Many eyes will be upon you, and more expected than from other young men of the sane age, engaged in other pursuits. To the youth of this venerable seat of learning and the arts, you are especially called, to set examples of piety worthy of imitation. Not to speak of actions grossly derogatory to your Christian character, and the stain of which might follow you to your graves; remember, that you have in great measure passed that period of life, in which folly is extenuated by juvenile indiscretion. A short time will place you, God willing, upon the theatre of the world, under the august character of ambassadors of Christ. Bear this in constant remembrance; and if you ever hope to fill that station with dignity to yourselves, usefulness to others, and glory to God, learn how to live by faith in the Son of God; govern your passions, deny yourselves, and con-

secrete your whole souls to the service of the Redeemer. Whatsoever things are true, just, lovely, and of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Let the world take knowledge of you, that you have been with Jesus; let it appear evident to all that you have entered upon your work with due reflection, and from proper motives, and you will in no wise lose your reward.

With piety toward God, my young friends, be careful to cultivate respect for your instructors. It is the sign of an ingenuous mind, and a debt of gratitude you owe them. They will deserve well at your hands. The hero of Macedon revered his father much, but he revered his instructor more. He viewed him as a second father; as one who had formed his mind; and acknowledged a debt of gratitude he never could repay. Christian youth, in regard to their Christian teachers, must not be outdone by the gratitude of a heathen.

Beloved pupils, who have commenced with me your theological course—I now resign *you* with pleasure into other hands. Divided between parochial duties and the care I owed you, I have found the task of instruction difficult, and sometimes oppressive; your future teacher, unincumbered by other cares, can, and will cheerfully, devote his whole time to your improvement. I am happy to bear this public testimony to your former diligence and good conduct, and trust you will secure, by your future deportment, the approbation of your teachers, of the public, of your conscience, and your GOD.

ARTICLE XVI.

QUESTIONS RESPECTING THE MINISTERIAL
PROFESSION.*

FIRST.—Is there any office in which we can render more substantial service to our fellow-men, or more advance the glory of God? Should not the good of society and the glory of God, influence us in the choice of a profession?

Is there any office, however splendid or lucrative, of greater real dignity, than that of God's ambassador?

Is there any office which affords more and higher prospects of true happiness in *this* world?

Is there any office which affords as many incitements to piety, as many helps and facilities in the work of salvation, or more comfortable prospects of future glory and reward?

Does it require the relinquishment of any habit or indulgence necessary to the highest enjoyment?

Are not multitudes in the world, possessed of the ability to serve

* Taken from the "*Episcopal Recorder*," 1839.

God in the work of the ministry, prevented by the love of ease or of pleasure, or of profit, or of distinction?

While it is admitted that much may be done in every condition of life for the spiritual benefit of piety, can as much be done in any other for these ends, as in the ministry?

SECOND.—Is not every man when he is sent into the world, and endowed with rational and bodily powers of ordinary excellence—is he not *called and commanded*, not only to work out his own salvation, but to assist others to the utmost extent of his ability?

The age of miracles being long since terminated, have we a right to expect a supernatural designation to the sacred office; or anything more than circumstances and dispositions providentially favourable, or not providentially unfavourable?

Are we not bound to use our own endeavours to remove obstacles, and support inconveniences *in this cause* as well as in any other?

Does not the *fact* that there are many whole congregations going astray from the way of life, rendering no worship to their Maker, ignorant of their danger, their wants, their privileges, and their Saviour, and in the broad road to destruction, who might, by the blessing of God, through the exertions of a pious minister, be rescued from vice and misery, and be led to the inheritance of eternal glory—does not this *fact* constitute a *call*, and the most powerful call—a *call from Jesus Christ*, upon young men of pious dispositions and ordinary talents, to engage in the work of the ministry?

Will not this call continue to be thus providentially addressed to such persons, as long as there remain any flocks without a shepherd, or in danger of being in that state?

THIRD.—Is it not very often the case, that the greatest good is rendered to the cause of religion, and the souls of men, by persons certainly not possessed of *singular* abilities?

Do not the promises of Jesus Christ—"I am with you always, even to the end of the world;" "My grace is sufficient for you," furnish every good man with just grounds of confidence in this respect?

Is it not as much, and even in a greater degree our duty to rely upon the *sufficiency of grace* for the work of *the ministry*, than in the work of *individual salvation*?

Do not the solemn and unequivocal promises made to persevering prayer, through the intercession of Christ, extend to prayers offered up for ability to glorify God by advancing the salvation of souls?

FOURTH.—Have *you* ordinary talents?

Have *you* a pious disposition?

Do *you* love Christ?

Do *you* love the souls of men?

Is not his Almighty grace *promised to you*?

Is not his Almighty grace *sufficient* for you?

Has not his providence afforded you means, or the prospect and assurance of means to enable you for the work?

Would not the efforts used for your worldly establishment in some other manner, succeed in accomplishing *this*?

Are not souls *now perishing*, which by the blessing of God, *you* could be instrumental in saving?

Will you hear Christ in vain?

Shall they perish?

Before you deliberately weigh these considerations, invoke, on your knees, the guidance, and over-ruling power of the Holy Spirit.

ARTICLE XVII.

PAUCITY OF CANDIDATES FOR THE HOLY MINISTRY.

BY ARCHIBALD ALEXANDER, D.D.*

THE great Head and Founder of the Church had this subject in his mind, and urged it on the attention of his disciples, while he was on earth. His commandment on this point, which is as obligatory now as it ever was, is, "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth labourers into his harvest." It is evident from these words, that the Lord of the harvest is able to supply the deficiency of labourers; and that He will only do it in answer to prayer. Christ could have offered a prevailing prayer for this gift, but no: Christians must pray. "*Pray ye.*" He will be inquired of for this blessing, that he may do it for us. When there is a great deficiency of faithful labourers, does it not suggest a reason for an inquiry, whether this command has been obeyed? In some cases, we cannot be certain that what we ask is agreeable to the mind of God; but here, all room for doubt is removed. It is not often that Christ, in exhorting his disciples to the duty of prayer, informed them particularly, what to pray for; but in this case, he puts words as it were, into their mouth—"Pray ye the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest." It cannot be, then, that He would omit to answer a prayer thus expressly dictated by himself. If there be a want of labourers, the neglect must be in the Church. The blessing has not been asked, with due importunity and perseverance. The people have depended on Education Societies and Theological Seminaries to provide the candidates; and there has been but little earnest supplication to the Lord of the harvest.

Thus the matter now stands; and if this state of things continues,

* This article originally appeared in the *New York Observer*, 1840.

your Education Societies and your Theological Seminaries will soon experience a great falling off in their numbers. Let Christians know and remember, that no organized societies or seminaries, can supply this want. They may educate pious young men when they come to them; but what if the number of such shall go on diminishing, every year, can they create a supply? Surely not. We must have recourse to the Lord of the harvest. Formerly, pious parents dedicated their children to this sacred service, from their birth, and were incessant in their petitions, at a throne of grace, for ministerial grace and gifts for their devoted sons; and such prayers God has heard and answered, in thousands of instances. But where now do we find the consecrated Samuels, growing up under the light of the sanctuary? Where are the Hannahs, to wrestle with God in public and private, until they obtain their heart's desire? This ought to be a weighty care with every Church of Christ. The Church cannot exist without a ministry; and where are we to look for candidates for the ministry, but in the churches? Can that Church have done its duty, in which few or no candidates for the sacred office have been reared up? Or what judgment must be formed of those large and flourishing churches, with their hundreds of communicants, which once had a succession of young men in training for the harvest, but now have none? Perhaps it will startle some of our good people to hear it alleged as a fault, that particular churches are rearing no candidates for the ministry. But I will maintain it. There must be a grievous fault somewhere, in relation to this important concern; and as it is a matter of common duty, when there has been a continual barrenness, there must have been a want of due culture. Why have you no pious young men, on their way to the ministry? Have you not many sons who, if their hearts were touched by the finger of God, might be useful? But you may say—We cannot give them grace. True; this is not the ground of your accountability. But have you, as a Church, prayed for the conversion of the dear youth, that they might be prepared for this work?

Every Church, rich in numbers, as well as worldly substance, which has no young men in a course of training, ought to appoint a day of fasting and humiliation, to inquire into this matter, and to beg of God not to leave them like a barren tree, in his vineyard. You say that you contribute every year to the Education fund. This is well; but it is not all, nor the half of your duty on this subject. You must furnish men, as well as money; and the men are by far the most important part of the means. Without suitable men, money in this concern is worthless. You must bring forward pious and promising men. Do you ask how you can accomplish this? I answer as before, "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest." Do not forget to pray this prayer, as you have too often done. Think much of it, and lay it before God in secret, in your families, and in the church. And be not contented until you receive this blessing of the ascended Lord, to be the honoured instrument of furnishing the harvest field with at least one labourer. There are a few churches

in our land, which can number more than one devoted missionary in the foreign field. The writer knows a church of moderate size and little wealth, in a remote station, which within his recollection has furnished five or six faithful men for the work of the ministry, the bones of one of whom lie among the heathen. He could designate another place, where at least a dozen ministers have proceeded from one church, and some of them men of eminence. But, alas! the glory is departed; for years past, this fruitful spot has been barren in this respect. An able and excellent minister in Virginia was snatched away from his family without a moment's warning. His children, mostly sons, were then small—now, *five* of them are labouring in the field; and possibly the sixth may enter. Do you not suppose that this was in answer to the prayers of the father?

Some people say, that there is no real deficiency, or we should not have so many unemployed ministers. It may be admitted, that if the sacred office be viewed as a secular trade, by which men may make a comfortable living, the profession is already overstocked. At any rate, it is overstocked with men who will not work—or will only work where they can find everything ready prepared to their hand. The Church wants no *cumberers* of the ground, but *labourers*—not men who wish to enter on and enjoy the fruits of other men's labours, but *working men*, willing to break up the fallow ground, and ambitious to preach the gospel even where Christ has not been named. No class of educated men are more to be pitied, than those clergymen who are not occupied with the proper business of their profession. Although they may grow rich (though Providence commonly thwarts their schemes and disappoints their hopes), they are not to be envied. In fact, they lose all respectability in the eyes of the world. What would be unnoticed in another, public opinion will not tolerate in them. But to bring up such as a proof that there are supernumerary ministers, is as absurd as to plead that reapers are not wanted for a great and ripe harvest, because many idle loungers or busy triflers may be found in the country. The Lord hath spoken it, "*The harvest is great and the labourers few, Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.*"

ARTICLE XVIII.

THE BIBLE THE BEST BOOK FOR CANDIDATES
AND MINISTERS.

A PASTORAL LETTER TO CANDIDATES.

ISSUED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

PRESBYTERIAN EDUCATION ROOMS,
Philadelphia, February, 1851.

DEAR CHRISTIAN BROTHER—May "grace, mercy, and peace" be given unto you "from God our Father, and Jesus Christ our Lord."

Few stand in greater need of a divine, helping power, than one who, like yourself, is a candidate for the office of the holy ministry. We deem it a privilege to address you, in behalf of the Church, a few fraternal words with a view to practical improvement, and have selected as a topic the importance of reading and studying **THE BIBLE**, the great and good book of God, written by "holy men of old, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Our object is to urge upon your attention the daily, prayerful, intelligent, and conscientious study of the Bible.

Among the motives which should consecrate the word of God to every Christian, and more particularly to a candidate for the ministry, is the great fact that,

I. The Bible contains the **ONLY PLAN OF SALVATION**. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," is the substance of prophecy, the joyful hope of promises, the solemn prefiguring of moral and ceremonial law, and the grace and glory of evangelical precept and exhortation. The Bible keeps before the mind and heart the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. It exalts the Son of God as the Saviour of sinners. It is filled with salvation by grace. The Bible is the student's help in preserving his interest in the plan of redemption through the merits of another. As a dying sinner, you need to be reminded daily of the first principles of the gospel of Christ; as a future minister of the Church, you need to be thoroughly indoctrinated into all that pertains to the scheme of reconciliation between God and man. Therefore, dear brother, read, study your Bible. It will bring you every day to Calvary and Christ. "Search the Scriptures: for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me."

II. The Bible is the **RULE OF LIFE**. Does the mariner require chart and observations to guide him over the seas? How much more do you and we require the instructions of the Book of Life in our journey to eternity? The Bible contains principles to regulate human conduct in every possible variety of daily circumstances and emergencies. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and thy neighbour as thyself," is the high requirement of moral excellence it holds forth. Its precepts inculcate holiness in every form of virtue—meekness, gentleness, temperance, purity, brotherly-kindness, diligence, forbearance, charity. The human heart, prone to undervalue these sacred graces, is constantly exhorted to their cultivation in the written word with the authority of its uncompromising and intelligible standard. The Bible, in the solemn and persuasive spirit of intimate friendship, converses with us about "holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

III. The reading of the Bible is auxiliary to **DEVOTION AND TO HIGH CHRISTIAN ATTAINMENT**. "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth," is the petition of Christ in behalf of the spiritual welfare of his redeemed. The Holy Spirit, who indited the Bible, comes down to bless those who bend over its pages. The work of

His own power is the instrument of grace to them that honour it. The word of God enjoins the necessity of daily prayer, of "praying always," of "continuing instant in prayer." Its truth is the ally of devotion, the help of the exercises which its precepts inculcate. Was there ever an eminent Christian that did not love his Bible? If any one does not read diligently the Holy Scriptures, it is proof that he has not made high attainments in the divine life. Nor can he ever rise to much elevation of Christian character whilst neglecting communion with the Father, Son, and Spirit in the sacred pages of Revelation.

IV. The Bible is a **DELINEATOR OF HUMAN CHARACTER**. There is a constant tendency to overlook our real condition, to forget our depravity, selfishness, pride, and natural aversion to divine things. The word of God is the mirror of human nature to reflect back the depths of our depravity. It delineates the character of man in all the reality of its imperfections, in all the perversity of its guilt. "Thou art the man!" is the emphatic alarm of its secret-knowing pages. Yes, brother in Christ, the Bible describes us as we are; it lays open our evil hearts of unbelief; it keeps us in the dust; it makes us realize our sinfulness. Therefore let us diligently read our Bibles.

V. The Bible is the **TEXT-BOOK OF THE THEOLOGIAN**. It is the repository of Christian doctrine—the storehouse of the truth of Heaven. A mind that is well versed in the knowledge of what is written, and that has long fed upon the abundance of Divine Revelation, has the intellectual preparation for the ministry which no other learning can supply. The great danger of students is in not going to the Bible for their mental resources. They often place more reliance upon some able text-book of human composition than upon the oracles of God. Some of them, owing to early neglect, have a very imperfect acquaintance with Biblical history—not so much, sometimes, as Sabbath school scholars of ordinary attainment. And others, who make it a matter of conscience to read the Bible, day by day, are, nevertheless, unable to quote texts readily in proof of theological doctrine. The absurdity, as well as criminality, of this oversight of the word of God, in the preparations that aim at expounding and preaching it, is apparent. It is a great evil of the times. It is an evil that every candidate for the ministry is under the most solemn obligations to eradicate from the history of his personal experience. No minister can expect to preach "in demonstration of the Spirit and with power," who neglects the use of "words which the Holy Ghost teacheth." "The sword of the Spirit," is "the word of God." A verse of Scripture, well applied, seals the exposition of doctrine with divine authority. The old maxim, "*a good textuist is a good theologian*" is true in all ages. A thorough knowledge of the Bible is indispensable to a thorough acquaintance with theology, or to the edifying proclamation of its gracious truths. We beseech you, there-

fore, to place your main reliance, in your preparations for the ministry, upon the word of God, and not upon the word of man.

VI. A practical acquaintance with the Bible AFFORDS COMFORT IN SORROW AND TRIAL. We are born to sorrow; trials are our natural allotment. Especially must the faithful minister of Jesus Christ expect trial in standing up between the living and the dead, and "in warning every one night and day with tears." The minister needs consolation in the midst of the ordinary dispensations which come upon him, and in the official temptations and griefs more immediately connected with the sacred office. The Bible is to him, as to all, a chief source of strength, support, and joy. "Thy testimonies also are my delight and my counsellors." "This is my comfort in my affliction; for thy word hath quickened me." "Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage." You may be assured, young brother, that in reading diligently and prayerfully your Bible, you are laying up for yourself consolation against the time of trouble.

VII. The Bible is a STIMULANT OF EVANGELICAL ACTIVITY. Who, more than a minister, should glow with zeal, be forward in every good word and work, and be clad with the whole armour of God, down to the sandals of the "preparation of the gospel of peace?" And whence does the ambassador of Christ derive the enterprise and the energy to spend and be spent in his Master's service? Not exclusively from the Bible, but from the Bible as *one* of the means of this grace. In the universal spirit of its doctrines, in the fervour of its exhortations, in the joy of its rewards, in its examples of apostolic deeds and endurance, in the glorious light of the unceasing benevolence of the Son of God, the Bible furnishes animating motives to Christian activity. No one, more than a minister, has need of his Bible to arouse him to work for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ.

VIII. The Bible BRINGS HEAVEN TO VIEW WITH THE GLORIES OF ITS EVERLASTING REST. Our life of sin and sorrow is to end, if we are the Lord's, in perfect holiness and peace. The Christian minister is refreshed by the anticipations of "the glory that is to be revealed." With the Holy Scriptures in his hand, he looks upward with the gracious assurance that there is "a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give him in that day." "This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal immortality." Sweet to the believer in the hour of death is the life-giving "truth as it is in Jesus." Precious always has been its influence in preparing for the conflict with the king of terrors; and oh, how precious is the Heaven which its revelations, having brought to view in life, leave to be entered upon at death, "to the full enjoying of God through all eternity!"

We have thus in a cursory manner, and in a friendly and pastoral spirit, endeavoured to "stir up your pure mind by way of remembrance" in regard to the sacred Scriptures. The most profitable

mode of reading them is believed to be *at stated hours* of the day, in *regular course* and with *prayer*. Hoping that this communication may tend in some humble measure by God's grace, to strengthen your sense of the value of the Bible, and to increase your determination to become more and more familiar with its contents, in your preparations for the ministry,

We are your fellow-servants in Christ,

C. VAN RENNELAER,

WM. CHESTER,

In behalf of the Board of Education of the Presbyterian Church.

ARTICLE XIX.

RESOLUTIONS OF A MAN OF GOD.

[Taken from the Memoir of the Rev. EBENEZER PORTER, D.D.]

I. THE CARE OF MY HEART.

1. I will endeavour to keep the Sabbath holy. I will avoid conversation on worldly topics, and will not allow myself to think on any matter of common business, nor to read literary or professional books on this holy day.

2. Special hindrances excepted, I will endeavour to maintain secret devotion steadily, at least twice a day.

3. I will recollect every day that I am mortal.

4. When any doubtful thing is to be done, I will ask myself, "How will it bear the eye of God's omniscience?—how will it appear at the judgment?"

5. I will endeavour to repress all undue regard to the praise or censure of men, by recollecting that GOD is a witness of all that I *do* or *think*.

6. I will guard against *selfishness* as the "abominable thing which the Lord hates." When I detect myself in being especially pleased with a good action, because it is done by *myself*, or done by another through *my* advice, I will condemn the littleness of such feelings as below the dignity of Christian principles. In all such cases, I will not speak of myself without some obvious reason; first, because it may cherish pride; and secondly, because it may exhibit the appearance of pride to others.

7. I will consider myself as sacredly accountable to God for my improvement of the *influence* attached to my station; and will endeavour to distinguish betwixt the respect which is given to my *office*, and that which would in other circumstances be given to *myself*.

II. CARE OF MY TONGUE.

1. When I am angry, I will never speak, till I have taken at least as much time for reflection as Athenodorus prescribed to Cæsar.*

2. I will never talk to an angry man.

3. I will not talk to a man intoxicated with strong drink.

4. I will receive admonition from my friends with candour and thankfulness; and will be careful not to make a peevish reply to any one who gives me advice, though it be officious or even impertinent.

5. That I may be kept from speaking amiss of my Christian brethren, I will *pray* for them.

6. With the exception of cases in which Christian prudence requires secrecy, I will consider it sinful to say anything of others *privately*, which I would not say *openly*. In general, I will deal in *secrets* as little as possible.

7. I will not mention the fault of another, when I have not good reason to hope that some valuable end will be answered by my doing so.

III. SELF-EXAMINATION.

I will regard the Bible as the only infallible test of character. With this in my hands, if I am deceived as to my spiritual state, it is my own fault.

I am satisfied that one great reason why so many real Christians live doubting, and die trembling, is the neglect of self-examination.

1. I will beware of relying upon official religion. I will never take it for granted that I am a Christian because others consider me so; nor because my profession or station require that I should be a Christian.

2. In judging of myself, I will make due allowance for the restraints I have been under from early education—from dear Christian friends, and from regard to public opinion; and will never ascribe to Christian principles the absence of faults which I am under no temptation to commit.

3. In any doubtful case, where good and bad motives are mingled as excitements to action, I will not conclude that the good motives influence me, without the most serious scrutiny.

4. I will watch my heart under *affliction*. As the severest strokes that I have felt hitherto, have been my *greatest mercies*, I will not, like the perverse child that attempts to resist or escape correction, try to break away from the rod of my heavenly Father; but will give him my hand and beg him to repeat his strokes, when he sees it necessary to purify my soul from sin.

* This prescription was,—“Always repeat the twenty-four letters of the Greek alphabet before you give way to the impulse of anger.” A prescription still more worthy, than that of the heathen philosopher, to be remembered is—“When in anger, repeat the Lord’s Prayer before you give utterance to your feelings.”

IV. STUDIES.

1. I will read no book without the expectation of real benefit ;— and will consider that as *lost time* which is spent in reading without *attention* and *reflection*.

2. I will never covet the reputation of knowing *everything*.

3. I will never speak confidently when I am in doubt, nor scruple to say that I *am ignorant*, when I am so.

4. Having suffered severely by late studies at night, I will never pursue any serious study after 10 o'clock in the evening.

5. I will not read any book which I should be unwilling to have it *known* that I have read ; or the reading of which I shall probably recollect with regret on my dying bed.

6. Since my time for study is so much restricted by frail health and various engagements, I will consider it as a sacred duty to spend no time in the attitude of study, without direct and vigorous application of my mind to some important subject.

7. I will not hold myself at liberty to neglect duties that are plainly devolved upon me by the providence of God, even though these duties debar me from studies which I earnestly wish to pursue.

V. PREPARATION FOR DEATH.

1. When I awake to the light of a new day, I will endeavour to ask myself, each morning, "Could I know this to be my *last day* on earth, what duty that I have neglected ought to be performed?"

2. That I may not be surprised by death, I will endeavour to carry with me the habitual recollection, that it *may* come at any moment.

3. I will often reflect that this life is only preparatory to eternity ; and that He who stationed me here, knows how and when to call me away.

4. As my comfort in death must depend on my hope of heaven, I will often examine this hope ; because if I have good reason to believe that I shall live with Christ in glory, I shall have no reason for reluctance in leaving this world, any more than the sentinel in being called from his post after a stormy night, or the child who has been long from home, in returning to his father's house.

5. I am satisfied, from much observation, that the *bodily pangs* of *dying* are much less terrible than is commonly supposed, excepting in a few extreme cases. I will not therefore be greatly disquieted with the anticipation of these pangs.

VI. PUBLIC DEPARTMENT.

1. I will endeavour to remember that as a *minister* of the *gospel*, my office is more important than that of any earthly potentate.

2. In my intercourse with men, I will endeavour not to degrade this office by exhibiting a *love of money*,—one of the vilest and most dangerous passions that can infest the heart of a minister.

3. I will watch against levity in conversation, a fault to which I

am in danger of resorting as an antidote against the influence of feeble health. Yet,

4. I will not identify in feeling, or in my conduct tempt others to identify *religion* and *melancholy*: because if I were to paint a Pharisee, I should give him a *sad countenance*; but if an angel or my Saviour, a *cheerful* one. The fact that painters who are strangers to vital godliness, so generally, in representing Christ, give him the aspect of sadness, I will endeavour to make instructive to myself.

VII. CARE OF MY HEALTH.

The difference between that state of health which amounts to bare *existence*, and that which admits of vigorous mental action, is so great, that there is no earthly blessing I so earnestly desire as health. But as I am clearly destined to be an invalid while I live, whatever I am to do for God and the Church, is to be accomplished by systematic care of my frail body.

1. I will not eat or drink any kind or quantity of food, that I have good reason to believe will impair my health.

2. I will, when not sick, take exercise daily, equivalent to the labour of sawing and splitting wood two hours.

3. When in perspiration, I will not stand or sit in cold air, without increase of clothing. I will not stand or walk on wet ground, in a cold season, without guarding my feet; and I will shun exposure to the evening, in cold or damp weather.

ARTICLE XX.

THE PRESENT BASIS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

BY THE CORRESPONDING SECRETARY OF THE BOARD.

It is important that our ministers, elders, and congregations should distinctly understand the PRESENT BASIS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH. Attention is, therefore, requested to the following explanations:—

Until the year 1847, the Board of Education was exclusively confined to the education of *candidates for the ministry*.

The General Assemblies of 1847 and 1848 enlarged the basis of the operations of the Board, so as to include the subject of Christian Education in *Schools, Academies, and Colleges*. These two departments were, and still are, kept distinct; namely, first, Ministerial Education, or the training of *Candidates*; and, second, General Christian Education, or the establishment of *institutions of learning*.

The General Assembly of 1851 made a few modifications, which may be best understood by reading the appended Resolutions of the Assembly, with the explanations of the Corresponding Secretary. It will be seen that the modifications are these:—

In the department of *Ministerial Education*, the Board is authorized, 1st, to give the appropriations the form of *Scholarships*. 2d, To dispense with *written pledges*; the candidate, however, being required, as heretofore, to be examined by his Presbytery on his purpose to enter the ministry, and to declare that purpose as a condition of his receiving aid from the funds of the Church. He is also required to refund whatever he may have received, if he abandons his studies for the ministry.

8d, A renewed examination before the Presbytery is required, after receiving his College Diploma, and previously to entering upon his theological studies, officially under the care of the Presbytery.

In the department of *General Christian Education*, the last Assembly authorized the Board to aid in the education of teachers, or young men of suitable character, who are not candidates for the ministry, *provided, funds are specifically given to this purpose.*

Upon the basis, as thus defined, the Board expect to conduct their operations WITHOUT ANY OTHER CHANGE,—excepting, of course, what may be ordered by the Assembly. The funds of the Board, therefore, are to be appropriated, 1st, to the education of young men, who have the ministry in view, as heretofore; 2d, to the establishing of Christian Schools, Academies, and Colleges; and, 3d, to the education of teachers, and others, not candidates, provided funds are specially designated to this object. *No other changes are contemplated by the Board.*

ACTION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, OF 1851.

1. *Resolved*, That in the judgment of this Assembly, the wants of the Church, and the general improvement of the age demand increasing attention to the qualifications of candidates for the ministry, and that with the view, partly, of keeping more prominent the idea of the necessity of literary attainments in our candidates, and partly with the view of other advantages, the Board of Education are hereby allowed to give their appropriations the title of scholarships; and the Presbyteries are enjoined to use their best endeavours to raise the standard of qualification for the ministry.

2. *Resolved*, That the practice of requiring from young men a pledge to enter the ministry, especially in the early stages of their preparatory studies, is not deemed conducive to the best interests, either of the candidates, or of the Church; and the Board of Education are hereby authorized to modify their rules accordingly.

[The object of the Assembly in this resolution was to leave the examination of candidates with the Presbyteries without requiring any *written pledges*. The resolution does not dispense with a *declaration to the Presbytery of a present purpose* to enter the ministry; nor does it absolve a young man from any of the obligations naturally binding under the circumstances. The Board of Education believed, indeed, that it would greatly benefit the whole plan of our Educational operations, if indigent young men of the proper talents and character were educated in academies and colleges, without any examination before the Presbytery as to their intentions to enter the ministry, until they were prepared to commence their theological studies. But these views were not urged upon the Assembly, nor does the resolution, as passed, have reference to them. It simply declares that anything of the nature of a vow or pledge is inexpedient. The fact that the written declaration of the intentions of the candidate has always gone by the name of *pledge*, shows that its effect was practically more than the mere declaration of a present purpose.

The practice of requiring these written pledges grew up with the forms of the voluntary societies. For several years, the candidates under the care of the Board were recommended by examining committees appointed by the Board. In such circumstances, a written pledge was more necessary. But since the whole matter was placed under the supervision of the Presbyteries, the recommendation of young men may be wisely left with the sound ecclesiastical discretion of these bodies.

The rules of the Board still require a young man to refund all moneys he may have received, if he abandons his intention to enter the ministry. He is also still required to go through a three years' course of theological study; and the fact of his receiving the appropriations of the Board will be equivalent to his declared acquiescence in all its rules. In short, the *pledge* has been done away with, so far as it was *most* liable to be a snare to the conscience.]

3. *Resolved*, That this Assembly prefer that young men within their bounds who are looking forward to the work of the ministry, should be officially recognised as candidates under the care of Presbyteries only when they are prepared to enter upon their Theological studies, and that until that time they be regarded simply as students on probation, under the general watch and patronage of the Presbyteries.

[The object of this resolution is to require a full examination of those who have been studying in reference to the ministry at the academy or college, when they are prepared to enter the theological seminary. Our plan of government seems to consider young men as ecclesiastically candidates for the ministry, only when they have received a diploma from some college, or have prosecuted studies which may be considered equivalent to a collegiate education. This resolution of the Assembly, therefore, not only makes our plan more conformable to our ecclesiastical order,

but it brings the young men on their leaving college before their Presbyteries, and requires another examination before they are officially regarded as *candidates* under their care.

Before this renewed examination, the young men are to be regarded as on *probation* and "under the general watch and supervision of the Presbyteries." Their *object* is and has been to enter the ministry; but the Church is not yet prepared to enrol them as her candidates. She requires them to re-examine their motives and qualifications, and to give the Presbyteries another opportunity of testing their merit before they are officially recognised as candidates. A number of the Presbyteries have always acted upon this principle in times past. The resolution of the Assembly is believed to be both orderly and wise.]

4. *Resolved*, That whilst home nurture is, according to the word of God and the covenant of his grace, a main reliance of the Church for the salvation of her children, Providence also testifies to the importance of public education on Christian principles in schools, academies, and colleges, and particularly to the intimate relation between Christian education and the power of the Gospel as proclaimed in the sanctuary, and therefore that *Home*, the *School*, and the *Church*, should all be imbued with the spirit of consecration to the Lord Jesus Christ.

5. *Resolved*, That this General Assembly, entertaining a lively interest in colleges, in view of the past history of the Presbyterian Church, its present prosperity and its future hopes, learn with great satisfaction the general progress attending this department of Christian education, and also the addition of Westminister College at Buffalo, to the list of these institutions; and it is recommended to our churches and members to assist, as far as possible, in the endowment of our colleges, and to co-operate with the Board of Education in sustaining them during the interval for which they may need aid.

6. *Resolved*, That this General Assembly has a deep sense of the importance of giving to its youth a Christian education in academies and colleges on a more extensive scale than has yet been practised within our bounds, and for the purpose of contributing to some extent in bringing forward promising young men of suitable character, other than candidates for the ministry, the Board of Education are hereby authorized to apply to this object whatever funds may be thus specifically appropriated by the donors.

[By this resolution the Board of Education is authorized to apply any sums that may be *specifically* given for the purpose of educating deserving young men who are not candidates for the ministry. The amount contributed for this purpose will be usefully expended. Sometimes the Board has received applications from ministers who were unable to defray the expenses of a collegiate education for their sons. Promising youth might be sent to our Presbyterial academies and colleges, who would otherwise never enjoy the advantages of a Christian education of a high grade. If there are benevolent individuals in our Church, who are disposed to assist in this manner young men of high talent and character, it is wise to give them the opportunity of doing so.]

7. *Resolved*, That in collecting funds for the purposes of education, the Board shall, in all cases, keep the contributions for candidates, and for schools, academies, and colleges, distinct from each other; but if no special direction is indicated, then the funds shall be appropriated to the education of candidates for the ministry.

8. *Resolved*, That the Board of Education, on account of its responsible work, and the increased pecuniary liabilities attending it, be commended to the liberality of all our churches, and that the Presbyteries endeavour to secure collections for the cause of education, either general or ministerial, as may be preferred by the churches.

9. *Resolved*, That the last Thursday of February be observed as a day of special prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit of God upon the youth of our land, who are pursuing their studies in literary institutions, and especially that many of them may be called and qualified by Divine grace for the work of the ministry.

[It will be seen that the General Assembly has fully approved of the great principles which underlie the whole subject of Christian Education. Let the Church now carry out these principles into energetic and general execution, through a permanent system of Christian schools, academies, and colleges, and who can limit her power, under God, to bless mankind?

The Board of Education, as the agent of the General Assembly, needs *means* and *men*; and without fervent *prayer*, no adequate resources of any kind can be expected. The educational cause is dependent upon an ecclesiastical co-operation, spiritual and practical; upon power sought at the throne of God, and which God gives to this people to use for his glory.

Brethren in the Ministry, Eldership, and Membership, you are asked to sustain the important measures relating to an INCREASED MINISTRY AND A WELL-TRAINED CHURCH.]



BY PAUL BELLOC FOR THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

Alexander

