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THE SCHOOL,

AND

THE CHURCH;

OR THE

PRESBYTERIAN EDUCATION REPOSITORY.

EDITED BY

C. VAN RENSSELAER,

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VOL. V.

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P R E F A C E.

THE Editor commits the Fifth Volume of "HOME, THE SCHOOL, AND THE CHURCH," to the public, with the hope that its contents will be found interesting and useful. Some of the articles have been kindly furnished for publication in this Annual, and others have been selected, but are not on the latter account the less valuable. The Editor gratefully acknowledges his obligations to those of his brethren who have favoured him with original communications.

The objects of the Board of Education are of the *utmost importance to the welfare of the Church*. The aim of this Education Repository is to promote the great cause of Christian education in the nurture and sending forth of well-qualified candidates for the ministry, and in establishing and sustaining schools, academies, and colleges, under the care of the Church. The parental relation being at the foundation of the whole work, its responsibilities are always kept in view, in every just view of the subject; and, therefore, some of the duties and appliances of this relation have had, and still have, a place in our Volume.

C. V. R.

PHILADELPHIA, January, 1855.

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THE
PRESBYTERIAN EDUCATION REPOSITORY.
1855.

ARTICLE I.

**THE RELIGIOUS INFLUENCE AND THE APPLIANCES
OF THE PARENTAL RELATION.***

BY THE REV. LOYAL YOUNG, OF BEAVER, PA.

JUDGES 13: 12 (last clause), —“How shall we order the child, and how shall we do unto him?”

WHEN Israel took possession of their promised heritage, and drove out the nations of Canaan, they left a people on their southwestern borders, warlike, impetuous, and of prodigious bodily stature. For centuries they were a thorn in the side of God's chosen people. Often were the latter trodden down and crushed by these relentless Philistines. But if their tyranny was grievous, their idolatry was enticing. And this was the true secret of their power. They tempted Israel to worship Dagon and Baalzebub. It was only when Israel yielded to idolatry, that these powerful enemies triumphed, and riveted the chains of their servitude. When Israel repented and cried to God, deliverers were raised up, and the church became free.

One of these deliverers was Samson, whose athletic frame and strength of muscle made him more than a match for the strongest and bravest of his foes. Being set apart by Heaven as the deliverer of his country, he felt religiously bound to fulfil his mission. And when moved by divine impulse, he carried consternation and death into the ranks of the enemy. Neither green withs nor new ropes could bind him; massive city gates were borne aloft on his shoulders to the mountain height; and the firm pillars of Dagon's temple were thrown down by a single impulse.

Introductory to his birth, the angel of the covenant announced to his parents (Manoah and his wife), that they were about to be honoured as the parents of a mighty deliverer of his country. Manoah, impressed with the responsibility of the trust thus to be committed to them, in the education of a child for such a work, and

* This discourse was delivered by appointment before the Synod of Pittsburgh, in the year 1853, and requested for publication.

prompted by that pious solicitude which all parents should feel for their own offspring, in a second interview proposed the question of our text, "How shall we order the child, and how shall we do unto him?"

What father, what mother, has not made the same inquiry as often as a new helpless member has been added to the family, to be nurtured, instructed, and guided in the path of life? What wonderful provision has God made for that young immortal! He has provided hearts to love it, and hands to minister to its wants. Months and years before it can understand to whom it owes such a debt of gratitude, it is watched over with all the solicitude of maternal love! With a sleeplessness that never tires, and a cheerfulness that never flags, does the fond mother, like a guardian angel, watch, and nourish, and caress, and guide, and reprove, and comfort. As it rises toward manhood, the strong arm of the father is reached forth to uphold, govern, and defend.

And will parents, so alive to the present and earthly interests of their children, feel a proportionate concern for their future and spiritual interests? Would that it were always so! Would that the mother as she presses her infant to her breast, and the father as he exults in its unfolding intellect, were always impressed with the solemn consideration, that the rich and joyous treasure is not a mere plaything, or idol, to be loved and worshipped; but an immortal being, to be trained in its depravity for the second death, or to be renewed by divine grace, and made an angel for the skies. Then, with more overwhelming solicitude, they would ask the question, "How shall we order the child, and how shall we do unto him?" Parents may well inquire, "How shall we order the child," to promote a vigorous constitution; and "How shall we order the child," to secure a cultivated mind? But their most earnest inquiry should be, "How shall we order the child" to insure its spiritual and eternal welfare, the salvation of its soul? Leaving the first question to the physician, and the second to the teacher, let us confine our attention to the last.

If we cannot make our children Samsons in physical strength, let us train them with him to be Nazarites in a spiritual sense; strong in virtue and in devotion to God. Let the consecration of their God be upon their heads (Numbers 6: 7); and let them drink neither wine nor strong drink, but let them be filled with the Spirit.

The answer to the question, "How shall we order the child?" is to be sought, not only in the perusal of the inspired word, but in the histories of families, the successes and failures of those who have gone before us, the rejoicings and bitter regrets of those who have witnessed the godly lives and triumphant deaths of beloved children, or seen them, profligate and abandoned, go down to an unblest and untimely grave. Abraham, exulting in the fulfilment of God's covenant, in blessings on the head of his Isaac, and David's heart, breaking over the untimely death of his abandoned Absalom, are

instructive commentaries on the subject of family training. Both were devotedly pious men, and cared for their families. Abraham commanded his children and his household after him that they should keep the way of the Lord. And David, after engaging in the public exercises of religion, did not forget family duties, but returned to bless his house.

But the mother of Isaac was a pious Hebrew, while the mother of Absalom was the daughter of a foreign prince, probably herself an idolater. This may in part account for their different success.

Let us consider—

I. *The Religious Influence of the Parental Relation.*

II. *The Ways and Means of its More Effectual Application.*

Parental influence, though silent like the nightly dew, is the most powerful human influence exerted on earth. It is an influence generally exerted for years, and in the most favorable circumstances for making an impression. The parent is the child's exemplar. His first impressions are formed from a mother's looks and tones of voice. The parent is to the child the standard of truth, the oracle of instruction, the ideal of excellence. Loves he gold—the child catches the flame, and becomes a miser. Grasps he for power—the young heart is filled with dreams of rank and authority. Serves he his God—the youthful imitator learns to serve him too.

That parent who has trained a family to respectability, religion, and usefulness, though in other respects he may be humble and obscure, is a benefactor. He has cast his influence forward, and improved the future. He has been a hidden spring, but has set in motion a current which will widen and deepen till the end of time.

On the other hand, parents who have trained their children to irreligion and vice, however bright their own career of virtue, have sent forth a moral pestilence upon the community, which will work its ruinous way through time, and be felt in the world of spirits, and forever.

Next then to the securing of their own salvation, this, for parents, is the great business of life,—to train immortal beings for God.

In looking at the religious influence of the parental relation, we may view it in its source, and in its extent.

1. Its *source*. The mere relation of parent and child, is not a source of religious influence. Nobility and estates are transmitted. Bodily organizations and complexions are hereditary. And the *disposition* of the parent often descends to the child. So is it with general depravity. Adam "begat a son in his own likeness." And that likeness has descended to all his natural posterity. But piety is not hereditary; it springs from God's blessing on appointed means, and not from mere relationship. "Begin not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father."

Whence then the religious influence of the parental relation? It results from God's covenant, and the training and prayers involved

in that covenant. To believers' natural seed, God has in covenant promised a blessing. To the father of believers God said (Gen. 17: 7, 8), "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 thy seed after thee." To this promise or covenant, Peter alludes when he says (Acts 2: 38, 39), "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you and your children."

Parents should be fully persuaded that if they keep the covenant, God will not break it, but will accomplish all that he has spoken. But it is only when parents perform the duties involved in the covenant, that they can claim the fulfilment of the promises. It is only when the child is trained up in the way he should go, that the parent is assured, that when old he will not depart from it. Religious character depends, under God, upon training; it is not hereditary. The acorn will produce an oak, and nothing else. The countenance of the sire is seen in the son, though separated by desert wastes and ocean waves. But religious character is of God, and the instrumental cause is the parents' training, or training by some substitute. The Christian's child trained up by a heathen, will be a heathen, and the Hindoo child nursed in the arms of a Christian female, and taught to pray the Christian's prayer, will, by the grace of God, be a Christian.

Parents in covenant with God, will, to their instruction and discipline, add their prayers. They will lay hold of the covenant and plead God's promises. Others may pray importunately for the rising race. Friend may intercede for friend's posterity. But who can pray with a parent's solicitude, when from the depths of a burdened heart, remembering God's covenant faithfulness, he entreats with Abraham, "O that Ishmael might live before thee!"

2. But we proceed to speak of the *extent* of the religious influence of the parental relation.

We shall not dwell upon the religious influence of the parental relation reflected back upon the parents themselves—how the decline of their lives is rendered peaceful and happy by the filial love and piety of those whom they have trained in the fear of the Lord. But we shall speak of its influence on the *temporal* welfare of the children, on their *spiritual* welfare, on their *later posterity*, and on the *world at large*.

(1.) Religious training promotes the *temporal* interests of the children. The chief anxiety of many parents seems to be that their children acquire wealth, distinction, and mental accomplishments. No pains are spared to provide an inheritance for them. But who does not discover that the true road to earthly comfort and competence is through virtue? "Godliness has the promise of *this life* and of that which is to come." The fifth commandment promises

"long life and prosperity" to children who are successfully trained to obey their parents and to serve God.

Many temporal calamities may be traced to the influence of irreligious training. To this, in part, the prophet ascribes the final destruction of Jerusalem. (Ezek. 22 : 7.) "In thee have they set light by father and mother." To this, in part, is ascribed the destruction of the nations of Canaan. They "cursed father and mother." (Lev. 20.)

The Dead Sea affords a perpetual monument of God's displeasure at the wickedness of the cities of the plain. And there the young had been early initiated into the basest of crimes, so that even God's angels could not spend a night in Sodom without being insulted with obscene words, and threats of violence, from the lips of the "old and young," who gathered around them. The storm of burning wrath which followed was kindled in part by these neglected youth, who were bold in crime and stout in transgression.

Indeed, the Deluge may be ascribed to the fact, that the instruction of the children of the "sons of God," was committed to the daughters of men. This instruction resulted in the wickedness and violence, which called down the wrath of the Almighty.

(2.) Religious training is especially important as promoting the *spiritual* and *eternal interests* of the children. It is in *this* that the overwhelming responsibility of parents appears. Parents, the deathless spirits of your children are to be trained *for the skies*. Upon their training depends, under God, their salvation! If your children are lost, fathers and mothers of the covenant (I say it affectionately), you have failed to do your whole duty. Parents cannot impart grace, but with God's assistance they can perform their vows, and God will do the rest.

A celebrated poet has said with great truth, "Just as the twig is bent the tree's inclined." An inspired poet and philosopher has said (Eccl. 11 : 3), "If the tree fall toward the south or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be." If then the young tree is bent to the south, in that direction will it continue to lean; by the law of gravitation, as it leans it will fall; and as it falls it shall lie. This is the regular progress and end of the tree; and with almost equal certainty of the child. According to his youthful habits he will live; as he lives he will die; and as he dies, he will spend his eternity. God may at any moment interpose, and bend his stubborn will to the obedience of faith. But why should parents expect a tornado of divine influence, just at the critical moment when the tree is falling, to send it over in a direction contrary to that in which it has always leaned? Yet on this slight hope of deathbed repentance, many parents are resting, while they witness the strengthening habits of vice in those whom they have brought into being, and for whose training they must render an account to God!

Shall parents feel no concern whether their children be saved or lost—be the friends or the enemies of God forever? Shall they in

their anxiety to provide for them worldly substance or distinction, lose sight of their undying souls? Amazing folly! Dreadful cruelty! To open up a smooth passage in this world, by which they may glide pleasantly along into the gulf of woe!

Irreligious parents will perhaps excuse themselves for neglecting the religious education of their children, on the ground that they themselves are irreligious and have taken no vows. But would it satisfy the child perishing for want of bread, for the parent to say to him, "I am starving with you; if you die, grieve not, for I am dying too; I have taken no vows to help you!" Parents, there is no way of ridding yourselves of your responsibility! You must render an account to God for this stewardship. Here is room for your most earnest solicitude! Here is a motive sufficient to call forth your most vigorous exertions! Is it not the most painful thought that ever disturbs the peace of your pillow, that the souls of your children may perish? Should it not rest as a heavy burden on your hearts, as long as they seem to be strangers to religion, that they may spend their eternity in hopeless woe? On this subject, there cannot be too deep solicitude.

Religion should be at the very threshold of all your plans for your children. It should be your landmark in all your efforts. O teach them that they have immortal souls; that those souls are already stained with guilt; that God's wrath is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness; that the blood of Jesus Christ alone cleanseth from sin; that by faith in his blood they may be pardoned, saved, and dwell among the pure and blessed in realms of glory. O urge them to accept without delay the blessings offered in covenant, when they were baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Urge them to seek a new heart. Let them not reproach you in a dying hour for your unfaithfulness. Let not your own hearts reproach you. How blessed that parent whose child dies with the sweet words of religious hope on his tongue, ascribing to parental instruction, under God, his being led to the sinner's friend. And O how blissful the meeting of parents and children in heaven, where their love shall be increased and cemented for ever! Such will be the reward of parental faithfulness.

(3.) Finally, the religious influence of the parental relation is communicated to *society at large*, and transmitted to *future generations*.

The true source of influence upon society is in the family. Families are so many springs, and all the streams of civil virtue and prosperity take their rise here. If the springs are pure, society will enjoy their healthful influence; if impure, moral contagion will be diffused abroad.

The happy training of a virtuous household will do more for society than all the "associations," and "phalanxes," which infidel visionaries have ever devised for remodelling and improving society. There can be no improvement on God's own model. No, verily!

"Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." The family is the best community for developing the social and religious feelings, for awakening a sense of responsibility, and for securing religious instruction. It was one of God's earliest institutions. And according to the prophecy of Malachi, he organized it as it is, "that he might seek *a godly seed.*"

Every well-conducted family is a seminary of virtuous citizens. Abram founded a nation for greatness by his family discipline and instructions. "Abram shall surely become a great and mighty nation." Why? "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him."

But parental influence is not confined to the age in which the parent and his children live. The blessing is handed down from generation to generation to the end of time.

He who neglects his family in his zeal for blessing the world, has mistaken his mission. He seeks to purify the stream by neglecting the fountain. Let the fountain first be purified.

God's covenant is from father to son. How beautiful did piety flow in the channel of Abraham's descendants, Isaac and Jacob and Joseph. The parental relation is a golden pipe, through which the waters of salvation are conveyed to coming generations.

There are isolated pools and cisterns which at times bless the barren desert, and quench the thirst of the traveller; but the most certain water is the running stream, fed by a pure fountain. So God in sovereign mercy, gathers here and there a trophy of grace from families whose ancestors knew not God; but it is chiefly from families flowing down from a pious ancestry, in covenant with him, that he takes his sons and daughters. From such an ancestry often springs a successive race of holy, devoted, and benevolent men.

Dr. J. W. Alexander, in his admirable treatise on "Family Worship," says, "There are clergymen now in the Scottish Church, who have descended from an unbroken line not only of believers, but of ministers: and there is a blessed instance in our own communion, of six living preachers of the gospel, all sons of one man, himself a servant of the sanctuary." We may add, that in this synod was a devoted servant of the sanctuary,* whose father, two uncles, and a brother, were also ministers, and four of whose sons are this day ministering before God, and two of them present as members of this synod. Nine ministers of one family in three generations. Again, four sons of a ruling elder in the bounds of this synod entered the ministry, one of whom is now an aged member of synod.†

Another fact may not be out of place in this connection. An aged "mother in Israel" is now living, of Puritan Pilgrim parentage (formerly in the bounds of this synod), whose husband was, while living, an elder in the church; her eldest son, while living, an elder; another is now an elder; another a minister of the gospel;

* Rev. THOMAS E. HUGHES, of the Synod of Pittsburgh. † Rev. ABRAHAM BOYD.

and the remaining five children all consistent members of the Presbyterian Church. Of her grandchildren, nineteen are now members of the church. Of the thirteen grandchildren over twenty-one years of age, twelve are consistent members of the church. All the grandchildren who having arrived at adult years have died, have died in the triumphs of faith; while several others of them, through the influence of a precious revival, are recently indulging hope in Christ. The oldest grandson is an elder; and of the eight families descended from her, there is not one but what contains a child or children hopefully pious. Such facts speak loudly for religious training.

The Christian parent looks forward with anxiety even to his *remote* posterity. "Shall they be God's dear children?" is his earnest inquiry. And here the covenant comes to his relief, and says, "*Yes, if you are faithful.*" God shows mercy unto thousands (of generations) of them that love him and keep his commandments. "They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth trouble, for they are the *seed* of the blessed of the Lord, and *their children* with them." "As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; my spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of *thy seed*, nor out of the mouth of *thy seed's seed*, saith the Lord, *from henceforth and forever.*"

This view of the subject gives increasing interest to the cause of missions. For, every parent rescued from idolatry, and brought into the fold of Christ, is the fountain of a perennial stream of influence, widening and spreading till "the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." And on the other hand, every unconverted son or daughter of a Christian family, is an underground current, *drawing off* and *wasting* this refreshing stream of hope and comfort for posterity, so as to render sterile what would otherwise be the garden of the Lord.

Should the present race of Christian parents cease to exert a religious influence on their children, the world would be set back in its career of virtue and prosperity a thousand years.

But we proceed to consider:—

II. *The ways and means of the more effectual application of the religious influence of the parental relation.*

And here the important question of our text recurs—"How shall we order the child?" We fear it is true, that parental influence is not now as vigorous for good as it once was, and as it might now be. When the pioneer fathers in this Presbyterian region lived, were not greater pains taken in giving thorough religious instruction to the children of the church? They were catechized by their own parents. They were taught that they did not belong to the world, but to the church. They were early impressed with the sanctity of the Sabbath,

and the value of religious ordinances. They were obedient to parents, and reverential to the aged.

And as parents went forth weeping, bearing precious seed, they returned with rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them. Do not those days of prayer and carefulness for the children of the church, contrast mournfully with the present times? Does not this account for the fact, that so many of our baptized youth, sons and daughters of praying parents, are without hope and without God in the world?

The church is justly alarmed, that the candidates for the ministry are not increasing. Is there not also cause for alarm, that the number of pious youth generally is so nearly stationary? It is so common to find unconverted sons and daughters, where the parents are professors of religion, that we begin to think it a matter of course, forgetting that God is a covenant-keeping God, and that if our children are strangers to him, we have not fulfilled all our baptismal vows.

Christian parents, are there means in our reach which we have not fully tried; let us lose no time in using them. Let not an influence now within our reach—an influence so powerful for good; an influence involving the eternal happiness of the rising race, and of future generations—be lost! But if possible, let it be increased a hundred fold.

Parents should ponder this subject with all the solicitude of those who have the destinies of souls committed to them. The commander of a vessel who by *ignorance* or *carelessness*, endangers the lives of the voyagers, is justly blamed. That was a righteous indignation which went forth after the "Norwalk tragedy," because through carelessness, scores of passengers were suddenly dashed to death. And is he blameless, who undertakes to guide those young immortals committed to his charge, through the perilous sea of life, or over the dangers of their earthly path, without a knowledge of his duties or without care to perform them? The priceless treasure of immortal souls is guided onward to the haven of bliss or the gulf of despair! Through all the voyage there are shoals, and quicksands, and rocks, and whirlpools. The parent stands at the helm. Let him beware lest all perish together.

What then are the ways and means of the more effectual application of this religious influence?

1. Let the *seal of the covenant* be applied to all the children of the church.

As no one can estimate the value of the inheritance sealed in baptism, so no one can tell the importance of the seal. Those who object to the baptism of infants ask, what good can an *infant* receive from a rite, of which it knows nothing? And others sometimes partake of their scepticism. But it is enough to know that God has reasons for his own appointments, and that in the discharge of duty parents are to expect the blessing. Who can tell what salutary connection God has instituted between the sign and the thing signified? Baptism is not regeneration, but where parents are faithful to their

vows, they have a right to expect that their children will be born again.

Does not observation teach us that God has wonderfully honoured the ordinance of baptism, by bringing those who are baptized "to subscribe with their own hands to be the Lord's?" "The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; to such as keep his covenant and to those that remember his commandments to do them."

2. Pious parents should themselves attend to the spiritual instruction of their children. This need not exclude *helps*. The Sabbath-school—the parochial school—and especially a pastor's private and public teachings, are invaluable helps—but they should be regarded as *helps only*. The parent cannot throw off his own responsibility by calling in foreign aid. No tuition from others should supersede the direct personal guidance of the Christian parent. If children must be sent from home, let them be placed under the care of consistent and pious guardians.

The father, and in his absence, the mother, should be the chaplain of the family. The mother should feel it her duty and privilege, in the absence of the father, to lead her household to God in prayer, unless some other suitable person is present to conduct the devotions of the family.

Pious parents should be *with* their children as much as possible. Who are safer companions? The wickedness of the children of many pious persons may be ascribed (at least in part) to their separation from parental influence. Pious kings of Judah were prevented by public business from attention to their families. Hence they were often succeeded by irreligious sons. Such was the case with Solomon, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah. Committing their children to the care of irreligious mothers, while they were employed in the affairs of state, their sons forsook the God of their fathers.

On the other hand, the influence of parental oversight is seen in the piety of many who enjoyed such oversight. Isaac and Jacob were almost inseparably with their parents, till their religious principles were formed. Joseph was at home in his youth, more at home, it would seem, than his brothers. Moses, though the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter, was providentially reared by his own mother. Samuel, it is true, went early from home, but it was to reside with a pious servant of God, and to attend constantly on religious exercises; which, united with a mother's fervent prayers and occasional visits, led him to the God of his fathers.

Natural affection, a sense of obligation, acknowledged authority, all combine to make home in religious families the place of highest religious influence. John Newton devoutly acknowledged the influence of a mother's early instruction and prayers, though that mother died when he was a child. Had she lived to water the seed sown, he might have been spared that long night of sin and wretchedness which followed. Let parents furnish at home, and under their

own eyes, rational enjoyments, and home will be to their children the dearest spot on earth. There the heart will be gradually moulded and strengthened to all that is virtuous, and noble, and devout. Children will not then desire to wander abroad in quest of amusements. And in after years, they will recall with deep emotion the old family room, sacred to love, to social joy, to cheerful converse, to songs of praise, to earnest, wrestling prayer, where parents and children bowed together before the throne of grace, and held communion with God and each other; where God himself came down and hallowed the place with his presence.

The word of God contemplates parents as the natural instructors of their own children. The Jewish father was to teach the words of the law to his children, talking of them when sitting in the house, and when walking by the way, when lying down, and when rising up. The Psalmist says, "I will open my mouth in parables; 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 generation to come* the praises of the Lord, and his strength and his wonderful works that he hath done. 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. 78: 2-7.) The prophet says that in the ages of gospel triumph, "*the father to the children shall make known thy truth.*" (Isa. 38: 19.)

Neither father nor mother should seek to roll the whole responsibility of religious instruction upon the other. The inquiry, "How shall *we* order the child?" implies that both parents were ready to unite in the effort.

3. Would parents make a more effectual application of their religious influence, let them *guard their children against evil associates*. Let them say with David, "He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight." Let them say with Solomon, "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not."

The Bible declares, "Evil communications corrupt good manners." And, "He that walketh with wise men, shall be wise; but the companion of fools shall be destroyed."

It is not wise to exclude the young from society. Their social feelings should be gratified by proper company.

But great care should be exercised in the choice of their companions. It may not be possible to prevent contact with evil. Indeed contact with evil under such circumstances as will lead to resist and overcome it, is a part of that moral gymnasium by which our virtuous principles and habits are strengthened, just as the muscles of the body are strengthened by exercise. The child that over-

comes to-day, gathers strength thereby to overcome to-morrow. Divine aid is needed, it is true, but divine aid operates in *strengthening principles* in the use of appropriate means. But till their moral principles are confirmed, children should be carefully guarded from evil, lest instead of overcoming the weight, it fall and crush them.

4. To give greater efficiency to the religious influence of the parental relation, *family discipline* should be faithfully exercised.

The levelling system of the present age, is nowhere more unfavourable than in the family. Obedience is the first lesson that should be taught. If this lesson is well learned, all others become easy. We plead not for *severity*. Tyranny is offensive to God. "Ye fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged." But the parent's authority ought to be *early, absolute, and entire*. The rod is an ordinance of God. "He that spareth the rod, hateth his son." "A child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame." Disobedience to parents will lead to further disobedience to God, while the child that regards the authority of a religious parent, will almost certainly learn to regard the authority of God.

But while the parent demands obedience, let the child be fully aware that it is for no selfish purpose, but because the parent seeks God's glory and the child's temporal and spiritual good.

5. Finally, we must *pray* with and for our children, *with more fervent importunity*.

Need the necessity of *family worship* be insisted upon? And yet it is to be feared that this service is wholly or occasionally neglected by parents who profess to be the Lord's. They give their children no opportunity of asking, "What mean ye by this service?" Can they expect their children to pray when they set them no example? Can they expect the fire of devotion to burn where they have no altar? Can they ever look for *safety* where the name of God and the blood of the covenant are not found upon the lintels?

O how many infant hearts first learn to aspire after heaven, while the parents are commending them to God in earnest family prayer! And how many religious impressions are smothered and die, because there is no domestic altar to keep alive the flame kindled by the preached word!

But the question arises whether those of us who regularly commence and close the day with family worship, make it as valuable to our children as it might be. Are not our devotions sometimes a mere formality? To prove a blessing, the exercise should be *instructive, earnest, spiritual*.

But we must wrestle for our children with more importunity *in the closet*.

We must first be really concerned for their salvation, and then with an importunity that takes no denial, present them before the Hearer of prayer.

What happy results have followed such wrestlings, will be fully known only in eternity. The fruits of such prayers have been wit-

nessed in our synod. Permit me to cite a few cases. There are no doubt other similar cases, which will be unfolded in the light of eternity, but which now remain hidden in the secrecy of the closets where effectual and successful prayers were offered, and which God answered in love, to the salvation of the sons and daughters of the church.

Let us ask, then, how was one of the fathers of the Presbyterian Church in Western Pennsylvania, Dr. M'Millan, brought into the ministry? We trace back the stream of that mighty influence which is now spreading and increasing, to the devotion and prayers of a pious father. His lamented biographer says, "Before his birth, his father, having lost his infant son, whose name was John, solemnly vowed to the Lord that if he would give him another son, he would call his name JOHN, and devote him to the gospel ministry. This son, given in answer to prayer as in the case of Zacharias, was a chosen instrument in the conversion of many."

How was Dr. M'Millan's pupil and co-labourer, that gifted servant of God, Samuel Porter, brought into the ministry? Let the biographical sketch recently published, declare. "His parents were both persons of approved piety; especially his mother, who devoted him to the Lord at his birth, for the work of the ministry, in reference to which she called him SAMUEL. Having thus consecrated him to the Lord, she diligently trained him up for his service. His pious mother, whenever she retired for secret devotion, was in the habit of taking her son with her, and on her knees before the throne of grace, and her hand upon his head, of pouring out her prayers to her covenant God on his behalf."

We have another example in the case of an aged servant of God, still living, and whose attendance upon the meetings of this synod, has been remarkably punctual.* When he was an infant of days, his maternal grandfather died, who was a devotedly pious man. Just before his death he was led to the door, at his own request, supported by his attendant watchers. It was night. He looked with anxious gaze toward the heavens, as though longing to fly away to God. But his work was not quite done. As he cast his eyes downward, the little babe in its mother's arms smiled upon him; at which sight he lifted his eyes again to heaven and poured forth a most earnest and impassioned prayer for the infant. It was his dying prayer. His work was now done, and he fell asleep in Jesus. From that hour the parents, who had already devoted the child to God in baptism, resolved with unwavering purpose, to educate him for the ministry.

"That great pains were taken," says one, "in the religious training of children by many of the early settlers of Western Pennsylvania, especially by some of the pioneer ministers of our church, is a fact abundantly proved by credible testimony and general tradition. It is related of Rev. Joseph Smith, of Buffalo, Washington

* Rev. ROBERT JOHNSTON, who was not absent from a meeting of the synod, for *forty-seven years*.

County, that he and his wife, were in frequent practice of appointing and observing special days of personal and family fasting and prayer for the conversion of their children. The subject was made known to the whole family, and a portion of the day would be spent in praying and conversing with the children. *They all* became hopeful subjects of divine grace, and some of them when quite young. The same in substance has been stated respecting the Rev. Dr. Power and others."

It may be added of Mr. Smith's family, that one of his sons became a devoted minister of the gospel, and four of his daughters ministers' wives, while one of his grandsons is a minister, and with us as a member of this synod.

Such facts are worthy of record, and should be pondered by parents of the present day with prayerful interest.

It has formerly been the glory of the Presbyterian Church in all her branches, to care for the religious training of the young. We revere the memory of our ancestors—Covenanters and Puritans. And in nothing do we admire them more, than in their care for the pious instruction of their children. Their labours and sufferings for the good of posterity, added lustre to the martyr crowns which encircled many of their brows. At this distant day, and in these ends of the earth, we enjoy the fruit of their labours.

To their prayers and instructions we are indebted, under God, for all the precious and elevated advantages which we enjoy. Let us hand down untarnished to our children these advantages, derived from a pious and consecrated ancestry, that they may in turn rise up and call us blessed.

Christian mothers, this subject addresses *you*. You have to do with first impressions! That little one that begins to lisp the name of mother, is now drinking in its lessons of virtue or vice from you. To Christian mothers, under God, may be ascribed the purity and worth of some of the most influential men that ever adorned the history of the world. The spirit infused into the boy has shone out in the man, in which you might read this inscription: "*A mother's love has made me thus.*" What cannot mothers do for the rising race and for posterity!

Christian fathers, this subject speaks to *you*. Think not to throw all the responsibility on the other sex. Your *united* energies are required. Remember Manoh's question, "How shall *we* train the child?" not how shall the mother do it? Your *stronger* arm and *sterner* nature are also needed to defend and govern.

Children, this subject speaks to *you*. Look into the heart of your anxious father, your affectionate mother. Why heaves that bosom with such deep emotion? It is silent but agonizing solicitude for *you*. For you those eyes are moistened with tears. For you those knees are bent in prayer. Will you pierce those hearts with continued grief by your impenitence! Will you bring down those gray hairs with sorrow to the grave? Or will you not rather seek the God of

your fathers, and crown the declining years of your parents' lives with peace, and rejoicing, and your own being with a blissful immortality.

Finally, let us who *minister* before God, enforce this subject more constantly and more earnestly. The pastor has an excellent opportunity, in his public discourses, and when visiting the firesides of his people, to urge this subject on their attention.

Fathers and brethren, let us lead the way in our own families. And let us persuade our Abrams, our Manoahs, our Hannahs, and our Eunices, to consecrate their children to God and his Church. Then there will arise from our midst Isaacs, and Samuels, and Timothys, to be Christian husbandmen and judges, and devoted ministers; also *moral* Samsons, who shall carry destruction into every temple of Dagon and Baalzebub.

Let us plead to the ear and the heart of every parent the cause of their offspring. Let the hearts of the fathers be turned to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, and the earth, instead of being smitten with a curse, shall "keep jubilee a thousand years."

Imperial Salem will arise crowned with light; to whom may be said:—

"See a long race thy spacious courts adorn:
See future sons and daughters yet unborn,
In crowding ranks on every side arise,
Demanding life, impatient for the skies."

To parental faithfulness we look as the principal instrumentality for ushering in the Millennium. Jesus will ride again in triumph, not merely into Jerusalem, as formerly, but through the earth, in his chariots of salvation, when *children* learn again to sing, "Hosanna to the Son of David." Amen.

ARTICLE II.

PREPARATION FOR BAPTISM BY CHRISTIAN PARENTS.

BY THE REV. THOMAS HOUSTON, D.D.*

GOD early and impressively proclaimed the manner in which He is to be approached in holy ordinances. "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified."† This is still the standing law in the house of God. He is "greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence

* Extracted from "A Practical Treatise on Christian Baptism, by THOMAS HOUSTON, D.D." Published at Paisley, Scotland, in 1853. This is one of the best Treatises on the subject of Christian Baptism.—ED.

† Levit. 10 : 3.

of all them that are about him."* While, in all ordinances, holy fear and devout reverence should characterize religious worshippers, those which may be regarded as the highest and most sacred institutions of Christianity—the seals of the covenant—should be approached with peculiar solemnity, and with a frame of mind corresponding to the nature and importance of the service—to the spiritual benefits expected from its performance, and to the weighty obligations which it involves.

It is generally admitted to be a gross profanation to partake of the Lord's Supper, in a rash and hasty manner, without due preparation. The very formula of institution appears to imply as indispensable to a right participation, solemn previous preparation. "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat," &c. And not only the practice of our Lord and his apostles, but the profession also of almost all sections of the church, declares an unprepared approach to this sacrament to be presumptuous sinning; not only unproductive of any real benefit to the participant, but fraught with fearful danger.

Although there is reason to fear that, from low views of the nature and design of the other sacrament, and from the unfaithfulness of those who dispense it, numbers come to it destitute of due solemnity, ignorant of the necessity of special preparation, and unconcerned about making it, yet is such preparation equally important and beneficial in partaking of baptism as in coming to the Lord's Supper. The gracious presence of the King of Zion is assured to faithful ministers in baptizing, equally as in preaching the Word, and should be earnestly sought and expected, and should be reflected on with reverence and godly fear. Those who came to the baptism of John at Jordan, "confessed their sins" (Matt. 3 : 6), and this implied reflection, humiliation, self-examination, and prayer. The awakened on the day of Pentecost were bid to "repent and be converted." Saul was enjoined by Ananias to "rise and be baptized, washing away his sins." The eunuch, when baptized by Philip, was instructed, as indispensable to receiving the solemn rite, of the need of "believing with all his heart," and in the apostolic practice generally, the converts baptized are described as being "pricked in their hearts," crying out, with earnestness, what shall we do? as having "gladly received the Word," and being made "partakers of the Holy Ghost."†

Now, substantially the same preparation is required still to a right participation in the baptismal seal of the covenant. Although it is admitted that the instances referred to were cases of adult baptism, and infants cannot give the same evidences of faith and repentance, yet this does not render the less necessary a proper spiritual state of mind in those who claim the ordinance as a privilege to themselves and their offspring. It cannot be regarded as less than presumptuous

* Psalm 89 : 7.

† Acts 2 : 37, 41; 10 : 47.

to partake of a seal of the covenant, ignorant of its nature, and without faith in the spiritual mysteries which it exhibits, and a real, heartfelt desire after the blessings which it is designed to communicate. Parents require to have knowledge of Divine things and spiritual affections for themselves, and they require the exercise of grace, in connection with the dedication of their children to God. It is true that the blessing of baptism is not absolutely conferred because of the faith of parents; yet, when it comes, it is generally in this way. There is a *gracious*, though not a *necessary* connection between the faith of a parent exercised in the act of baptismal consecration, and the spiritual blessing upon the child, whether conferred at the time, or enjoyed afterwards. On these grounds, Christian parents, like those who came to the Saviour while on earth, in behalf of their children, should be concerned to approach in baptism in a right frame of spirit. Viewing the service as unspeakably important to themselves and to their little ones, whom they present to God, they should aim to come to it with special preparation of heart, putting away from them whatever is inconsistent with the holy solemnity, and cherishing dispositions of mind befitting the enjoyment of the blessing desired. The preparation requisite for receiving the ordinance of baptism consists in

1. *Serious meditation and self-examination.*

In every instance of drawing near to God, we should solemnly consider the character of the glorious Being with whom we have to do. We should think seriously on the spiritual objects exhibited, ponder the nature of the service required, and reflect upon our own character and the state of our hearts, when engaging in its performance. To the people of Israel, as they stood at the base of the mount, it was said by Moses, in the act of sprinkling the blood of the victims, "Behold the blood of the Covenant which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words."* The immediate preparation for the observance of the Lord's Supper is enjoined in the command—"Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread." Self-scrutiny is equally necessary towards a right participation of the sacrament of initiation. In baptism we come to take hold on God's covenant, to profess reliance on the Saviour and his merits for all blessings to ourselves and to those who are to us objects of the dearest interest, to join ourselves to the Lord's people, and to dedicate ourselves and our children to be wholly the Lord's. We publicly declare that we renounce every other service, and all other grounds of dependence. In the solemn transaction, we have to do with the vast concerns of God's glory, and with the interests of immortal souls for eternity. It seriously concerns us to see that we have duly considered these important matters, and that we are acquainted with the way of acceptance. We approach an ordinance which may either be a signal means of blessing to ourselves and

* Exodus 24 : 8.

others, or which, if profaned by an inconsiderate and unhallowed observance, must be fraught with eminent danger. "If we regard iniquity in our heart, the Lord will not hear us."* The person who does not meditate on such things, and who does not weigh the question of his fitness to approach this ordinance, must be in a state far from safety. His ignorance and thoughtlessness betray a heart unchanged, and the prevailing power of unbelief within. He provokes God, profanes a holy ordinance, and may not expect the blessing to himself and others. On the other hand, serious meditation and self-examination may tend to discover the real state of the heart and life, and may lead to apply for the blessing which is never denied to them that humbly seek it.

2. *Due consideration of the truths, privileges, and obligations held forth in the ordinance.*

It is sad to come in contact with the truths of revelation without feeling their momentous nature and importance, and to be presented with high privileges without a due estimate of their value. To be brought under solemn obligations to duty, and yet not to feel a sense of responsibility, betrays a state of conscience at once degraded and revolting. In no position is this insensibility more criminal than in coming unprepared to the sacraments. Those who partake of the Lord's Supper without *discerning the Lord's body*, are declared to "eat and drink damnation," or judgment, to themselves. This *discernment* implies some measure of knowledge of the great truths connected with the character, mission, and work of the Redeemer, and a spiritual acquaintance with their influence on the heart and life. By analogy, we infer that it is most dangerous to come inconsiderately to the other sacrament without reflection on the truths and privileges which it exhibits, and without a feeling of the solemn and weighty obligations which it imposes.

Baptism embodies an epitome of the great truths connected with the work of Christ, and the momentous affair of human redemption. It holds forth impressively the evil and demerit of sin, the necessity of pardon and moral purification to the enjoyment of happiness, a perfect atonement provided, deliverance from condemnation, the moral renovation of the nature by the agency of the Spirit, fellowship with the family of God, and all the weighty and affecting obligations to holiness which are furnished by the cross of Christ, the enjoyment of special and high privileges, and the professed dedication of the person to God and his service.

Right preparation for commencing such an ordinance must, in the nature of the case, imply that these great truths are duly considered in their vast magnitude and importance, believed on in the heart, and embraced as principles to purify the mind, and influence the life and conduct. We are justified, regenerated, and sanctified by the knowledge of the truth, and all the saving operations of the

* Psalm 66 : 18.

Spirit are conducted through the same instrumentality. In no position can a rational, immortal being, be placed more favourable for the contemplation of divine truths, than when these are not only addressed to the ear, but exhibited also in embodied action. If this opportunity of studying them and receiving impressions from them be neglected, it can hardly be expected that, in any other case, they will be received so as to exercise a salutary, spiritual influence. On the other hand, it is not less our duty than our privilege, to ponder deeply these vital truths, and to surrender ourselves to their influence, when we approach to an ordinance which most vividly exhibits them.

Every separate truth should be made the subject of distinct, prayerful meditation and application. We should receive the doctrines of the word in faith and love, feed on them for soul nourishment and spiritual strength, and should be prepared joyfully to profess these in the baptismal act, as the ground of our sure hope. Privileges and obligations to duty are necessarily and inseparably connected in the dispensation of the covenant of peace, and in the administration of holy ordinances. The one we cannot possibly enjoy without feeling the other; and in proportion as "spiritual blessings" in "heavenly things with Christ"* are really enjoyed, so will we be constrained in love to walk in newness of life. Coming to partake of eminent privileges in baptism, we should seriously consider the obligations which are thus laid upon us to be the Lord's, to live not to ourselves, but to Him who died for our sins, and who rose again for our justification. When we take the cup of salvation and call upon God, we come to pay our vows to the Lord before all his people. The plentiful provision of high privileges in baptism demands the consecration of ourselves and all we have to Him who has satisfied us with good things, and crowned us with tender mercy. To Abraham, when God gave him the covenant of circumcision, the announcement of the highest privilege was connected with the precept enjoining all holy obedience. To Christian parents, in like manner, the gracious declaration and promise—"I am God Almighty:" "I will be a God to thee, and thy seed after thee"—is inseparably connected with the comprehensive command, "Walk before me, and be thou perfect." Let these truths, privileges, and obligations be duly considered. Let them be felt as a solemn, personal concern in their proper connection and influence, and thus will be attained a main part of the preparation for receiving baptism as an ordinance fraught with blessings important and permanent.

3. *Lively faith in the great mysteries presented in the ordinance.*

In every religious service, we are solemnly reminded, "that without faith it is impossible to please God." The grand principle of all acceptable obedience is the reliance of the heart upon divine truths—the dependence of the whole man upon Christ and his finished

* Ephesians 1 : 3—margin.

work. "He that comes to God must believe that he is, and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Every right view of the sacrament of baptism shows its observance to be eminently a work of faith. This is the essential and pervading principle of the whole service, and without it, there can be no proper attendance upon the ordinance. We require faith to perceive the authority of the institution, and to discern its glory and excellence. Faith is needed to discern the connection between the outward symbol and the spiritual substance. By faith we behold in the service the blood of the covenant, and take hold of the blessed charter of salvation. The dedication of ourselves and ours must be the work of faith: in the exercise of the same holy grace, we alone can apprehend the worth of the soul, estimate aright the grand provision made for its salvation, and trust the Redeemer for the accomplishment of his gracious assurances—"Nurse this child for me, and I will give thee thy wages." "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children."

In approaching to this ordinance, it is specially required, not only to have the principle of faith in the heart, but to have it in lively exercise. It is by *actually believing* and not by *reflecting on the nature and operations of faith*, that we realize divine mysteries, and receive the blessing. In baptism, the great objects of faith are brought very near. They are "*represented, sealed, and applied to believers.*" We should, therefore, by looking to "the Author and Finisher of faith," draw near to these glorious objects. We should embrace a *personal Saviour*, as he is revealed appointing the ordinance, presiding in its administration, and dispensing all the blessing. His faithful word of promise should be received in faith; and his finished righteousness should be taken as the ground of all our dependence and hope for acceptance. The ordinance not only exhibits impressively the grand objects of faith, it presents likewise the strongest *supports* and *encouragements* to believing confidence. The Saviour's boundless compassion in receiving helpless, sinful human beings; the full provision of his love and mercy displayed and brought near to bless them; and his truth and gracious offers declared and confirmed by an expressive rite—all supply "strong consolation" to them who flee for refuge to lay hold on the gospel hope. What higher encouragement can we possibly expect to enable us to draw near in "the full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed as with pure water?" As we ought, in a special manner, to have faith in exercise before approaching to the baptismal service, so, in partaking of the ordinance, the blessing is to be sought and obtained only through the working of this grace. If we believe with all the heart, water may not be denied us to be baptized; and in the act of its application, by faith we apprehend the great mysteries of redemption, and receive the all-enriching blessing which is entitled—the baptism of the Holy Ghost, as with fire.

4. Lastly, as preparatory to the reception of baptism, we should, with much prayer and in humble penitence, and full purpose of heart, *take hold of God's covenant.*

The blessing dispensed through ordinances is enjoyed in answer to prayer. There is the amplest encouragement to expect it in this way. "I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them." "Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not." "Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me."* These divine declarations furnish a large warrant and encouragement to expect acceptance and blessing in surrendering ourselves and our offspring to God in baptism. In an act of spiritual dedication, there is special need of genuine contrition of heart, and of godly sorrow for sin. We are naturally estranged from God, and devoted to the service of idols. Our children are under guilt, and the taint of moral depravity, and are exposed to condemnation. Solemn vows voluntarily made, we have frequently broken, and because we regard iniquity in our heart, we have reason to fear that the Lord will not hear us. The frame and exercises of the genuine penitent peculiarly befit us, when we draw near to the holy Lord God, and when his name is named upon us. When we renew our own baptismal vow, we should do it in fervent prayer and in deep humility; and when we present our children to God, to be called by his name, to receive the seal of his covenant, and to be consecrated to his service, such exercises are specially becoming. From us they derive a polluted nature; and they are exposed to innumerable evils and dangers, which they have of themselves no power to escape. Their welfare for time and eternity is connected with the results of their baptismal dedication. In such solemn circumstances, the heart of a parent must be callous indeed, that is not humbled in the divine presence, and that is not excited to earnest entreaty in behalf of his child. Fearing that God may justly remember against him former sins, and that the blessing may be withheld because it is not asked, or because it is asked amiss, he should seek the "Spirit of grace and supplication," and should pour out his heart in fervent prayer. Like "the father of the faithful," when he feared the exclusion of one child from the promised blessings, and earnestly asked, "Oh! that Ishmael might live!" he should plead for the life—spiritual and eternal—of his offspring. In baptism he should be able to declare, as the mother of Samuel, "For this child I prayed, and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him. Therefore also I have lent him to the Lord, as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord."†

Taking hold of God's covenant by personal vowing is not only a chief part of the baptismal service, but is likewise an eminent pre-

* Ezekiel 36 : 37 ; Jeremiah 33 : 3 ; Isaiah 45 : 11.

† 1 Sam. 1 : 27, 28.

paration for it. By repentance and prayer, we renounce all dependence upon works of our own for acceptance. We confess and mourn over our manifold breaches of God's law; and we come to the Mediator of the New Covenant, and lay hold of his righteousness. By appropriate symbols, the great provision of the "counsel of peace" is set before us in baptism. God graciously proposes to be a God and Portion to us and our seed. The Mediator is willing to receive "little children" to himself, and to bless them. His blood is exhibited, in symbol, to pardon and cleanse them—his Spirit is offered to sanctify and seal them, and all the benefits of a "covenant, ordered in all things and sure," are held out, in impressive manifestation and gracious offer, to be to them an everlasting portion. What encouragement have we, by faith and solemn dedication, to avail ourselves of this merciful provision, and to declare on the footing of such high encouragement, "I am the Lord's!" *Personal vowing* is a singular means of preparation for the reception of the Sacraments. We come to them, not so much to engage, for the first time, to be on the Lord's side, as by bringing our previous acts of dedication with us, to renew them solemnly, and to have our personal covenant accepted and ratified. The promise to parents and their children in connection with such preparation is most gracious and abundant. To the "sons of the stranger," that *join themselves to the Lord, and take hold of his covenant*, it is promised, "even unto them will I give, in my house and within my walls, a place and a name better than of sons and daughters. I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off. Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar: for mine house shall be called a house of prayer for all people."*

A pious minister in New England (Rev. John Baily), thus speaks of his feelings and private exercises preparatory to the baptism of one of his children: "I spent some time in offering up myself and my child to the Lord, and in taking hold of the covenant for myself and for him. It is a weighty matter to be done to-morrow in baptism. I prayed hard this day that I might be able, in much faith, and love and new-covenant obedience, to do it to-morrow. It is not easy, though common, to offer a child unto God in baptism. O, that is a sweet word, 'I will be a God unto thee, and thy seed after thee.' No marvel Abraham fell on his face at the hearing of it."†

* Isaiah 56 : 5-8.

† Quoted in "Bowder's Religious Education Enforced."

ARTICLE III.

THE DUTY OF THE CHURCH IN THE INSTRUCTION
AND DISCIPLINE OF HER BAPTIZED CHILDREN.

BY THE REV. JOHN B. ROMEYN, D.D.

[A BRIEF historical account of the important article, here inserted, may be useful and interesting. The article is the Report of a Committee, consisting of Drs. Samuel Miller, John B. Romeyn, and James Richards, appointed by the General Assembly, in 1811. The instruction and discipline of the baptized children of the church was brought before the Assembly in 1809, by the following minute :—

“Whereas the Book of Discipline states, that children, born within the pale of the visible church, and dedicated to God in baptism, are under the inspection and government of the church, and specifies various important particulars in which that inspection and government should be exercised, as also directs the mode in which they should be treated, if they do not perform the duties of church members ; and, whereas, there is reason to apprehend that many of our congregations neglect to catechise the children that have been admitted to the sealing ordinance of baptism, and do not exercise suitable discipline over them, therefore,

“*Resolved*, That the different Presbyteries within our bounds, are hereby directed to inquire of the different sessions, whether a proper pastoral care be exercised over baptized children in their congregations, that they learn the principles of religion, and walk in newness of life before God ; and that said Presbyteries do direct all sessions that are delinquent in this respect, to attend to it carefully and without delay.” *Minutes of Assembly*, p. 431, *new edition*.

In the year 1811, the subject was again brought before the Assembly, by an overture from the Synod of Kentucky, as appears by the following action :—

“*Resolved*, That Drs. Miller and Romeyn, and the Rev. James Richards, be a committee to prepare and report to the next Assembly, a full and complete answer to the following overture from the Synod of Kentucky, which has been made to this Assembly :—

“What steps should the church take with baptized youth, not in communion, but arrived at the age of maturity, should such youth prove disorderly or contumacious ?” p. 509.

The foregoing committee presented to the Assembly, in 1812, a report, which is here republished *verbatim*. The Report awakened much interest and discussion ; and the Assembly ordered its publication, without coming to any decision on its principles. The following was the minute adopted :—

“The committee appointed by the last Assembly to report to this Assembly on the subject of disciplining baptized children, reported ; and the

Report being read, was recommitted to the same committee for revision and publication, and it was

"*Resolved*, That the Assembly, without expressing any opinion on the principles it contains, recommend it to the serious consideration of all the Presbyteries and ministers, that in due time a decision may be had on the important subjects discussed in the Report." p. 509.

The same committee reported to the Assembly in 1813, that they had revised and published the Report, and sent copies to the different Presbyteries. p. 519.

In 1814, the following action was had: "The subject of a Report on *the disciplining of baptized children*, in relation to which the Assembly of the last year, and the year before, had taken order, was called up; and it appeared that several Presbyteries had brought forward a formal expression of their opinion in regard to the adoption or rejection of the Report in question. On this, a discussion having arisen whether the report was intended to be sent to the Presbyteries, for the expression of Presbyterian opinion on the subject, it was therefore,

"*Resolved*, That the whole subject be referred to a committee, to consider and report to the Assembly, what shall appear to them to be the correct method of procedure to be adopted relative thereto, in the circumstances in which it is now before the Assembly, and that Drs. Green, Woodhull, and Wilson, and Messrs Caldwell and Connelly, be the committee." p. 543.

At a subsequent period in the sessions of the same Assembly, this committee made a report, which was laid upon the table. p. 547. The Report was afterwards taken up, "was again read, and recommitted to the same committee, with the addition of Drs. Griffin and Blatchford, and Messrs. Blackburn, Fisher, and Hazlett." p. 551. Finally, on the last day of the sessions of the Assembly, the committee were discharged, "and the subject was indefinitely postponed." p. 567.

It appears, from this history, that the Report on the discipline of baptized children, was the occasion of awakening much attention to the subject, and that the Assembly preferred to leave the matter as it stood in the standards of the church, without expressing any opinion.

As to the *author* of the Report, tradition distinctly assigns it to Dr. ROMEYN, of New York. Drs. Miller and Richards, approved of the principles of the Report, by signing their names to it.

The *title* of the Report has been slightly changed, for the sake of giving a clearer insight into its discussions. The title of the pamphlet edition is as follows: "Report of a Committee of the General Assembly, appointed to draft a PLAN FOR DISCIPLINING BAPTIZED CHILDREN." The Report discusses largely, the principles which underlie the whole subject of religious instruction and government.

The Report, in this republication of it, has been divided into *sections*, for the convenience of the general reader.

All will probably admit the extraordinary ability of the Report, and will acquiesce in many of its reasonings, without adopting all its views about excommunication. The remarks about the *religious instruction* of baptized

children show that the present views of our church on the subject, were familiar to the Presbyterians of the last generation.—*Editor.*]

THE DUTY OF THE CHURCH IN THE INSTRUCTION AND DISCIPLINE OF HER BAPTIZED CHILDREN.

In well-regulated communities, provision has ever been made for the education and future usefulness of children. Their instruction and their habits, are considered as matters of essential importance to the respectability and happiness of the whole body. In the Church of God they hold a station not less conspicuous, and for their benefit directions are given by God in his word. In the dispensation of the Old Testament, they, as well as their parents, constituted a part of the congregation of the Lord: and to them, as such, circumcision, the sign of the covenant between God and the father of the faithful, together with his faithful seed, that is, the Church, was administered. The standing which they then held, has not been taken from them under the dispensation of the New Testament, for the promise is still to them, as well as their parents. Hence, as members of the Church, they receive the sign and seal of the sacrament of the Christian circumcision, which is Baptism. This principle being adopted in the standards of our church, it will be necessary to show what view our standards give of the sacraments of baptism, and the Lord's Supper, and also of the visible church, that we may thoroughly understand the relation which the children of her members sustain to her, and thus be enabled to judge, concerning the nature and execution of that discipline, which ought to be exercised towards them.

THE RELATION OF BAPTIZED CHILDREN TO THE VISIBLE CHURCH.

The Confession of Faith of our church, chap. xxvii. sect. 1, teaches us, that "sacraments are holy signs, and seals of the covenant of grace, to put a *visible difference* between those that belong to the church, and the rest of the world." Similar is the language of the Larger Catechism, in the answer to the 162d question, where "a sacrament is called a holy ordinance, instituted by Christ in *his church*, to signify, seal, and exhibit unto those that are *within the covenant of grace*, the benefits of his mediation." Hence, it is expressly stated in the answer to the 166th question of the same, "that baptism is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible Church:" and provision is made in the 29th chapter of the Confession, and in answers to the 169, 170, 171, 172, 173 questions of the Larger Catechism, to "keep off from the Lord's table such as are not visible members of the Church."

In this view of the sacraments, and of the persons to whom alone

they may be lawfully administered, our church agrees with the purest and best churches formed at the period of the Reformation, in different parts of Europe, as also with the first churches in New England. Several authorities will be quoted in detail, and references made to others.*

The former Confession of Helvetia (or Switzerland), which was written in Basil about the year 1636, in behalf of all the churches of Helvetia, says expressly, "the sacraments do appertain to them which are in the Church."

The Confession of Bohemia, published in the year 1573, also called the Confession of the Waldenses, terms "the sacraments, holy covenants, of God with his church, and of the Church with God."

The French Confession, drawn up in the year 1559, by the Reformed in that kingdom, in the 35th article, acknowledges that there are only two sacraments which are common to the whole church. In the Belgic or Reformed Dutch Church Confession, published by all the Belgic or Dutch churches in the year 1566, it is said, art. 33, "We believe that God, having regard to our dulness and infirmity, did institute sacraments for us, that by them his promises might be sealed unto us, and that they might be most certain pledges of his heavenly love towards us, and of *his gifts bestowed upon us, for the cherishing and sustaining of our faith.*"

The first synod of the churches of New England, held at Cambridge, 1648, unanimously judged the Westminster Confession of Faith, in all matters of faith, to be very holy, orthodox, and judicious; only excepting to those parts which relate to church government and discipline.† Their view of the sacraments was therefore the same with that which our Confession gives.

In the second session of this synod, held in Boston in 1680, a Confession, essentially the same with the Westminster, but differing in its phraseology and arrangement, was adopted. In the 28 chap. sect. 1, of this Confession, it is said, "Sacraments are holy signs and seals of the covenant of grace, immediately instituted by Christ, to represent him and his benefits, and to *confirm our interest in him.*"

The Connecticut churches, in an assembly of elders and messengers, held at Saybrook, in 1708, adopting the above-mentioned Confession, maintained the same opinion on this subject.

A similar doctrine is taught in the Augsburg Confession, art. 3—the Confession of Saxony, art. 2—of Sueveland,‡ art. 16—of England, art. 25—of Basil, art. 5.

Indeed, on this point there appears to have been no material difference among the Reformed churches.

* These authorities are taken from a "Harmony of the Confessions of the Faith of the Christian and Reformed Churches." London, 1643.

† Mather's Mag. Chr. Am. 5, b. 1, p. 3, page.

‡ This is the Confession of the four cities, Strasburg, Constance, Memingen, and Lindau, presented to Charles V. 1530.

Having thus seen that, according to our standards, and the Confessions of the Protestant churches, the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, legitimately belong only to the visible church, we proceed to exhibit the view they give of the *visible church*.

In the answer to the 62 question of the Larger Westminster Catechism, the visible church is defined to be "a society made up of all such, as in all ages and places of the world profess the true religion, and their children." To understand this answer correctly, we must attend first to the nature of the profession required in adults, to constitute them members of the Church, and then to the relation which the children, either by birth or adoption, of such adults, sustain to the church as members thereof.

I. The profession meant in the above answer, according to the answer to the 166 question of the Larger Catechism, is more particularly specified to be "a profession of faith in Christ and obedience to him." The faith, of which mention is made in the answer to the 86 question of the Shorter Catechism, is defined to be "a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon Jesus Christ alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the Gospel." Obedience to Christ, is a conformity of conduct and conversation to all the commandments of Christ.

In full agreement with this view, is the doctrine of other Reformed churches. In the latter Confession of Helvetia, which was framed by the pastors of Zurich, in the year 1566, and approved by their confederates of Bern, and other parts of Switzerland, as also by those of Geneva and the churches of Hungary and Scotland, the church, in chap. 17, is defined to be "a community of all saints, i. e. of them who do truly know and rightly worship, and *serve* the true God in Jesus Christ the Saviour, by the word and the Holy Spirit, and which by faith are partakers of all those good graces which are freely offered through Christ." In the Confession of Basil, which was written in the year 1532, by the ministers of the Church of Basil, and allowed by the pastors of Strasbourg, "All they are said to be citizens of the Christian church, which do truly confess that Jesus is the Christ, the Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world, and do show forth that faith by the works of love."

The 19th article of the Articles of Religion of the Church of England, specifies the church to be a "congregation of faithful men."

The Belgic Confession, in the 27 art. defines the church to be "a holy congregation of true Christian believers."

In the Confession of Augsburg, presented in the year 1530 to Charles the V. by the Protestants of Germany, it is stated, "to speak properly, the church of Christ is a congregation of the members of Christ, i. e. of the saints who do truly believe and rightly obey Christ."

The French Confession, in the 27th art. affirms that the church is a company of *the faithful*, which agree together in following the Word of God, and in embracing pure religion.

The Cambridge Platform, in the 12th chap. 2d sect. says, "the

things which are requisite to be found in all church members, are repentance from sin and faith in the Lord Jesus; and therefore, these are the things whereof *men* are to be examined at their admission into the Church,* and which then they must profess and hold forth in such sort, as may satisfy rational charity that the things are indeed."

The Confession adopted by the synod of the New England churches, in Boston, and afterwards by that of the churches of Connecticut, in Saybrook, defines the visible catholic church, in chap. 26, sect. 2, to be "the whole body of men throughout the world, professing the faith of the Gospel, and obedience unto God by Christ, according unto it, not destroying their own profession by any errors subverting the foundation, or unholiness of conversation."

The same doctrine is taught in the Confession of Bohemia,† chap. 8—of Saxony, art. 11—of Wirtemberg, art. 32—of Sueveland, art. 15.

To these authorities the opinions of the principal Reformers might be added, but it is deemed superfluous. Enough has been said, to prove, that in the judgment of other Reformed churches, as well as our own, the profession which constitutes visible membership in the church, is that of saving faith in the Lord Jesus and obedience to his commandments.

II. We proceed to show the nature of that relation, which the children by birth or adoption, of such adults as make the above profession, sustain to the church as members thereof. As the birth of children is the consequence of a law of nature, and not of the covenant of grace, so these children, as well as all others, come into the world children of wrath. They therefore are not members of the Church in the same manner as adults, i. e. by profession, as before described; for of such membership they are not capable. Nevertheless, since they belong to their parents, as their flesh and blood, and their chief earthly good, they, in virtue of this union with their parents, are related to the Church as her children. Not that the faith of their parents is imputed to them, and they on that account are considered within the Church. But God, by virtue of his own free and sovereign goodness, hath given unto the members of his church very precious promises, not only to them personally, but to their seed. Thus he assured Abraham, Gen. 17, "I will be a God unto thee, and unto thy seed after thee;" and the apostle Peter, in Acts 2, says, "the promise is to you and to your children, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." The promise is, not that God will convert and save every one of these children; but that he will, by

* The men here meant, according to the 6th sect. of the same chapter, are those adults who "were never in church society before." In chap. 3, sect. 2, "the children of such as are holy," i. e. of visible saints, are declared to be members of the church.

† The poor persecuted remains of the Albigenses or Valdenses, presented to Francis I., in the year 1200, their Confession, in which they call the church "one holy congregation of all the elect of God."—*Jortin's Life of Erasmus*, vol. 3, p. 106, 8vo. Ed. 1808. Lond.

virtue of Christ's death, from such children of wrath, raise up a seed to serve him. On the ground of the promise, therefore, the children of those who profess faith in Christ, and obedience to his commandments, are considered as members of the church. As the promise is made only to the members of the Church, and as we cannot acknowledge any one to be a member who does not profess faith in Jesus Christ, and obedience to his commandments; it follows that none, but the children, by birth or adoption, of parents, one or both of whom do thus profess faith and obedience, can be considered as the subjects of the promise, and thus within the Church. We have added children by adoption, to those by birth, because there is nothing in the word of God and in the standards of our church to forbid such adoption.

To these, and no other children, the sacrament of baptism may be lawfully administered. Thus, in the answer to the 166 question of the Larger Catechism, it is said, "Infants descending from parents either both or but one of them professing faith in Christ and obedience to him, are *in that respect* within the covenant, and are to be baptized."

In agreement with this, the latter Confession of Helvetia restricts the privilege to "young infants born of faithful parents; "the former to "such as are born of the people of God;" the French Confession, to infants born of "holy parents;" the Belgic, to the infants of believers, "the children of the faithful;" the Confession of Saxony, "to those only, which are engrafted into the church;" the Confession adopted at Boston, and afterwards at Saybrook, to "the infants of one or both believing parents, and to those only."

To these authorities may be added the forms for baptizing infants, used by the French, Genevan, and Dutch churches,* which are founded upon the fact that the infants are presented by persons professing faith in and obedience to Christ.

In addition to these public testimonies, the opinions of Calvin, the elder Turretine, Beza, Witsius, and others, might be adduced. We only quote Frith, one of the English martyrs, whose words are a proper conclusion on this subject. "Baptism is given before the congregation unto him, which before he receive it, hath either professed the religion of Christ, or else hath the word of promise, by the which promise he is known to be of the sensible congregation of

* The language used in the form of the Reformed Dutch Church for baptizing infants, is remarkably precise on this point. "Baptism, it is said, is a seal and undoubted testimony that we have an eternal covenant of grace with God." Further, in the exhortation to the parents, we have these words, "Beloved in the Lord Christ, you have heard that baptism is an ordinance of God, to seal unto us and to our seed his covenant; therefore it must be used to that end, i. e. as a seal to us and to our seed, of his covenant with us and our seed. Can a person then use baptism as such a seal, if that person does not profess faith in Christ and obedience to him?" Moreover, the first question requires the parent or parents to answer that his child is "sanctified in Christ, and therefore a member of his church." How is it possible for any parent to profess this, "if he has not himself the hope that he by faith is united to Christ?" Or can he profess his child to be in Christ, "if he does not profess himself to be in Christ?"

Christ." In these words, the two grounds on which membership rests, are distinctly noticed,—1, in adults, the ground is their profession; 2, in infants, the word of promise.

We have been the more full in our quotations from our own standards, and those of other Reformed churches, on the subject of the sacraments and the church, not merely to show the pleasing harmony which existed between the Reformed churches at their commencement; but chiefly to exhibit a warning testimony, against prevailing errors on these subjects. The errors to which we refer, are these, "that the right and power, of handing down baptism to our children, are derived from the baptism of the parent;" "that the original guilt of baptized infants, is so covered by the blood of atonement, symbolized in baptism, that its condemning power, at least with regard to baptized infants dying in infancy, is destroyed by the grace of the new covenant;" "that a profession of saving faith in adults, is not requisite to entitle them to baptism;" "that a mere owning of the covenant, without a credible profession of a person's being in the covenant, entitles him to the baptism of his children;" "that a child ought not to be punished, by refusing baptism, for the faults of its parent;" "that a parent's profession is to be considered credible, if his life be moral, without inquiring into his religious practice, or exacting from him a promise of obedience to all the commandments of Christ;" "that a person may lawfully be admitted to the Lord's Supper, who neglects religious duties, though he may be moral in his deportment;" and "that the sacraments are converting ordinances, intended to regenerate sinners, or to procure the pardon of sins." The quotations we have made, prove that the Reformed churches considered the sacraments as *confirming* ordinances, intended only for the members of the visible church; the visible church, as composed only of those adults who *credibly profess saving faith in Christ and obedience to him*, and their infants; the profession required in adults, that of saving faith; the right of handing down infant baptism, as derived not from the mere fact of a parent's being himself baptized, but from his professing credibly the great truths taught by his baptism; the cleansing efficacy of the blood of atonement symbolized by baptism, as sealed not so much to the infant baptized, as to the church; the relation which children sustain to the church, as arising altogether from the *promise*; the promise, as made only to those who walked in the steps of faithful Abraham, and none as possessing the promise, who do not obey all the commandments of Christ, as well as profess faith in him.

**CHILDREN, AS MEMBERS OF THE VISIBLE CHURCH, ARE PROPER
SUBJECTS OF CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINE.**

The children of those parents who profess faith and obedience as before described, being thus the proper recipients of the privilege of baptism, are also legitimate subjects of Christian discipline. As

members of the household of faith, they are subject to its rules and its authority, in the same manner as children are subject to the rules and authority of the house or family to which they belong. They are not subject as adults, until they become adults, but as children; and that care and discipline, which is suited to their age and character, must be exercised over them. This is fully established in the form of discipline and government of our church, in that part which relates to forms of process, chap. 1, sect. 1, where it is said, "Inasmuch as baptized persons are members of the church, they are under its care, and subject to its government and discipline." And in the Directory for Worship, chap. 9, sect. 1, it is said, "Children born within the pale of the visible church, and dedicated to God in baptism, are under the inspection and government of the church."

Agreeably to this principle, our mother church in Scotland, has, from the earliest period of her establishment, made provision for the instruction and discipline of her children. By different acts of the General Assembly, she has declared their education to be under the inspection of her judicatories, and directed the course of their studies accordingly. Thus we find, that as far back as the reign of James the VI. none were admitted to instruct the youth, but such as should be tried by the visitors of the Kirk. (Steuart's (Pardovan) Collections, b. 1, tit. 17, sect. 1.) The General Assembly, in 1638, ratified the acts of the Assembly, 1565-67-95, "whereby visitation of colleges is to be had by way of commission from the General Assembly; and the principal regents and professors within colleges, and masters and doctors of schools, are to be tried by them, concerning the soundness of their judgment, in matters of religion, their ability for discharge of their calling, and the honesty of their conversation." (Steuart's Collec., b. 1, tit. 17, sec.) The same Assembly directed the several presbyteries to settle schools in every landward parish, and provide men able for the teaching of youth. (Do., b. 1, tit. 5, sect. 2.) By an act of the Assembly, 1642, a *grammar-school* was erected in every presbytery, seat, and burgh. (Do.—do.—do.) In 1645, the Assembly passed an act for the advancement of learning and good order in colleges and grammar-schools, in which details for regulating the education of youth are given. The Assembly of 1700, appointed all presbyteries to take special, particular, and exact notice of all school-masters, governors, and pedagogues of youth, within their respective bounds, and oblige them to subscribe the Confession of Faith, and in case of continued negligence (after admonition), error, or immorality, "or not being careful to educate those under their charge, in the Protestant reformed religion," points out the mode in which they are to be punished. (Do., b. 1, tit. 5, sect. 1.) By an act of the Assembly, 1706, it is enjoined, that presbyteries visit grammar-schools twice a year, by some of their own number. (Do., b. 1, t. 17, sect. 4.) The above acts, which have been selected from a mass, relating to the same subject, fully prove that the mother church, considering herself responsible for her chil-

dren, has directed their education in schools and colleges, that they might thus be trained up for God. In this she has acted upon the principle, that these children were subject to her authority. "We account ourselves bound," says principal Hill, in his *Institutes* (p. 3, sect. 2; p. 316), "to exercise a continued inspection over the Christian education of those who have been baptized, that as far as our authority and exertions can be of any avail, parents may not neglect to fulfil their vows." Being subject to her authority in their education, unquestionably they are not freed from that authority in their moral or religious deportment. The care which has been taken to provide for them sound and pious teachers, proves the contrary. So does the avowed ground, on which they are baptized, viz.: to use the words of the Directory of the mother church on baptism, 'the seed and posterity of the faithful, born within the church, have by their birth, interest in the covenant and right to the seal of it.' Hence it is added, "that children by baptism are *solemnly* received into the bosom of the visible church, distinguished from the world, and them that are without, and united with believers." If, then, these children are in the church, surely they must be the subjects of her discipline. In conformity to this principle, all baptized persons are amenable to Kirk Sessions, to Presbyteries, Synods, and the General Assembly. Even minors may be summoned before church sessions (Steu. Col., b. 4, tit. 3, sect. 24); and finally, by the Assembly of 1642, "every presbytery is enjoined to proceed against non-communicating members;"* which act, taken in connection with other acts, relative to discipline, and the avowed principle of the church on this subject, must include all members, minors as well as adults, who have come to years capable of discerning the Lord's body. (Steu. Col., b. 2, tit. 4, sect. 12.) In thus claiming the right of inspection and government over all baptized persons within their respective jurisdictions, the mother church, and our church, perfectly agree with the Primitive Church, as also with the other Reformed Churches. A very brief detail of facts will be given in proof of this assertion.

1. The *Primitive Church* considered herself as the common mother of all baptized children, and exercised a corresponding care over them, that they might be trained up as a generation to serve the Lord. She did not indeed, in so many words, in her public Confessions, adopted and enlarged from time to time to meet prevailing errors, avow the principle: nor was it necessary, for the principle was recognized in the requirement of "a promise or vow from the baptized person, that he would live according to the rules of Christianity." (*Justin's Apology*, Bingham's *Ecc. Ant.* vol. 4, b. xi. ch. 7, s. 6, p. 288.) ~~As this vow could not be made by infants, it was required from those who presented them.~~ These persons, whether parents or others, besides receiving themselves, as members of the church, the seal of baptism, became responsible not only for the

* A similar rule is contained in the discipline of the French Reformed Churches, chap. 12, can. 11, *Quick's Synodicon*, vol. 1.

instruction, but for the admonition, and rebuke, if necessary, of the children baptized. (Bing. Ecc. Ant. vol. 4, b. xi. ch. 8, s. 5.) Individuals of eminence in the Primitive Church, incidentally avow the principle, and draw conclusions from it suited to the circumstances which led them to avow the principle. Thus Augustine, in his 28 Epist. to Boniface, says, "Children were presented to baptism, not so much by those in whose hands they were brought (though by them too, if they were good and faithful men), as by the whole society of saints. The whole church was their mother." (Bing. Eccles. Ant. b. xi. c. 8, s. 8.) Hence he concludes the church is bound to maintain baptized *children*, who in the course of providence should be deprived of support. That this principle was in fact avowed by the Primitive Church in her practice, though not in words in her Confession, appears from the design of the rite of confirmation; the attention which was paid to the instruction of baptized children; and the discipline actually inflicted upon them in case of improper conduct.

First. It appears that a rite, called Confirmation, was administered by the imposition of the hands, of the *Minister*, or Bishop, or Elder, together with prayer, on baptized children, at a certain age. Both Calvin (in his Institutions, b. 4, c. 19, s. 4), and Owen (in his Commentary on the Hebrews, ch. 6, v. 19, p. 33, vol. 3), acknowledge that this practice existed at a very early period in the church. The latter thus states its design: "When they (that is, the children of believers, baptized in their infancy), were established in the knowledge of these necessary truths (of which he makes mention before), and had resolved on personal obedience unto the gospel, they *were offered* unto the fellowship of the faithful: and here, on giving the same account of their faith and repentance, which others had done before they were baptized, they were admitted into the communion of the church, the elders thereof laying their hands on them, in token of their acceptance, and praying for their confirmation in the faith." This rite, which originally was confined to those who were baptized in their infancy, was afterwards administered to adults, immediately upon their baptism. (King's Primitive Church, part 2, ch. 5. Bing. Ecc. Ant. b. xii. c. 1, s. 1.) In process of time, when the church became grossly corrupted in her practice as well as doctrine, it was administered to infants immediately after baptism, that they might receive the Lord's Supper. (Bing. Ecc. Ant. b. xii. c. 1, s. 2.*) This historical fact, whilst it exhibits a most deplorable superstition, strikingly illustrates the design of *Confirmation*, as already stated from Dr. Owen. By this rite, "it came to pass," saith the judicious Hooker (in his Eccles. Polity. book 5, sect. 66, p. 236, of his works, fol. ed. Lond. 1723), "that children, in expectation thereof, were seasoned with the principles of true religion, before malice and corrupt examples depraved their minds; a good founda-

* This practice is still continued in the Greek Church. Smith's Account of the Greek Church, p. 116 and 161.

tion was laid betimes for direction of the course of their whole lives: the seed of the church of God was preserved sincere and sound: the prelates and fathers of God's family, to whom the care of their souls belonged, saw by trial and examination of them, a part of their own heavy burden discharged; reaped comfort by beholding the first beginnings of true godliness in tender years; glorified him whose praise they found in the mouth of infants; and neglected not so fit an opportunity of giving every one fatherly encouragement and exhortation: whereunto *imposition of hands, and prayer being added*, our warrant for the great good effect thereof, is the same which patriarchs, prophets, priests, apostles, fathers, and men of God have had, for such their particular invocations and benedictions, as no man, I suppose, professing truth and religion, will easily think to have been without fruit." This rite of confirmation, thus administered to baptized children, when arrived to competent years, and previously instructed and prepared for it, with the express view of their admission to the Lord's Supper, shows clearly that the Primitive Church in her purest days, exercised the authority of a mother over her baptized children.

Secondly. The attention which was paid to the instruction of baptized children in the Primitive Church was great. The Christians, according to Mosheim (Ecc. Hist. vol. 1, p. 118), took all possible care to accustom their children to the study of the Scriptures, and to instruct them in the doctrines of their holy religion. Clemens Romanus praises the Corinthian believers, "that they commanded the young men to follow those things that were modest and grave:" and exhorts them to train up their children in the discipline of Christ. (Wake's trans. Manchester edit. 1799, p. 2 & 15.) Eusebius notices the great care of Leonides, the father of Origen, in the matter (l. 6, c. 2); Socrates (l. 2, c. 9), takes the same notice of the education of Eusebius Emisenus; and Sozomen (l. 3, c. 6), in relating the same fact, says, this was done *κατα πατριον εθος*, according to the custom of the country. "Gregory Nazianzen (in the 4th century), peculiarly commends his mother, that not only she herself was consecrated to God, and brought up under a pious education, but that she conveyed it down as a necessary inheritance to her children: and it seems her daughter Gorgonia, was so well seasoned with these holy principles, that she religiously walked in the steps of so good a pattern; and did not only reclaim her husband, but educated her children and nephews in the ways of religion, giving them an excellent example while she lived, and leaving this as her last charge and request when she died." "This, says Cave, was the *discipline* under which Christians were brought up in those times. Religion was instilled in them betimes, which grew up and mixed itself with their ordinary labours and recreations." (Primitive Christianity, p. 173, 174, 7th ed. Lond.) As an instance of this, he quotes Jerome, as saying of the place where he lived, "you could not go into the field, but you might hear the ploughman at his hallelujahs, the mower at his hymns, and the vine-dresser singing David's

psalms." (Prim. Christian, 173, 174.) Besides the instruction which was thus given by believing parents to their baptized children; these children, in all places where it was *practicable*, had, from the very commencement of the Christian Church, the opportunity of attending *catechetical* schools; schools erected for instruction in *divine* and *profane* science. Such was the famous school of Alexandria, to instruct both in human and divine learning, which Jerome dates from the days of Mark the Evangelist. (Vol. 1, of his works, Col. Agrip. an. 1616, p. 105.) In this school, Eusebius informs us (Eccles. Hist. b. 5, c. 10), Pantænus taught; to him succeeded Clemens Alexandrinus (l. 6, c. 6); and to Clemens, Origen (l. 6, c. 19). Similar schools existed, according to Bingham (Eccles. Antiq. book 3, chap. 10, sect. 5), in Rome, Cesarea, Antioch, and other places. These schools it appears were kept in churches, where they were erected, or in buildings adjoining to the church: "which is evident, says Bingham (b. 8, c. 7, s. 12), from the observation which Socrates makes upon the education of Julian the apostate, that in his youth he frequented the church (*βασιλικήν*), where in those days the schools were kept." This practice was continued, even when the church became corrupted. In the early part of the 4th century, Gregory, who was instrumental in converting the Arminians, and was afterwards their bishop, "set up schools in every city, and masters over them by the king's command, to teach the Arminian children to read the Bible." By the canons of some councils, charity-schools were appointed to be erected in cathedrals and other churches. Especially in the 7th century, the 6th council of Constantinople; in the 8th century, Charlemagne set up schools in bishoprics and abbeys. In the 9th century, the council of Rome direct that there shall be masters in all cathedrals; and other places where it is necessary, masters and teachers, of the liberal sciences. Similar directions are found in the canons of the council of Toul or Savonieres, in Lorrain. (Dupin's 8th and 9th cent.) From these few facts, the conclusion is inevitable, to adopt the language of the learned arch-deacon Jortin, "to the gospel, and those who embrace it, are due our grateful acknowledgments, for the learning that is at present in the world. The infidels, educated in Christian countries, owe what learning they have to Christianity, and act the part of those brutes, which, when they have sucked the dam, turn about and strike her." (Charge 1, vol. 4, of his sermons, Dub. ed.) The attention which was thus paid by believers, individually, and by the church, collectively, to the instruction of children, proves the fact, that they were under the care and watch of the church.

Thirdly. Discipline was actually inflicted upon baptized children, in the Primitive Church. "The censures of the church," Bingham (b. 16, ch. 3, s. 11), informs us, "seldom or never touched them whilst *minors*, or children under age: there being more proper punishments thought fit for them, such as fatherly rebukes, and corporal correction; and to inflict the highest censures upon such, was rather thought a lessening of authority, and bringing contempt upon the discipline

of the church." Thus the same author says, Augustine, who flourished in the 4th century (Epis. 159, to Marcellinus), assures us, the kind of punishment by stripes, was often or commonly used, not only by schoolmasters and parents, but by bishops in their consistories also. One of the rules of Isidore of Seville, who flourished in the 6th century, was, "That they, who were in their minority, should not be punished by excommunication, but according to the quality of their negligence or offence, be corrected with congruous stripes."

II. The Reformed Churches of Bohemia, of France, of Holland, waiving any notice of others, in their standards, have recognized the principle, that baptized children are under the watch and discipline of the church. By the two last, especially, specific regulations are given for the education of their children; and schools are directed to be established, under the inspection of the eldership, in every congregation. Thus we find, in the discipline of the Reformed Churches of France (chap. 2, can. 1, 2, and 5), it is enjoined, 1. "That the churches shall do their utmost endeavour to erect schools, and to take care of the instruction of *their youth*. 2. Regents, and masters of schools, shall subscribe the Confession of Faith, and church discipline, and the towns and churches shall not admit any one into this office without the consent of the consistory of that place. 5. A proposition out of the word of God shall be made by the scholars of EVERY CHURCH, as time and place may conveniently bear it: at which exercises, pastors shall be present to *preside and order* the said propositions." Thus, also, in the 14th chapter of the same book of discipline, can. 14: "Fathers and mothers are directed to be exhorted to be very careful of their children's education, which are the seed-plot, and promising hopes of God's Church. And therefore, such as send them to school to be taught by priests, monks, Jesuits, and nuns, they shall be prosecuted with all church censures. Those also shall be censured, who dispose of their children to be pages, or servants, unto lords and gentlemen of the contrary religion." (Quick's Synod, vol. 1, p. xxvi. and lv.) In perfect agreement with this, the Reformed Low Dutch Church, in the rules of government, art. 21, direct "The consistories in every congregation to provide good schoolmasters, who are able, not only to instruct children in reading, writing, grammar, and the liberal sciences, but also to teach them the catechism, and the first principles of religion;" and, in art. 54, it is enjoined, "That the schoolmasters, under the immediate care of the consistory, shall be obliged to subscribe the Confession of Faith, or instead thereof, the Heidelberg Catechism." Thus the Synod of Dort decreed, in their 17th session, that there should be observed a threefold method of catechising. 1. *Domestic*, by parents; 2. *Scholastic*, by schoolmasters; and 3. *Ecclesiastic*, by pastors, elders, readers, or visitors of the sick; and that all, whose duty it is to visit and inspect the churches and schools, shall be admonished to make this the first object of their care. To carry this plan into effect, so far as respects the *second* method of instruction, the

synod passed another decree, embracing the following resolutions: 1st. Schools for the education of children and youth, shall be established wherever they may be found necessary. 2d. Provision shall be made for procuring and supporting suitable teachers. 3d. The children of the poor must be provided for in these schools, or in others expressly for them. 4th. No person shall be appointed to the charge of these schools, who is not a member of the Reformed Church, furnished with testimonials of his orthodoxy and good morals, and who shall not previously have subscribed the Confession of Faith, and Belgic Catechism, and solemnly promised to instruct the children committed to his care, in the principles contained in the church standards. 5th. They shall, according to the age or capacity of the children, employ two half-days in every week, not only in hearing them repeat, but in assisting them to understand their catechism; shall examine them frequently; inculcate on them the necessity of regular attendance upon the ordinances of religion; accompany them to these ordinances, and promote their benefit from them. 6th. To promote fidelity in the teachers, and progress in the children, it shall be the duty of the pastors and elders frequently to visit these schools; to encourage and direct the teachers in the mode of catechising; to examine the children with mild severity, and to excite them to industry and piety, by holy exhortations, by commendations, and suitable rewards. "Such," say the general Synod of the Reformed Dutch Church in this country, in the year 1809, in their printed extracts, "such is the construction which our forefathers put upon the constitution of the Church of Christ; and we must be at a loss whether more to admire their wisdom and fidelity, or to lament our languor and degeneracy in this point. A close adherence to a system like this, so far as means are connected with their end, is calculated to raise the visible church and social state to as high perfection as this earth admits. It is the system of complete organization, which promotes the unity; forms, while it preserves, the habits; combines the efforts, increases the strength, and pours moral health into the fountains of society." (Christians' Magazine, No. 4, vol. 3, pp. 229, 230.) Not less pointed and explicit on this subject did the New England churches express their opinion, in the Cambridge Platform of Discipline, chap. 12, sect. 7: "They," that is, baptized children, such is their language, "are also under church watch, and consequently subject to reprehensions, admonitions, and censures thereof, for healing and amendment, as need shall require."

Though THE PRINCIPLE, that baptized children are subjects of church discipline, be thus acknowledged by the Reformed Churches generally, and by ours particularly, according to the unquestionable and laudable example of the Primitive Church, it is a lamentable truth, that it is not carried into effect in any of them, as it ought to be. In the earliest and purest periods of their existence, they did, in a commendable degree, act upon this principle. But now,

from the most of them, if not all, the glory in this respect is departed. Children of the faithful, are still considered proper recipients of the privilege of baptism, yet they are suffered to live as if they were not subjects of Christian discipline. In too many instances, a superstitious regard has been paid to the mere rite of baptism, whilst the most deplorable neglect of the duties arising from, and connected with, that rite, has been manifested, not only on the part of parents, but of church officers. This neglect appears to have originated in two mistakes on this subject.

The *first* is, that infant baptism is viewed as a sacrament to the parent, or parents only, and not to the church or body of visible believers. The latter undoubtedly, as well as the former, receive the thing signified, and sealed by baptism.—Baptism (says Boston), as often as it is administered according to Christ's institution, doth by his appointment seal the whole benefits of the covenant of grace, not only to the party receiving, but the whole of the body within the covenant (Body of Divinity, vol. 3, p. 299). Indeed, the former receive it only because they belong to the latter, constituting a part of them in their collective capacity: for the covenant was made with Abraham and his seed, which the apostle (Gal. 3 : 16, 29), explains to be his faithful seed, the church. Baptism, being thus a sacrament to the church, as well as the Lord's Supper, for the confirmation of her faith, she is bound to pray for baptized children, and exercise suitable pastoral care over them, that the ordinance may not be profaned by them, but on the contrary, the thing signified in their baptism, may be enjoyed by them in their experience.

The *other* mistake relates to discipline. It is considered merely as the infliction of punishment, and as consisting in *suspension* and *excommunication*. But discipline is also a privilege, consisting in *instruction, advice, warning, reproof, and remonstrance*. Even when it assumes the awful form of an avenger of evil, it is for edification, and not for destruction. The authority of the church is mild and parental. Her officers may not lord it over God's heritage, but must treat the whole visible family of the Redeemer as their spiritual children. When they are constrained to inflict judicial censures, they must do it in love, that the wanderer who is punished may be reclaimed. In this twofold light it is a privilege, as much as discipline is in a family, in a school, or in a state, by which *authority*, on the one hand, and *subordination* on the other, become sources of blessings to all who are in the church of God. Both the *authority*, on the part of church officers, and this *subordination*, on the part of all church members, infants as well as adults, lie at the foundation of *discipline*. Without this distinction, well understood and carried into complete and universal operation, *discipline* becomes in the church the instrument of faction to distract the members, or of corruption to screen delinquents from punishment. The church of God, equally with civil society, rejects the absurdity of all who belong to her being both ruled and rulers. She recognizes, in the most

unequivocal manner, the authority of parents over their children ; of teachers over their pupils ; and of magistrates over their subjects. Without interfering in the peculiar province of each, as far as religion is not concerned, she claims for her officers paramount authority in the house of God over all who are in that house ; and requires that in matters pertaining to the interests of that house, the authority of parents, of teachers, and of magistrates, shall be so far subordinate to the authority of her officers, as to aid them in their duty ; to be guided by them, and to receive the rebuke of love at their hand when deemed necessary. The two principles of *authority* and *subordination* must be kept in view, as also the twofold nature of discipline, viz., *preventive* and *corrective*, in order that we may properly ascertain the manner in which the church of Christ must exercise her authority over baptized children, that they may be trained up as a generation to serve the Lord. She must take care that they receive necessary instruction in the ways of righteousness and usefulness : and if they transgress, she must take care that the necessary corrections be administered to them. Her duty then, as a mother, possessing the authority of a mother over them, as children, owing to her the subordination of children, consists :—

I. IN PREVENTING TRANSGRESSION, BY AFFORDING THEM INSTRUCTION.

II. IN CORRECTING TRANSGRESSIONS, BY ADMINISTERING TO THE TRANSGRESSOR THE NECESSARY CENSURES.

The illustration of these constituent parts of the Church's duty, will necessarily include in it, as fundamental, all the reasonings, and the proofs, in support of the reasonings *which have already been offered*. It will also strike at the root of some popular, but gross and ruinous mistakes, on the subject of education, as well as on the relation which baptized children sustain to the church. No conclusion ought to be made, or previous prejudice indulged, until the illustration contemplated be finished. Then an opportunity will be afforded, by taking the whole in connection, to judge whether the plan presented be according to the law and testimony, or not ; whether it be such as to invite the experiment of trying it, or not ; whether it approves itself to the understanding, and the affections, not only as right, but as desirable.

DUTY OF THE CHURCH TO GIVE INSTRUCTION TO HER BAPTIZED CHILDREN.

I. The duty of the church as a mother, possessing *the authority* of a mother, towards baptized children owing to her *the subordination* of her children, consists in preventing transgressions, by affording them **INSTRUCTION**.

The remark which is often made, that men need not so much to be *informed* of their duty, as to be *persuaded* to do their duty, is not

well founded. Instruction is as necessary for acquiring the knowledge of our duty, as for acquiring the knowledge of any science or art. Sin, though it has not annihilated any one of the faculties of man, has fearfully disordered them all, so that the understanding is blind, the will depraved, the conscience stupid, the affections sensual. Hence arises the necessity of a revelation from God, as also of a particular class of men qualified by God for teaching from such a revelation, the things which pertain to the peace, comfort, and happiness of sinners. The instruction which these men are directed to give, includes motives, as well as truths; truths first, and then motives. They must first convince the understanding, and then excite the affections. The church, in her treatment of children, follows the mode which God has adopted in his treatment of sinners. And as the Spirit of God, by means of the instruction which his word affords, and the motives which it exhibits, destroys the dominion of sin in the hearts of believers, and keeps them from wilfully transgressing his law in their lives: so the church affords her children that instruction, which is calculated, under the blessing of God, to develop their faculties, to furnish their minds with principles, and to form their habits; thus training them up in the way in which they should go, for a generation to serve the Lord. The persons to whom she commits their instruction, are the parents, the teachers in schools, or colleges, the church officers. A mere sketch, and no more, of the manner in which these persons respectively ought to conduct the instruction of children will be attempted.

1. The first instructors of children, are **THEIR PARENTS**. To these the church, after having admitted the children presented by them in baptism to this sacrament, and all the privileges connected with it, commits such children upon the faith of their engagement that they will teach them the truth, and set them good examples, with the express understanding that they, the parents, are subject, from time to time, to the inspection of the church by her officers, whether they perform their duty or not.

The first school of children is their mother's lap. Here they acquire their earliest impressions and ideas, which in a very great degree give the tone to their conduct in subsequent life. Here then the fear of God, and love to Christ, must be instilled into their minds. Thus Lois, and Eunice, the mother, and grandmother of Timothy, acted, and God blessed their labour. To encourage other mothers, or those females who may in the course of providence be called to take the place of mothers, the names of these female worthies are left on record in God's most holy word. How desirable then that all mothers should be pious, nay, how necessary! And yet, females are ordinarily educated with a view to everything else, save that which gives dignity to their character, by making them permanently and extensively useful, viz.: *the proper discharge of their duty as mothers*. It is certain, that to the want of true religion in mothers, a very large proportion of the wickedness of youth is to be ascribed,

and also, that the virtue and godliness of many youth, under God, are owing to the lessons they have received from their mothers.

As the children advance in years, they become more particularly the care of their fathers, whose duty is to endeavour to increase the first impression and give them permanence, by enlarging their acquaintance with truth, as their minds enlarge. They must be taught the simple elements of the gospel, before they can read; and, as soon as possible, the Bible must be put into their hands; its nature explained, and its importance urged upon them. The objection, that to use it in a familiar manner, or as a common book, will sink its consequence, and destroy its authority over the mind, is frivolous, and unfounded in fact. Equally destitute of force is the objection, that some parts of the Bible are calculated to fill the minds of children with improper ideas. The *first objection* is unphilosophical, and the *last* irreligious. Upon the principle on which the *first* depends, moral essays, or treatises on moral duties, ought not to be put into the hands of children: and upon that of the *last*, man, a child of corruption, is considered as a better judge of correct ideas—ideas suitable to be unfolded to children—than his God, who is perfect. Both the objections ought for ever to be banished from all who belong to the Church of Christ. Parents must teach their children to venerate, love, and obey, “all Scripture,” and must strive to make them mighty in the Scriptures. For this purpose, they must make the Scriptures known to their children, from their earliest years, as they were known to Timothy from a child. They must, moreover, teach them their Catechism, informing them of the design of such Catechism: and as they advance in it, referring them to Scripture passages, in support and proof of the answers which they commit to memory. Their relation to the church, as baptized children, ought to be sedulously impressed upon their minds, as also their consequent obligation to walk in newness of life, and their subjection to the spiritual authority which Christ hath established in his church. From the first dawns of reason, they ought to be taught to consider themselves as **THE LORD’S CHILDREN**, solemnly dedicated to him, and bound to glorify him in soul and body. “The needful, but much neglected duty of improving our baptism, we are informed in the answer to the 167 quest. of the Larger Catechism, is to be performed by us, all our life long, especially in the time of temptation, and when we are present at the administration of it to others, by serious and thankful consideration of the nature of it, and of the ends for which Christ instituted it, the privileges and benefits conferred and sealed thereby, and our solemn vow made therein: by being humbled for our sinful defilements, our falling short of, and walking contrary to, the grace of baptism, and our engagements: by growing up to assurance of pardon of sin, and of all other blessings sealed to us in that sacrament; by drawing strength from the death and resurrection of Christ, into whom we are baptized, for the mortifying of sin, and quickening of grace; and by endeavouring to live by faith, to have

our conversation in holiness and righteousness, as those that have therein given up their names to Christ, and to walk in brotherly love, as being baptized by the same Spirit into one body." All the parts of this answer, constitute so many distinct heads of instruction, on which parents ought to dwell, and about which they should be plain and explicit, as well as affectionate. Particularly, ought children to be taught to pray for themselves, and parents must pray for them perseveringly. It is highly proper, nay, an incumbent duty, that each parent, if both have come under the engagements, should often separately retire with their children, and wrestle with God for a blessing on them. The impressions, which such scenes, often witnessed by the children, are calculated to produce on their young minds, it is hardly possible to conceive. Unless parents be earnestly engaged in prayer, and their children see it; and unless they exhibit uniformly a life consistent with the practice of prayer, and agreeing with the truth as it is in Jesus, they need not expect much religion in their children. And here it may be proper to remark, that this fact affords a strong and irrefutable argument to prove, that those parents, who are in visible covenant with God, according to the principles already laid down, as recognized by the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church, and also by the confessions of other Reformed Churches, and those parents only, to the unqualified and utter exclusion of all others, are entitled to the privilege of Infant Baptism. If this be not the case, how can we expect that the children will be brought up in the fear of God? If they who present them do not pray, or live godly in Christ Jesus, we need not look for religion in the children. Those parents who are not in visible covenant with God, are themselves the cause *why* their children cannot be baptized. If their children suffer by this deprivation, the parents must ascribe it to their own hardness of heart and rejection of Christ. It is a perfect absurdity to think that children can, or will be, trained up aright, if we have no reasonable evidence to hope that their parents are right in the temper of their minds, and the tenor of their lives. The present deplorable state of thousands of baptized children, is chiefly to be ascribed to this, that their parents do not act as those who are in visible covenant with God.

2. Next to parents, **TEACHERS IN SCHOOLS OR COLLEGES**, are the instructors to whom the church commits her children. And here it cannot but appear obvious to all, that a thorough and radical reform, *must* take place in our schools and colleges, before *baptized children* can be properly disciplined. As the education of children in all parts, is the proper, the legitimate business of the church, rather than of the State, so she is bound to see through the medium of her officers, not only that parents do their duty, but also in the same way to exercise her rightful superintendence over seminaries of learning.

No one ought to be admitted as a teacher of the children of the

church, who is not by profession a believer in the truths which she conceives essential to their best interest. No one ought to attempt to train up the Lord's seed, who is not visibly united to that Lord and his people. The perdition of thousands of children, it is to be feared, must be ascribed to their parents, who, either from indifference or a worse cause, have put them under the care of teachers who feared not God, and kept not his commandments. The utter inconsistency of such conduct cannot but be obvious to all, who will exercise the slightest reflection, when the nature of education, and its influence over the mind and life, are taken into consideration. If we except the paramount power of God's preventing and converting grace, the language of the poet on this subject is true:—

'Tis education forms the common mind,
Just as the twig is bent the tree's inclined.

Upon the *fact* contained in this quotation, a fact which experience has taught mankind, the wisest of men have ever acted in all matters *with care*, except in religion. Children have been studiously trained up for their places in life; but how few have been studiously trained up for God! They have been put under the direction and instruction of teachers qualified to make them acquainted with the liberal arts; with profound sciences; with professional employments; but no question has been asked, no solicitude felt or discovered, to furnish them with teachers qualified to make them acquainted with the fear of God; with faith in the Lord Jesus; with the spirituality of the divine law; with the corruption of human nature; with the necessity of the regenerating and sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost: in short, with true religion, the religion of the Gospel. And yet, without this religion, they must be and remain destitute of the one thing needful for time and eternity. In this neglect of religion, as a primary concern in the education of children; a concern as far exceeding all others as eternity exceeds time, there is a display both of *unnatural cruelty* and *deplorable ignorance*. The *cruelty* consists in this, that parents, professedly Christian, after having been instrumental in bringing into the world children in their likeness, possessed of a depraved nature, put those children in a place, and under circumstances where the depravity of their nature will rather be cherished and increased, than checked and corrected. The *ignorance* displayed is this, that the design of education is entirely perverted or frustrated. For *education*, using the term in its restricted sense, as a part of that extensive and thorough instruction which the *church* is bound to give her children, and which those who are not in the church must approve, must develope the faculties, and form the habits, by presenting principles to the former, and thus producing the latter in the course of time. Now what *subjects* can so develope the faculties, as those which constitute the sum and substance of true religion? In these subjects, there is food for the understanding, the imagination, the affections, all the intellectual, as well as moral

powers of the soul : inasmuch as the subjects relate to God ; to salvation ; to heaven ; to hell ; to eternity. The nature of these subjects is directly calculated to form the habits ; for relating to those matters which involve our present and everlasting happiness, they directly arrest our conscience, and control our feelings. They overawe the passions, and insensibly, but powerfully, conduct to a life of external (if not more), decent conformity to God's most holy will. Such is the scope of true religion ; such its commanding authority ; such its present, and its future, everlasting consequences, that every department of knowledge is subordinate to it, because it derives its real value from its relation to true religion. Unless it directly or indirectly promote this religion ; unless it aid in illustrating, applying, and defending the truths of this religion ; unless it co-operate with the specific design of the Bible, to make us seriously and perseveringly engage in glorifying God, and making our light so shine before men, that they may glorify God, it does not deserve our attention ; for it is not suited to our *character as men*, or to our *state as dependent and accountable creatures*. Hence the school-master ought to be able conscientiously and honestly to make every part of his instruction subordinate to the best, because the eternal, interests of the children committed to him. As the most important matters deserve the first attention in common life ; so, to all who make a profession of religion, decency, truth, honour, common honesty, natural feeling for the happiness of their offspring, and a legitimate fear of God's wrath, together with a sincere desire to promote his glory ; all call for, and imperatively urge, the duty of first, and chiefly, and above all other matters, teaching their children to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. What a contradiction to this incontrovertible, this self-evident duty, is the conduct of those parents, who knowingly and willingly send their children to such instructors as do not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not live godly in Christ Jesus ; to instructors of whom they have no evidence, even in the judgment of charity, that they regard the Saviour and his cross ! Mere piety, it is unequivocally granted, is not a sufficient qualification to instruct youth ; but the *want of visible piety* utterly disqualifies the most able man from instructing aright. For the teacher ought to embrace every opportunity to introduce religious observations in his instruction. He ought to make all his instructions subservient to religion. He ought to catechize them with care, devoting a regular portion of time to this great and important duty. For this purpose he ought to use the plainest and most evangelical catechisms ; catechisms, in which truth and error are in the most definite and express manner exhibited to view. He ought to be able to give a familiar exposition of such catechisms. He ought to have a portion of Scripture read every day, besides making the Scriptures a class book, and to accompany the portion read with a familiar and affectionate application ; as also, from time to time, in the use of it as a class-book, to make remarks calculated to arrest

the attention of the children, and to impress upon their hearts the truths which are read. He ought to pray with the children regularly, and to exhibit to them in his whole deportment an example of godliness. How can he perform his duty, of which a mere sketch has been given, if he possess not visible piety? He ought to be what in the Primitive Church, and in some of the Reformed Churches, is called a Catechist. His school ought to be a nursery for the church; it ought to be under the care of the church. In every congregation, one or more elementary schools of this description ought to be established by the church.

The same care ought to be taken in regard to higher schools and colleges. No child of the church ought to be sent to a seminary where religion is not the principal object of attention to the student, and where the officers are not in the visible connection of the church. As the church is divided into different denominations, each denomination ought to have their own college or colleges. The state cannot object to the incorporation of such institutions, on the ground of liberty of conscience, and toleration of all denominations; for on that very ground each of them who have ability to do it, ought to be permitted to establish them for their own individual use. The emulation which these rival institutions would excite, combined with the enlistment of religious feelings, would, under God's blessing, promote the interest of sound learning to a higher degree, and on an extensive scale. The plan of uniting different denominations in the support of a college, necessarily prevents the introduction of religious instruction as a part of collegiate exercises. For a proof of this, we need only look to those colleges which are established on this plan. Little indeed is the information which youth acquire in them from their teachers concerning a Saviour, and the way of reconciliation with God through him. Not so ought to be the colleges which the church fosters, and to which she sends her children. Constituting a link in the chain of discipline, by which the whole design of discipline can alone be completed, the design must be frustrated where this link is wanting. A great proportion of infidels can trace back the cause of their infidelity to the manner in which their education was conducted in the higher schools or colleges to which they resorted. The time of life when they were sent, their absence from home, and the systems of moral philosophy put into their hands, combined with the want of professed instruction in the Scriptures, and the want of visible piety in their instructors, have all contributed to produce scepticism, because all are calculated to call into exercise, rather than check, their passions and appetites. Perhaps one of the most powerful causes of this effect, is the fashionable mode of teaching moral philosophy, by which, pretending to exhibit a foundation for morals in what is called the law of nature, and to derive motives for that conduct from this law, *pupils are led to the fatal mistake, that there is a law independent of the revealed will of God, which gives us any information of duty; and also, that we possess the power of*

performing this duty without the grace of God. As the law of nature is nothing else than the remains of an original revelation; so, in all the illustrations of that law, the pupils ought to be directly referred to that revelation. They ought to be taught, that the foundation of morals is to be found only in that revelation; that *morals*, in the correct sense of the phrase, can only be the result of a renewed temper, and that the power of performing duty flows from God. As the revelation of God takes cognizance of all the relations of life, of all our employments, and of all our pleasures, so there is no duty which is incumbent on us as members of civil society, as magistrates and subjects, as parents and children, as husbands and wives, as physicians and patients, as lawyers and clients, as masters and servants, as neighbours and friends; in a word, no civil, political, professional, domestic, or religious duty, which is not directed either by the letter or the spirit of this revelation. This truth ought to be deeply impressed upon the minds of youth, that thus they may be accustomed to consider the revelation of God as the source from whence the knowledge of, and obligations to, all our duty is derived; and to estimate the systems of morals by this standard, and no other. In this way, and this way alone, moral philosophy can become a hand-maid to true religion. Apart from true religion, in the manner specified, she is the direct ally and powerful friend of infidelity.

After young persons have left the schools or colleges to which they were sent by their parents, and returned home, they must be treated with equal care and attention as at any previous period. It is then that they must choose their profession or employment in life. In the choice of this they ought to be directed in such a manner, that their obligations to the fear of God should not be neglected. Some professions and employments are unlawful, such as those of stage-players, keepers of lottery offices, gamblers, and the like. Parents ought never to consent that their children should embrace these. With respect to those which are lawful, children ought never to be put under the care of any one who is not visibly pious. They ought to look for *such* a lawyer, physician, merchant, or any other person, to whom an important trust is committed; for *no other* are worthy of their confidence. It is an eternal truth, that as there are some professions which religion condemns, so there are some members of lawful professions whom religion also condemns. Both ought equally to be discountenanced; viz., *the irreligious profession and the irreligious member of a religious profession*, i. e. of a profession which religion approves. Attention to the choice of a profession, to the character and conduct of *him* under whom children are placed to acquire the mastership of any lawful profession, is equally necessary with that which has been specified on the subject of schools and colleges. Both these, viz., the profession, as also the character of the teacher or master, in any profession or employment which is lawful, are legitimately and scripturally under the superintendence of the church. She, by her officers, according to that form of *doc-*

trine and discipline which she has adopted, has a right, and IT IS HER DUTY, to inquire into these particulars, as well as into those which have already been explained. She is as much concerned in the *professional employments* of her baptized children, as she is in the *colleges or schools* to which they are sent, and in the manner in which they are trained up by their parents; for the whole course of their *instruction*, as children, is only terminated when they begin to act their part on the theatre of life, no longer "under tutors and governors," whose duty it is to educate them.

3. THE MINISTRY, AND ELDERSHIP, are also instructors of baptized children; not exclusive of THEIR PARENTS, OR TEACHERS, but rather in connection with each of them. Constituting the *executive* of the church, their duty is not only to superintend the conduct of parents and teachers, but also themselves to aid, by actual instruction, the efforts of both parents and teachers. We shall, for the sake of plainness, illustrate their duty in detail; first, in relation to the children; second, in relation to the parents of the children; and thirdly, in relation to their teachers in schools or colleges.

First. THE MINISTRY AND ELDERSHIP, are bound to give *catechetical* instruction, in its extensive sense, to the children. For this purpose, it is necessary that every Session establish *catechetical schools*, under their immediate superintendence, direction, and government, to which children should resort at stated times, to be examined by them as to their knowledge of divine truths. The examination should be conducted according to the catechisms adopted and authorized by the church. The age at which, and the times when, attendance at these schools should be required, must be directed by the wisdom and consciences of church officers and parents conjointly. They cannot attend too soon after they are any way capable of profiting, nor too often in such seasons when they are not necessarily and properly, upon Scriptural grounds, otherwise employed. The importance of catechetical instruction must be obvious to all. The church has in all ages acknowledged it, and made provisions that it should be given. In this way, children are not only taught elementary truths—truths which pertain to their salvation—but they are also introduced to the notice and inspection of church officers; accustomed to their company, and trained up under their eye. It is not deemed necessary to say more of the duty. A few remarks will be made on the manner in which the duty ought to be performed. The mere exercise of memory in learning questions by rote, is not sufficient. The judgment ought also to be exercised: and for this purpose, children ought to be questioned about the meaning of words, and the import of the Scriptural passages which they repeat. As many words used to exhibit important doctrines, have a figurative, as well as literal, meaning, the necessity of understanding them aright must be obvious to every one. The contents of the books of Scripture, noticing separately the history, biography, prophecy, doc-

trine, and rites, contained in those books, as also the gradual increase of light in relation to doctrines; the change in relation to rites; the fulfilment of prophecy, and the important lessons deducible from history; as these several particulars present themselves to view in the books, they severally ought to constitute an object of special instruction. Particular attention ought also to be paid to the evidences which accompany revelation, and to the government which the Lord Jesus hath instituted in his church. The aim of the minister and session ought to be, to furnish the catechumens with doctrines, with a knowledge of the Bible, with the reasons on which faith in the Bible rests, and with a suitable acquaintance with the order of Christ's house. Thus baptized children will be able to give an answer to every one that asketh them a reason of the religion which they have been taught, and in the subjection to which, according to the direction of its Master, they have been baptized.

Secondly. The Ministry and Eldership, ought to visit the schools or seminaries of learning within their jurisdiction. This duty belongs to the judicatory under whose auspices and authority the schools or seminaries are established. Every session is bound to inspect the congregational school or schools. And if a higher school or college be established by a number of congregations united in presbytery, or by a number of congregations in different presbyteries united in synod, that presbytery or synod must inspect said school or college. But if it be by the combined efforts of sessions, presbyteries and synods united in General Assembly, that assembly must inspect the same. The manner of inspecting these schools, can only be by committees appointed for that purpose, with suitable instructions. The objects of inquiry must be, the system of instruction adopted; the rules of the schools or colleges; the proficiency of the pupils; their moral conduct, and their knowledge of the Gospel, as well as their conformity to all its doctrines; and the character, deportment, capacity, and piety of the instructors. Especial care and attention must be paid to the subject of religion, both in relation to instructors and pupils, by the visitatorial committees of the respective judicatories. These instructors, whether clergymen or laymen, who make religion subordinate to literature, who consider themselves merely as teachers in letters, and not in religion, and act accordingly, ought to be removed from their places: and the clergyman admonished officially, and if obstinate, to be suspended or deposed, as the nature of their conduct may demand. For clergymen who profess to receive the doctrines of our church, and yet make a sacrifice of these doctrines to what the world considers the interests of literature, when they relinquish the preaching of the Gospel and pastoral duty, for the sake of becoming instructors of youth in seminaries of learning, as they degrade themselves by this sacrifice, deserve to be degraded by the church, in which they are unworthy officers. As with instructors, so with their pupils, the utmost fidelity must be exercised in relation to their spiritual and eternal interests.

If the former have, from motives of vain-glory, worldly applause, ambition, or fear of man, neglected the souls of the latter, the visitors from the ecclesiastical judicatories, must strive to remedy the evil, not only by punishing the former, but by instructing, admonishing, and otherwise disciplining the latter. Or if the judicatories do not think it discreet to clothe the visitors with these powers, let the visitors report facts as they find them to the judicatories, and let the judicatories proceed against the offending instructors and pupils, as they in their wisdom shall see fit. At all events, the Church must exercise the power of superintending all seminaries of learning, so as to purge them both of improper instructors and of immoral pupils, that thus they may be fountains of piety, from whence shall flow streams to benefit society, and make glad the city of God.

Thirdly.—The Ministry and Eldership ought to visit the families who are under their pastoral care. To do this aright, is both important and difficult. Important, because thus the Gospel is brought not only to the doors, but to the firesides of families, so that each individual may receive a word suited to his case. Difficult on account of the difference of age, of taste, of state, which exist among the individuals in the same family. In the proper discharge of this duty, the connection between the officers and the members of a church, is not only preserved, but made the source of mutual comfort and improvement. Neither the regular preaching of the Gospel on the Lord's day, nor the friendly interchange of visits between the officers and members of a church, will or can supply the want of pastoral visitations. By these visitations, the Gospel, in its individual application to families, is preached from house to house, and an opportunity is afforded to a minister and the eldership, of becoming personally acquainted with all the individuals under their care, young as well as old, bond as well as free. They can also ascertain the actual state of families, together with the state of children; to what schools they are sent, what their knowledge is, especially of divine truth, and in what manner their parents fulfil their engagements in relation to them. These are subjects of information, useful to the minister for his preaching, and to the eldership in conjunction with the minister, for the exercise of discipline. A better view of the nature of this duty, of its extent, of its mode of operation, and the advantages which it secures to baptized children, cannot be given, than by quoting the act of General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in the year 1708, on this subject. The act itself will be given at full length for the benefit and use of all.

"The following articles are unanimously recommended to the ministers of this church, not as binding rules, but as a help to them in their visiting of families: viz., that ministers visit all the families in their parish, at least once a year, if the same be large, and oftener if the parish be small. And in the management of this work it is advised, 1. That ere a minister set out to this work, he labour to have his own heart in a suitable frame for it. 2. That he choose such a time in the year,

as his people may be best at leisure to meet with him : and that due intimation be made of the minister's design to visit, that the people may order their affairs so that he may find them at home. 3. That he be accompanied with the elder of the bounds ; with whom he may confer before they go forth to the work, about the state and condition of the persons and families of these bounds, that the minister may be able to speak the more suitably to their condition, and as may be most for edification. 4. When they enter a house, after a short account of the design of the visit, they are to take an account of the names of the family, parents, children, and servants, and inquire for certificates from those who are lately come to the parish, and to mark them in the roll for catechizing : and to take notice who can read, and of the age of children when capable of catechizing. 5. Then the minister may speak to them all in general of the necessity of regeneration, and the advantages of serious religion and godliness : of piety toward God, and justice and charity towards men. 6. And next, more particularly to the servants, of their duty to fear and serve God : and to be dutiful, faithful, and obedient servants, and of the promises made to such : recommending to them the reading of the Scriptures as they can, and prayer in secret, and love and concord among themselves : and in particular, a holy care of sanctifying the Lord's day. 7. The minister is to apply his discourse to the children, as they are capable, with affectionate seriousness ; showing them the advantages of knowing, loving, seeking, and serving God, and remembering their Creator and Redeemer in the days of their youth, and honouring their parents ; and to remember how they are dedicated to God in baptism ; and when of age, and fit, and after due instruction of the nature of the covenant of grace, and seals thereof, to excite them to engage themselves personally to the Lord, and to desire, and pray for, and take the first opportunity they can of partaking of the Lord's Supper ; to be specially careful how they communicate at first, much depending thereon : and such of the servants as are young, are to be exhorted hereto in like manner, exciting them also to daily reading of the Scriptures, and to secret prayer, and sanctifying of the Lord's day. 8. After this he should speak privately to the master and mistress of the family, about their personal duty towards God, and the care of their own souls' salvation, and their obligations to promote religion, and the worship of God in their families ; and to restrain and punish vice, and encourage piety, and to be careful that they and their house serve the Lord, and sanctify the Lord's day. After this, it may be fit to exhort masters to take care that God be worshipped daily in their family, by prayer, and praise, and reading of Scripture. They should inquire of them concerning the conversation and behaviour of the servants, and their duty towards God and man, and how they attend the worship of God in the family, and the public worship on the Lord's day, and how they behave after sermon : if any of them be piously inclined ; if they make conscience of secret prayer, and reading of the Scrip-

ture : if there be catechizing, and instructing of the ignorant and weak ; if due care be taken in educating the children, and particularly if they be put timeously to school, and how they profit thereat : and how the Lord's day is spent after sermon, in the family and in secret : all which the minister may mix with suitable directions, encouragements, and admonitions, as he shall see cause, and most for edification. 9. He may inquire who have Bibles, and encourage them who are able to get Bibles of their own, to make diligent and religious use thereof, and to recommend to parents and masters of families, to have the Confession of Faith, Catechisms, and other good books, for instruction in faith and manners. 10. If any be tainted with errors, or given to vice, they should be particularly dealt with, and spoken to, either privately or before others, as may be most for edification, and all in the family are to be exhorted to watch and edify one another, and to carry towards any who walk disorderly according to the rule, Matt. 18 : 15. 11. If there be any difference or division, either in the family or with the neighbours, the minister should endeavour to remove the same, and to make peace and to excite to follow it with all men, as far as possible. 12. It may be also inquired of those who have received tokens to communicate the last season for it, whether they have made use of them or not, and those who have communicated may be inquired privately, how they have profited thereby, and excited to remember to pay their vows to the Lord. 13. If there be any in the parish who keep not Church communion with us, whatever their motives may be, ministers ought to deal with God for them, and with themselves in such a way as may be most proper to gain them; and exonerate their own consciences before God and his people, waiting, if God peradventure will prevail with them ; who can tell, but our making them sensible of our tender love and affection to their persons, especially to their souls, giving them all due respect, and doing them all the good we can, yet still discountenancing their sin, may in the end be blessed of God for their good. Jude 22, 23 ; 2 Tim. 2 : 23, 25. All this should be carried on with dependence on God and fervent prayer to him, both before a minister set forth to such a work, and with the visited, as there shall be access to, and opportunity for it." Act. 10, Ass. 1708. (Abridgment of the Acts, p. 343-346).

Though one or two things in this act are local, and refer to local peculiarities, yet the reduction of the whole to practice, according to its spirit and meaning, is easy. The place, respectively, of parents, children, and servants, are noticed, and the subjects of inquiry, as well as the matter of admonition, suited to each, suggested at considerable length. Every part of the plan is replete with information, both in presenting motives to the mind, to urge to family visitation, and in affording materials for a right discharge of the duty. To such a discharge under the divine blessing, we must look for one of the principal means of disciplining baptized children. It brings them directly in the view of the pastor and eldership, who, from a suitable examina-

tion, can judge whether the parents and teachers have done, or are doing, their duty to the children. The pastor and eldership thus exercise their superintending authority in a social, friendly way, with the affection of spiritual parents, and the familiarity of domestic intercourse.

NATURE AND METHODS OF THE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINE DUE BY
THE CHURCH TO HER BAPTIZED CHILDREN.

II. The duty of the church, as a mother of baptized children, possessing *the authority* of a mother over them as children, owing to her *the subordination of children*, consists in correcting transgressions by administering to the transgressors the proper censures.

These, we are informed in the Confession of Faith, chap. 30, sect. 3, "are necessary, for the reclaiming and gaining of offending brethren, for deterring other from like offences; for purging out of that leaven, which might infect the whole lump; for vindicating the honour of Christ, and the holy profession of the gospel: and for preventing the wrath of God, which might justly fall upon the church, if they should suffer this covenant, and the seals thereof, to be profaned by notorious and obstinate offenders." The ends which are thus contemplated by church censures, are of the last importance, both for the benefit of offenders, and the prosperity of the church. One of these two ends will unquestionably be gained by the prompt, affectionate, and faithful discharge of duty in this respect. The duty is incumbent on the church, and where her officers neglect it, she must suffer materially. Nor will offenders escape injury; for let it be remembered, that the infliction of censures is a *privilege*, as well as a punishment, because its tendency is to correct offenders, and to reclaim them. The idea of letting them censure themselves, by abstaining from the sealing ordinances of the church, of their own accord, is absurd and condemnable. Absurd, because it takes for granted, that an offender will administer suitable punishment to himself for his offences, whilst he retains his character of offender, and without an acknowledgment of his offence. Condemnable, because it makes the voluntary abstinence of an offender from sealing ordinances, which in itself, with no accompanying circumstances of an offensive nature, is a *grievous offence*, a sufficient punishment for any other offence; renders nugatory the injunctions of our Lord and his apostles, on the subject of discipline; and in its legitimate and unavoidable consequences, annihilates the very existence of government in the house of God. To the prevalence of this idea, and the line of conduct pursued by church officers in consequence of it, we may trace the decay of vital religion and visible holiness in many parts of the church. How can it be otherwise? The church retains in her bosom those who have offended, without requiring gospel-satisfaction, or even bearing official testimony against the offenders. Such conduct on the part of church officers, whilst it encourages and hardens

offenders, invites others to commit offences. Against this sad and ruinous mistake the church ought ever to guard: promptly administering, by her officers, those censures which the Head of the church hath directed.

As the children of those who profess faith in Christ and obedience to his commandments, are members of the church by virtue of the promise made to such parents, and therefore baptized, so they are necessarily, upon every principle of correct reasoning, subjects of discipline. The discipline which ought to be exercised towards them, must be suited to their character and years as children. That we may understand this aright, let us for a moment advert to the modes, or ways, in which the censures of the church are to be administered. They are, according to the Confession of Faith, chap. xxx. sect. iv., "Admonition, suspension from the sacrament of the Lord's Supper for a season, and excommunication from the Church, according to the nature of the crime and the demerit of the person." Of these ways, it will at once be seen that the first is only applicable to children, and the last to adults. A few remarks relative to the first, illustrating the nature of admonition, and the manner in which it should be given, will precede an examination of the last ways, or, more properly, way, in which censure must be administered.

I. The nature of *admonition*, and the manner in which it should be given, will be sufficiently illustrated in the following particulars.

1. *Baptized children must be admonished* by THEIR PARENTS, when they offend. Though it is the duty of church officers to do this, they must commit the immediate exercise of it to parents and schoolmasters, reserving to themselves the right of superintending and examining both, in the exercise of it. The church, when by her officers she administers to the children of believers the sacrament of baptism, commits these children back to their parents in trust, that they shall be trained up a seed to serve the Lord. Hence parents are bound narrowly to inspect the conversation and conduct of their children; and when they see in them a departure from the ways of virtue and piety, to exhort and rebuke them. In the exercise of this part of their duty, is included chastisement when necessary. The father that spareth the rod, loveth not his child. Chastisement for offences is an ordinance of God; and they who reject it, under the pretence of its uselessness or its severity, only discover their own folly. It ought never to be inflicted but in cases when the offence in itself requires it; or in other cases, when continued admonition, solemn and affectionate, has failed, and in either case to be accompanied with prayer. In the same manner, those rebukes and exhortations, which relate to sins committed by children, ought to be given. They must be admonished *in the name of the Lord*, and corrected in that same name. In no instance ought anger to prompt the parents to the admonition or the chastisement. In every instance such admonition and chastisement ought to result from a deep conviction of

duty, and to be administered with the warmest affection towards those who are the subjects of it. The great reason why children, even of believing parents, are not more impressed by the expostulations, and warnings, and rebukes, which are given them, is because their parents expostulate, warn, and rebuke, not *in faith*, but according to natural affection. Living faith is as necessary on the part of a parent, for success in the admonitions or chastisements of his children, as it is necessary for the acceptance of any work. This however is forgotten too often by those who are commanded, and have promised, to "train up their children in the way in which they should go." Censures sure, but tender, ought ever to follow every offence. Not one ought to be passed by unnoticed, and unrebuked. Parents ought to *command* their children after them, to walk in the ways of the Lord, as Abraham did; and if they do not, to exert all the authority which they possess, in a manner which is consistent with, and originating from, living faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, that they may be morally constrained so to walk.

2. Baptized children must be admonished by their *teachers* in the schools or colleges where their parents have placed them, whenever they offend. As the duty of every Christian teacher is to superintend and inspect the education of his pupils in such a manner that they may chiefly be taught to know Christ, and him crucified; so he is also bound to superintend and inspect their conduct, in such a way that they may live conscientiously according to God's law. It is not merely attention to their studies, nor external morality, that he must expect and require, but also attention to the will of God, and the performance of religious duties. Wherever he meets with transgression in the latter, as well as in the former particulars, he must admonish the transgressor: and if there be necessity for it, he has unquestionably the right of chastising him. But the admonition and chastisement ought to be given as already specified in the case of parents, affectionately, certainly, and *in faith*. The right discharge of this duty, clearly demands that the teacher be himself a pious man. Indeed every view which can be taken of the instruction of children in an enlarged sense, is calculated directly to produce, in thinking, serious persons, an utter reprobation of the idea, that visible religion is not indispensably requisite in him who gives the instruction.

3. Baptized children must be admonished by the *officers of the church* in their official capacity, whenever they become the subjects of such admonition. In the two preceding particulars, the officers of the church act through the medium either of the parents or of the teachers. They merely inspect the conduct of both in the exercise of discipline, recommending it, and enjoining it upon them; as also, inquiring from them whether they do it or not, and in what manner it is done. As cases may and will occur, in which, after suitable care has been taken by both parents and teachers, the children still persist in their offensive conduct, then it becomes the duty of both

parents and teachers to send for the pastor, that he may admonish the offenders, and pray with them. Let his admonitions be repeated as often as is deemed necessary, and if no suitable effects are produced, let the offender be brought by his parents and teachers to the session or eldership of the church, that he may there be rebuked in love, and his case commended to God by prayer. It may be proper also, and perhaps best, to send first for an elder of the church, before the pastor be called in, or the offenders be brought before the session; and if he be unsuccessful, let another be sent for; and if both separately be unsuccessful, let them conjointly endeavour to reclaim the offending children. All these attempts must be preceded, or closed with prayer. The children ought to be impressed with the truth, that the censure thus administered in private is a *religious ordinance*; and when the offenders are, after all the previous steps, summoned before the eldership or session, the whole of the proceedings in their case ought to be marked with solemnity, affection, and a deep sense of responsibility to the Head of the church. The censures administered in private, or in session, must be suited to the character, the feelings, the understanding, and the state of children. Everything like unnecessary severity, or that harshness which is so repelling to children, must be sacredly avoided. For though in the Jewish Church, corporal chastisement was administered in the Synagogue, by the officers thereof to offenders,* and though at an early period the Primitive Church, imitating this example of the Jewish Church, thus punished minors, yet the spirit of Christianity, which is the spirit of adoption, and, as such, is hostile to the spirit of bondage, together with the habits of civilization originating in that spirit, forbid an imitation on our part of this mode of discipline in the church, or the adoption of any measures which assimilate to it. It remains an everlasting truth, that the *father* who spares the rod loveth not his child: but the authority of the church being *spiritual*, it is as true that the *church* by her officers ought, now she is delivered from "tutors and governors," to exercise that authority in a spiritual manner, as has been illustrated.

When admonition has failed, and a suitable time has elapsed, with a distinct understanding on the part of offending children of this issue, the church must proceed to *exclude* them from her communion. This duty belongs only to the church, through the instrumentality of her officers. Neither parents nor teachers have any share in this part of the discipline of Christ's house. Even the civil magistrate may not interfere; for he is himself subject, in his official capacity, to the spiritual authority of the church.

II. The nature of this *exclusion* will now be explained; the duty of the church to administer this highest, and most awful kind of dis-

* Beausobre and L'Enfant Introduction, p. 161, 162, in Watson's Tracts. Vol. 3, *Wissii Meletemata*, p. 18-20.

cipline, to baptized children, will be proved, and the manner in which the said kind of discipline should be administered, will be unfolded in some leading details.

1. This exclusion is commonly known by the name of excommunication. "There have been," says Dr. Owen, in his true nature of a Gospel Church, and its government (p. 208), "many disputes about it as unto its order and kinds. Some suppose that there are two sorts of excommunication; the one they call the lesser, and the other the greater: some three sorts, as it is supposed there were among the Jews. There is no mention in the Scripture of any more sorts, but one, or of any degrees therein. A segregation from all participation in church order, worship, and privileges, is the only excommunication spoken of in the Scriptures. But whereas an offending person may cause great disorder in a church, and give great scandal unto the members of it, before he can be regularly cut off, or expelled the society, some do judge that there should be a suspension of him from the Lord's table, at least to precede total or complete excommunication in case of impenitency. And it ought in some cases so to be. But this suspension is not properly an especial institution: but only an act of prudence in church rule to avoid offence and scandal. And no men question, but this is lawful unto, yea, the duty of the rulers of the church, to require any one to forbear for a season from the use of their privilege in the participation of the Supper of the Lord, in case of scandal and offence, which would be taken at it and ensue thereon. And if any person shall refuse a submission unto them in this act of rule, the church hath no way for its relief, but to proceed unto the total removal of such a person from their whole communion. For the edification of the whole church must not be obstructed by the refractoriness of any one among them." These remarks of Dr. Owen, sufficiently illustrate the precise nature of what is called suspension from the Lord's table for a season, in the 30th chapter of the Confession of Faith.

With respect to *excommunication*, it is necessary to enter into some detail, that its nature may be fully understood. And here let it be remembered, once for all, that as the church is a spiritual body, so her authority is spiritual. *Excommunication*, therefore, does not consist in inflicting fines, or bodily punishment, or in depriving men of their civil and natural rights. It is a judicial deliverance of an offending member of the church unto Satan, which "is no more," says Dr. Owen, in the same work already quoted, "but the casting of a man out of the visible kingdom of Christ, so giving him up, as unto his outward condition, into the state of heathens and publicans, which belonged unto the kingdom of Satan. For he, who, by the authority of Christ himself, according unto his law and institution, is not only debarred from a participation of all the privileges of the Gospel, but also visibly, and regularly divested of all present right to them, and interest in them, belongs unto the visible kingdom of Satan. The gathering of men by conversion into the church, is the

turning of them from the power of Satan unto God (Acts 26 : 18), a delivery from the power of darkness, that is, the kingdom of Satan, and a translation unto the kingdom of Christ. (Col. 1 : 13.) Wherefore, after a man hath by faith, and his conjunction unto a visible church, been translated into the kingdom of Christ, his just rejection out of it, is the re-delivery of him into the visible kingdom of Satan, which is all that is here intended. And this is an act suited unto the end whereunto it is designed. For a man hereby is not taken out of his own power, and the conduct of his own mind; not actuated, nor agitated by the devil, but is left unto the sedate consideration of his present state and condition. And this, if there be any spark of ingenuous grace left in him, will be effectually operative by shame, grief, and fear, unto his humiliation, especially understanding that the design of Christ, and his church herein, is only his repentance and restoration." Of this design the fullest information is given by the apostle, in 1 Cor. 5 : 5, when he speaks of excommunication. It is to be exercised, i. e. the offender is to be delivered unto Satan, "for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus;" i. e. says the pious Dr. Guyse, "that by the blessing of Christ upon his own ordinance, the prevailing corruption of that man's life and heart, may be mortified and subdued: that he, through fear, grief, and shame, may be brought to a thorough humiliation, repentance, and reformation, in order to the saving of his soul from deserved wrath and ruin in the great day of account." To effect this design, the offender is entirely excluded from all fellowship in ordinances, which, in their nature, use, and design, belong to believers, though he may still attend on preaching, praying, and praising, as even open unbelievers may do. (1 Cor. 14 : 23, 24.) Believers, moreover, are forbidden to eat with him (1 Cor. 5 : 11), and also to have company with him. (2 Thess. 3 : 14.) By both these phrases is meant ordinary intercourse from choice, which previous circumstances have not made necessary; as also ordinary conversation about temporal matters. Mutual engagements in trade, relations between husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, or the like, cannot however be suspended by excommunication; for they rest on obligations, and involve in them duties, which excommunication cannot affect. *Excommunication* only relates to spiritual privileges; it touches not moral and religious duties. It deprives a person of the *former*, but leaves him as much bound to perform the *latter*, and as liable to God's displeasure for not performing them, as if the censure had never been inflicted; nay, the design of the censure is, by depriving him of the privileges, to constrain him to repentance for a breach of duties, and to make him more careful and conscientious in relation to them in future. This view of *excommunication*, cannot be too strongly impressed upon the mind, for it is calculated to correct a common mistake on this subject. The mistake is this: that excommunication is merely an awful display of justice in the infliction of punishment; whereas it is also

an ordinance of the Lord Jesus for reclaiming the offender. The church, in attending to this ordinance, besides satisfying the claims of her own laws and her members, aims at the edification of an erring member. It is always administered with the hope that its issue will be, not only to purge the church and to testify against sin, but also to save the person who hath backslidden. The church, under the authority of Jesus Christ in this matter, acts as a tender but faithful parent, who feels it is his duty to chastise his transgressing child; or a skilful and humane physician, who finds it necessary to occasion present pain in his patient, for the attainment of future good. *Ex-communication* is the highest, and therefore the severest, and most awfully solemn, corrective which can be administered in the household of faith.

2. The duty of the church, to *administer* this corrective to baptized children, will now be proved. This is evidently the doctrine of our church: for in chap. 1, of "the Forms of Process," after the principle, that baptized children are members of the church, and therefore, under its care and subject to its government, it is added, "when they have arrived at the years of discretion, they are bound to perform *all the duties* of church members." If, therefore, baptized children are bound to perform all the duties of church members when they have arrived to years of discretion, they unquestionably are subject to the highest censure that can be inflicted upon *church members*, whenever they have reached the years of discretion, if they do not perform these duties. Two questions here present themselves to view, each of which require an answer.

The first is, *What are the duties of church members?* They are, in a few words, adherence to the truth, in principle at all times, and obedience to all the precepts of the Lord Jesus. Thus, attendance upon the Lord's Supper, as well as prayer, praise, and the other ordinances of divine appointment, together with the practice of justice, charity, and the other moral duties, which are prescribed by the divine law, is positively and peremptorily required from every *church member*. He has no warrant for making a distinction between the duties which God has enjoined upon all believers. If he neglects one duty, though he may perform another, he must be called to an account for that one neglect. A church member must walk in all the ordinances and institutions of the Lord, blameless, adorning the doctrines of God his Saviour in all things. Mere morality, according to the worldly sense of morality, is not sufficient, if the duties of religion, such as prayer, praise, religious conversation, and a participation of the sacraments, are omitted. The law of the Redeemer's house admits of no division, or selection, of duties or privileges. It demands from all his members, obedience to *all the duties* he requires, and a participation of *all the privileges* he grants. From this demand, none of the members are excepted: and they who except themselves, manifest one of two things: either that they are still, spite of their profession, enemies of Christ by evil works,

or that they are labouring under the influence of superstitious prejudices, or of grievous mistakes about present duty.

The second question which requires an answer, is, *When may baptized children be considered as having arrived to years of maturity?* As the word of God has given no positive direction on this subject, and as the faculties of one unfold sooner than those of another, no definite period can be specified. The best and safest rule appears to be this: when a baptized child discovers sufficient intelligence, if otherwise qualified, to be admitted to the Lord's table,* and does not perform all the duties of a church member, the church is bound to proceed towards him, as she would towards a member in communion. He is then, if the church sees fit so to do, subject to her highest censure. If this be not the fact, there is no meaning in the language of the directory already quoted. But there *is* a meaning which it conveys, such as has been noticed and illustrated. And in adopting this principle, that baptized children are subject to her government, and when of age bound to act as members in full, of her communion, our church has followed the best examples. The Primitive Church has already been brought into view on this subject. The Jewish Church also has been incidentally noticed. But to understand the nature of this duty aright, it will be necessary to pay more attention to the latter; for in all those particulars which are not ceremonial, but moral, the practice of that church, as far as it is founded upon the direction, expressed, or necessarily implied, of the Lord, ought to be followed by the Christian Church.

The Jewish Church was a body distinct from the Jewish State, and had a government distinct from the government of the State. There were ceremonial laws for the government of the Church, distinct from those which related to the State. The officers of the Church were distinct from the officers of the State. The magistrates, as such, were not rulers in the house of God; nor the priests and Levites, as such, without a special commission or authority, rulers of the State. The civil government was variable, and did actually undergo many changes; but the government of the church remained the same. The nation did not worship in their political character as a State; nor did the Church in her spiritual character inflict civil penalties. Besides these particulars, which are undeniable facts, the mode of worship directed, the character of the acceptable worshippers designated, and the ecclesiastical punishments or correctives prescribed, are so many additional arguments to prove that the Jewish Church and the Jewish State were communities distinct the one from the other. This distinction Mr. George Gillespie, a member of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, has satisfactorily established in his *Aaron's Rod Blossoming, or the Divine Ordinance of*

* The French Reformed Churches, in chap. xi. can. 10, call the fourteenth year at least, a sufficient age, for the presentation of children to baptism, and require as a preliminary to such presentation, that the person or persons shall have previously communicated at the Lord's table. Quick's Synod, vol. p. xlii.

Church Government Vindicated, b. 1, c. 2 & 3. See also Godwyn's *Moses and Aaron*, b. 5, c. 1, and the Dutch annotators, on Deut. 17 : 8-18, and 2 Chron. 19 : 8, 10, 11. Godwyn, in the place just referred to, thinks, Matt. 21 : 23, and 26 : 3, where the chief priests and elders are named, proves the distinction.

This distinction serves to correct the too common mistake, that moral cleanness or holiness of heart and life, as well as legal cleanness or legal holiness, was not required for a participation of the privileges of the church under the Mosaic economy, as it is required under the gospel economy.

Such cleanness, or holiness, was required from those strangers who applied for *circumcision* : for we are told that the applicants were examined narrowly, and only admitted when it appeared that they were moved by affection to the true religion and the glory of God. (See Gillespie's *Aaron's Rod Blossoming*, b. 1, ch. 12.)

The same holiness was required for partaking of the *passover* ; for we are informed in Ezra 6 : 21, that "all such as had separated themselves to the children of Israel, from the filthiness of the heathen of the land, to seek the Lord God of Israel, did eat."

Finally, the same holiness was required for the *worship of the temple*. In Ezek. 44 : 7, 9, God reproveth not only the bringing of strangers, who were uncircumcised in the flesh, but also the bringing of those who were uncircumcised in heart, that is, those who, by their want of visible holiness, proved themselves strangers to his grace. In Jer. 7 : 9, 10, 11, and in Ezek. 33 : 38, 39, the Lord sharply contendeth with those who did steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, and burn incense to Baal, and yet presumed to come and stand before him in his own house. In the 50 Psalm, 16, God saith unto the wicked, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth ? In the 15 Psalm, the character of a temple-worshipper is accurately described. And to add no more, from Num. 5 : 6 and 7, and Lev. 5 : 5, 6, it appears that no person committing sin, or, in other words, scandalous or profane, might offer a trespass-offering, without previously confessing his sin. The character thus required for the *temple-worshipper*, was the same which was required for the participation of the privileges of *circumcision*, and the *passover*, as has been stated ; for the temple-worship was in its nature sacramental. (Gillespie's *Aaron's Rod Blossoming*, b. 1, chap. 8, 9.) The morally unclean were excluded from each and all of these privileges, whilst they remained thus unclean. That this must have been the case, the very nature of legal cleanness unquestionably proves. For being ceremonial, it signified the moral character which a person ought to possess. It is utterly incredible that God looked to this legal cleanness merely, without regarding or requiring the things signified. Nay, he again and again rebuked his people for their gross hypocrisy in this respect ; rejecting their legal cleanness, and demanding moral cleanness.

These few hints are merely suggested to prove the propriety and necessity of imitating the example of the Jewish Church, in all those matters which were not ceremonial. A profession of the same state of heart, and line of conduct, was required for a participation of the privilege of circumcision, and the passover, which is required by our church according to the Scriptures, for that of baptism and the Lord's Supper. This then being the fact, that the requirements in both churches, for these privileges, are the same, let us see in what manner the Jewish Church treated delinquent offending members. This will throw light upon the subject of investigation, and aid in confirming, or in overturning some of the positions already assumed. Here it will be necessary to make a very few observations, explanatory of the advantages which the Jewish children enjoyed, and then state at what age children were considered adult members of the church.

First. Jewish children were "trained up," with care, as a generation to serve the Lord. Parents were commanded (Deut. 6 : 7) to instruct their children in the great duties of religion. Besides the attention which was thus paid to children, they had the opportunity of deriving benefit from schools. These were established in every city and province, in which children were taught to read the law. There were also academies in which the doctors gave comments on the law, and taught the traditions to their pupils. (Godwyn's *Moses and Aaron*, b. 2, c. 2; Jennings's *Jewish Antiquities*, b. 2, c. 2; Basnage's *History of the Jews*, b. 5, c. 5; Knibbe's *Republyk der Hebreëen*, 569-571)*. The Christian Church, in providing for the instruction of her children, has thus followed the example of the Jewish Church.†

Second. Scripture gives us no information, about the time when children were considered and treated as adults, but the Jewish doctors say that it was thirteen. At that age, according to them, a child became what they call a son of the commandment, i. e. one who was bound to perform all the duties of church members. (See Ainsworth, on Numb. 9 : 13; Lewis, *Antiquities of the Hebrews*, vol. 2, p. 450; Knibbe's *Rep. der Heb.* p. 570).‡ The silence of Scripture on this subject, and the information of the Jewish doctors, both tend to prove the propriety and eligibility of the rule already suggested. The age of thirteen being that which in the Jewish Church, according to the testimony of their writers, constituted adult membership, was that in which the children became subject to the highest

* Knibbe, in the work above quoted, b. x. c. xi. gives a particular account of the manner in which Jewish children were educated.

† For the honour of the Church of Scotland, it ought to be known, that "*the first book of discipline*," adopted in 1560, included in it a complete plan for "the virtuous and godly education of youth." In this plan we find parochial schools, academies, and universities, with the course of education in each of the universities, distinctly marked out. Spotswood, in his *History of the Church of Scotland*, b. 3, gives the whole book of discipline. A good analysis is contained in Cook's *History of the Reformation in Scotland*, vol. 2, chap. 18.

‡ Knibbe says the age specified by the Jewish doctors was 14.

censures of the church. At this age we are told the command of God, in Gen. 17 : 14, was carried into effect, and at this age the children were bound to eat the passover.

1. The command of God in Gen. 17 : 14, was this, "The uncircumcised man-child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant:" i. e. a male, whether of Abraham's own seed, or born in his house, or acquired by money; who, being come to the years of discretion (viz., thirteen, as above-mentioned), his circumcision having been neglected by his parents or master, shall not then see to his own circumcision, such an one is guilty, and of whatsoever people he be, he shall be cut off from his people; not from the earth, or from the land of the living; but from his people: more plainly, Exod. 12 : 15; Num. 19 : 13; from Israel: most plainly from the congregation (or Church of Israel), Exod. 13 : 19; Numb. 19 : 20, that is, shall be removed from the fellowship of the saints, or as God by Ezekiel, chap. 12 : 9, expresses himself, "shall not be in the assembly of my people, neither shall they be written in the writing of the house of Israel." (See Gillespie's *Aaron's Rod Blossoming*, chap. 5, b. 1; Witsii *Ocon. b. 4*, chap. 8, sec. 11.) The reason assigned for this cutting off, is, "he hath broken my covenant," i. e. saith Boston, "he hath thrown it away, or trampled it under foot, as refuse." The punishment was thus suited to the crime. The offender had free access to the covenant of grace, with the righteousness of faith, and all the other benefits of it: whether he was of Abraham's seed or not, being incorporated with Abraham's family, he was under the obligation of a law to receive the Covenant, personally to enter into it, and in token thereof to receive the seal of it, 5 : 11, 12, 13. He is come to years, and capable of judging for himself: and the hazard of refusing is told him. But he contemns the seal; he will not circumcise himself. Thus he makes void the Covenant, making the device of heaven for salvation useless, and of none effect, to himself, by his obstinacy; he throws it away contemptuously, and treads it under foot." (*Body of Divinity*, vol. 3, p. 299.) Therefore he must be re-delivered to the kingdom of Satan, by being cut off from the visible kingdom of God.

2. At the age of discretion, i. e. thirteen years, the circumcised children became sons of the commandment, i. e. were bound to perform the duties of adult members. One of these duties was eating the passover, the requirements for which have been already noticed. They who did not eat the passover, were subject to the censures of the church. In Num. 9, 13, a direction is given to *cut off those* who did not eat the passover, if they were clean and not on a journey. Though the cleanness noticed was legal; yet as that legal cleanness signified and demanded moral purity, it follows that he who did not profess the cleanness of heart required by the outward ceremonies, was excommunicated. He might profess it insincerely, but of that the church could take no cognizance. External conduct, attendance on outward forms, and a confession with the mouth, is all of which

she can judge. Where these did not indicate a right state of heart, the passages already quoted from Ezekiel and Jeremiah, clearly prove that excommunication ought to be administered.

From the manner in which the Jewish Church treated circumcised children, we can see the propriety of the rule of our church about baptized children. If they fail of performing what they are bound to perform according to the ans. to the 167 ques. of the Lar. Cat. as already quoted, if they do not discharge all the duties of members when they have reached the age of discretion, then let them be dealt with accordingly. If at that age, after having had all the care and attention already prescribed as necessary, they do not conform to all the institutions of Jesus Christ, there is every reason to suppose, that they will commit such open sins as will make it evident to all that they deserve to be cut off; or if not, they will still deserve to be thus cut off,

1. For not improving their religious education.
2. Slighting warnings administered by parents, teachers, and ministers.
3. Neglecting to fulfil the vows which baptism imposes.
4. For irreligion, breaking the covenant of their God.

The necessity and propriety of this measure cannot but appear obvious, not only as it regards the church, for the above-mentioned reasons; but also as it regards the offenders themselves. Let it be recollected, that the design of excommunication, as has been stated, is to "save the soul of the offender," and there will be but little difficulty in considering it as calculated to promote his best interest, and therefore, as a privilege to him. It may be the very ordinance which Christ has determined to bless, after having withheld his blessing from all the other ordinances.

3. We proceed, lastly, to consider the manner in which excommunication is to be administered to baptized children. This is the same with that specified in our Directory for communicants. All the preliminary measures of admonition and suspension, must have been attended to, before it is the duty of the church to think of the last; and when they consider it their duty to proceed to the last, they must first ask advice of presbytery or synod, who of course will be put in possession of the case. In every instance, patience, tenderness, lenity, regret, compassion, and other feelings of the same nature, must be cherished and displayed, so that the offender may see that duty, and not caprice, requires his punishment. When these feelings are accompanied by fervent prayer, and spring from living faith, there is reason to hope that this part of discipline will be crowned with a blessing. At all events it must be administered with the disposition of redeemed sinners, and the hope of benefit to the offender, and glory to God.

JAMES RICHARDS,
SAMUEL MILLER,
JOHN B. BOMEYN,
Committee.

PHILADELPHIA, May 30, 1812.

ARTICLE IV.

IMPORTANCE OF BIBLE CLASSES.

ADDRESS TO MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL ON THE SUBJECT OF
BIBLE CLASSES.

WITH the most respectful deference, and the most cordial attachment, the Committee of the Sunday School Union beg leave to solicit the attention of the Ministers of Christ, to a subject which appears to them to have a direct bearing, not only on the interests of Sunday Schools, but also on the general efficiency of pastoral exertions.

They believe that they shall not encounter any difference of opinion, when they express their fears, that, with comparatively few exceptions, the general standard of scriptural knowledge among the children and the youth who form an interesting part of Sabbath congregations, is lamentably low and defective; they fear that there is too much reason to entertain this apprehension, not only in reference to the children who are received into Sunday Schools, but also as it regards many who are not dependent on gratuitous education.

It may be deemed scarcely necessary to remind their revered instructors, who sustain the honourable and responsible office of the Christian ministry, that of all orders of influential men *they* possess the amplest means and opportunities of elevating the standard of Bible knowledge, and diffusing among the young, of every grade in society, the grand principles of the doctrine of Christ. With this conviction, the Committee of the Sunday School Union are anxious to suggest the views which they have been led to form, after much inquiry and deliberation, of that species of religious instruction which has been recently adopted by not a few of the best friends of the rising race, and which is included under the comprehensive designation of *Bible Classes*.

With the utmost regard to conciseness of statement, the committee beg leave to advert, first, to the object of Bible Classes, and then to the advantages which may be anticipated from their formation. The leading object of Bible Classes may be stated in one sentence. It is to convey to the minds of the young as accurate and extensive a knowledge as may be found practicable, of the most important contents of the Bible. It is impossible to conceive of any effort more in union with the grand object of a minister of the Gospel than the attempt to render intelligible and interesting to the young of every class, the vital truths, the pure precepts, the instructive histories, and the precious promises of the word of God.

The characteristic principle of Bible Class tuition is that of *catechetical* instruction. This principle has the sanction of immemorial

usage; having been adopted, with success, by the wisest preceptors in successive generations. Catechisms without number, not only for the purposes of religion, but also of science, may be regarded as so many attestations to the excellence of the general system. But it is important to bear in mind, that the application of the principle is not dependent on a printed form, or on a fixed series of questions and of answers; neither does it necessarily require the labour of committing to memory specific phrases or sentences. If certain truths or facts have been previously conveyed to the mind of the learner, with simplicity, with clearness, and with force, it may be easy to the teacher to put to the test, and to elicit, the amount of knowledge which the learner may have acquired; and it may not be difficult to the learner, after being a little accustomed to the effort, to express the ideas he has imbibed, in terms the most familiar to his own mind.

Catechisms have been composed for different ages, and for different gradations of progress in knowledge; yet, without a succession of catechisms, burdensome to the learner, it is exceedingly difficult to adapt the conveyance of truth to the diversified capacities of children, and the different stages of advancement observable among many, even of the same age. Difficulties, on the part of the teacher, often increase rather than diminish, as the childhood of the scholar ripens into youth. Reluctance to the continued repetition of a catechism often shows itself, even if a minister be the catechist; and few, comparatively, continue to be his catechumens, when arrived at that period of youth which is, beyond comparison, the most important, as connected with the growth and development of the human character. Now, this is the very period of life in which the principle of Bible Class instruction may be brought to bear, with most promising effect, upon the opening and inquiring mind. If there be a desire of knowledge, and that desire be directed to the treasures of divine revelation, is it not unspeakably important, that the minister of the Gospel should avail himself of this state of mind with a view to the conveyance of that truth which maketh wise unto salvation?

But in what manner, it may be asked, may the attempt be made by the Christian minister with the greatest probability of success? The committee of the Sunday School Union venture, with the most respectful deference, to suggest only a few hints, which, by the blessing of God, may be improved and expanded by ministerial wisdom, and by that practical facility in devising expedients for doing good, by which they doubt not many of them are distinguished.

Let it be supposed, then, that some book of Scripture, such as one of the Gospels, or the Acts of the Apostles, has been selected for familiar explanation. Either at a public lecture, or at a meeting with the young, a chapter, or part of a chapter, may be elucidated with clearness and simplicity of statement, and pressed with affectionate earnestness on the conscience and the heart. The young

people of the congregation may be divided into classes, at the discretion of the minister. Two classes, a senior and a junior, may include all the young of the congregation; and if two be formed, let each class meet once in the week, or in a fortnight; and let plain and pointed questions be addressed to them individually, of such a character as to call forth the knowledge they have acquired by the previous explanation of the chapter and by their private study of the passage. It may be found equally to facilitate the labours, both of the teacher and of the learners, to use such a help as is to be found in the "Scripture Questions," employed to a great extent in the American Bible Classes, and reprinted in London, at a very low price, by the Religious Tract Society.

If such a course of Bible instruction be steadily pursued by ministers of the Gospel, with earnest prayer for "an unction from the Holy One," advantages of the very highest character may be expected to result. To some of these the committee beg leave concisely to advert.

1. The Christian pastor will be brought into more immediate and intimate contact with a most interesting and important part of the flock intrusted to his care. He will discover the most direct avenues, both to the heart and to the intellect, of the different classes of the young. *He will love them, and they will love him.* They will venerate him as a father, and confide in him as a friend. His own qualifications for usefulness among them will increase, by a growing aptitude for the right communication of truth, and a growing delight in the employment.

2. An impulse will be given to parental diligence among the people of his charge.

It has been said that some parents have declined sending their children for the catechetical instructions of the pastor, lest their deficiency in scriptural knowledge should be regarded as a reproach to their parents. When it is expected that children should be sent for such instruction, it will rouse the parents who have been negligent, and give an additional incentive and encouragement to such as are diligent. Pious parents will know how to value their pastors, as coadjutors with themselves, in training up their children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord: they will "esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake."

3. Pulpit instruction will be rendered more available.

On how many minds, especially among the poor and the young, the discourses of the pulpit produce no effect! They are altogether inefficient. They are not even understood. They proceed on the supposition of a habit of attention, which is not acquired, and of a facility of apprehension, not attained. But the discipline of the Bible Class is one of the most efficient means of mental culture ever employed. Every faculty is roused, and placed in requisition. The judgment, the memory, and the power of attention, are vigorously exercised and progressively strengthened. Where these classes are

in operation, sermons are now heard with a listening ear, and, in many cases, by the grace of God, with a susceptible heart. The young people having learned, in the Bible Class, to *love* their minister, as well as to *understand* him, consider themselves as personally concerned, and as personally addressed, when he dispenses the word of life.

4. Young persons are qualified for the important engagements of Sabbath school teachers.

This appears to the committee to be one of the most momentous objects at which the Christian minister can aim. It is in the highest degree desirable that the children in Sabbath schools should spend their time on the Lord's day, as much as possible, in obtaining the elements of the knowledge of Christ, and not in the merely preparatory task of learning to read. It is equally important that their teachers should themselves be taught of God, and qualified to teach the children the way of salvation. Let, then, the teachers form a part of the senior Bible Classes; and having first been instructed and examined by the minister, on a portion of the word of God, let the teachers, in their respective classes, explain that passage to the children. If they have also the aid of such a book as "*Judson's Scripture Questions*," it will be found to render very valuable assistance.

Without dwelling at greater length on the advantages which may be anticipated from such a course of Bible education, will it not be readily conceded, that those already specified present sufficient incentives to enter on the systems recommended? May it not be hoped, that God will graciously vouchsafe his especial blessing to labours such as these? May they not be expected to contribute most powerfully to that revival of the power of vital religion, which many ministers and churches so ardently desire, so earnestly implore? Let holy diligence be combined with humble dependence and persevering supplication, and what may we not expect? "*Prove me now herewith*" (we may regard the Lord as saying to us), "*and see if I will not pour you out a blessing, so that there shall not be room enough to receive it!*" It is no new experiment. It has been tried with increasing success, in Scotland and in America, and, more recently, by ministers and private Christians among ourselves.

The committee will only add the expression of their heart's desire and prayer, that the Lord may pour out his Spirit, in copious effusion, on the ministers of the Gospel, and on all classes of the people of their charge; and especially on those who teach, and those who learn, in our Sabbath schools. May one say, "*I am the Lord's, and another call himself by the name of Jacob, and another subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel!*"*

* [The above Address on "*The Importance of Bible Classes*," was written by a Committee of a Sunday School Union in England.—Ed.]

ARTICLE V.

THE CHURCH AND EDUCATION.

BY THE REV. HENRY A. BOARDMAN, D.D., PHILADELPHIA.*

"And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."—DEUT. 6 : 6.

By such express and imperative commands as this were the ancient Hebrews required to instil the principles of their faith into the minds of their children. Other nations have followed this example. Whatever people have educated their children at all, have given them a religious education. The Greek and Roman youth were faithfully instructed in their national mythologies. The sacred books of the Chinese, are the principal text-books in their schools. Every Musulman studies the Koran. In all Anti-Christian systems, religion is commingled with politics, with literature, with traffic, with social customs, and, in a word, with the whole business of life.

Most Christian governments have recognized the validity of the principle lying at the base of these arrangements, and have provided for the religious instruction of the young. This was done in Geneva under a republic; it is done under all, or nearly all the European monarchies. The union of Church and State contemplates, as one of its prime ends, the training of the people in the national religion; and their combined agency is employed in securing the due transmission of the established faith.

On the policy of this arrangement there would be no difference of opinion among our citizens. We condemn the alliance of the ecclesiastical and secular powers as pernicious to both. And even if we could tolerate the principle, it would be impracticable to carry it into effect among a population the most heterogeneous for its creeds and rites to be found on the globe. But we cannot repudiate the theory so universally sanctioned, that education does of right include religious teaching, and that no people can be properly styled an educated people, whose moral faculties have been left uncultivated. This, in fact, is the essential part of an education. On any other scheme than atheism, the most vital elements in the training of the human being must be those which appertain to his relations and duties as a responsible and immortal being. Strike out from your system the ideas of God, accountability, eternity, an immutable rule

* This discourse was preached June 6th, 1852, in the Tenth Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, by its pastor, in the course of his weekly pulpit instruction. It is now published by request. The Editor may add that the Tenth Church has a large and flourishing Missionary Parochial School under its care; and that this discourse was preached in behalf of the Presbyterian Institute, of which DR. BOARDMAN was one of the original and influential friends.—EDITOR.

of right and wrong, and rewards and punishments—and you may train men, indeed, but you will make monsters of them. This is so well understood here, that there can be no need of arguing the point. All sects will agree in the necessity of having the young instructed in the Bible. But who is to give them this instruction, and how far is it to be carried?

Shall this function be devolved upon the State, or upon the Church, or left exclusively to parents and guardians? Each of these plans has its able and zealous advocates. It is no part of my present purpose to engage in an extended discussion of them. I have it in view, simply to press it upon you as an indispensable duty, to see that your children receive daily and thorough instruction in the sacred Scriptures.

The obligation to attend to this great interest in our FAMILIES, will of course be admitted. If we neglect it there, we fail in a fundamental point. It is an intransferable duty. No Sabbath school teacher, nor secular teacher, can become our proxy. They may be our helpers, but they cannot be our substitutes. Our children have an indefeasible claim upon us for religious teaching. We are as much bound to provide for their souls as for their bodies; to care for their spiritual as for their physical health. We are bound to make them acquainted with that system of faith and practice which we believe to be contained in the word of God, to teach them our catechisms, and to guard them, as far as may be, against prevailing errors. A wise and faithful parent will neglect no suitable means for filling the minds of his children with divine truth, and bringing them to feel its elevating and sanctifying power.

But there are very many parents who, from their own conscious incapacity, from the engrossing demands of their daily business, or from other causes, will require to have their efforts in this department supplemented from without. Can the STATE help them?

How far the State can help them, is one of the vexed questions of our republican polity. All parties, in all our commonwealths, are united in maintaining the principle of public schools. But the problem of teaching religion in these schools, has perplexed and confounded the ablest minds in the country. The matter has been variously adjusted in the different states. The existing methods have neither uniformity nor stability; and the endless debates and experiments growing out of the subject, disclose the intrinsic difficulty of composing it upon any permanent and satisfactory foundation. It is ground for congratulation that in most of the states (as is believed) the daily, though moderate, reading of the Bible is permitted. This is well as far as it goes. But the circumstances of the case forbid that it should go far enough to meet the demands of enlightened Christian parents. Such parents will desire to have their children taught the “*whole* counsel of God,” the doctrines, no less than the precepts, of the inspired record; its elementary theology, no less than its perfect morality. In a public school this is obviously impossible.

Can the CHURCH do what the State cannot? Our principles are so moulded by usage and observation, that this question cannot be distinctly answered without doing violence to the popular judgment. The truth, however, must not be suppressed. The Church was instituted for this end. It is her commission to teach all nations. And "to her alone are given the gifts requisite to the discharge of the duty. These gifts are not promised to the State; they are promised to the Church, and when found at all, it is only within her pale, and in the custody of her members. There alone is the requisite practical knowledge of the truth; there alone the love of souls, there alone the zeal for truth and the glory of God, essential for the right discharge of this important duty. And as God never gives the qualifications for any important work, without imposing the obligation to exercise them, it is plain that it is his will that the body to whom he has given the gift of teaching, should act as a teacher."*

The Apostolic Church so understood her commission, and applied her resources to the education of the young, with a liberality and an energy which mark this as one of the most signal and imposing characteristics of the Christianity of the early centuries. It is mainly through an inflexible adherence to this principle, that the Church of Rome has achieved and maintained her gigantic usurpation for the last twelve hundred years. The Church of Scotland ordained, from the beginning, that in every one of her parishes, the school-house should stand side by side with the church; and on the disruption, which took place a few years since, one of the first measures of the Free Church, after their exode, was to rear a school-house again in every parish, and send out a goodly staff of evangelical teachers into every part of the land.

This is precisely the position which is coveted for our own beloved Church. There is a craving after it throughout our communion, which cannot be repressed. It has shown itself within the last fifteen years, in the pages of our periodical literature, in frequent memorials to our supreme judicatory, in urgent debates in our church-courts, in the modified plans of our Board of Education, in various official reports and disquisitions, and in other unequivocal manifestations. There is a feeling deep and strong, and daily becoming stronger and deeper, that we *must* adopt some more adequate measures for the training of our children, and that nothing short of a complete equipment of educational institutions, under the supervision of the church herself, can thoroughly meet our exigencies. This conviction has not been inoperative. It has already brought into existence a noble array of parochial schools, academies, and colleges. A beginning has been made; it is seen that something can be done; and when this comes to be well understood, it is fair to presume the work will be carried forward with increasing efficiency.

There are undoubtedly venerable prejudices to be overcome.

* Dr. Hodge.

There are serious practical hindrances to be encountered, hindrances which will, in some localities, be for the time invincible. The system is somewhat alien from certain tendencies of our civil polity. It is not in harmony with the popular sympathies. If it were not for using a cant phrase, one might say that it was adverse to the tone of the "*American mind*." But these are no arguments against it. They are rather arguments in favour of it. The more they are considered, the more evident will it appear that we need a greater infusion of the gospel-leaven in our schemes of education. One of the radical evils of the times is a spurious sentiment of independence among the young, a disposition to spurn at authority in every relation and on every subject. Parents are made to feel it; magistrates feel it; teachers feel it; the Christian ministry feels it: impatience of restraint, disrespect to age, contempt for received opinions, sneers at creeds and confessions, jeers at evangelical piety, habitual desecration of the Sabbath—these are among the symptoms of widespread disease in the body politic, which meet us on every side. They find but too much nutriment in the state of the country, in our redundant prosperity, in our heated political contests, in the boundless field open to avarice and ambition, in the multiplication of popular amusements, in the torrent of atheism and vice which is rolling in upon us from the revolutions of Europe, and in the mawkish sympathy of pseudo-philanthropists, which invests the vilest criminals with the graces of martyrdom, and cares not how many innocent people are murdered, so no murderer is hung. These pestiferous agencies, and such as these, are making themselves felt in the church. Many a Christian family can attest their ravages. Thousands of children dedicated to God in baptism, may be found sitting in the scorner's seat. The church has been losing her hold upon her offspring. Instead of clinging to her with filial veneration, as they once did, nothing is more common than to see them, as soon as they are fairly fledged, flying off into other communions, or more frequently into the haunts of infidelity or callous indifferentism. Many, it is true, are restrained and saved. But the examples of an opposite kind are so numerous, it has become so familiar a spectacle to see the children of the church wholly alienated from the church, and identified with the heedless throng who crowd the road to ruin, that the question will force itself upon thoughtful persons, "What means are we neglecting, which might help to repress these wayward propensities among our children, and to bind them to their homes and to the house of God?"

That there is a serious defect somewhere in our systems of education, does not admit of a question. There are many excellent persons who might be slow to believe that the establishment of "church schools" was the appropriate remedy. But we shall probably agree in the opinion that our youth must be brought more thoroughly into contact with Christianity, that in some way their minds must be more effectually imbued with scriptural truth. If it is the proper business of the church to provide for this, and she alone has the requisite

gifts for it, is it not worthy of a serious inquiry, whether the organization of such schools be not a matter of imperative obligation? It is certainly a possible thing that her remissness in this particular may have a close connection with that relaxed conscientiousness, and that want of filial gratitude and affection, which are so prevalent among her children. Our youth cannot be expected to love a system of which they are ignorant. If we permit them to grow up without an intelligent and discriminating acquaintance with our standards, can it surprise us that they should fall a prey to errorists? The farmer who leaves his fences down, must count upon having his fields invaded. If we neglect our children, that is a sufficient reason why others should not neglect them. How can they elude the swarms of enthusiasts, ritualists, and false teachers of various kinds, who are everywhere spreading their snares around the unwary? There is but one way to protect our folds from that restless, crafty, proselyting spirit, which has gone out through the land, and that is, to indoctrinate them early and heartily in the evangelical faith. Even this will not avail, except as the grace of God makes it effectual; but it is the best means we can use for accomplishing the object. And in order to apply it to good purpose, we require the day-school, as well as the Sabbath school and household teaching.

The advantage of the Church plan is, that it secures the inculcation of religious truth *in a systematic form*. It is no disparagement of State schools to say that they can, ordinarily, teach only a meagre outline of Christianity. This is all the nature of the case permits them to do. But it is not all that your children and mine need. They need to be taught the distinctive doctrines of the Bible, as we understand the Bible—and this cannot be in a public school. In such a school you could not have them taught the doctrine of the Trinity, lest some Unitarian families might be represented there: nor the doctrine of depravity, lest there might be Pelagian ears by; nor election and effectual calling, lest Arminian prejudices might be wounded; nor future punishments, lest the Universalist should be offended. Should you essay to have Baptism explained to them, you would be reminded of immersion: the Lord's Supper, you would be told of the Mass: the parity of the ministry, you would hear of "bishops, priests, and deacons." And thus your children would be put off with a Christianity so diluted, as to be only a shade or two above mere natural religion. The ethical system of the Scriptures is so complete, that many persons seem to imagine it is by itself sufficient to exonerate any scheme of education, which embraces it, from censure. But "from the morals of the Bible, merely as such, what greater influence can be expected, than from those of Epictetus and Seneca, unless motives more powerful and assistances more large can also be offered? Man wants power as much as direction; his hopes and his fears are the sinews of his virtue; and when even his mind is instructed, he is motionless towards the right, until he feels the life of love. We love Him because He first loved us." Here is the spring of morality,—the heart of the whole system of Christian

morals is the love of Christ. No education is religious in any Christian sense without the knowledge of the Gospel, and the hope of its practical influence rests, therefore, on the careful and full communication of its leading doctrines. To take the morals of the New Testament, and to discard its faith, is to sever the tree from the root while it is yet in bloom. The hues may be admired, and the fragrance be for a time as a field 'which the Lord hath blessed;' but 'their blossom shall go up as dust, because they have cast away the law of the Lord of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.' "

This difficulty is not met by referring to domestic and Sabbath school instruction. For, in the first place, there are very many families, as already hinted, where no adequate religious teaching will be given. And, in the second place, it must have a salutary effect to interweave religious truth with the whole framework of education. It is easy to ask with a sneer, 'Would you have a religious geography? and a religious arithmetic?' No, but we would have religious *teachers*; and we would have some place assigned to the study of religious *truth* in the routine of every day. We would have Christianity so installed over our schools, as to keep alive in the minds of the pupils, a sense of its reality. We would have so much prominence assigned to it, as should repress that common and infidel sentiment, that religion is a matter altogether by itself—a matter of Sundays and sermons and sacraments, and not an earnest and palpable interest of every-day life, to be recognized in all our plans and to preside over our every word and act and thought. We would have the leading ideas of the Gospel economy incorporated with the entire mental and moral structure of our children, so that as they gather fresh stores of knowledge from the fields of literature and science, they may make corresponding acquisitions in the field of Biblical research; and as their faculties are developed and invigorated by the discipline of the schools, they may insensibly form the habit of looking at every subject in its relations to the great First Cause, and of resolving all questions of morals according to the only true standard of virtue. To effect all this by any one agency, is of course impracticable. But it would be no trivial aid towards the accomplishment of it, if we could have the Bible and our catechisms interlaced with the entire *curriculum* of the class-room. We might then count upon having our children grow up with an intelligent attachment to our faith and order, too firmly "rooted and grounded" in the truth to be carried about by every wind of doctrine, and at the same time too much liberalized by the generous culture of such a training, to look with a bigoted eye upon those who might prefer a different doctrine and worship.

As an additional recommendation of this plan, it would foster a suitable reverence for the *Church* and its ordinances. We all abhor the heresy which would substitute churchmanship for Christianity. The worst tyranny with which the nations are cursed, is the tyranny of the Church. But in avoiding this extreme, we need not run to the

other. The tendency in this direction is perhaps as strong nowadays as that towards the spiritual autocracy of Rome and Oxford. Sacerdotal infallibility and licentious liberalism—these are the rival powers which are contesting the supremacy of the world. Our children must be warned against them both. They must be admonished neither to commit their consciences and their reason to a priest, nor to condemn the authority and laws of the Church of Christ. They should be instructed in the nature of the Church, its charter, officers, functions, and ordinances. They should be trained to think and speak of it with respect, as the kingdom of Christ, the depository of his truth, the great conservative element of the world, and the ordinary medium of salvation. They should understand well their own relation to the Church, as its children, and its high claim to their affectionate gratitude and their cordial service. And this result, so important in an age which threatens, where it does not deify the priest and bow down before him in servile idolatry, to break away from all wholesome restraints, divine or human, would be essentially promoted by an educational system devised, controlled, and administered, by the Church.

If the latitudinarianism of the times has so infected even Christian people, that the enunciation of this proposal awakens a prejudice in their breasts, let them simply consider that "the Church" means the professing people of God; that in this character we have engaged to make the Bible the sole rule of our conduct, and that all we are now recommending is, that we should adopt adequate measures for securing to our children such an education as the Bible claims for them. Is there any evil in this? Is there any valid objection to it?

I have barely glanced at a few of the principles which underlie a great subject. If these principles are sound, the work in which our Church has engaged of establishing Parochial Schools, Presbyterial Academies, and Synodical Colleges, is a great and good work,—good in all its aspects as regards the Church itself, our country, and the world. A long time must elapse before a plan of this comprehensive character can be carried into effect. Meanwhile, it is the obvious duty of parents to sustain those schools, in which due prominence is given to the word of God. A *godless school* is anything but a blessing to a community. Parents little understand what serious injury they may be inflicting upon their children, by subjecting them to a course of tutelage, which has impressed upon its every lineament the revolting brand of atheism. This is not the case, happily, with *our** public schools; and if there are private schools to which it may apply, there are many *others* which are pervaded by a truly Christian influence, and where the morals of the pupils are guarded with even parental watchfulness. Let them receive the sympathy and support which are richly due to those who, by the faithful training of the young, are conferring more substantial benefits upon society, than

* In Philadelphia.

the inventor of a new manufacture, or the discoverer of an inexhaustible gold mine.

It is one of my prime duties as a pastor to lend you all the aid I can, in the laudable and difficult work of training up your households in the fear of God. And I should but very poorly acquit myself of this obligation, to restrict the counsels I venture to offer you, to the management of your Sabbath avocations. It is not the Sabbath only which has to do with the educating of our children. The process of education goes on day by day, like the steady flow of time. It begins in the cradle, it ends only in the grave. And it concerns us as deeply to see how it is carried forward during the six days of toil, as during the one day of rest. Nay, of what avail will be the wholesome appliances of this day of rest, if we are reckless of the agencies which are plying their ceaseless enginery in the moulding of our children's characters, throughout their six days of secularity? It is due to our children, and to their God and ours, that we subordinate all these agencies, in so far as practicable, to the ultimate end we profess to have in view for them,—their transformation into the Divine image and their meetness for the fellowship of heaven. We may not innocently neglect any appropriate aids which Providence tenders us, in the consummation of this arduous work. And among the aids of this description may certainly be reckoned a system of education which has the Bible for its corner stone and the Church for its sponsor, which combines the culture of the moral faculties with the culture of the intellect, and which concentrates within itself so many of those salutary restraints and encouragements which every judicious parent feels to be indispensable to the proper training of his children.

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It would, however, be a grievous perversion of the errand on which I have come to you, should you allow the thought even a transient lodgment in your hearts, that you can delegate to any school or college, your responsibility for the faithful training of your offspring. The co-operation of the Church through her Sabbath ordinances and her schools, secular and sacred, is one of the privileges for which we cannot be sufficiently thankful to God; but if we could look for his blessing upon our families, we must ply all those resources which are bound up in the *domestic constitution*, and the due administration of which has the unfailing promises of the new covenant attached to it. Christianity must be enthroned in our houses. It must preside over every part of the interior economy of our habitations. Our lives must embody the religion which our lips profess. And it must be our habitual aim to renew in the minds of our children those impressions of the invisible and the spiritual, of God and eternity, of redemption and perdition, which are so constantly obliterated by contact with the world. Labours like these cannot be lost. And just in proportion as they are exemplified in the families around us, may we expect to see households united in the communion of saints, and prepared for an eternal reunion in heaven.

ARTICLE VI.

THE COMMON SCHOOL AND THE COLLEGE.

BY THE REV. C. VAN RENSSELAER, D.D.

Young Gentlemen of the Elders' Ridge Presbyterial Academy :

It is a privilege to stand upon one of God's country ridges, away from the streets of city life, surrounded by a beautiful Pennsylvania landscape. The soul of man is made to sympathize with nature. His eye loves the blue of the heavens, the green of fields and trees, the slope of the mountain, the winding of water-brook and river. His ear loves the pure-voiced wind. There is an inspiration in the healthy air. Oh, how good it is to be country-born and country-bred; and walking upon some acres of well-tilled soil, to know that these are *father's*, and that yonder is the homestead where mother dwells with a happy family. It is pleasant, indeed to look upon the country. But even amidst the rural enchantments of nature, it is a far finer sight to look at this academy that stands upon the ridge. *Elders' Ridge*—well named and associated with the good, old stock of Zion—is now doubly honoured as the location of an institution of the Church. The institution is established upon the eminence of divine truth; it is endowed with the wealth of great moral purposes; and its glory consists in the mental and moral development of young men, born to a high destiny of privilege and duty.

Before proceeding to my more immediate subject, I wish to say a few words in regard to the value of Literary Societies in an institution like this. Their value consists principally in four things. *First*, They cultivate the power of extemporaneous speaking, the art of elocution—one of the most useful departments of human acquisition. *Secondly*, They tend to preserve the harmonies of education; they work in admirably with the attainments of scholarship, reducing knowledge, as it were, to practice and even stimulating its pursuit. *Thirdly*, They cherish a proper sense of self-reliance, and counteract the timidity and excessive modesty of many a youthful student. A youth who has learned how to speak out his thoughts, in the glow of competition with other minds has begun to act the part of a man, and to put away childish things. And *Fourthly*, these Societies exert excellent social influences, and strengthen the bonds of friendship. Be assured, gentlemen of the Ereuneteon and Matheteon Literary Societies, that the weekly exercises within your Halls teach important branches of learning, and that the Societies are really Assistants in the Board of Instruction of the Academy.

But this is not my subject. A person, called to address you, has the common-law right of literature to talk about any thing he pleases, always however, in conformity with the proprieties of the occasion. As my aim is to be useful in this brief interval of Christian interview, I have taken for my subject a paragraph of the annual circular of the

Elder's Ridge Presbyterian Academy, viz: the institution "aims to accomplish a two-fold object: 1st. To elevate the standard of general education by providing properly qualified teachers for common schools. 2d. To prepare young men to enter an advanced class in colleges." My subject is, therefore, a double one, tied together by the academic bond; first, the common school as a field of labour; and second, the college as a place of youthful desire.

I. My remarks will be principally on THE COMMON SCHOOL AS A FIELD OF LABOUR. And where is there richer mould than in this field, on either side of the mountains? Where can the implements of industry turn up soil more promising to the eye of sight and of faith, and the cultivator enjoy the rewards of a better harvest? The common school is one of the powers of the land. Every school-house is a ridge, helping to water and fertilize the surrounding country, and by the variety and elevation of position, adding a blessing to the general landscape. The importance of common schools may be briefly *alluded to* in several points of view; for a brief allusion is all that our mutual contract of speaking and hearing, will justify.

1. Look at the common school, then, in its relation to *agriculture* and you will find that you are doing no inferior work in becoming a teacher. Agriculture, both as a science and an art, requires at least an ordinary degree of knowledge in carrying forward its operations. Would the valleys and hill-slopes of western Pennsylvania have ever presented the appearance of cultivation which now robes them with beauty and verdure, if the farmers had been an ignorant and shiftless population? Knowledge is power, even at the handle of the plough, or in the grasp of the scythe, or at the top of a waggon-load of hay. Every thing worth doing at all, is worth doing well, and can be better done by being done with knowledge or common sense. There are some men, who, although they have never learned to read or write, yet show much shrewdness in agriculture; but there can be no doubt that if such had attended more to their minds, they would have been better fitted to look after their farms. Agricultural people ought to value the common school for the general purposes of every-day life, just as they do the grind-stone for the axe in the time of wood-cutting. These little boys in the school-houses are soon to be the sturdy farmers of Indiana county, and they need all the knowledge they can get, to know the best way to manage their affairs. You want no fools in the fields of agriculture; nor, on the other hand, are classical scholars of much use among cattle, and haystacks, and threshing floors; but common sense is much needed every where, and common sense is the chief end of a common school. The common school teacher, therefore, is a sort of head-manager on all the farms of a school district. He helps train the boys to become respectable farmers, and the girls to become thrifty housewives; and both to be fitted for each other when the "good time comes." The population of a country is greatly formed for the occupations of agricultural life through reading, writing, arithmetic, and the general items of learning put together in the common

schools. The New Englanders, who are so shrewd and thrifty would never have known how to do so much of everything, if the little country school houses had not disciplined them with book and birch, and so made them ready for the world. Depend upon it, young gentlemen, there is a close relation between common-schoolism and agriculture, just as there is between corn sown and corn grown, between means and end, between cultivation and harvest.

2. Our common schools have also a good deal to do with *politics and free government*. Many a man goes to Harrisburg who acquires all his learning in the township school-house; and many more, who began to get it there, have gone on to attain to more, and to qualify themselves for influence in higher stations. Our governors and statesmen and judges were once little boys, sitting down on hard unbacked benches, with bare feet on a rude floor, and with unwashed hands turning over the spelling-book, or holding a pen at an acutely wrong angle in trying to create letters. Many a beginning of humility has ended in a career of honourable success. As a boy in the academy sometimes goes up from the bottom to the top of a class, so many a man has gone up from a low position in life to the head of his profession.

But, leaving public officers out of view, how important are common schools in teaching the masses to read, and thus to act in the great affairs of life! The people can never manage wisely the affairs of government, if left to grope along in ignorance and mental degradation. It is one of the axioms of a republican government that the people must be intelligent. Mere intelligence is not, of itself, sufficient; but, even with virtue and religion—which are better things—*this* cannot be dispensed with. Ignorance is the ambush of demagogism, whilst the school-house is the stockade fort, from whence to fire upon the subtle foe. Never since the days when the Indians defeated Braddock at the pass of the Monongahela, has a more savage enemy than demagogism arrayed itself against American liberty. We must conquer it, by taking our position from the school-house and in the line of general education. Every boy, taught to read, stands so much better chance to become a wiser voter and a more intelligent citizen. A person, in passing through a park, saw nailed to one of the trees—"All dogs found in this park will be shot." Whereupon a friend who was with him said, "Unless dogs can read, they are pretty badly off here." But an American voter, who has had no common school education, is worse off than the dog in the park. Although he may have political masters to read for him, he is liable to be shot down at any time, and by none sooner than by those who lead him into the "park" on election days. The voting masses must be educated masses. We must gather into the school-houses all the children we can, and pour into their minds the light of primers, of arithmetics, of grammars, and of history; knowing that every new ray of knowledge dispels so much darkness, under whose cover corruption does its wily work. The school teacher is an important character in the political world; for he assists in training the people

to the intelligent exercise of their political rights, as well as to discharge the higher functions of political station.

3. The common school in its *relation to education* has motives to stimulate young men to become teachers. The importance of the general education of the people can scarcely be over-estimated. Dr. Johnson, upon being once asked, "Who was the most miserable man," replied, "The man who cannot read on a rainy day." Every one ought to have mental resources and the means of acquiring knowledge from books. My design is to notice the common school as affording the opportunity of beginning education *early*, and of *stimulating its progress*. The early education of children is to be sought as the best basis of general education. The intellect of the young should be unfolded at the period which God has given for the work. A late beginning leaves its mark of disadvantage, which no future diligence can eradicate. The common school, planted in the midst of a neighbourhood, affords opportunities of comparatively easy access, even to young children, and summons them all to enter upon their studies without delay. It is eminently conciliatory, accommodating and practical; and aims not at carrying on instruction from some given point of a higher course, but at commencing with the elements of the language, so as to cultivate the minds of children from an early age.

The education of children, thus early begun, becomes the means of progress. The boy first sent to school merely to learn the rudiments of knowledge and thence to be brought home again to labour, often acquires a love of books which leads him to be a learner all his life. Although he may never be advanced to an academy, or college, he yet has been nurtured into the pursuit of a thing, which he will always continue in a measure to seek. His education goes on, making perchance slow progress, but still adding to its value year after year, until the principal invested in the stock of common school learning becomes far more productive than his original mental means gave any promise of.

The common school, not unfrequently, is the feeder of the academy, as the academy is of the college; and in this view of the case, the relation of the common school to education becomes very important. If Daniel Webster had never gone into the district school, taught by Thomas Chase, there is little likelihood that that glorious black-eyed boy would ever have gone to Exeter Academy, and then to Dartmouth College. Webster's experience is that of a multitude of others in the land. In riding along with a stage-driver on the National Road last week, he informed me that he was born in the same village, on the same night with a distinguished member of Congress, (whom he named) and that they were companions in early life at the same public school. Whilst one never rose higher than to drive horses, the other went to an academy and college, became an educated man, and thus eventually a great public character. In proportion as common schools are improved in general condition—and there is a constant tendency now towards improvement—they will contribute more and more to

advance academical and collegiate education. So that a faithful teacher has a wide field of usefulness before him, and may well be stimulated to lay out his strength on his scholars, not knowing how far he may promote, through the influences of his school, the general cause of education in its more humble as well as its higher branches.

4. One more consideration to stimulate the teacher, is the *relation of the common school to religion*. Great imperfection in the matter of religious instruction has undoubtedly existed, of late years, in the administration of the system. Some of the schools have, perhaps, had an injurious effect upon the cause of Christ, positively and negatively. The withdrawal of religion from education is wrong in principle and in policy; and the community must suffer in the providence of God for inflicting this dishonour upon divine truth. The question in many places is now very much reduced to this: "Shall the public school system be sustained in spite of its indifference to religion?" Our answer is, "Yes." Between the two evils we may choose the least. Education without religion is probably, on the whole, better than no education at all. At least, it is so in this country, where the children commonly have other opportunities of receiving evangelical instruction in Sabbath Schools, or by pastoral care, or in families. The existence of these opportunities outside of the schools is no *argument* for keeping religion outside of the schools, and can be no palliation of the sin in the sight of God; and yet as a plea of justification in still adhering to the system, it may be admitted as valid.

But there is a way of exerting a direct influence in favour of religion, even though the Bible itself be excluded, and that is by the fidelity of pious teachers. The graces of Christianity will shine through dungeon bars. Law cannot confine them out of sight. Christianity has rights of her own. Public opinion, however arbitrary or infidel, cannot make a teacher throw off his religion as a garment, and hide it under school-benches. No! Religion is seen in the countenance; it beams in the eyes, and makes itself known in the voice; its spirit is that of good will and charity; and its discipline derives sanctions from the eternal world. The teacher may make appropriate allusions to the Creator of men, and to the plan of salvation through the Redeemer. A general enforcement of the claims of the Gospel, it is his privilege to insist upon as an individual believer. Public sentiment will in most places allow general and appropriate suggestions relating to religion, and in various places will still tolerate the Bible and other more formal means of inculcating divine truth.

It is believed, therefore, that the public schools, at least for the present, sustain a relation of good to the cause of religion; first, because knowledge is generally better than ignorance; secondly, because outside evangelical influences can contribute something to make up the defalcation in the school room; and thirdly, because pious teachers can both indirectly and directly inculcate some portion of divine truth upon the minds and consciences of the scholars. If

the time should ever come when religious teachers shall be rejected from the public schools, then the last bond between public education and the church will be broken, and the state must abide the consequences of its infatuated and wicked policy.

Young gentlemen, it is an important thing to engage in carrying out one of the objects of the Elders' Ridge Presbyterial Academy, viz: the promotion of the cause of common schools, particularly in view of their relation to agriculture, politics, education, and religion. Permit me, before passing to the second topic, to say a few words to commend the profession of teacher on account of the advantages which accrue personally to the individual.

One of these advantages is the teacher's own *mental improvement*. The best way to impress knowledge upon one's own mind is to endeavour to communicate it to others. The schoolroom has a constant tendency to sharpen one's faculties, and to promote, even amidst much vexation, intellectual benefit.

A *knowledge of human nature* is certainly acquired among boys and girls. A school is a wonderful place in which to learn the true characteristics of mankind. It presents every variety of character, all kinds of perverseness, trickery, good nature, falsehood, self-vindication, fun, idleness, diligence, mischief, and ingenuity. Hence a teacher is commonly one of the knowing ones of the earth.

It results from this that a good measure of *self-acquaintance* is usually acquired in this profession. Oh, the trials of a teacher's mind and heart and conscience! How he is taxed by the little publicans, sitting at the receipt of knowledge! How many hard lessons about patience and self-restraint are put into him, by boys and girls with natural tact of instruction! A teacher must be dull, indeed, not to have a deep acquaintance with poor human self. After all, self-knowledge is wealth.

A teacher also obtains wealth in another form. The *substantial returns* of his profession are quite considerable. The first money which many an enterprising young man makes, is in teaching the children of the yeomanry of the land. As the California gold comes sometimes from breaking the hard quartz, and sometimes from the washings of the sand—so the professional coffer is filled both by hammering on hard intellects, and by the easy gatherings of the more exposed treasure. A teacher is thus enabled to support himself respectably; and afterwards to go to the college or the seminary, or to continue his profession, according to circumstances.

And this leads to my last remark on this point, which is, that the common school often *guides the teacher himself to higher and more influential positions*. God's ways are not as our ways. A comparatively humble place in early life has been the means, in Providence, of promoting the future advantage of both teacher and scholar. Many a principal of an academy, or professor in a college, has passed on to his elevation by beginning his ascent from the steps of a district school-house. The best pilots on the magnificent steamers of the west

are commonly those who began navigation in a flat boat, and then became second pilots on stern-wheel steamers, and finally trod the deck of the "Crystal Palace," or the last "Ben Franklin." The most thorough and accomplished teacher, other things being equal, is the man who first sounded the depths and shoals of knowledge in a subordinate capacity, and thus became gradually acquainted with the whole channel of the mighty and majestic stream. A teacher often makes his first instructions serve as the basis of entrance into some other profession or pursuit. In any aspect of the case, the common school serves as the medium of future advancement.

I will here make a single remark to those of you, young gentlemen, who expect to be teachers in the common schools; and that is, *Keep the smart scholars up to their work.* Do not expect too much from the dull ones; but whilst all are taught to do their duty, take special care that the bright ones come up to the mark. The celebrated Dr. Parr made it a rule seldom to punish lads of stunted capacity, and never to extort from mediocrity of mind gifts which nature had not been prodigal enough to bestow. But the really talented he resolutely attacked, and insisted upon it that those whom nature had favoured should cultivate her gifts. This was good advice. Look after the smart boys and girls, and make them do their work well.

Having considered the common school as a good field of labour, mentioned some advantages to the teacher personally, and added a single rule of administration, it is time now to refer to the second object of the Elders' Ridge Presbyterial Academy, which is to prepare young men to enter advanced classes in college.

II. THE COLLEGE COURSE, AS AN OBJECT OF YOUTHFUL DESIRE, is the topic to be considered. I have two remarks to make upon it.

1. The college course is designed to *produce a high order of men.* Education has a natural tendency to elevate its subject. Place a collegian and a common-school boy side by side, and other things being equal, you will see what a difference their training has made. It is with the mind as it is with the soil; cultivation shows its advantages. An acre of boys, or an acre of earth, will be improved according to the labour and skill put forth. You often hear a farmer boast, "A few years ago that field yielded poorly; but since I manured it, and tilled it aright, it has done wonderfully well; far better than my neighbour's of equal quality." Just so, the President of a college can point to many a graduate and say, "See that young man. When he first came to college, he was rude enough, and had been long left uncultivated; but we put in the plough of diligence, fertilized his mind with rich motives and sowed the seeds of learning, and now how superior is he to the young man who sat by his side at the common school and who never carried his education further!" People may have as many prejudices against colleges as they please; but it will ever be true that colleges raise up the mind, and secure a higher order of men. Why do farmers send their boys to the common school? Because the knowledge and discipline there acquired place

the boys in a higher grade than if they had never learned to read and write. The same principle carried out elevates the student of the academy above the common school boy, and the collegian above the student of the academy. It is necessarily so, because the higher the course the more severe are the studies; and the mind receives sterner discipline, and expands more and more, according as it is operated upon by education.

The college is a place of privilege and of honour. It raises up the children of men to a more advanced degree of intellectual and moral cultivation. In our colleges, as well as in our academies, however it may be in our schools, religion goes hand in hand with learning. Our young men, in going through the upper courses of training, feel the blessed power of religious influences moulding their minds and hearts. Sometimes, indeed, a young man fails in getting much good at a college and, as the saying is, he turns out badly. But the failure is, probably, more owing to defective training at home than to the hazards of college life, great though these may be. And besides, do not common-school boys fail, too, sometimes, in getting much good from their limited course? Do they not often grow up the worse for having learnt to swear and curse and lie and steal from their wicked companions in the district school-house. There are failures everywhere, among all classes of men and all kinds of educated men.

The college is a great place to test and to improve character. It brings out its true sons, as silver and gold are tried. With all the imperfection of these institutions, they generally improve the mind and heart, and send forth into the community a higher order of men.

2. The other remark I have to suggest about the college, as a place of youthful aim, is that it trains men for a *higher order of usefulness*. Mind was not given to subserve the private purposes of the individual, and merely to rejoice over its own conscious elevation and dignity. Its capacity, enlarged by cultivation, must pour forth its resources for the public good. We are all bound by the appointments of Providence to do what we can to promote the best interests of society. Now it is clear that our influence depends materially on our intellectual and moral elevation. Ignorance can never claim an equality with knowledge, in ability to serve the world. In fact, all the pursuits of life derive immense advantages from learning. Not only does the church rely upon education to qualify her ministers for more extensive usefulness, but agriculture, the mechanical arts, manufactures, commerce, the learned professions, literature and general philanthropy, all give honour to intellect, as debtors to its moving power. Educated men assist in the formation of public opinion, in devising plans of general improvement, in directing the education of the people, in giving an impulse to works of benevolence, and in short have an influential agency in promoting the social, physical, political and religious interests of the world. Colleges, therefore, are great blessings to mankind. By raising up a high order of men, they qualify them to enter upon high spheres of usefulness. For these two reasons, colleges may well excite in ingenuous, enterprising, conscientious young

men, a disposition to enjoy the advantages afforded by their halls of literature.

The double object of the Elders' Ridge Presbyterial Academy is commanding and noble. The academy, from its elevated ridge, looks down with interest upon the common school on one side and upon the college on the other. Placed in the middle between the two, it sends strength into both. It gives teachers to the schools, and students to the colleges. With such a spirit to bless all around it, it will itself be blessed by the laws of Providence, which take care of great enterprises. The school, the academy and the college are immense public benefits. Like the rivulet, the creek and the river, they form the great educational system, which waters the world with streams of joy.

I congratulate you, young gentlemen, that you enjoy the advantages, literary, social and religious, afforded by the Elders' Ridge Academy. You will never sit under the instructions of teachers, more sincerely desirous of advancing you in intellectual knowledge, or more solicitous for the things of your everlasting peace. May their instructions and their prayers be answered in the lives of usefulness and piety you shall lead! Aim at being useful, highly useful; useful among men through the grace and strength which come only from God. You see an exemplification of Christian enterprise in the establishment of this institution. Behold what faith and love and perseverance can accomplish with the divine blessing. In that same spirit, go ye forth to do good things and great things for the country, mingling modesty with enterprise and giving to God the glory of your success. Attend always to the interests of education; and if you cannot find an Elders' Ridge on which to erect an academy, like that which crowns yonder eminence—which, without impropriety may well be called *Donaldson's summit*—nevertheless aim at doing what you can to advance education every where, and among all classes in society.

I close this address, young gentleman, by setting before you the example of a native-born son of western Pennsylvania, who fulfilled in his own person the two aims of your academy, by being a school teacher and a graduate; and who afterwards rose to be president of a college.* He was born west of the mountains just before the revolutionary war, of poor but respectable parents; and in the midst of the war was left an helpless orphan at the age of nine years. A friend of his father, who kept a tavern and a small grocery store, took him into his employment, and gave him instruction in writing and arithmetic. He soon became very fond of reading; and as there happened to be in the house a copy of the Spectator, the young boy's eye was attracted to the Latin sentences, prefixed to the chapters. With a determination and perseverance which God gave to his youthful heart, he began to study Latin, all by himself, by means of

* For the incidents which follow, I am indebted to Dr. Elliot's *Life of Macurdy*, a work full of interesting information about the early ministers and churches of western Pennsylvania. It stands side by side with Dr. Miller's *Life of John Rodgers*; both being superior specimens of Christian Biography.

a Horace and a half-torn Latin Dictionary which he found in the neighbourhood. He obtained considerable insight into the strange language by these strange means, often sitting up at his studies till a late hour. One night, Judge Addison—who lodged at the same hotel—upon returning to his lodgings after the family had retired, found the boy, now about twelve years of age, diligently engaged with his Horace and Dictionary by the light of the fire. After a little conversation, the Judge became deeply interested in the youth, and promised to give him a grammar and other books, better suited to unfold the language. The promise was not forgotten; and the little boy, still behind the counter and in the bar room, gradually mastered the Latin and the Greek, and in a few years became a fine classical scholar. Dr. McMillan soon found him out, and secured him as a teacher in the Canonsburg Academy, before the college was established. After a while, he was sent to Princeton College by means of assistance supplied in part by Dr. McMillan, and he was graduated in 1797, at the age of twenty-five. After studying theology with Dr. McMillan, he was licensed by the Ohio Presbytery in 1798 and ordained a minister of the gospel in 1800. In 1802, when Jefferson College was chartered, the first President was the Rev. JOHN WATSON, the little orphan boy, who commenced the Latin in the chimney corner, with no teacher but his own divinely aroused energies and with no opportunities but the most forbidding and unpromising. Standing on the last Sabbath at the grave of Watson, in the old Chartiers grave yard, I rejoiced that resurrection glory awaited the tabernacle in which such a spirit had dwelt.

Young gentlemen, be ye like-minded; quit you like men! God has given you minds and precious opportunities! Your country and your church call for your services, at a most eventful age of the world. Let this academy witness in you faithful sons. And whilst pursuing your various studies and whilst engaged in the exercises of your literary societies, forget not that religion is the chief study and the best exercise for the faculties of immortal beings. Among all the advantages of this institution, its religious spirit gives it its highest glory, for it tends to prepare you all for Heaven.

Oh THOU, whose providence is over all the earth, and who "waterest the ridges thereof abundantly," pour out thy Spirit here! Bless the Elders' Ridge Presbyterial Academy, its honoured Principal, its teachers, its students, their parents, the community, the Presbytery, and the Church, throughout their generations! Supply teachers for our common schools, and send forth students into our colleges, to the praise of Thy great name!

The above Address was delivered on September 29th, 1853, before the Literary Societies of the Elders' Ridge Academy, Indiana Co., Pa., under the care of the Blaireville Presbytery.—Ed.]

ARTICLE VII.

THE EDUCATION QUESTION.*

BY THE REV. CHARLES HODGE, D.D.

THERE is a substantial agreement among religious men, as to the most essential points involved in the education question. We are well aware that the difference between the religious community and those who, in many instances, control the action of our legislative bodies in relation to this subject, is radical and irreconcilable. We are sorry to be obliged to add, that many religious men, from different motives, have been led to throw their influence in favour of this latter party, who advocate the exclusion of religious instruction from our public schools. The religious community, however, as a body, we hope and believe, are united and determined in their opposition to any such destructive course.

Before proceeding further, we will briefly indicate the points as to which, with individual exceptions on either side, there is, as we believe, a substantial agreement, especially so far as our own Church is concerned, in relation to this whole subject. The evidence is abundant and conclusive that the great mass of our members, ministers and laymen, are convinced, 1. Of the absolute necessity of universal popular education. 2. That this education should be religious; that is, not only that religion ought to be in some way inculcated, but that it should be made a regular part of the course of instruction in all our non-professional educational institutions. 3. That the obligation to secure for the young this combined secular and religious training, is common to parents, to the State, and to the Church. It does not rest on one of these parties to the exclusion of the others, but, as the care of the poor, it rests equally on all, and the efforts and resources of all are requisite for the accomplishment of the object. It is included in what has been said, that the obligation in question presses all these parties as to the whole work of education. One portion of the work does not belong exclusively to one of them, and another portion exclusively to the others, but each is in its sphere responsible for the whole. That is, as the parent is bound to provide not only for the religious but also for the secular education of his children, the same is true with regard to the State and to the Church. 4. That in the existing state of our country, the Church can no more resign the work of education exclusively to the State, than the State can leave it exclusively to parents or to the Church. The work cannot be accomplished in the

* Reprinted, by permission, from the "Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review."

way in which she is bound to see it accomplished, without her efficient co-operation. The Church, therefore, is bound, without interfering either with the State or with voluntary institutions, to provide the means of thorough secular and religious training, wherever they are not otherwise secured. 5. That in the performance of this great duty, the Church cannot rely on the separate agency of her members, but is bound to act collectively, or in her organized capacity. Consequently, the Board of Education, in aiding in the establishment of schools, academies, and colleges, is acting on sound principles, whatever mistakes may have been made in the application of those principles in particular cases.

There may be, as before remarked, individual dissentients from one or another of the above positions, but the almost unanimous decision of one Assembly after another, and the concessions of those, who under misapprehension of the ground intended to be assumed, had taken the part of objectors, prove beyond doubt the substantial and cordial unanimity of our Church as to all these points.

I. The first of these positions need not be argued. The necessity of general popular education is universally conceded. If such education is necessary to other nations for their prosperity, to us it is necessary for our existence. Universal suffrage and universal education condition each other. The former without the latter is a suicidal absurdity. Everything connected with our political well-being, with the elevation and personal improvement of the people, and with the extension and establishment of the Redeemer's kingdom, is more or less directly involved in this great question. The work which as a people we have to do ; which, next to the preaching of the gospel, is most immediate and most pressing, is to provide and apply the means for the education of all classes of our varied and rapidly increasing population. This education should be such as to meet the exigencies of the people ; giving not merely to all the opportunity of acquiring the rudiments of knowledge, but furnishing the means of higher cultivation, for those who are disposed to avail themselves of them. This may be taken to be the public sentiment of the country and of the Church. In almost all our States provision is made more or less effectively, not only for the establishment of common schools, but also of academies and colleges endowed and sustained by public funds. The free High Schools of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia are among the most elevated of our educational establishments.

II. The second position, viz., that education in all its stages ought to be religious, is one of the great dividing points in relation to this subject. On one hand, it is contended that religion, the Christian religion, including its facts, doctrines, and moral principles, should be a regular topic of instruction in our public schools and higher educational establishments ; and that the whole process of education should be conducted with the design of cherishing religious principles

and feelings. On the other hand, it is assumed that the State has nothing to do with the religious instruction of the people; that religion must be left to be inculcated by parents and the Church; that the only legitimate sphere of state action is secular education. Indifference or hostility to religion; a dread of the union of the Church and State; an apprehension of ecclesiastical domination; the opposition of Papists to religious instruction, and even to the reading of the Bible in the public schools; the difficulty arising from conflicting sects, have led a very large part of the community to advocate or acquiesce in the exclusion of religion from all places of education sustained by the State. It is regarded as the simplest solution of a complicated problem, to confine the State to secular education and leave religion to be otherwise provided for.

This is the ground publicly assumed by the majority of our public men; it has received, directly or indirectly, the sanction of several State legislatures; it is avowed and acted upon by superintendents and commissioners; it is advocated by some of our most influential religious journals, and by many of our prominent religious men. In the year 1842 and 1843, laws were passed by the legislature of New York, forbidding "sectarian teaching and books" to be employed in the public schools. Everything was regarded as *sectarian* to which any person would object on religious grounds. Every book, therefore, even the Bible, and every sentiment to which the Romanists objected, were banished or expunged when demanded. All religious instruction and prayer have in many cases been proscribed. Teachers have been threatened with dismissal, and actually dismissed, for using even the Lord's Prayer. E. C. Benedict, Esq., President of the Board of Education of New York, delivered in August last an address, in which he asks, "What should be our rational rule of conduct? Whenever we find a few children together, shall we compel them to lay aside their occupation for the time and read the Bible, or say prayers, or perform some other religious duty? Will it be sure to make them better? Will it be sure to give them religious instruction—to require it at the dancing school, the riding school, the music school, the visiting party, and the play-ground? Shall studies, and sports, and plays, and prayers, and Bible, and catechism be all placed on the same level? Shall we insist that secular learning cannot be well taught unless it is mixed with sacred? Shall algebra and geometry be always interspersed with religion instead of *quod erat demonstrandum*? Shall we say *Selah* and *Amen*? Shall we bow at the sign of *plus*? Can we not learn the multiplication table without saying grace over it? So of religious instruction, will it be improved by a mixture of profane learning? Shall the child be taught to mix his spelling lesson with his prayers, and his table-book with his catechism? If there were any necessary relation between religious and secular instruction, which required that they should be kept together, the subject would have another aspect. But no one has ever maintained that the religious teacher

the minister of religion, and the office-bearers of the Church, should mix secular instruction with their more sacred and solemn inculcations.

"Now, the reading of the Bible, the repeating of the Lord's Prayer, the Apostle's Creed, and the Ten Commandments, in school, is ritualistic and educational. It is not for improvement in secular learning, nor in sacred learning. Turn the tables—substitute for reading of the Scriptures at the opening of the schools, the simplest and least offensive of the religious ceremonies of the Roman Catholic Church—reading from the Missal some portions of it to which in itself there would be no objection; insist that the school should bow at the name of Jesus; shall always speak of the Virgin Mary as the Blessed Virgin or Holy Mother of God, and see if all of us would be willing to send our children there day by day. See if the pulpits and the ecclesiastical conventions throughout the land would not re-echo the word of alarm; and why should we compel the Jews, who are numerous in our cities, to listen to the New Testament, to repeat the Lord's Prayer, or the Apostle's Creed, or to be taught the mysteries of redemption, or leave the schools?"*

It is against this doctrine, which is now so extensively embraced and so effectively acted out, that the great body of Christians in this country, and of the Presbyterian Church especially, enter their earnest and solemn protest. They regard it as a virtual renunciation of allegiance to God, as destructive to society, and as certainly involving the final overthrow of the whole system of public education. If the Bible and religion are excluded from our public schools, they and their abettors will very soon be swept away, if the country remain, what it now is, Protestant and Christian.

It is to be borne in mind that a very large part of our population is almost entirely dependent for instruction on the public schools. If, therefore, religion is to be excluded from those schools, a large proportion of the people will inevitably grow up ignorant of religion. Commissioner Flagg says, in reference to the State of New York, that "to every ten persons receiving instruction in the higher schools, there are at least five hundred dependent on the common schools, for their education." Dr. Cheever says: "Perhaps not more than a sixth part of the families in our country ever attend church, or any other schools than the free schools. Consequently, five-sixths of our whole youthful population are left unprovided with the knowledge of the Bible, and any religious instruction, if you exclude it from the free public schools."† We do not answer for these numbers. It is not necessary for the argument to assume more than must be conceded, viz.: that parochial schools, Sabbath-schools, and pastoral and parental instruction leave a very large part of the population dependent for their education on the public schools, and therefore, if religion be banished from those institutions, a large

* Quoted by Dr. Cheever. *The Bible in our Common Schools*, pp. 237, 8.

† *The Bible in our Common Schools*, p. 134.

portion of the people must grow up in ignorance of religion. This, then, is a fact to be deliberately considered by those, and especially by those Christians, who advocate the separation of secular and religious education. They are practically consigning thousands of the people to utter ignorance of God, of Christ, of morality, and of the method of salvation. They cannot avoid the fearful responsibility which they thus incur. The man who cuts off the regular supply of water from a great city, and tells the people they must get water as they can, that the public aqueduct is not the only means of supply, would not act more absurdly or with greater cruelty, than the men who deprive the people of the ordinary and long-continued means of religious instruction, and bid them look elsewhere for the most essential kind of knowledge. It is vain to say that religion can be inculcated in the family. Why not leave secular knowledge to be thus inculcated? It is the simple and admitted fact, that, if left to parents, secular education will be, and must be, in the great majority of cases, neglected. But more parents are competent and disposed to teach their children the rudiments of human knowledge, than are qualified or inclined to instruct them in religion. If therefore, religious instruction be left to parents, it will in most cases be entirely neglected. It is no less vain to say it is the office of the Church to teach religion. Very true; but the public schools have in all ages been one of the principal and most effective agencies of the Church for accomplishing this mission. You cut off her right hand, and bid her do her work. You debar her access through her members to the young, and bid her bring them up in the fear of God. The Church is the body of Christians, and all church action is not the action of organized ecclesiastical bodies. Much of the efficiency of the Church is through the activity of her private members, operating as Christians in all the walks of life. The command to teach all nations, given to the Church, is executed not only by the action of presbyteries and synods, of bishops and presbyters, but also by the agency of all the professed followers of Christ, acting in obedience to his command. To tell the Church, therefore, to provide for the religious education of the young, and yet forbid her members to teach religion in the public schools, where alone they can have access to the greater part of them, is simply a mockery. Presbyterians may attend to their own children, and we trust they will do so; Episcopalians may attend to theirs; but who are to attend to the multitudes who recognize no such ecclesiastical connection? Nothing, then, is more certain than that to exclude religious instruction from the public schools, is to give up a large part of the people to ignorance of God and duty. This is not a matter of conjecture, but a fact of experience; and we beg every man who has the welfare of his country, or the good of his fellow-men at heart, to look this fact deliberately in the face, and to pause before he gives his sanction to the popular doctrine of an exclusive secular popular education.

But, in the second place, the whole theory of separate secular

education is fallacious and deceptive. The thing is impossible. The human soul is in such a sense a unit, that it is impossible the intellect should be cultivated without developing, favourably or otherwise, the heart and the conscience. You might as well attempt to develop one-half of a man's body, and allow the other half to remain as it is. It is impossible to introduce ideas and facts beyond the mere relations of numbers and quantity, into the mind without their calling into exercise the other powers of our nature. If a child is to read, it must read something. But what can it read in prose or poetry, in history or in fiction, which will not bring up the ideas of God, of right and wrong, of responsibility, of sin and punishment, and of a future state? How can a teacher reprove, exhort, or direct his pupils, without an appeal, more or less direct, to moral and religious motives? If he tells a child that a thing is wrong, can he avoid telling him why it is wrong, what is the standard of duty, and what are the consequences of wrong conduct? He cannot appeal to conscience without awakening the sense of responsibility to God, and creating the necessity of instruction as to what God is, and as to our relations to him as his creatures. If it be true that we live and move and have our being in God, if our finite spirits are at every point in contact with the Infinite Spirit, the attempt to ignore God, and to bring up a child in ignorance of the Supreme Being, is as absurd and as impracticable as the attempt to bring up a living creature, out of contact with the atmosphere.

This, however, is not the worst of it. The separation of religion from secular education is not only impracticable, it is positively evil. The choice is not between religion and no religion; but between religion and irreligion, between Christianity and infidelity. The mere negative of Theism is Atheism. The absence of knowledge and faith in Christianity is infidelity. Even Byron had soul enough to make Lucifer say:—

"He that bows not to God, hath bowed to me."

As in a field, if you do not sow grain you will have weeds, so in the human mind, if you do not sow truth, you will have error. The attempt, therefore, to exclude religion from our common schools, is an attempt to bring up in infidelity and atheism all that part of our population who depend on these schools for their education. There is no middle ground here. If a man is not good, he must be bad; if he is not a Theist, he is an Atheist; if he is not a Christian, he is an infidel; and, therefore, a course of education which excludes religion, must from the necessity of the case be irreligious. Mr. Webster, in his argument on the Girard College case, says, speaking of the exclusion of Christianity from that institution: "There is nothing original in this plan. It has its origin in a deistical source, but not from the highest school of infidelity. It is all idle, it is a mockery, and an insult to common sense, to maintain that a school for the instruction of youth, from which Christian instruction by

Christian teachers is sedulously and vigorously shut out, is not deistical and infidel in its purpose and in its tendency." Again, in still stronger language, when speaking of the plan of keeping the young entirely ignorant of religion until they get their education and can judge for themselves, he says: "It is vain to talk about the destructive tendency of such a system: to argue upon it, is to insult the understanding of every man; *it is mere, sheer, low, ribald, vulgar deism and infidelity.* It opposes all that is in heaven, and all that is on earth that is worth being on earth. It destroys the connecting link between the creature and the Creator; it opposes that great system of universal benevolence and goodness that binds man to his Maker." This language is not too strong; and it is not too strong as applied to the system of excluding religion from our common schools, because, and in so far as, those schools are the sole means of education for a large part of the people.

It is indeed admitted by many advocates of exclusive secular education in common schools, that any institution which assumes, for any considerable period, the whole education of a child or youth, "and yet gives no religious instruction or training, is justly said to give an irreligious and godless education."* Very well, this is all we contend for. We readily admit that if adequate provision could be made, and was in fact made, for the instruction of the young in religion elsewhere, there would be no such absolute necessity for its systematical introduction into the common schools. Though even in that case it would be impossible to train and govern advantageously any body of youth, even in secular knowledge, without constant appeals to moral and religious truth. But the fact is, that the common school does assume the whole education of a multitude of children; it is the only education they ever receive, and therefore is in their case "irreligious and godless," if it is merely secular.

The principle of excluding religion from State institutions, cannot be, and is not consistently carried out, even by its advocates. All the popular objections about sectarianism, the union of the Church and State, the injustice of excluding Jews and Romanists from educational institutions which they are taxed to sustain, bear against schools for the deaf and dumb with as much force as against common schools; yet by common consent not only Christianity, but Protestant Christianity, is inculcated in all such establishments. Would the public endure that all religious instruction should be refused to the deaf and dumb, because a Jew or a Romanist might object to the nature of that instruction? It may be said, that the only instruction which the deaf and dumb receive is communicated in schools designed for their benefit exclusively, whereas the frequenters of common schools can be taught religion elsewhere. This answer does not touch the principle of the objection, and it is not a fact. The deaf and dumb are taught to read, and when that is accomplished,

* New Englander, April, 1848, p. 244.

they might be sent to their friends to be taught religion. And this is the course which consistency would require our opponents to take; but the operation of their principle is here seen too clearly to admit of its being carried out. The children are all together, and constantly under the eye of the observer, whereas the children of the common schools scatter to their homes as soon as the school is dismissed, and therefore the effect of the absence of religious training is not so clearly seen. It is not, however, the less real. And the man whose heart and conscience would revolt at the idea of leaving the deaf and dumb in ignorance of God and Christ, should not do in the case of thousands, what he would not venture to do in the case of tens.

We are fully persuaded that the attempt to banish religion and the Bible from common schools, which owes its origin and success to Papists, infidels, and scheming politicians, which is opposed to the practice of all Christian countries, to the judgment of all the great statesmen of the forming period of our country, and to the general usage of our forefathers, Presbyterian and Puritan, will, if persisted in, result in the overthrow of the whole system of popular education. The people will bear a great deal. They may allow men to trifle with their interests; they may submit to measures which encroach upon their rights; but if you touch their conscience, you awaken a power before which all human resistance is vain. If history teaches anything, it teaches the danger and folly of wounding the moral and religious convictions of men. We owe all the liberty the world possesses to tyrants trespassing on the domain of conscience. Christians, determined not to do what God forbids, and resolved to do what God commands, are the authors and preservers of civil and religious liberty. If our public men, for the sake of conciliating the Papists, or of avoiding trouble, undertake to say that Protestant Christianity, in this Protestant and Christian country, shall not be taught in our public schools, we venture to predict that they and their schools will be very summarily overthrown. The reason why so little resistance has been manifested to the edicts of the legislatures and superintendents, is that the people utterly disregard them. They care not a farthing for what the State officer at the seat of power says as to what their children shall be taught. The time for resistance will come when these State officers undertake to carry their edicts forbidding religious instruction into effect. We know of public schools, both in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, in which the Westminster Catechism is taught every day; and we believe that, in very many cases, the children in our own common schools are taught just what their parents see fit to have them learn. The safety of the system of public instruction depends on its freedom; on its being left to receive the form and application which the people may choose to give it; and upon our public men keeping the system out of the control of Papists and Infidels. The country may be deluded and cajoled, and we think here lies the danger, but the people will never submit with their eyes

open to a merely secular, which is only another name for an irreligious and godless education.

Among ourselves there exists, so far as we know, scarcely a diversity of opinion on this subject. The Southern Presbyterian Review, in an article against "Denominational Education," says, while advocating the State system: "Religion, as a distinct and most important part of knowledge; revealed religion, as the received religion of our country, so far from being excluded from general education, should be made a prominent part of it, from the primary school to the university." It is the principal object of the book of Mr. Stephen Colwell (a strenuous advocate of State, as opposed to Church schools), to prove the right and the necessity of religious instruction in common schools. "There has never," he says, "been a more suicidal position taken by the most unwise of our politicians or statesmen, or the worst of our internal foes, than this exclusion of Christianity from public education. The worst enemy of humanity could not have devised a doctrine more dangerous to our republican institutions. It is fortunately too absurd, too monstrous, too unthankful, to take deep and lasting root in American soil."* Whether absurd and monstrous or not, it is the reigning doctrine of the day among those who control legislative bodies. On page 105, the author says: "If we have succeeded in conveying to our readers our own conviction of what is due to the present and coming generations of children in our republic, of the civil and religious obligations which will rest on these children when they arrive at maturity, and of the facilities of doing good then to be enjoyed, they cannot fail to see that the church or denomination which opposes religious instruction in the public schools, is at war with our institutions, with our civilization, and with the public peace and safety. That Bible upon which the largest portion of the judicial oaths of the United States are administered; that Bible which is the fountain of our Christianity, and which our whole system, civil and religious, assumes to be the Word of God, is the Bible which should be held up to the children in our public schools, announced to be a revelation from the Most High, the will of God, the Old and New Testament of Christianity. It should be taught the children to that extent, and in that way, which an enlightened and liberal piety would dictate." Again, on page 116, he says: "In one sense, it is true, there can be no compromise in religious matters; that which is vital to Christianity cannot be surrendered or kept out of view. The Bible cannot be sacrificed nor kept out of view to conciliate the prejudices of any, whether priest or infidel. It is the manual of Christianity. We cannot concede that the Bible is a mere human production, because it is of the essence of Christianity that the Bible is a revelation from God."

It is then the settled conviction of all parties in our church, and

* Position of Christianity, &c., p. 98.

of the great body of the religious public, that popular education, by whomsoever administered, should in this country be Christian and Protestant. This is a position which we hope and pray may never be given up.

III. The third position is, that this combined secular and religious education of the young, is the common duty of parents, of the State, and of the Church. It has indeed been argued that if it is the duty of the Church, it is not incumbent on the State, and if incumbent on the State, it is not the duty of the Church. But this is a fallacy. It might as well be said, that if it is the duty of parents, it is the work neither of the Church nor of the State, and if it binds either of the latter, it does not bind the former. The truth is, that it binds all the above-named parties equally.

There are other things besides education which impose this common obligation. Individuals, as men and Christians, are bound to relieve the poor; but this obligation rests also on the State, and on the Church in her organized capacity. So, too, the care of the sick belongs, as a duty and privilege, to individuals and to society as a secular and religious organization. Has not the Church its deacons for the very purpose of taking care of the sick and of the poor? But does this exonerate either individuals or the State from this great natural duty of religion and humanity? The fact, therefore, that education may be proved to be the proper work of the State, is no evidence that it does not belong to the Church; and to prove that it belongs of divine right to the Church, is no evidence that it does not belong, by the same solemn sanction, to the State. It belongs alike to both, and for the same reasons, and on the same grounds; that is, from the design of their institution, from the necessity of the case, and from divine command.

The State is a divine institution. All its legitimate powers and functions have the sanction of divine authority, for the powers that be are ordained of God. Neither the existence nor the powers of the State depend on any social compact as their ultimate foundation. The State is a body of men organized, under divine authority, as a political community, for the protection of human rights, the promotion of the common good, and enforcing of the moral law, *i. e.*, for the punishment of those who do evil, and the praise of those who do well. Such being the design of the State, it has of course the authority to do whatever is necessary to attain the end of its appointment. It can regulate commerce, make roads, administer justice, raise armies, construct navies, provide for the poor, the sick, and the young. It can educate soldiers and sailors for the public service, and why not the people, to fit them for the duties of citizens? There is no function of government which flows more immediately from the design of its institution, than that of providing for the education of the people, because education is the most essential means for accomplishing the end for which the State exists, *viz.*, the prevention of

evil and the promotion of good. By the instinct of its being, therefore, revealing its nature, every enlightened state has its schools, academies, and colleges, as well as its poor-houses and hospitals, or its armies and navies.

This duty not only flows from the design for which civil governments exist, but also from the necessity of the case. It is a sound principle, that the State has the right to do whatever it is necessary it should do for the promotion of the general good. If the means for securing the public good can be more effectually and safely applied by individuals, by voluntary organizations, or by the Church, than by the State, then the latter is not bound to employ these means. But if there is no other adequate provision for the accomplishment of the desired end, it is clearly the right and duty of the State to interfere. It is the universal conviction that popular education is necessary for the public good; it is a no less general conviction that a work so vast as the education of the whole population cannot be accomplished effectually, except by the systematical exercise of the power of the State, and by the application of its resources. We know no one, therefore, who ventures to deny the right in question.

All this is confirmed by the Scriptures. God, in ordaining civil government for the protection of men and for the promotion of the public good, did thereby invest it with all the powers requisite for the attainment of its object. He holds magistrates responsible for the conduct and character of the people, which implies that they have by divine right the authority to teach, or cause them to be taught, whatever is necessary to their well-being. The numerous commands given in Scripture to have the people taught, are not addressed to individuals only, but to the community, *i. e.*, they are addressed to men not only in their separate but in their organized capacity. Nations as nations are addressed, commanded, encouraged, and threatened. Ignorance of God and of his law, is condemned and punished as a national sin. The Bible everywhere recognizes the principle that nations, as such, should be under the control of the law of God, and that they should not forget or allow the knowledge of that law to fail from among the people.

It may be said, and has often been assumed, however, that though the State has authority to provide for secular education, it has no right to interfere in teaching religion. This is the ground taken by many advocates of the exclusion of religion from our public schools. It is said the State has no religion; that it has no means of determining what the true religion is; that religious instruction in common schools is the first step towards ecclesiastical domination, or the union of the Church and the State.

If, however, the State is bound to educate at all, it is bound to impart that kind of education which is necessary to secure the ends of good government. The State does in a multitude of cases assume the whole work of education; it gives all the instruction which a

large portion of the young receive. But such education if merely secular, is conceded to be "irreligious and godless." No sane man will maintain, that the State is bound, or has the right, to train up the young in irreligion and atheism. If, therefore, the work of education is, by the providence and word of God, thrown upon the State, it must be an education in religion. The State is bound to see that the true religion is taught in all the schools under its control. This is the common sentiment of all our great men of the last generation, from Washington to a late period. All the early advocates of popular education, the authors of the common school system, as adopted in our several States, have insisted on the vital importance of training the young in the principles of piety and morality.* Those among ourselves who have arrayed themselves against "Denominational Education," have done so on the ground that our "common Christianity," our "common Protestantism," as Mr. Colwell calls it, or "religion"—"revealed religion," as the *Southern Presbyterian Review* expresses it, may be, and should be made a prominent subject of instruction in all our institutions, from the primary school to the university. It is a new, and a latitudinarian doctrine, that the State cannot teach, or cause to be taught, the great truths and duties of religion.

All the arguments which go to prove the right and duty of the State to provide for the education of the people, go to establish the right and duty of making that education religious. If the design of the State is the promotion of the public good; if religious education is necessary for the attainment of that object, and if such education cannot in a multitude of cases be secured otherwise than by State intervention, then we must either admit that the State is bound to provide for the religious education of its members, or assume the absurd position, that the State is not bound to answer the very end of its existence.

It may be objected to this argument, that since the preaching of the Gospel is essential to the public good, the State is under obligation to secure the preaching of the Gospel to the people. So it would be, were there not other agencies by which that end might be more safely and effectually accomplished. In every case in which other agencies cannot operate, the State is bound to provide its subjects with the ministrations of the Gospel. It is under the most sacred obligations to provide chaplains for the army and navy, for military schools, and penitentiaries, and on this principle all Christian States, our own among the number, have ever acted.

The two leading objections to the doctrine, that the State is bound to provide for the religious education of the young, are the following: the one theoretical, and the other practical. The former is, that the State has no religion, and has no means of determining what the true religion is; the latter, that in consequence of the diversity

* See abundant proof of this presented in Dr. Cheever's able and important book.

of opinion on religious subjects among the people, no system of religious instruction can be introduced into the public schools, which will not offend the feelings, or interfere with the rights of conscience of a portion of the people. In the *New Englander* for April, 1848, already quoted, it is said: "The principle, which has been so extensively adopted in the discussion of this subject, that in this country the State, or civil power, is Christian and Protestant, and therefore that schools sustained and directed in part thereby are Christian and Protestant, and that whoever attends them has no right to object to a rule requiring all to study Christian and Protestant books and doctrines, we wholly disbelieve and deny. The State, the civil power in whatever form, in this country, is no more Protestant or Christian, than it is Jewish or Mohammedan. It is of no religion whatever. It is simply political, interposing, or having the right to interpose, in matters of religion, only by protecting its citizens in the free exercise of their religion, whatever it be; of course excepting such violations of civil rights, or civil morality, as any may commit under a pretence, or a fanatical sense of religion." p. 242. Here, indeed, is a radical difference. We, on the contrary, maintain that the State in this country is Christian and Protestant, and is bound to see that the schools which it establishes are conducted on Christian and Protestant principles, and that the chaplains which it appoints are neither Jew nor Mohammedans. This country is a Christian and Protestant country, granting universal toleration; i. e. allowing men of all religions to live within our borders, to acquire property, to exercise the rights of citizens, and to conduct their religious services according to their own convictions of duty. Turkey is a Mohammedan state, granting a very large measure of toleration to men of other religions. Most of the governments in Europe are Roman Catholic states, granting little or no toleration to Protestants. Sweden is a Protestant state, allowing freedom of action only to the Lutheran Church. What is meant by all this? It means that in Turkey the religion of Mohammed is the common law of the land; that the Koran regulates and determines the legislative, judicial, and executive action of the government. Whenever men associate for any purpose whatever, they do, and must, associate under the control of their religion, whatever that religion may be. If a body of Christian men organize themselves as an insurance company, or as a railroad company, or as the trustees of a college, they are bound to act as Christians in their collective capacity. They can rightfully do nothing as an organization which Christianity forbids, and they are required to do everything which Christianity enjoins, in reference to the work in which as a corporation they are engaged. Thus if a number of Christians and Protestants organize themselves as a State or political community, they are obviously bound to regulate their legislative, judicial, and executive action by the principles of their religion. No law in this country which does violence to Christianity, can be rightfully enacted by Congress, or by any State

Legislature; nor would such a law, if enacted, bind the consciences of the people. No judicial decision, inconsistent with the Bible, can be, according to the supreme law of the land, or morally, obligatory. No State Legislature would pass a law authorizing polygamy. Such a law being inconsistent with Christianity, would be invalid *in fore conscientia*, and a flagrant violation of the common law of the land, which underlies all our State constitutions, and is paramount to all legislative enactments. If a court should divorce a man and his wife for mere incompatibility of temper, they would not thereby cease to be man and wife. Men cannot make void the law of God. They cannot free themselves from the obligation to obey his word. To say, therefore, that the State, in this country, is no more Christian and Protestant than it is Jewish or Mohammedan, is tantamount to saying, that the people of the country are destitute of all religion, of all faith, of all allegiance to God, and of all regard to the moral law. The utter absurdity, as well as infidelity of this sentiment, is betrayed by the concession that the State is bound to act in accordance with "civil morality." What modicum of moral obligation is intended by that expression, we do not know, but no matter how infinitesimal it may be, it establishes the principle. If the State is bound by any moral law, no matter how attenuated, it is of course bound by the law which its members recognize as divine. The heathen govern themselves by their convictions of moral and religious duty; so do Mohammedans, and so must Christians, unless they are recreant and reprobate. Christianity is the common and the supreme law of the land, from the necessity of the case, because it is the religion of those who constitute the country. Blessed be God, this fact is an historical and established one, which cannot be shaken by denial. It is a fact that Christianity is the religion of the people, that it does control our State action; that no Congress or Legislature, no court or convention has ever ventured to deny themselves bound by the Bible and the moral law. Our real statesmen, our highest judges, our chief magistrates, the founders of our government, and the ornaments of our country, have with one voice and in various forms acknowledged that Christianity is the law of the land. The Jewish religion allowed polygamy and arbitrary divorce. But no Jew in this country can be a polygamist, or put away his wife at pleasure. No man can legally pursue his ordinary avocations on the Christian Sabbath. No man can blaspheme God or Christ with impunity; and that not simply because these things might lead to a breach of the peace, but because they are wicked, and against the public conscience.

It is the principal object of the work of Mr. Stephen Colwell, to prove that Christianity has ever been recognized as part of the common law in this country. Among the authorities cited are the following. Judge Story, in his Commentaries on the Constitution, says: "It is impossible for those who believe in the truth of Christianity as a divine revelation, to doubt that it is the

special duty of government to foster and cherish it among all the citizens and subjects." "Every American colony, from its foundation down to the Revolution, with the exception of Rhode Island (if indeed that State be an exception) did openly, by the whole course of its laws and institutions, sustain in some form the Christian religion, and almost invariably gave a peculiar sanction to some of its fundamental doctrines." "In a republic there would seem to be a peculiar propriety in viewing the Christian religion as the great basis on which it must rest for its support and permanence, if it be what it has ever been deemed by its truest friends to be, the religion of liberty." At the time of the adoption of the Constitution of the United States, he says, "The attempt to level all religions, and to make it a matter of State policy to hold all in utter indifference, would have created universal disapprobation, if not universal indignation."*

In the Act for the better government of the Navy of the United States, is the following clause: "The commanders of all ships and vessels in the navy, having a chaplain on board, shall take care that divine service be performed in a solemn and reverent manner, twice a day, a sermon preached on Sunday, unless bad weather or other extraordinary accidents prevent it; and that they cause as many of the ship's company as can be spared from duty, to attend every performance of the worship of Almighty God."—*Colwell*, p. 29.

Judge Duncan, of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, in a judicial decision says, "Christianity is and always has been a part of the common law" of that State. "It is impossible," he adds, "to administer the laws without taking the religion which the defendant in error has scoffed at—that Scripture which he has reviled, as their basis."—*Ibid.* pp. 55 and 58.

Mr. Webster made the following noble declaration on this subject: "There is nothing we look for with more certainty than this principle, that Christianity is part of the law of the land. This was the case among the Puritans of New England, the Episcopalians of the Southern States, the Pennsylvania Quakers, the Baptists, the mass of the followers of Whitefield and Wesley, and the Presbyterians. All brought, and all have adopted this great truth, and all have sustained it. And where there is any religious sentiment among men at all, this sentiment incorporates itself with the law. Everything declares it.

"The generations which have gone before speak to it, and pronounce it from the tomb. We feel it. All, all proclaim that Christianity, general tolerant Christianity, Christianity independent of sects and parties, that Christianity to which the sword and fagot are unknown, general tolerant Christianity, is the law of the land."—*Ibid.* 61.

How exalted and noble are these words in contrast with the mis-

* Position of Christianity, pp. 24, 25.

rabble and shallow sophism that the State is not more Christian than it is Jewish or Mohammedan! If then, it cannot but be, as our jurists and statesmen worthy of the name, declare it in fact is, that a Christian people of necessity constitute a Christian state—a state controlled in all its actions by the truths and laws of Christianity; just as by a like necessity a Mohammedan people constitute a Mohammedan state, controlled by the Koran, it of course follows, that in conducting the work of education, the State in this Christian country is bound to conduct it on Christian principles. It is, therefore, only by a violence to all just and ordinary principles of action, that the public schools in a Christian country, should be no more Christian, than Jewish or Mohammedan. The schools in China are instinct with the doctrines of Confucius; the schools in Turkey are imbued with the spirit of the Koran; and if the schools of America are not pervaded by the truths and principles of Christianity, it will be because we are the most irreligious or the most easily befooled people the world has yet produced. The objection to the introduction of religion into the public schools, founded on the assumption that the State in this country is of no religion, may, therefore, be dismissed as a mere infidel cavil.

The second great objection is, that such is the diversity of religious opinion in this country, that it is impossible to introduce any system of religious instruction into our educational establishments, which will not interfere with the rights of conscience. Mr. Benedict, as we have seen, asks: "Why should we compel the Jews, who are numerous in our cities, to listen to the New Testament, to repeat the Lord's Prayer, or the Apostle's creed, or be taught the mysteries of redemption, or leave the school?" There are about seventeen thousand Jews in this country, and for their accommodation twenty millions of Christians are required to bring down their system of education to the Jewish standard. There are doubtless some thousands of Atheists and Pantheists in the country, who deny not only the existence of God, but any distinction between right and wrong. By parity of reasoning, we are bound for their benefit to exclude from our schools all reference to God, or to the first principles of morals. Such is the style of argument by which our presidents of Boards of Education, our State superintendents, and even our State legislatures, would overthrow a system of education which has prevailed in all ages in every part of Christendom. If it is a plain principle, that the State has no right to force an individual or a minority to do what their conscience forbids, it is a principle no less plain, though often strangely overlooked, that the minority have no right to force the majority to violate their conscience. The public conscience in every Christian country, and in this country pre-eminently, demands that public education shall not be "irreligious and godless," and for the State to declare it shall be, under pretence of not wounding the conscience of the minority, is as gross a violation of the rights of conscience, as high-handed an act of injustice, and as

gross an absurdity, as was ever perpetrated. Of all methods of solving the difficulty in question, this would appear to be the most preposterous. Suppose a few Christians were to settle in a Mohammedan country, and acquire the rights of citizenship, what would be thought of the demand, that for their accommodation the Koran should be banished from all the schools of the land, that all instruction in the religion of the country should be forbidden? Such a demand would be scouted by every reasonable man. Is not the proposal to banish Christianity from the schools of this Christian country, for the sake of a handful of infidels and atheists, worthy of still stronger indignation?

It may be said, however, that the minority are taxed for the support of the public schools, and, therefore, they have a right to require them to be conducted so as to suit their views. But are not the majority taxed too? Have they no rights in the premises? Besides, are not men taxed for educational purposes, who have no children to educate? Is not a man with two children often taxed five times as much as the man with ten? Are we not all taxed for railroads, canals, hospitals, and colleges, from which we derive no immediate personal advantage? We get our compensation in the promotion of the public welfare. And those who are taxed for public schools receive a thousand fold the worth of their money in the elevation and improvement of society, even though their children never enter a State institution.

It is evident that all that has been said in reference to the exclusion of Christianity from the public schools, for the sake of Jews or Infidels, applies to the exclusion of Protestantism for the sake of Romanists. If a few thousand Protestants should become citizens of Spain or Austria, and require the Romish religion to be banished from all the public institutions of those countries, the Romanists would see them all reduced to ashes at the stake, before they would even listen to the demand. What effrontery, then, is it for the Papists in this Protestant land, to require that our schools should, for their sake, cease to be Protestant? To what an abyss of degradation was the Empire State led down by her puny politicians, when she submitted her school-books to be expurgated by Bishop Hughes! With what ineffable scorn for Protestantism and Protestant institutions, must that astute prelate have drawn his effacing pen over the words of life and liberty which glow on every page of English and American literature! May this infamy remain forever without a parallel, and may those blackened books be soon committed to the flames, and replaced by others luminous with Protestant Christianity! Nothing short of this can ever efface the stigma which mars the lofty brow of that great State.

If the Romanists, however, are our fellow-citizens, entitled to the same political privileges, and to the same measure of religious liberty as other portions of our population, what is to be done? In answering this question it should be remembered that this is, in the sense

before explained, a Protestant country. The religious character of a State does not depend primarily on the opinions of a majority of its members. It is historically determined. Turkey is a Mohammedan State, though the Turks constitute a small minority of the people. Here, however, both the historical origin of our government, and the convictions of the vast majority of the people, concur in giving us a Protestant character. This is an undeniable fact, and therefore any solution of the difficulty in question which ignores that fact, must do violence to the public conscience. For a Protestant people to make their educational institutions acceptable to Romanists cannot be done without their ceasing to be Protestant. It would be just as reasonable for the Papists to require that our political institutions should be accommodated to their religious convictions. Every one who knows anything of the theory of the Romish Church, or who is capable of tracing the logical consequences of the doctrine of Church infallibility, sees and knows that the Romish conscience does and must require the subordination of the State to the Church. It does and must require the forcible suppression of what it regards as heresy. If the Romish conscience, therefore, is to be our rule of action, we must give up our republicanism as well as our religion; and if we are besotted enough to give up the latter, the sooner the former is taken from us the better.*

If then this country cannot, and ought not to, give up the Protestant character of its schools to satisfy Romanists, the question returns, what is to be done? The simplest answer to this question is, let Romanists do what Protestants do in Romish countries. Let them have schools of their own. The Christians in Turkey do not call upon the government to sustain their schools. Protestants in Spain and Italy make no such demand upon the Romish authorities. There is no real hardship or injustice, as we have shown, in Romanists being left to provide their own schools, even though they are taxed to sustain the schools of the State. The Quakers are justly taxed for the support of the army and navy, because they have the benefit of their protection, although they disapprove of the means by which security is obtained. If Romanists derive in various ways incalculable benefits from popular education, they may be justly taxed for its support, though they disapprove of its character.

This is one way, and as we think, one that is simple and just, of meeting the difficulty. If Romanists should neglect to establish schools of their own, the result would be, that a large part of their

* There is another consideration which shows the unspeakable folly of Protestants attempting to conciliate Romanists by excluding religion from our common schools. The immense sacrifice is unavailing. Schools without religion are not what Romanists want. They are no great friends of popular education at best; and they are decided enemies of all education which is not in the hands of the priesthood. The good people of Salem were simple enough to dispense "with all religious exercises" in their school, "in order," as they say, "that the children of Roman Catholic parents might be free to attend. This change," they add, "failed to produce the desired effect, our (Roman) Catholic brethren having provided instruction for their own children."

youth would resort to Protestant schools. If the plan suggested, though just, should be regarded as ungenerous, let Romanists be exempted in whole or in part from taxation, on condition that they should maintain a sufficient number of schools for the education of Catholic children, to be approved by the officers of the State.

Still a third method may be suggested. If the State thinks that it is far better that the children of the Roman Catholics should be educated in the Romish religion, than that they should be allowed to grow up in ignorance, let the State contribute to the support of their schools, not as to State institutions for which the State is responsible, but as to schools which do the public good service, though not belonging to the public as a Christian and Protestant body. Our conscience would not object to this. We might contribute to the support of a Turkish hospital, without approving of the religion practised within its walls. These are methods of meeting an acknowledged difficulty, any one of which we regard as incomparably better than the suicidal and futile attempt to banish from our Protestant institutions everything to which a Papist can object.

Besides the difficulty arising from the Romanists, it is further urged as a reason for excluding all religious instruction from the common schools, that Protestant denominations differ so much among themselves, that it is impossible to suit the views of all. On this we would remark. 1. That this difficulty is in a great measure imaginary. It did not originate with Protestants, but with infidels and Romanists. Our several colleges, such as Yale, Nassau Hall, Jefferson, &c., are frequented by students of all Protestant denominations, and yet religious instruction is freely given in them all. In Yale, Dr. Dwight was in the habit of delivering to the undergraduates those admirable lectures which have since been published under the title of "Dwight's Theology." Did any one ever object to this? Thirty or forty years ago, religion was taught in every school in New England, without objection from any source.

2. Our second remark is, that this harmony was attained not by limiting the instruction to what is called "general Christianity," but by allowing the people to do as they please. In the great majority of cases, there would be no objection to thorough religious training by the study of the Bible and of the Catechism. If any parent should object, let him have his child either exempted from attendance on the religious instruction, or permitted to study the catechism of the Church to which the parent belongs. What injustice, hardship, or difficulty is there in all this?

3. Let State officers and legislatures, instead of bending all their influence to make public instruction as little religious as possible, endeavour to render it as thoroughly Christian and Protestant as they can. Instead of vainly striving to make the schools acceptable to sceptics and Papists, let them strive to make them what they ought to be—and the people will rise up and call them blessed. Let thoroughly religious and Protestant books be provided for the

libraries; let the Bible be made an indispensable text-book in every school; let some approved catechism be taught to every child, and let every care be taken to have the teachers not only competent, but religious, and we venture to predict that where one man is offended a hundred will rejoice. This is only asking the State to return to what it was and did, before Scepticism and Popery scared it from its propriety, and made it a prey to the enemies of all religion.

IV. Having attempted to show that the State is entitled and bound to provide for the general education of the people; that in this country education should be Christian and Protestant; and that the objections against the introduction of religion into the common schools, made in behalf of Jews, Infidels, and Romanists, are unreasonable and fallacious, the next point to be considered is the true prerogative of the Church in the matter of education. That secular as well as religious education, the former as a necessary adjunct of the latter, falls legitimately within the power of the Church, we never heard questioned until of late. When under the preaching of the Apostles, multitudes of the Jews and Gentiles were converted to Christianity, they formed themselves into a distinct society. They had their own places of worship, their own schools, and they took charge of their own sick and poor. They acted not only as individuals, but in their collective capacity as a Church in reference to all these objects. They had their officers for the instruction of the young, as well as for the cure of souls, or care of the poor. The idea that they were to leave their children to go to schools conducted by the heathen, and imbued with heathen doctrines and usages, never seems to have entered a Christian mind. Nor does any Christian ever seem to have doubted that it was the right and duty of the Church to provide for the education of her own children. As Christianity advanced, and the necessity and resources of the Church increased, institutions designed for the promotion of learning and religion were established under her influence and control, in every part of Christendom. When the Reformation occurred, the instruction of the young under the care of the Church, was one of the earliest, and one of the principal objects of attention. Calvin in Geneva, Luther in Germany, the Protestants of Holland, France, and Scotland, had their systems of schools, academies, and colleges, under the direction and control of the Church. This was done, not only where the Church and State were intimately united, and because of that union, but also, as in France, where no such union existed. The Christians and Churches of America have always acted on the same principle. The clergy of Boston, and of the neighbouring towns, the representatives and organs of the Churches, had the official control of Harvard. Yale was under the real and effective authority of the Churches of Connecticut. Princeton owes its existence to the Synod of New York and New Jersey. Every denomination of Christians in the land have schools and colleges under their control.

It seems rather late in the day to discover that all this is wrong, that the Church has nothing to do with secular education, that denominational schools, academies, and colleges, under the control of Church courts, are anomalies and dangerous innovations; or that a State legislature is a safer body to which to intrust the great interests of education, than a court composed of ministers and elders, the representatives of the disciples of Christ. It is hard to argue this point. There seems to be but one side to the question. The ablest pens engaged in the attempt to vindicate an exclusive right in the State to control the education of the people, lose all their wonted power.

The design of the Church includes as one of its essential objects the instruction of the people. Christ said to her: "Go teach all nations." Her ministers are teachers; her great office is instruction. Of course what the Church is required to teach, is the religion of Jesus Christ. She is to do this in the most effective way. Everything necessary for the accomplishment of this object, comes within the scope of her commission, and assumes the nature of a divine command. If she takes the Gospel to a people who cannot read, she is bound to teach them letters. If she goes where the philosophy, the history, the science, and literature of the people are imbued with irreligious and antichristian principles, she is bound to establish institutions in which all these subjects may be taught in combination with the truth. To deny this right to the Church, is to deny her the power to fulfil her great commission. If she is to reap the harvest of truth, she must break up the fallow ground, and extirpate the briars and thorns, as well as sow the seed. You might as reasonably sow wheat in a jungle, as expect to get Christian knowledge and faith established in minds imbued with the doctrines of heathenism. Every missionary body, therefore, has felt that education, the education of the young, secular as well as religious, was indispensable for the propagation of the Gospel and the establishment of the church in heathen lands. Batticotta in Ceylon, Dr. Duff's Institution in Calcutta, Allahabad in Northern India, are all monuments and evidences of the necessity of secular education to the propagation of the Gospel. These are Church Institutions, and to deny the right of the Church to establish such schools, shocks the conscientious convictions of the religious community, and excites something bordering on indignation. Such denial never could have been ventured on by good men, except to serve a purpose. In their zeal to protect the public schools from injury, and to secure for them the co-operation of the religious community; and in their anxiety lest State colleges or those under the control of self-perpetuating boards of trustees, should lose caste or confidence, a few, and only a few of our leading men, have been led for a time into the apparent assumption that the Church and Church-courts have nothing to do with secular education. We believe, however, there has been no little misapprehension on both sides, on this subject; and that no party, and perhaps no indi-

vidual in our Church, is now prepared deliberately to question the right of the Church to have her own schools, academies, and colleges, whenever and wherever they are necessary for the attainment of the great end of a Christian and Protestant education. That Christians in the midst of heathens, that Protestants in the midst of Romanists, not only have the right to such establishments under their own ecclesiastical control, but are solemnly bound by the command of God, and the nature of their vocation as a Church, to have them, no man, we presume, will venture to deny. And that this right which thus inheres in the Church, in virtue of her commission and the design of her appointment, is to be exercised whenever the ends of a thorough religious education cannot otherwise be attained, we hold to be equally beyond dispute.

The arguments urged against the right of the Church in this matter, are such as these. 1. That if education belongs to the Church it cannot belong to the State. This, we have before remarked, is an obvious fallacy. The care of the sick and of the poor belong, by divine command, to the Church and to the State alike.

2. If education belongs to the Church, it is said, it must be of the nature of religious things, and the duty of superintending it must be in its nature spiritual.* This is another fallacy. All that is needed is, to show that education is necessary as a means for the promotion of religion. If the Church is bound to secure the end, she has the right to use the requisite means. The care of the sick and poor is not so much of the nature of religious things, as education is, and yet the care of the poor, by divine command, belongs to the Church. How easy would it be to retort the objection. If religion, we might say, is a necessary part of education, it cannot belong to the State, for the State is in its nature secular. But those whose arguments we are now considering, admit that the State is bound to secure a religious education for the people. A secular power, therefore, may be bound to do a religious work; then why may not the Church, a religious power, be bound to do a secular work? The fact is, both are bound to do what is necessary for the ends of their existence.

3d. Another form of the same argument is presented thus: "Education is an affair purely civil, purely temporal. It cannot be shown, that the processes of acquiring the art of reading and writing, have anything more to do with the spiritual operations of our being, than the processes of acquiring any other art; for these are merely arts ~~arts~~ by means of one of which, when acquired, we may ourselves proceed indefinitely in the acquisition of knowledge; and by means of the other of which, we may act indefinitely in the communication of knowledge. Nor can it be shown, that the process by which any one part of knowledge, not purely moral, is acquired, is any more

* The Church, it is said, should have the control of things strictly religious, and of none other; for her Master has given this control, and no other; and right reason, as well as divine truth, limits her to this sphere as the one of her true and real power.—*Southern Presbyterian Review.*

religious, or has any more relation to religion, than any other part of knowledge; so that every means by which any mortal acquires any knowledge, is as much liable as the district school, to be engrossed by the Church; as indeed it has been in past ages. Nor can it be shown that a company of boys at school, is more liable to spiritual injury, than a company of boys at a tannery or a carpenter's shop; nor that unsanctified study, as they express it, more demands, upon principle, the supervision of the Church, than unsanctified play, or unsanctified work."*

Even if the premises of this argument were correct, the conclusion would not necessarily follow. We might admit that "education is an affair purely civil, purely temporal;" that what a boy is expected to learn in the district school, the academy, or college, has no more relation to religion, than what he learns in a tannery or carpenter's shop; and yet consistently assert the right of the Church, on due occasion, to supervise and control it. Architecture, and the building of houses, is a matter purely civil, and yet the Church has the right to build houses and to organize a system of Church extension. The truth is, that anything, no matter how purely it may be of a civil nature in itself considered, becomes a legitimate matter of Church direction whenever it is a necessary means for the promotion of religion. We, however, deny that education is in its nature a civil affair. On the contrary, the training of the young is of necessity of a moral and religious, as well as an intellectual operation. The Southern Reviewer himself says: Revealed religion "ought to be made a prominent part of education, from the primary school to the university." How, then, can it be "an affair purely civil?" How can the schools be sunk to a level with the tannery? Is "the revealed religion" an essential part of the art of tanning leather? It is only by degrading education to a level with a handicraft, that even a plausible pretext can be framed for withdrawing it from the province of the Church.

4th. It is urged that the Church has not perfectly secured the object aimed at, when she had the control of schools and colleges. Even in Scotland, "it has not availed much that the schoolmasters must be members of the Established Church, and in our own country memorable examples are not wanting to prove that we have achieved little in the way of giving education a safe moral direction, when we have placed it most completely under ecclesiastical control." We cannot see the force of this argument. Does the fact that the Church has not fully accomplished her mission, though she has ever been intrusted with the preaching of the Gospel, prove that she has no right to preach? or that she should be forbid to exercise that right? How then does the fact, that she has not accomplished her whole work, though she has had the control of education, prove either that she has no right to educate, or that the work should be taken out of

* Southern Presbyterian Review.

her hands and given to the State? Has nothing been done in Scotland by her parish schools? Lives there a Scotchman in the world, or a man in whose veins a drop of Scotch blood circulates, who has courage to say, it had been well for Scotland had her parochial schools never existed, or that the control of them had been in the hands of her Stuarts and Lauderdale's?

5th. The work is represented as far too great for the Church to accomplish. This objection bears only against those, if any there be, who maintain that the Church has the exclusive right to educate. We know no one who takes this ground. It is expressly disclaimed by the Board of Education, and by their able and devoted Secretary. All admit that there is work enough for Church and State, for individuals and bodies corporate, to do. It should, however, be borne on the conscience of the Church, that should the State provide only a secular or irreligious education, the whole work would come on her. She would in that case be bound to declare off from all State schools, and assume the work of providing a proper education for the whole people. She has assumed the work of preaching the gospel for the whole population. The work of education is not greater, and will not prove to be beyond her strength. If God brings the occasion, he will give the grace. The objection, however, from the magnitude of the work, does not bear in the present posture of the controversy. No one wishes to drive the State from the field, so that the Church may have everything to do.

6th. Much the most plausible argument, not against the right of the Church, but against the expediency of the establishment of parochial schools, is, that if Christians of various denominations devote their energy to the establishment of Church schools, the public institutions will be left in the hands of irreligious men. More good, it is urged, can be accomplished, more power exerted in the promotion of religious knowledge by the Christian community giving a right direction to the public schools, than by the establishment of schools under Church control. If this were so, we should, on the grounds of expediency, be opposed to denominational education. It is to be remembered, however, that the establishment of parochial schools has been forced upon the Church, by the irreligious character of the education furnished by the State. No one heard of parochial schools until, under the instigation of Papists, the State authorities began to exclude the Bible and to expurgate the school books. We, however, do not believe that denominational education will seriously interfere with the interest taken in the schools of the State. Christians see that the public schools are exerting an immense influence on the public mind. They have every possible motive to labour to make those schools as good as possible. The establishment of parochial schools, by raising the standard of education, and by provoking emulation, will tend to improve the whole system of State education.

Neither, then, on the ground of right nor expediency, can the propriety of the Church assuming her position as "one of the parties"

in the work of education, be legitimately called in question. By her divine commission she is required to teach all nations. It is impossible that she should fulfil her commission without, in a multitude of cases, engaging in the work of secular education. And, therefore, wherever and whenever the proper religious and secular training of the young cannot be otherwise accomplished, it is the bounden official duty, as well as the prerogative, of the Church, to intervene for the attainment of that object.

V. Our fifth position is, that in the existing state of our country, our Church cannot properly give up the whole work of education to the State. Having seen that religion is an essential element in the education of the young, and that it is equally the right and duty of the Church and State to provide for them a Christian and Protestant training, it is obvious that the separate duty of these two parties to the work, is one to be determined by circumstances. If the State provides such an education for the people as the conscience of the Church demands, there is no necessity for separate Church action in the premises. And, on the other hand, if parents or the Church make such provision for this object as satisfies the necessities of the State, there is no need for State intervention. The position assumed by our Church and by a large part of the Christian community is, that the State does not in fact, in this country, and cannot rationally be expected to, furnish an education sufficiently religious to satisfy the just demands of a Christian people, and therefore, that it is the duty of the Church, while endeavouring to make the State education as good as possible, to provide at least for her own members a course of instruction more thoroughly according to her own views. The correctness of this position is fully sustained by the two following considerations. First, that the standard of religious education fixed by the most religious advocates of the State system, is too low. And, secondly, that there is no rational hope of seeing our public schools, as a general thing, elevated even to that defective standard.

In religious education there are two things obviously distinct and of almost equal importance. The first is, the communication of truth to the mind, so that it shall become part of the pupil's knowledge; the other is, the impression of it on the conscience and religious feelings, so as to render it practically operative in the formation of the character and government of the conduct. What, therefore, Christians are bound to require, and what the Church is bound to see as far as possible effected is, that a knowledge of Christianity as a system of divinely revealed truth, should be communicated to the minds of the young; and that that system should be, as far as human agency can go, suitably impressed on the heart, by sincerely religious as well as intelligent teachers. Religious education in this sense of the term, is of necessity a very protracted process. It requires constant and long-continued effort. It is only by years of

instruction that a child or youth can be brought to such an intelligent and comprehensive knowledge of the contents of the Bible, of its facts, institutions, doctrines, and precepts, as is necessary for his proper moral and religious development as a Christian man. It is not by the simple use of the New Testament as a reading book in the public schools, that this object has ever been accomplished. The Bible must be regularly studied; its doctrines clearly drawn out and inculcated, and the principles of duty exhibited and applied. It is by a course of instruction which renders the pupil an intelligent Christian, so far as knowledge is concerned, that Scotch schools have exerted the wonderful influence universally attributed to them. It is by a similar process of indoctrination, that the Prussian system has availed to preserve religious knowledge among the common people, in the midst of a general apostacy of the clergy into rationalism. It is evident that no such thorough religious teaching is now contemplated as desirable, or, at least, as possible, in our State institutions. The writer in the *Southern Presbyterian Review*, seems to make the introduction of the Bible as "a reading book," the maximum of religious instruction for common schools. "In Maryland," he says, "about the year 1838, by a simultaneous movement, the word of God was introduced as a reading book, first into the public schools in the city of Baltimore, and afterwards into far the greater part of the public and private schools of the State. Those who insist on going beyond this, and require, as a part of public education, that the peculiarities of their particular sect shall be publicly taught to all the pupils in all the schools, manifestly require what they would not themselves be willing to concede to others, and which it is therefore absurd for them to expect that others will concede to them."*

Mr. Colwell pleads for instruction in "general Christianity," that in which all denominations agree. He says, "There is a general Christianity in which men may be saved, who belong to no particular denomination, and are instructed in no peculiar tenets." p. 118. "The simple fact that Protestants admit that men may be saved in any Christian communion, in which the essential truths of Christianity are professed, proves that there is a common ground on which all might meet if they would." p. 119. "This common ground," he adds, "has not been defined, vindicated, and proclaimed, because Christians have spent their strength upon their differences, and not upon their agreement." p. 120. "It is this Christianity which is common to the prevailing denominations, which is to be communicated to, and impressed upon the children of the United States, in the public schools." p. 126.

The objection to this is, that it is indefinite. By common Chris-

* It need hardly be remarked, that there is a wide interval between simply making the Bible "a reading book," and requiring denominational peculiarities to be taught "to all the pupils in all the schools." The latter no one demands; more than the former every friend of religion is bound to require.

tianity, one man understands mere philanthropy; another makes it an ethical code, another a system of natural religion. The very fact that it is undefined, renders it unfit for a standard of religious instruction. It means little or much, just as every one pleases. If by common Christianity be meant the doctrines common to all who call themselves Christians, including Unitarians and Universalists, it is evident this would not, and ought not to, satisfy the conscience of the Church.

Dr. Cheever in his eloquent plea for the Bible in common schools, quotes Dr. Humphrey, as thus describing the religion to be taught in common schools. "There are certain great moral and religious principles, in which all denominations are agreed, such as the ten commandments, our Saviour's golden rule, everything in short which lies within the whole range of duty to God, and duty to our fellow men." *Cheever*, p. 160. But is this Christianity? Here is not one word of those great doctrines without which Christianity is a dead letter. On another page, he quotes Mr. Webster to much the same effect. "It is notorious that there are certain great truths which are admitted and believed by all Christians. All believe in the existence of a God. All believe in the immortality of the soul. All believe in the responsibility, in another world, for our conduct in this. All believe in the divine authority of the New Testament. And cannot all these great truths be taught to children, without their minds being perplexed with clashing doctrines and sectarian controversies? Most certainly they can."

It is evident that the standard here set up by the advocates of religious instruction in the common schools, is far below what the Church is bound to require. But even this modicum of religious teaching cannot in many cases be secured. The Bible has in many places been excluded by public authority. Everything sectarian, *i. e.*, everything to which Jew or Romanist could object, has been proscribed. The whole influence of government, and the general tendency of the public mind has been to the entire exclusion of religion from the public schools. This exclusion is advocated by politicians and by ministers of the Gospel, by influential religious, as well as secular journals. A very great change has occurred in this matter. Fifty years ago, the Westminster Catechism, as well as the Bible, was taught in all the schools in New England. Now the Bible can hardly be retained as "a reading book." The *New Englander* advocates the exclusion of all religion, and quotes with approbation, the language of Dr. Vaughan in the *British Quarterly Review*. "For our own part," says that gentleman, "we have always entertained a very low opinion of the religious instruction given in day schools, and of the religious impression produced by it. We have thought that a fuss has been made about it wonderfully greater than the thing itself would justify." Think of that, ye shades of Knox and Calvin! So low as that, have men of our day descended. Too much "fuss" is made about an agency which, next

to the ministry of the word, has done more to mould human character and to decide human destiny, than any other in the world. The *New Englander* not only endorses this, but says: "The plan of giving no direct religious instruction, has, in its essential features, been practised generally in New England for thirty years."

Is it not time, then, for the Church to move? If one party, and that the largest and most powerful, advocate the entire exclusion of religion from public institutions, colleges, as well as schools; if another pleads only for that amount of instruction which can offend neither the Unitarian nor the Romanist; if in point of fact, common schools, and colleges under State control, are, in many cases, conducted without the semblance of religious instruction, can the Church, or Christians, leave the whole work of education in the hands of the State? Are we not bound to have institutions of our own, in which the Gospel may be fully taught and faithfully inculcated? In so doing we take the most effectual method of elevating public sentiment, and of bringing back the State to a higher appreciation of its duties. If State schools and colleges are conducted without any religious instruction, and other institutions rise around them, in which Christianity is faithfully taught, the former must either become Christian or perish. We do not advocate any indiscriminate action, or the purpose to establish Church schools and colleges wherever they can be placed. If the State institutions are truly Christian, as we know is often the case, especially as it concerns common schools, it would be most unwise to set up rival institutions. What we contend for is, that the Church, as well as individual Christians, has a right by her divine charter to provide for the secular, as well as the religious training of the young; and that in the existing state of our country it is incumbent on her, in many places, to exercise that right. Wherever thorough religious instruction cannot be incorporated in the common school, the Church is bound to have a parochial school. Wherever there is a college under control of the State, which excludes Christianity from its course of instruction, the Church, or Christians, are bound to provide a Christian College.

V. The only other position which remains to be considered is, that the Church, in providing that religious education which our present exigencies demand, cannot rely upon the separate action of her members, but is bound to act in her organized capacity, and, therefore, that the principles on which our Board of Education have acted in aiding the establishment of schools, academies, and colleges, are sound, and ought to be approved.

If private Christians establish schools, or academies, or colleges, in which religion is adequately taught, then, in the places where this is done, there is, as before remarked, no call for the intervention of the Church in her organized capacity. But such individual and separate action is altogether inadequate. In the work of domestic and foreign missions, we can depend neither on individual effort, nor

on voluntary associations. The Church as such in her organized form, is bound to conduct these great enterprises. It is only by this combined action that the resources of the Church can be called out; that the strong can be brought systematically to aid the weak; and that the requisite security for orthodoxy and fidelity can ordinarily be attained. All these considerations apply with as much force to the work of education, as they do to the work of missions. How many parochial schools, or how many Christian colleges, in our Western States, would have been established without the co-operation of the Board of Education? The necessity of this organized assistance is felt and acknowledged universally. Our New England and New-school brethren have a voluntary society for assisting in the support of Western colleges. Are we to have resort to such a society? Must the battle between ecclesiastical boards, and voluntary irresponsible societies, be fought over again in our Church? The work cannot be left to individual enterprise. There must be concentrated and organized effort. Shall this be by the Church? or by one or more voluntary organizations? There can be but one answer given to these questions, and it has been given by the Church in a way not to be mistaken.

But if the Church is to raise the funds for the support of these schools and colleges, she must control their management. Our parochial schools must be under Church sessions, and our Church colleges under synodical supervision. This is not only right, but necessary for the obvious reasons: First, that the Church, in raising funds for a specific object, becomes responsible for their proper application. Secondly, because the very ground of Church intervention in the matter, is that State schools and colleges do not furnish security for that kind of education which the conscience of the Church demands. It would be easy to refer to a State college long under the control of one of the most notorious infidels in the land; to another where many of the professors were avowed sceptics; and to others where religious instruction is entirely excluded; and where the Sabbath is disregarded—the students being allowed to spend that day as they please. It is not right or reasonable to expect either the Church or Christian men to contribute for the support of institutions controlled by trustees appointed by State legislatures.

It may be said, however, that self-perpetuating corporations furnish all reasonable security. On this it may be remarked, that where such boards of trustees already exist, and have an established character, they ought to be confided in, and nothing should be done in any way to weaken their hands. But when the Church is called upon to aid in the founding a college—it is right she should herself retain the control. If it be known and agreed upon, that the trustees of a college in Wisconsin or Iowa, are to be appointed by a Presbyterian Synod, there is a ground of confidence for the present and the future, that no list of names of a self-perpetuating corporation could inspire. If any man doubts this, let him make the experiment.

Let him try to raise funds for a college in the far West, under a self-perpetuating board, and see if he will find it as easy as to secure aid for one under the care of a Synod. Such colleges as Princeton, Jefferson, Washington, Hampden Sydney, have the full confidence of the Church, and are entitled to it. But when the question is, how shall new colleges, especially in the thinly settled parts of the country, be organized, in order to give due security for their religious influence? the case is very different. Under such circumstances neither State control, nor self-perpetuating trustees, can furnish any such security, either for liberal education or sound religious influence, as ecclesiastical supervision.

It has, however, been said, "the working of systems of secular education, the virtual, if not formal appointment and removal of teachers, the determination of courses and methods of secular teaching, and in effect, the last appeal in questions of discipline," do not "fall properly within the divinely appointed jurisdiction of the spiritual courts of Christ's house, or constitute the proper themes of promoting the spirituality and peace of the Church." Do these subjects belong more legitimately to a State legislature? Suppose the course of instruction for our youth, the selection of teachers, and final administration of discipline must belong directly to a political legislature, Whig or Democrat, or to a Presbyterian Synod—no good man, we answer for it, would prefer the former. The objection, however, has no foundation. There is no necessity for any of these distracting details being brought before the Synod. They do not come before the legislature. The legislature retains the appointment of trustees, and thus has entire control over the State institutions; but it has nothing to do with these details of management. So the Synod of Kentucky appoints the trustees of Centre College, and leaves to them its management. We are not aware that the spiritual interests of that Synod are injuriously affected by its relation to the college; nor would any other Synod have much to fear from that source.

If the Church then as an organization, is called by its duty to the country and to its divine Master, to aid in securing the establishment of schools, academies, and colleges under her own control, wherever such institutions of a proper character do not exist, or cannot be secured, it is hardly open to question that the Board of Education is right in the course which it has hitherto pursued in relation to this subject. That Board is the organ of the Church for educational purposes, and whatever the Church does in that department is done through that Board. The question whether the field of labour has not so increased as to call for a separate organization, is one of expediency and not of principle. It is analogous to the question whether the work of Church extension should continue to be a branch of the work of missions, or be erected into a separate department. It is obvious, that no new organization ought to be adopted, so long as

the work to be done is adequately accomplished by those which now exist.

It is, indeed, said that "the work of inaugurating a scheme so vast, and so complex, and requiring gifts, knowledge, and experience in its founders, of so varied and comprehensive a character," cannot properly be coupled with the other objects of that Board. This supposes that the Board of Education is to stand in the place and perform the duties of trustees to all the schools, academies, and colleges which it may be called upon to aid. The Board, however, have no more to do with the management of these schools and colleges, than with the direction of Theological Seminaries in which its candidates study. They are the mere agents of the Church for the collection and distribution of money, and for stimulating the efforts of its members. If a pastor informs the Board that he needs aid for the establishment of a parochial school, or if a Synod call upon them for assistance in sustaining a college, such help may be afforded without any very extraordinary "gifts, knowledge, or experience" on the part of the officers of the Board.

We look back on the recent discussions on this whole subject with great satisfaction. It has no doubt done good. It has, on the one hand, led to a clearer view of the duty of the State in reference to the work of education, and to a deeper sense of the importance of Christians exerting themselves to give a truly religious character to the public schools; and, upon the other hand, it has served to produce a stronger conviction of the high part the Church is called to act in this matter, and of the importance of the Board of Education continuing and extending their efforts to establish schools, academies, and colleges, "on a definite religious basis, and under the Church's own care."

ARTICLE VIII.

THE CHURCH'S PRAYER FOR MORE MINISTERS.

BY JOHN ANGELL JAMES.

"The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth labourers into his harvest."

THUS spoke the Saviour of the world, when he saw the multitude willing to receive instruction, and the paucity of teachers ready and competent to impart it. The scene moved his loving heart to compassion. Instead of miraculously raising up an army of labourers, which he easily could have done, he laid it upon the conscience of

his people to pray for them, and made the supply dependent upon their supplications; and thus, to a certain extent, makes them responsible for an adequate and efficient ministry. I have been of late deeply and solemnly impressed with the importance and necessity of this injunction of our Lord and equally so with the fact, that it is generally and astoundingly neglected. I repeat the assertion to draw attention to the fact—it is *generally and astoundingly neglected*. How rarely is it the subject of ministerial petition in our public assemblies; of the prayers of the brethren at our social meetings; of heads of families at the domestic altar; or of individuals in their closet exercises. I put it to all who may read this paper to inquire how often they hear it mentioned in associate devotion; and how often *they* make it the subject of their own. The whole matter of the ministry seems by common consent to be all but excluded from our prayers. True, our brethren pray at our prayer-meetings for their own ministers, and sometimes not only with earnestness, but with *adulation*. But how strangely they forget *the ministry* at large. Or if they pray for those who are already engaged in the work, how rarely they pray for a greater supply of labourers! How small a space of our united supplication is devoted to our colleges, either to the students or the Professors! But the subject of the present paper is specific—it is for a numerous, an adequate, and efficient ministry—for *more* labourers.

If ever there was a time when the people of God should lie down upon their faces, imploring with all the importunity, boldness, and perseverance of faith, for a larger supply of ministers, each full of the Holy Ghost, as was Barnabas and Paul, it is the period that is now passing over us. And yet the Lord's people are silent; or, if not silent, satisfy themselves with a few formal, lukewarm petitions, destitute alike of faith and fervour.

Before I come to enjoin the duty of prayer, I will for a moment advert to the *kind* of ministers we must pray for. This may be known from the work they have to do—to gather in the harvest of souls to Christ and to heaven. We want *harvest men*, for harvest work; men that can and will labour; men that thoroughly *understand* the great work of saving souls, and who will give themselves to the work. It would be a poor recommendation of a labourer for the harvest field that he was a good tradesman, or that he was a good scholar, or well read in history, if at the same time he did not know how to *reap*. His work is specific, it is to gather in the harvest, and his qualification must be appropriate. So it must be with the ministers of the Gospel.

They are described as *labourers*, not as loiterers: and as labourers in *this* work of gathering in the harvest. A man may be very busy, very diligent, really very hard-working, but if he is not busy, diligent, and hard-working in reaping and gathering in the harvest, he is *not* the kind of man we should pray for. The work of the Christian ministry is as specific as the work of the reapers in the corn-

field; and if he is not fit for *this* work, what business has he to be there?

For such labourers the Church must lift up a general, loud, importunate, and persevering cry; and just for these two reasons,—the immensity of the harvest, and the paucity of the labourers. If we saw a vast breadth of wheat spreading out before us, and only here and there a solitary labourer, though, perhaps, there were scores of loiterers and idlers sitting under the hedge, or stalking about with their sickles under their arm, we should involuntarily exclaim, “The harvest will perish for want of labourers to collect it.” Such, friends, such is the scene presented by the spiritual harvest.

If we look to the heathen and Mohammedan world, we find about a thousand missionaries for seven or eight hundred millions of immortal souls; we find in China only a single missionary to several millions. How slowly the twenty missionaries required by the Baptist Society for India come forth! Where are the ten for China which the London Missionary Society are anxious to send out? If we turn our attention to the colonies, we see a population rapidly multiplying beyond all preparation that all the various denominations of Evangelical Christians have yet made for their spiritual wants. But my present purpose is more particularly to plead for prayer, with direct reference to our own country. And here, in reformed Protestant England, what a paucity of Evangelical labourers prevails. What are three thousand out of fifteen in the Church of England? Are there more than twelve thousand spiritually enlightened, earnestly devoted, right hearted, ordained ministers for the whole United Kingdom of England, Scotland, and Ireland? But to come to our own denomination, I ask what is the state of that? Are not hundreds of our churches destitute of pastors? True, we have also hundreds of ministers destitute of churches, but are they labourers fitted for the work of gathering in the harvest? Look at our colleges; with one or two exceptions, are they not all only half full? New College, in London, has no more students for the ministry at the present time, than Highbury alone at one time contained. Manchester College is not much more than half full. Spring Hill could receive, and we hope will receive when the new building is finished, double its present number. Is it not the complaint of our professors, that their classes are all lamentably small? And thus the education of our ministers in this day is going on at an enormous cost; not so little, in some cases, as a hundred pounds (\$500) a year for each student! At the present moment we have many stations of the greatest importance unoccupied, and without any immediate prospect of being occupied. Whatever be the cause, whether it be a low state of spiritual religion in the churches which leaves the bulk of our young men lukewarm and worldly; or the tide of emigration drawing them away to distant lands; or the higher requirements for admission into the colleges, by which many otherwise ardent and devoted men are rejected; or the smallness of our stipends, by which

young men of much prudence are prevented from becoming aspirants for the high and sacred employment of saving souls; or the divisions in our churches, which repel those who otherwise feel a desire to be engaged in ministerial duties; the fact is indubitable, that few are offering themselves in this day for admission to our colleges. Nor does this apply merely to our own country; it is equally true of the Continent, and of America. This is a subject not only for lamentation, but also for inquiry. May we not trace it up in part to a deficiency in the church's prayers, and in part to a want of the church's own diligence in looking out for suitable men to be educated for the ministry? I have no doubt that both these are to be taken into account. I shall advert to the latter in the close of this paper, and confine my remarks at present to the former. We have not, because we ask not; or asking, ask without faith, fervour and hope.

It ought to be borne in mind that *we*, practically as well as doctrinally, admit it is the Lord's work to send labourers into the field. We repudiate the practice of "bringing up our sons for the church," irrespective of intellectual and spiritual qualifications. We wait till God has converted the soul and moved the heart to the work. We, therefore, are, by our own views of the ministry, specially bound to pray for labourers. We entirely depend upon the Spirit's working in the hearts of men for ministers. To neglect prayer is, with us, to neglect everything. We thus disuse every means. We ignore the whole theory of apostolical succession, not only as unscriptural but unnecessary; for, without attempting to trace back our call to the ministry, through the dubious and dirty channel of episcopal ordination, we derive it directly from the Holy Ghost. The office is of Christ's appointing, the qualification of His working, and the call of His giving. How fervently, believingly, and constantly, should our prayers, therefore, be directed to Him for the supply of ministers. Prayer is an intelligent, believing, and practical acknowledgment of Him as head over all things to His church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in (or with) all. Did He not ascend up on high, having obtained gifts for men, to give "pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ?" Surely this not only teaches us the duty of prayer in reference to this subject, but makes it obligatory upon us. The gift of faithful pastors is His Divine prerogative, and an act of His power and grace. The church, measuring her Lord's ability and grace by her own narrow views and limited means, has but a faint conception of her Lord's inexhaustible resources. Her prayers have been in proportion to her own views, and not to his loving heart and mighty arm. She has appeared afraid of excess in her petitions when she has, in fact, comparatively asked nothing. Why should she not prepare herself to ask and to expect a ministry as large as the wants of men, and as excellent as that of the apostolic age? Why, Christ ascended up on high to give such a ministry, and is only waiting for the believing

prayers of his church to bestow it. Instead, therefore, of sitting down to lament over the paucity of eminent, devoted men, let us go to Him in the confidence of believing prayer. The church's faith should rise to the church's necessities, and her Lord's ability to supply them; and her prayers should be the expressions of her faith.

The prayer for such a blessing as a devoted and efficient ministry should be *general* and *importunate*. It is a subject demanding the solemn attention of every minister and every member of every Christian church. It is a duty from the obligations of which none are exempt. It is not to be left to the preacher and the pulpit, but the whole body of the faithful should be engaged in wrestling supplication for this blessing. Ministers, of course, must lead, and, instead of a cold, occasional, and heartless reference to the subject, they should breathe out such entreaties in the hearing of their people as should enkindle the flame of devotion in a whole church. If it is true in reference to anything it is true in reference to this, that man "ought always to pray, and not to faint." The utmost importunity should characterize our prayers.

We have only to dwell upon the magnitude, the richness, and the necessity of the blessing, to see the importance of this. The churches are to be supported in vigour, and the world is to be converted principally by preaching, and by preaching adapted to accomplish the mighty result. We do not underestimate the power of the press and the advantages of education; but these will never supersede nor surpass the influence of the pulpit. The ministry of the Word will ever remain God's chief instrument for working out the plans and purposes of his grace towards this revolted world. Everything is standing still, or only moving slowly on for want of an adequate number of earnest preachers of the Gospel. The harvest is perishing on the ground for want of hands to get it in.

It may, perhaps, be said, we have already more ministers and missionaries than we can comfortably support. Such is the plea of a sordid covetousness and a weak faith. When once the church is roused to a due sense of her duty to pray for ministers, she will not be backward to support those whom God gives in answer to her own prayers. Ministers, such as those I plead for, will never lack support. The churches are tired, I know, of the burden of incompetent and indolent men, and no wonder; but ministers who are as flames of fire, will call out resources for their own support. When God sends us missionaries, such as Schwartz, Carey, Martin, Morrison, and Williams, to say nothing of men living now, will the church say, "We cannot support them?" Let Whitefields, Wesleys, M'Cheynes, Spencers, Pearces, Paysons, come in troops, we have no need to fear for their support. The Spirit of the living God that sends such men will send their support with them. The zeal of such seraphs will burn up the covetousness of the church, and cause abounding means for their sustentation.

The attitude, operations, and prospects of the church in this age, call imperatively for this spirit of believing prayer for labourers in the harvest field. Associations of all kinds are formed and are still multiplying. But who is to work them? By whom are the means of working them to be called forth? Perhaps we are too eager for the multiplication of organizations, and too dependent upon them. We are in danger of idolizing our institutions, and becoming Society worshippers. Individuality is being lost sight of, and *the power of the one noble-minded, large-hearted, energetic, and earnest man is underestimated.* What might not one such man do? What has not such a man often done? Without selecting for illustration such men as Luther, Calvin, Knox, or Cranmer; or even as Whitefield or Wesley—those *spiritual giants*—but referring to men of lower stature and more ordinary powers, what has not one man done, in many cases that have come under our own observation? God could raise us up many such men, and would do it, if we had but a spirit to seek the blessing by believing, importunate prayer. Let us ask not only for the might of associated numbers, but of single labourers. I often look round, and fixing upon such men as have been eminently useful, plead with the Almighty by their names and usefulness, saying, Lord God of the spirits of all flesh, give to thy churches such preachers and pastors as these. We should plead not only for good men but great men. Great I mean in the power of the pulpit,—*great in power to gather in the harvest.*

Still we cannot do without *Societies*, and for their sakes, also, we want wise, holy, and commanding men,—men that shall influence others and multiply themselves. Good and great men make other good and great men. The age is wonderful, and we want men for the age. God is telling us by the signs of the times, what kind of ministers are wanting. He is lifting up a voice on this subject which grows louder and louder continually, as if he meant that it should at last be heard. But it is not *yet* heard. No response is given; no loud, general, persevering cry is going up to Heaven, saying, "Send more labourers into the harvest!" Christians are satisfied with giving money, attending meetings, hearing speeches, but they do not pray in equal proportion. God is not acknowledged; the Spirit is not implored. The giving age and the working age are happily come, but the praying age is *yet* to come. We hope it is coming, though there are not many indications of it at present. Look at your prayer-meetings,—yes, and your *Missionary* prayer-meetings too. "Must it not be a cause of constant heaviness and sorrow of heart to every one not under the general infatuation, that our concerts for prayer, of all other occasions of concourse among Christians, should have the very last place in the esteem of the church. It is impossible to lament too deeply this portentous fact." So wrote an eminent American minister, in one of the most heart-stirring sermons on this subject ever published. By this we find that the

spirit of prayer is as low on the other side of the Atlantic as it is on ours.

Let me then send out the call over our land for more prayer on behalf of a supply of ministers. Oh, if all pulpits, all social meetings, all family altars, all closets, were from this hour solemnly, earnestly, importunately consecrated to this work of praying to the Lord of the harvest for more labourers, what a revival would take place both in the church and in the world! Oh what an amount of beneficent power would be exerted on the destinies of the whole earth's population, if we should henceforth witness these scenes of importunate and wrestling supplication! What students would fill our colleges! what ministers would occupy our pulpits! what pastors would preside over our churches! How should we break forth on the right hand and on the left! Let the whole church, then, continually lift up its hands, its heart, its eyes to Heaven, in imploring cries for this great blessing. Let us thus meet the cry which comes to us from our colleges—"Send us students!" which comes to us from our destitute churches—"Send us pastors!" which comes to us from colonies—"Send us ministers!" which comes to us from the benighted realms of paganism—"Send us missionaries!" which comes to us from all these quarters, without, indeed, the Macedonian vision, but with a cry not less piercing or affecting, saying, "Come over and help us!"

But, as we are to *seek*, as well as *ask*, there is something else for us to do besides *praying* for ministers, and that is to *look out for them*. Christ's bounty in giving pastors and teachers does not at all supersede our duty in endeavouring to obtain them. I hold it to be a solemn duty on the part of the pastors and their churches to look among their members for young men of eminent piety, good physical qualifications, competent abilities, and great devotedness. Christ may, and often does, say through the pastors to a selected youth—"Son, go work in my vineyard." It ought not to be left in all cases to an impulse from within, but the desire may be in some persons awakened by a call from without. In many of our churches young men are to be found in whose hearts a secret desire is cherished, but repressed by modesty, to be engaged in the work; while there are others also, who, though they had never felt such a desire in a definite form, would, on its being presented to them, immediately embrace it. Great care, however, should be taken, that incompetent men are not selected. The most ardent piety without physical qualifications and competent abilities, will not do for the work of the ministry at any times, much less in such times as these. We had better send none to college than men not up to the right standard. We have already hundreds of men who are doing nothing, and who are standing in the way of others. We must pick out the best and most devoted men that our churches contain. A pastor should be as intimately acquainted as possible with all the young men in his church, and should take under his care and training any

one whom he deems eminently qualified for the work of the ministry. It is to be regretted that our more wealthy families have little sympathy with the Apostle or his views, where he says, "If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." It is worthy of remark how few of *our* ministers come from our more affluent families, some of whom would consider it almost a misfortune if one of their sons should become a *Dissenting* minister, though, perhaps, they would feel little objection to his going to Oxford and becoming a clergyman. I much question whether, if the Universities be thrown open to Dissenters, many will ever come from thence to *our* pulpits. Dissenters may go to Oxford and Cambridge: but will they *return* such? Should the privilege be granted to us, it may be our bane after all.

In conclusion, I return to the subject of prayer, and most earnestly call upon all who feel interested in the welfare of our own denomination in particular,—in the prosperity of the universal church, or in the conversion of the world to Christ; upon all who own subjection to the Redeemer's commands or sympathies with him in the desires of his immaculate and loving heart; upon all who see the connection of an adequate and efficient ministry with the support and advancement of Christ's kingdom in our world,—to consider from henceforth more deeply, solemnly, and practically than before, the necessity and importance of believing, importunate, and persevering prayer for the Lord to send more labourers into the harvest. It is with small hope of much effect, as regards either ministers or their flocks in general, that I send forth this paper. Alas! alas! we are all too busy to pray. We can find time and inclination for anything rather than this. And yet, is not prayer the very lock of our strength, *the secret of our success*? Let us begin a new era in the history of religious activities, which, without being attended with any decay of zeal and liberality, shall be characterized by a spirit of deep devotion and earnest supplication. Let the past be characterized, as it may be, by coldness and neglect, neither the present nor the future ought or need to be, on that or any other account, similarly distinguished. Let the end of averseness to prayer be now come, and a wrestling spirit begin its mighty power and prevalence with God. Some anxious, earnest hearts will sympathize in his views and feelings with the writer of this paper. To them he proposes to unite with him in his purpose to make the subject of this paper the matter of *special prayer in his Saturday evening's exercises of the closet*, to carry it more frequently into *the pulpit*, and to engage the hearts of his flock to present it more earnestly to God at their *meetings for social devotion*.

ARTICLE IX.

THE MINISTERIAL OFFICE.

BY THE REV. THOMAS GUTHRIE, D.D., SCOTLAND.

PEOPLE are ready enough each to exaggerate the importance of their own place and duties. Distance lessens the apparent, and nearness increases the relative magnitude of objects; a molehill close to the spectator's eye seems bigger than a distant mountain; and this I know, that men are prone to exaggerate the magnitude of what is near, and the value of what is dear to them. All classes are indeed ready to do with their own business what the apostle did with his when he said, "I magnify my office." Paul, however, belonged to an order who cannot unduly do so. No powers of language, no eagle flight of fancy, no glowing enthusiasm of temper can over-estimate the importance of the pulpit and the ministerial office. I speak the truth, the simple truth. "I am not mad, but speak the words of truth and soberness," when I pronounce it worthy of the highest talent and the holiest piety, and that the Gospel offers a theme and the pulpit a place even for an angel's intellect and a seraph's fire.

I know indeed that God can work out his own ends by the most unpromising instruments, through the agency of those who are neither gifted with parts nor graced with piety. On one occasion Parry, Franklin, or some one else, engaged in exploring a north-west passage, relates how they shaped a speculum from a block of ice, and gathering in its focus the rays of an Arctic sun, how they kindled a fire by that frozen mirror. And so, using him as an instrument to reflect the rays of the Sun of Righteousness, by means of a cold, frozen, lifeless minister, God may awaken souls and kindle within the hearts of men a celestial fire. To show that "it is not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts," by some poor, weak, silly man, He may do great things; as in the days of old, by the sound of an empty horn, He threw down the walls of Jericho. This is true; yet in his providential, and also in his gracious dealings with mankind, He commonly selects the means that are best adapted to the end. Once, but only once, He called a youth from the sheepfold with sling and pebble to lay a giant low. Once, but only once, He spoke by the mouth of an ass. Once, but only once, He summoned a woman from her household cares to save his people, and lead on to battle the tribes of Israel. Commonly, shortsighted as we are, we can discover an adaptation of the means to the end in view. Look at Moses; look with what ardour he flung himself into the quarrel, and how, bestriding the prostrate Hebrew, he stood up to the Egyptian, and as he received his blow, returned it on the head of the oppressor with the power of a battle-axe. Was this a soft, apathetic, lethargic, even common man,—cast

in the ordinary mould? Look at Paul; how he does stir and blow the fires of persecution,—how he roams through the Church like a roaring lion,—how he steels a kind heart against the wails of woman and the cries of children,—how he crowds the dungeons with captives, and makes the name of Saul as terrible as that of Nero! Were these weak men? Men of average intellect, energy, and courage? No. By them, by Martin Luther, by Knox, by many others, God had a great work to do, and He chose great men to do it; grafting his grace upon a native stock of rare talent and resistless energy. And that is a wise Church which seeks to fill her pulpits with her noblest sons, the men of mightiest talents and most illustrious piety; and which in the management of spiritual matters, takes a lesson from the son of Kish. “There was sore war with the Philistines all the days of Saul.” And there will be sore war with the devil, the world, and the flesh, all the days of the Church on earth, even till Christ himself descend to close the fight and crown the victors. And as we are told that “when Saul saw any strong man, or any valiant man, he took him unto him,” even so should the Church, with the battle in the front and her banner in the field, lay her hands upon the men of grace and talent, enlisting, and by moral power impressing them into her service.

I have said that it was impossible to over-estimate the importance of a minister's office. Over-estimate! who can even estimate it? When a man looks forward to the day when he shall have to give in his account, and be reckoned with by God for the souls committed to his charge, it makes one almost repent that he ever undertook this office,—so solemn, so weighty, so overwhelming is its responsibility. It casts over every Sabbath, not indeed a gloomy, but a very solemn air, and gives to a large congregation something of an awful aspect. The player from the footlights of the stage may look round with satisfaction on his crowded house, but a large audience waiting for the bread of life is a sight to fill one with fear, and to remind us of the words of Dr. Johnson, who, when some one said that he thought a minister's an easy office, replied, “No, Sir, I pity the minister who thinks his an easy office. I pity the people who are under such a minister. I look upon a minister as on a father who has a larger family than he can well provide for.” I believe certainly, that heaven's brightest crowns shall shine on those who have shone as lights in the world, that heaven's highest throne shall be occupied by those who, with God's blessing, have turned many from sin to the living God; but I believe as certainly, that to faithless ministers, to men who have sought the priest's office for a piece of bread,—to these cold, dead, careless, lifeless men, will be reserved the hottest fire and the deepest hell; and to our imagination, in all the depths of perdition there appears no situation more appalling, no group more terrible, than a lost minister among a lost people. We shudder to think of it.

Fearful is the position of a minister who has to dwell for ever and for ever with lost souls, who pour on his unhappy head loud and

bitter reproaches, as, pointing to a distant heaven they cry, "But for you, accursed man, but for you, we might have been there. Jesus died to save us; you preached not Him but yourself, you sought our praise, not our profit; our admiration, not our salvation, was your miserable aim. You saw us sinning, and never warned us, sinking, and made no effort to save us; dumb dog, why did not you bark? greedy dog, why did you seek only your own? You took the charge of souls you never cared for; you betrayed your charge. We are lost. Accursed man! Oh! that we had never seen you, never seen your face, never heard your voice!"

One who magnified the profession of the law has said, that by the exercise of his talents, a lawyer saves or ruins families. So by his skill or ignorance, by his care or negligence, the physician saves or destroys life. But here the stake is not family or fortune, health, limb, or life—it is not time, but eternity: here, heaven is lost or won, and when one meditates on this, how in the providence of God on these mortal lips may hang the destiny of immortal souls, and what momentous interests are suspended on the closet with its prayers, the study with its preparations, the pulpit with its Sabbath sermons, sometimes we feel inclined to lay aside this office, and if we could see another door than Jonah's, make our escape from such a solemn position. At any rate, I can understand the speech and sympathize with the feelings of the martyr in the Grassmarket, who, to the surprise of all, stopped on the ladder, suddenly stopped, not to kneel for life, nor sell his principles, nor live a base apostate; but stopped to say, as he turned him to the weeping multitude, "I ascend this ladder to die with less fear than I have often gone up my pulpit stairs to preach." Happy the land, and happy the Church, whose pulpits are filled by such men as he, who wear another gown than this the fabric of the loom, the produce of a worm, the prey of the moth; who ascend the pulpit robed in the mantle and burning with the spirit of their Master, and who look around the assembled congregation through the very eyes of him of whom it is written, "When he saw the multitude, he had compassion on them."

ARTICLE X.

"I MAY DIE IF I GO."

[From the Christian Intelligencer, N. Y.]

To ministers of the Gospel who have too little of Paul's or Timothy's spirit, the following letter may perhaps contain an idea that may be useful to them. The occasion which called it forth was this:

A young minister, who had lately left a Theological Seminary, was very anxious to obtain a settlement, and was zealously candidating for one. He possessed qualifications which gave promise of usefulness, being pious, industrious, persevering, and energetic. A certain missionary Board gave him a commission to labour in an inviting field, in one of the Western States. He wrote in answer, stating his difficulties, and declined going. The following letter was sent in reply to his:—

MY YOUNG BROTHER:—This answer to yours of the — inst., is given at the earliest opportunity that I have been able to command. And now, what to write I really do not know. The reasons you give for not accepting the appointment to go West, surprise me not a little. Where or from whom you could have learned your lessons of self-denial and trust in Providence, I do not know. Certainly, however, not from the Bible.

You say, "If the West would agree with your health, and you could be supported, you might go; but you should want to be sure of the latter before you went."

Now, as to the first, I don't believe it is in the power of any mortal man to tell whether it would agree with you or not in the West, or in any other place. People do get sick, and always have got sick—die, and have died, up to this time, in every place where they "have lived and moved and had their being," on this earth. And really, my brother, I do not see any reason why you should not be healthy in the West, as well as any one who has gone there to labour in the Master's cause.

When he sent forth his disciples, I believe he gave them no assurance that they should not get sick; nor, if they got sick, that they should not die. Some of them, however, did get sick, and "were sick nigh unto death." But they recovered again, and lived quite awhile, but died after all.

You say also, "you want to be *sure* of being supported, if you went West." Had you been one of those who heard the command of the Saviour, "Go your ways, carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes," the thought of sickness and poverty might have prompted the reply: "What, go to preach the Gospel to save souls, and run the risk of getting sick, and not be *sure* of support? Why, behold, we have forsaken all and followed thee: what shall we have therefore? a place to labour in where we may get sick, and where we shall not be sure of our support?"

Why, did you never know, brother, that the Master had not where to lay his head? and "is the disciple above his master, or the servant above his lord?"

Now, my young brother, if you are ever called to enter upon the work of the ministry, I hope you may be enabled, in comparison with those who are afraid of getting sick, and want to be sure that they will be supported, if they should venture to go and preach a Saviour who was despised and had no support but what was the fruit of

charity, and sometimes not that—I say I hope, in comparison with such, you may be able to say: “Are they ministers of Christ? I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure; . . . in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness,” &c. See 2 Cor. 11: 23, 25, &c.

I hope, also, that if you should ever be in such a place as Damascus, and meet with such a governor as the one under King Aretas, who might wish “to apprehend you,” and do with you I know not what, that you may then be so happy as to escape his hands, by finding somebody who will, through a window, in a basket, let you down by the wall, so carefully as not to break your neck, nor do it in the night, lest you might get chills and fever.

To conclude, let me say that I firmly believe, where there is an undue anxiety on these subjects, there is little prospect of usefulness in the self-denying work of the gospel ministry; and that we have several missionaries in the West, and none of them have, as yet, been in a state of starvation.

Hoping that you may have your difficulties removed by inquiring of the Lord, who alone can look into the future, I remain yours, ever ready to answer such inquiries as come within the range of human ken; and with earnest prayer that you may be guided by heavenly wisdom through all your toils, and safely reach the place where “the faithful shall hunger no more,” and none shall ever say “I am sick,”
I am, of the meek and lowly one,

Your fellow DISCIPLE.

ARTICLE XI.

THE STUDY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.*

BY THE REV. JAMES WOOD, D.D.

MY YOUNG BRETHREN:—

When Christ commissioned his disciples to “go and teach all nations,” promising to be “with them alway, even unto the end of the world,” he gave thereby a clear intimation of his purpose to raise up a succession of ministers from generation to generation, until the final consummation of all things. In accordance with this design, he instituted ordinances, which in like manner were to continue “till he should come.” He made no provision for the administration of these ordinances, except by this order of men; and to

* The substance of an address delivered to the students of the New Albany Theological Seminary, at the opening of the session in November, 1843, by James Wood, D.D., at that time Professor in the Seminary.

them he also "committed the ministry of reconciliation," and made it their official duty, first "to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ," whenever and wherever they might have opportunity, and then to "commit the same to faithful men, who should be able to teach others also;" aiming thereby to secure for that and every subsequent period of time, a suitable agency to instruct the ignorant in the knowledge of the gospel, and urge upon their attention its claims to their belief; to "warn them to flee from the wrath to come," and seek shelter in the ark of the "new covenant;" in short, to edify and enlarge the Church of Christ, by gathering into her pale a "redeemed, purified, and peculiar people, zealous of good works."

These objects, which lie patent on the original commission, were justly regarded as being so essential to the happiness of mankind, that a threatening to remove the gospel ministry from a people who enjoyed this privilege, was viewed as a terrible judgment; and when actually inflicted, as in the case of the seven churches of Asia, the calamity proved to be as great in reality as it was in anticipation.

But though Christ has sometimes suffered here and there a light in his tabernacle to be extinguished, for the punishment of formal and idolatrous professors, his love and covenant faithfulness to his people have prevented him from permitting his sanctuary to be at any time *completely* darkened. Hence, though the enemies of religion have, at different periods, invaded the holy place, and threatened to exterminate the whole priesthood, yea, the temple of Christianity itself; there never has been a moment, when they could boast that the ministers of Jesus were all slain, or that they had ceased to offer up spiritual sacrifices to God. Sometimes, indeed, they have been compelled to perform their devotions in secret places, "wandering about in mountains, and dens, and caves of the earth;" but in those obscure recesses, the lamps of a pure Christianity, though reduced in number, have yet burned with a brilliant flame; and the incense there offered, has ascended up with so sweet a savour before the mercy-seat, as to secure in due time enlargement for the church and her ministry, together with increased faith and zeal to discharge their high and holy functions. Thus has this office been perpetuated to the present time; and it still exists unimpaired in its authority, in the persons of all true ministers of the Gospel, who, as the called of God to this office, are the legitimate successors of the apostles, evangelists, and bishops or pastors of primitive times, and of the persecuted and martyred preachers and pastors of succeeding ages.

Upon Timothy, one of those early evangelists and bishops, it was solemnly enjoined to "study to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." And as the charter under which Paul introduced him into the gospel ministry, was that great commission which will never lose its force so long as the Christian ministry continues, we justly infer that this injunction was intended for our instruction as well as Timothy's; and hence, that the *study of the Holy Scriptures* is one

of the first duties of a gospel minister, and by parity of reasoning, one of the first which is incumbent on a candidate for the sacred office.

The Gospel, in the hands of ministers, is like the sanctuary and the ark in the camp of Israel, which, as pledges of Jehovah's special favour, were the glory and defence of the people; and yet the Israelites were located around the tabernacle, as if they had been the guardians of these sacred symbols. They were encamped in four grand divisions, with the tabernacle in the centre, so that no enemy could approach it without forcing themselves through their host. Thus, though the Gospel is the defence and glory of the church, yet it is committed to the church, especially to her ministers, as a sacred trust, like the tabernacle to the tribe of Levi, and they are required to employ their whole time, talents, and attainments, in learning, defending, and promulgating its precious truths; so great, indeed, should be their devotion to this Gospel, that they ought to be willing, not only to stand between it and the hostile attacks of its infidel adversaries, but to confess and publish its truths, if required, at the sacrifice of every earthly good. So felt and so acted the great Apostle of the Gentiles: "Neither count I my life dear unto myself," said he, "so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God."

Such being the nature of the ministerial office, it is a clear inference that those who are called to engage in it, ought to aim at the possession of high qualifications; and among them all, no one should hold a higher place than a thorough and practical acquaintance with the Word of God. It has been remarked by a late writer, that the only commendation of eloquence in a Christian minister found in the Bible, is, that he was "*mighty in the Scriptures.*" To be mighty here, is to be armed with that "panoply of God," by which we can "quench the fiery darts of the wicked," and "put to flight the armies of the aliens." To be mighty here, is to possess a moral influence, which, if faithfully and prayerfully wielded for the benefit of our fellow-men, will enable us to move, and renovate, and save a perishing world. I cannot, therefore, enjoin upon you any duty of greater importance than the diligent and devout study of the Holy Scriptures.

1. You ought to study the Holy Scriptures, because they are the records which it is the great business of your profession to expound and enforce. To attempt an exposition of what you do not understand, would be a gross imposition upon those who may attend on your ministry. But how is it possible to understand a book of the size and character of the Bible, without diligent study? If a man should propose himself as a counsellor of law, who had merely read the usual text-books of his profession, and had then laid them aside for occasional reference, but without making them his diligent and thorough study, who would have confidence in him as a legal

adviser? No more ought he to be confided in as an interpreter of God's Word, who is not a diligent student of the sacred volume.

2. You ought to study the Holy Scriptures, because they exhibit the spirit which it is the glory of your profession to exemplify. The spirit which pervades the Bible is pre-eminently holy. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." As might be expected of a book written by such men, and who were under the divine influence, it breathes from every page a spirit of love and meekness, of faith and humility, such as is found in no other book. It is the spirit which forms a perfect character, the spirit of the man Christ Jesus, the spirit of saints and angels, the spirit of the high and holy God. This spirit the preacher of the Gospel is expected above all other men to possess; and upon its exhibition much of his professional influence and usefulness depends. It is obvious, therefore, that he ought to be a diligent student of that volume from which, more than all other books, he can become imbued with this heavenly spirit, and thus acquire for himself what will constitute both the ornament and the moral power of his ministerial character.

3. You ought to study the Holy Scriptures, because they inculcate those duties in the practice of which it is expected you will be bright examples to others. Does Paul exhort Timothy to be an example to the flock? In order to this, he must obtain a definite knowledge of those duties of which he was required to be an example; and this knowledge must be sought chiefly in the Holy Scriptures; since they are taught with clearness and completeness nowhere else. For the same reason, the Bible must be made *your* study, in order that you may learn what duties are required of you, and how to expound and practise them. The precepts of the Gospel are to be both themes for your discourses, and rules for the regulation of your conduct; and you need not anticipate success in discussing the former, if you fail to practise according to the latter. But, whether they are considered as themes for discussion, or as rules for practice, the requisite knowledge and ability either for the one or the other, can be obtained in no other way, than by a diligent study of the Bible.

4. You ought to study the Holy Scriptures, because they give the only authentic account of many valuable and important facts concerning the creation and early history of the world; and especially, because they reveal those most wonderful and important of all truths, which relate to our redemption by the Lord Jesus Christ. These ancient narratives besides being interesting and instructive in themselves, furnish the richest materials for the illustration and confirmation of the great doctrines which it will be your duty to teach. Let those who *will*, draw their proofs and illustrations from Greek and Roman authors. A theologian acts much more in character, by entering the fields of biblical research, and exploring those golden mines, which Moses and the other sacred writers have laid open to his observation. In a particular manner, ought he to possess an intimate and accurate knowledge of the Gospel method of salvation;

lest through ignorance or misconception, he lead astray the souls of men who are committed to his care. Would you avoid a result so dangerous and awful as this? Make the Holy Scriptures your constant study. From these and these alone, can you obtain that knowledge with regard to these things, by which you will be able both to "save yourselves and them that hear you."

On both of these points, the Holy Scriptures are not simply the most original, but the only original writings ever composed. On the former we admit, i. e. with reference to the creation, &c., some fictitious narratives exist of an early date. But we exclude from our comparison compositions which are fanciful, or fabulous, and consequently without value. We care not how much originality may be claimed for these; nor do we lose anything by conceding to them this claim. Their character is such, in other respects, as to exclude them from consideration in our search for the *real*, the *true*, and the *useful*.

An infidel lawyer after reading the decalogue, is said to have exclaimed, "Where did Moses get that law?" The characteristic which excited his surprise, was its fulness and perfection. He found in it all the principles of legal jurisprudence and sound morality, which he had ever noticed anywhere else, or which he could conceive of as belonging to a *perfect* code. Did Moses derive those principles from other authors? or they from *him*? We have conclusive evidence, that the Mosaic writings *antedate* all other authentic records extant. Those books contain the "seeds of things;" the germs of all ethical knowledge. Though natural reason might have taught some of those principles, it could have done it only in a partial and feeble manner,—not with that fulness and force which characterized the decalogue, and gave it a commanding authority over the understanding and conscience.

The same is true, substantially with regard to the Mosaic history. It contains the original materials for all other history, which appertains to the earlier periods of the world. The fabulous accounts preserved among oriental nations concerning the patriarchs, the deluge, the world before the flood, and especially concerning the creation, were all derived from the books of Moses, or from those traditions which were found chiefly in that ancestral line, from which he descended. Whether God made a revelation to Adam concerning his own creation and the creation of the world, we possess no means of ascertaining with certainty. If he knew anything *particularly* on this subject, it must have been communicated by God. For surely, no one will seriously maintain that he could have reasoned out the process by which the earth assumed its form, and put on its green attire; how it was rendered animate and joyous by the presence and motions of living creatures; and especially how he himself came into being, possessing in his erect physical frame, and his intellectual endowments, a conscious superiority above all those by which he was surrounded. Much less could he have obtained this know-

ledge from tradition ; because he being the first man, had no ancestor from whom this tradition could be derived.

On the supposition that God communicated to Adam the particulars of his creation, and the creation of the world, there were materials from the very first, for preserving in the minds of men some knowledge of the circumstances of our origin, and the origin of all other things. But the details of that wonderful transaction, have never been found in any authentic document, which even professed originality, except the writings of Moses ; and it matters not to us, whether God made them known to him first of all, or whether he had previously revealed them to Adam. As the pentateuch contains the only credible *records* which relate to the origin of our race, the origin of nations, &c., those writings are to us, the only *original* sources of information on this subject. And what a wonderful book must that be, and how worthy of your diligent and profound study, in which your Creator has caused to be recorded the glorious acts of his power, wisdom, and goodness !

But these things, though wonderful, are not the greatest wonders found in the Bible. The recovery of fallen man from his sinful and ruined condition, and his restoration to the divine image and favour infinitely surpass all God's other works. They could never have been predicted or even imagined, by the most sagacious of our race, —no, not by the angels in heaven. They were so improbable, so contrary to all the known principles of Jehovah's government, and to the claims of law and justice upon the transgressor, that they remained a profound and inscrutable mystery even in heaven, until God was pleased to reveal his merciful purpose, and the manner of its execution ; how in his infinite wisdom he had devised a scheme, by which his justice would be displayed and his law honoured, and yet the sinner be redeemed. The Holy Scriptures are the grand repository of this amazing grace ; and the great business of your future ministry will be to open this repository, and unfold the riches of this grace. Need I urge upon you again, in view of this fact, the careful and daily study of the sacred volume ?

Let us now inquire how the Holy Scriptures are to be studied ?

1. Large portions of them should be committed to memory. A distinguished pastor lately observed to me, that if he were a professor in a Theological Seminary, he would make the memorizing of the Scriptures, one of the regular exercises of his class. A few verses committed to memory daily, and continued from year to year, will furnish a constant supply of the most valuable materials, for doctrinal discussion, for illustrating and enforcing duty, and for the exhibition of privilege ; materials which will be always at your command, and will form the most instructive, edifying, and impressive parts of your pulpit addresses. Sometimes we hear sermons so void of Scripture quotations, that the question involuntarily occurs, whether the Bible is used by the preacher for any other purpose than to find his text. This absence of Scripture from many modern dis-

courses, led the pious Mrs. Isabella Graham, to express her preference for the old Puritan divines; because, as she said, "*they had so many italics in them*"—alluding to the practice of printing Scripture quotations in italic letters.

At other times, we hear the Scriptures quoted in so inaccurate and bungling a manner, as to show that, however much the preacher may have *read* the Scriptures, he had taken no pains to treasure up the *language* of the sacred writers. We are aware, indeed, that this apparent negligence sometimes arises from the idea, but we think it an erroneous one, that it is preferable to quote the Bible *ad sensum*, than with verbal exactness and precision. It is reported of the Rev. Dr. Griffin, that a student of theology read a sermon in his presence for the purpose of criticism. Referring to the song of the angel, announcing the birth of Christ, he attempted to abbreviate the language and give the sense in his own words. Dr. Griffin interrupted him with the remark, "The angels can sing better than you; use the very words of their song."

It is pardonable in men of other professions, when referring to the Scriptures, to give only the general sense of the passage. But the preacher of the Gospel should not be satisfied with this. He should have in his memory a large number of proof texts on every important doctrine of the Bible, and be able to quote them with verbal accuracy. If "the priest's lips were to keep knowledge, and the people were to receive the law at his mouth," he ought to be acquainted with the very *words* of the law, so that they might perceive that the knowledge he kept and communicated, was the unadulterated truth of God. A different course may suit the views of Roman priests, and be acquiesced in by Roman Catholic congregations. But among Protestants it is otherwise. With them nothing is binding in religious matters, unless it is taught in the Holy Scriptures; and hence they should be thoroughly instructed in biblical knowledge; to which end their pastors and spiritual guides should intermix with their discourses Scripture quotations sufficiently copious, and so apposite to the subject under discussion, as to enable them to say in the language of Paul, that they "speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual."

2. Study the Scriptures in their chronological order. It is often a great assistance in enabling us to understand a person's language, to know at what time and under what circumstances it was uttered. This remark is so obvious as to require no proof; and it applies with as much force to the Sacred Scriptures, as to any other writing. Hence the study of biblical chronology is highly important to a theological student; and with reference to some portions of the Bible, it is indispensable to a clear understanding of the passage. The several books are not all arranged in the exact order in which they were penned. Such an arrangement is impracticable, without separating some books into two or three parts, and inserting between

them portions of some others. But by a careful investigation and comparison, their chronology may be generally ascertained; and the study of the whole in this order, serves greatly to elucidate what would otherwise be obscure, as also to invest it with much additional force and beauty.

3. Study the Scriptures in their connection. In arriving at the true exegesis of a passage, the question to be settled is not merely what ideas the words are capable of conveying, but what did the sacred writers design to convey by them. And this can be determined in many cases, by no other means so well, as consulting the context. Short, detached sentences, quoted out of their connection, may be and often are applied in a sense entirely different from that intended by the Holy Ghost. Such a use of them, however, is a perversion of the Word of God, and its tendency is to unsettle the meaning of Scripture, by giving to the same words and phrases as many different senses as may be suggested by the fancies of different interpreters. These fanciful and varied expositions have led to the unfounded and injurious insinuation that the Bible is like a musical instrument, on which the performer can play whatever tune he pleases. The sense of Scripture is *one*; and the preacher is bound to employ every means in his power to ascertain and educe that *one sense*; to which end let him study the Bible, not only in its words and phrases, but as these stand related to each other, and to the whole tenor of the writer's discourse.

4. Study the Scriptures systematically. By this we mean that you should bring together parallel passages from every part of God's Word, and hold them up before your minds, in that focal brilliancy and power, which will result from the collected and concentrated rays of divine truth. The texts thus collected and harmonized, form a system of divinity, a system constructed after a divine model, and in inspired language; such a system as you will find more valuable in preparing you to become "able ministers of the New Testament," than the study of the most profound and learned lectures on systematic theology. We would not depreciate the latter; but impress your minds with the transcendent excellence of the former. The one is important—the other is indispensable. If your theological knowledge is enriched with these golden materials, and systematized according to this method, your preaching will be eminently scriptural and instructive; it will edify and comfort God's people, and he will honour and bless it to the conversion of sinners.

The most pungent, heart-searching, and effective discourses of President Edwards, were strikingly systematic; but their model was the Bible. By a wise and skilful collection and arrangement of those Scripture arguments, which he found scattered through the Holy Scriptures, he entered into the very hearts of his hearers, "with thoughts that glowed and words that burned;" and on some occasions he drew from them expressions of deep concern for their souls. If you employ the arguments which God has furnished in his Word,

besides honouring him thereby, and securing his blessing, you may be certain that you are using the best that can be found, because he who knows what is in man, has revealed them for the use of Gospel ministers in their official work.

5. Study the Scriptures critically. Observe the various forms and inflections of the different parts of speech, and the manner in which they are employed in the construction of sentences. Attend to the etymology of the words, and particularly to their *usus loquendi*, at the time in which they were penned. These remarks are applicable to the English Bible, but are designed to extend further. The Scriptures were not written originally in English; and though the English version now in common use is doubtless the best which has ever been made, it is not perfect; and the study of this alone is not sufficient for obtaining a *critical* knowledge of the Bible. It must be read in the Hebrew and Greek. There are words, whose significations are so extensive, that their *full* import cannot be given in a translation, but must be unfolded by the expositor. Some *English* words (as is the case with all spoken languages) have undergone a change in their meaning since the translation was made; and hence, unless you are able to consult the original, you are liable to be led into an erroneous view of those passages where such words occur. Some words are also of doubtful meaning, even in the original, and require to be carefully examined with all the aids which the biblical student can command, in order to arrive at their true and exact sense. And further, the original languages have their own peculiar idioms, which cannot always be preserved in a translation; and yet upon a knowledge of these idioms depends, in no few instances, a perception of the force and beauty of the sacred text. We do not, however, advise you to study the original, to the neglect of the English, nor to employ in your translation different English words from those which are used in our version. Even where some other word would more clearly express the sense, it is preferable to introduce such word as a criticism or exposition, than to substitute it for the one in common use. Long-continued usage has imparted a kind of sanctity to this version, particularly in the minds of plain and pious readers of God's Word; and a preacher, who should quote in their hearing a passage translated from the original in different language, would be suspected either of carelessness, pedantry, or irreverence. But while you adhere to our translation, in reading and quoting the Scriptures, yet in your *studies* you should compare every word and phrase with the original text, and make it the court of final appeal, in all cases of difficulty or doubt.

6. Study the Scriptures devotionally; i. e. with a devout and prayerful desire to understand the truth, and to enjoy in your own souls its enlightening, comforting, and sanctifying influence. You are familiar with the remark of the great reformer, Martin Luther, "*bene precavisse, bene studuisse*;" a maxim which he doubtless practised. It was said of him, "that he could have of God what he

would; that his enemies felt the weight of his prayers, and the Church of God reaped the benefit." Though a prayerless man may study the grammar and lexicography of the Greek and Hebrew originals, as successfully as one who is devout, and may become as skilful and profound in biblical criticism; yet we are far from believing that he is as competent to unfold the *spirit* of God's word, as the man who daily seeks divine illumination. The former may expound the Scriptures in an erudite manner, and may present much that is true and important; but there are spiritual beauties which he fails to discover, and which of course will not be educed in his expositions. (See 1 Cor. 2: 9-15; and 2 Cor. 4: 2-6.) Even uneducated men who are "taught of God," exhibit in some instances, a more thorough acquaintance with the doctrines of the Bible, than some distinguished scholars not thus divinely illuminated. (See Matt. 11: 25-27). This circumstance forms no valid argument against a liberal education, or the critical study of the Bible; but is adduced to show that high intellectual culture and a studious and learned attention to the Scriptures, are only a part of what you need in order to understand the mystery of godliness. Divine truth possesses an inherent excellence and glory; which are discerned only by those that reverently approach Him, who as the "sun of righteousness," "shines in the hearts" of believers, "to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

But in addition to the light which you will thus obtain to understand the Scriptures, a devotional spirit will give them a supporting, comforting, and sanctifying influence over your hearts, and thereby greatly promote your ministerial usefulness and success. If you are imbued with the spirit of the Bible, you will have power with the people. John Knox was a great man intellectually; but it was not his giant intellect alone, but his prayers, that made him so successful a reformer and so terrible to the papal interest. Said Mary, Queen of Scotland, "I fear John Knox's prayers more than an army of a thousand men." Let your Christian graces be kept alive, and vigorous by habitual communion with God; and let your study of the Holy Scriptures be always accompanied with devout and fervent aspirations to him, to "open your eyes to behold wondrous things out of his law." You will then leave your studies, like Moses coming down from the Mount, after he received the decalogue, with your faces radiant with heavenly light. And as then, so now, your congregations will perceive it, and be powerfully affected by the extraordinary unction thereby imparted to your ministrations.

My brethren, if it were only a matter of personal improvement, the course now recommended would be worthy of your attention. But I speak in behalf of the Church, whose edification you are preparing to promote; and in behalf of perishing sinners, for whose conversion and salvation you are expecting to labour. The Gospel is deposited in the hands of the ministry as a sacred trust, for which they must hereafter render an account. You are looking to this

ministry; and will soon enter on its duties. In a few years your last message will have been delivered, and you will be required to answer before your Judge, how you have preached; what doctrines you have taught; what duties inculcated; and what life you have lived. In view of that momentous future, how imperative is the obligation to qualify yourselves to become "able ministers of the New Testament;" and in order to this, that you aim at becoming *now* what you will desire to be, when invested with the sacred office. If you are faithful, zealous, and persevering in your preparation, you will scarcely fail to be so in the work of the ministry. On the contrary, if you are slothful and negligent now, you will probably be so then; and who can tell how many souls may be lost through your inefficiency. Let the duties of every week and every day be faithfully and conscientiously performed; whether they appertain to the intellect or the heart; to the exercises of the class or the devotions of the closet. You will then be qualified, in due time, for distinguished usefulness in the church. And when your work is finished, and you resign your trust to the "Shepherd and Bishop of souls," he will greet you in that approving language, "Well done, good and faithful servants, enter into the joy of your Lord."

ARTICLE XII.

THE WAN REAPERS.

BY MRS. C. JUDSON.

I CAME from a land where a beautiful light
Is slowly creeping o'er hill-top and vale,
Where broad is the field, and the harvest is white,
But the reapers are wasted and pale.

All wasted and worn with their wearisome toil,
Still they pause not, that brave little band,
Though soon their low pillows must be the strange soil
Of that distant and grave-dotted strand.

For dangers uncounted are clustering there,
The pestilence stalks uncontrolled;
Strange poisons are borne on the soft languid air,
And lurk in each leaf's fragrant fold.

There the rose never blooms on fair woman's wan cheek,
But there's beautiful light in her eye;
And the smile that she wears is so loving and meek,
None can doubt it comes down from the sky.

There the strong man is bowed in his youth's golden prime,
But he cheerily sings at his toil,
For he thinks of his sheaves, and the garnering time
Of the glorious Lord of the soil.

And ever they turn, that brave, wan, little band,
A long, wistful gaze on the west—
“Do they come, do they come from that dear distant land?
That land of the lovely and blest.

“Do they come? Do they come? Oh! we're feeble and wan,
And we're passing like shadows away;
But the harvest is white, and lo! yonder the dawn!
For labourers—for labourers we pray?”

ARTICLE XIII.

CHRIST THE MODEL AND HELP OF THE CANDIDATE.

A PASTORAL LETTER TO CANDIDATES.

ISSUED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

PRESBYTERIAN EDUCATION ROOMS,

Philadelphia, February, 1854.

DEAR BROTHER:—Allow us, in the discharge of official duty, and with the freedom and affection of Christian intercourse, to direct your meditations, for a short time, to a subject which might claim a discourse, rather than a letter—CHRIST, THE MODEL AND HELP OF THE CANDIDATE FOR THE MINISTRY.

Halyburton, on his dying bed, exclaimed, “Oh! that the ministry of Scotland may be left from destroying the kirk of Scotland!” The best security of the Church in every age, is to have her candidates and ministers imbued with the spirit, grace, and power of Christ.

1. Christ is the model and help of the candidate, in the primary work of PERSONAL RELIGION. “He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners.” Perfect holiness, like a divine effulgence, shone through his human nature. Made under the law, he obeyed its requirements, and fulfilled all righteousness. His unspotted life is the practical standard of moral excellence, and a perpetual plea for holiness in all his disciples and ministers. Official rank in the Church, or the prospect of soon possessing it, confers no exemption from self-examination or holy concern; but, on the contrary, urges to it. A man who preaches salvation to others, may be, alas! himself a castaway. Pardon and acceptance are found only in the Mediator between God and man. “Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” Christ is necessary to the candidate, in securing, in retaining, and in confirming the evidence of a gracious state. For it is “through him that

we have access into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

Piety begun, will, if genuine, increase in vigour; but only in virtue of a union to Christ. Sanctification is the work of the Spirit, but of the Spirit working within those who receive their title in the Redeemer of God's elect. "Ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." All true religion, since the fall, has been nurtured by faith. It is one of the worst evils of "philosophy falsely so called" to remove Christ from the daily workings of religious experience, and to tempt the soul to rely upon itself, instead of divine power. Christ is the believer's righteousness and sanctification. Each and all, candidates and ministers, should strive to make him their model and their hope in the religious life, exclaiming with Paul, "Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Then would salvation be written on the walls of the sanctuary, and praise upon its gates.

II. Christ is the model and help of the candidate in HIS CALL TO THE MINISTRY. Our blessed Lord was commissioned from heaven, in the counsels of eternity, to carry on the covenant work of redemption. He came, in accordance with the divine decree, "Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O God." At his public inauguration into office, by the baptism of John, a voice from heaven declared, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The divinity of his call was the glorious sanction of his work. And all who follow him in proclaiming the Gospel, must possess, as their authority, a divine commission. Piety, although an indispensable qualification for the sacred office, is not the only passport to an entrance upon its functions. Accompanying all gifts and graces, there must be the inward conviction that the individual is divinely designated to this particular calling. It not unfrequently happens that the question of personal duty is of no easy solution. Even after it has been once settled with apparent satisfaction, difficulties and temptations occur to reopen its discussion with painful perplexity. To whom can the candidate look, in his doubts and fears, but to his Saviour? "The Lord of the harvest" alone has the right to "send forth labourers into his harvest;" and his sovereign authority over this high subject he will not, any more than his omnipotence, delegate to a mortal. He invites his disciples always to come to him in their difficulties. Prayer must be offered; rational self-examination be instituted; and the indications of Providence and grace reviewed with care. In such an exigency, there is no friend like Christ. "When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men;" and he gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. He exercises exclusive control in commissioning ambassadors, as among the prerogatives of the King of

Zion. It is of infinite moment to the student to have an assurance of being in the path of duty. "A divine call to the ministry is *everything* to the candidate. Let him, therefore, not move a step without it; else he may damage his reputation, involve himself in extreme difficulty, and embitter the whole of life, and above all, sow his dying pillow with thorns! Let your appointment to the Christian ministry be *divine*, not human, and originate, not from earth, but from heaven. Then 'God will bless you and make you a blessing;' you will walk in the light by which the blessed Redeemer himself surrounds you, and be the highly favoured instrument of conveying divine light to others."

III. Christ is the model and help of the candidate in HIS PREPARATIONS FOR THE SACRED OFFICE. Our Saviour took time—with reverence be it spoken—in qualifying himself for his great work. He grew in wisdom and in favour with God and man. His human nature was developed by meditation, self-discipline, prayer, and mature preparation. Instead of hastening into the public functions of his office, he abode his time; and can it be doubted that that time was spent in diligent mental and moral advancement, preliminary to the great work of redemption? O, that all students would learn to know the grace, as well as the wisdom of *waiting*, and that they would look to Christ as the model of mature attainment and thorough preparation!

Christ is the "Prophet" of his people. It is his office-work to teach, to lead the mind into truth, to communicate right moral discernment and to fortify against error. Doddridge used to affirm that he never studied to such advantage, as when refreshed by communion with Christ. Is not this the experience of every pious student in our colleges and seminaries? There is no aid in the acquisition of true knowledge like that afforded by the Spirit of God. The right *temper of mind* in conducting investigations, especially theological, is derived from intercourse with him, who was "the way, the truth, and the life." The great *end* of learning is most effectually retained in the soul by thoughts of the Redeemer. *Clearness of intellectual vision* is secured, in reference to the knowledge of the Bible. "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?" *Diligence* in pursuing our studies, and in "redeeming the time," is inculcated by the precepts of the religion of Christ. In short, if there be any occupation which needs the sympathy and aid of the Master, it is that of the student preparing for the work of the ministry.

Literary pursuits are snares to piety, and the heart must keep a watch over them. The errors and heresies in the Church have been the offspring of unsanctified learning. And no period, since the Reformation, has required more vigilance than the present, in order to prevent the contamination of students by the teachings of crafty philosophers and open errorists. To look to Christ as your model, and

to rely upon him for conforming to it, will be your best security, dear brother, for the sanctification of your attainments, and the consecration of your intellect to the glory of him who hath called you.

IV. Christ is necessary to the candidate **IN REGULATING HIS INTERCOURSE WITH OTHERS.** The character of Christ illustrates every grace. Meek, patient, condescending, sociable, kind, instructive, loving, the complete circle of virtues irradiated his presence, and the majesty of his mission flashed forth from the centre-glory for them all.

Many eyes are directed towards the young student, on account of the prominence of his profession, and the censoriousness natural to corrupt human nature. How important for him to study Christ as a perfect model of social intercourse. To say nothing of intercourse with the world, the example of a candidate for the ministry among his fellow-students and companions needs the careful regulation of Christian principle. A College, or a Theological Seminary, affords severe tests of character. Temptations exist everywhere. Young men, in the glow of ingenuous years, are often liable to injury—all unconsciously—from the influences of unguarded social intercourse. Without entering into particulars, we will only say, that the best protection from all such dangers is to live near to Christ. He is our great exemplar. In following him, we shall not only avoid injuring others and being injured ourselves, but our whole intercourse may be precious and edifying in its influence.

V. Christ is the help of the candidate **IN TRIALS AND SORROWS.** Whilst preparation for the ministry opens many sources of true delight, it does not reverse the decree of Providence, that man's inheritance is "full of trouble." Inward grief and outward trials are the allotment of our earthly condition. Most candidates have to endure hardships, even in securing the means of subsistence during their preparation for the ministerial office. But how less severe than those of Christ himself, in his mission of love! "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head;"—distinctly intimating that his mode of life was precarious, and far from possessing the comforts or the certainties of a regular maintenance. "The women," who followed him, "ministered unto him of their substance." Our Lord had all kinds of sorrow, the sorrows of sin excepted, in greater abundance than any of his disciples and servants. The scoffs and jeers of Pharisee and Sadducee; the rejection of his claims as Messiah; the comparative unprofitableness of his ministry; the stupidity and ingratitude of the people in view of his miracles and teachings; the agony and bloody sweat—the trials—the buffetings—the crucifixion! "He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." And every sorrow was sanctified to the perfect discharge of the office of Mediator. "Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the

things which he suffered." Great moral purposes are likewise secured by the sufferings of every candidate and of every minister. Glory be to the name of Christ, he loves to sympathize with his faithful servants! "In all their afflictions, he is afflicted." He invites them to rest their burden upon his own Almighty arm. He is the sure support and stay of all that put their trust in him. Says Melancthon, "Trouble drives me to Christ, and Christ drives away trouble." The Apostle Peter says, "Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you." Lord, be thou our model in suffering, and thou our help in enduring!

VI. Christ is necessary to the candidate in **INSPIRING HIM WITH COMPASSION FOR THE SOULS OF MEN.** One of the pre-eminent traits in a Christian minister is an interest in the eternal welfare of others. The world knows nothing of this spirit. Philosophy cannot teach it, and hypocrisy can but feebly imitate it. It is the "unction from the Holy One," the baptism from on high, that alone can call forth the gracious exercise of spiritual sensibility. Our Lord "came to seek and to save that which was lost." Salvation was the great purpose of his life and death. He preached salvation to all classes, especially to the poor. He was ever intent on the objects of his mission of mercy. He taught and he wrought for the welfare of souls—of immortal souls. So must the Christian minister ever do. He must be "as one that serveth." The master-passion of the heart, in all official work, must be the good of others. He must be ready to exclaim with Paul, "God hath committed unto us the ministry 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." This spirit of compassion for sinners ready to perish, is the product of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and it must be nurtured and invigorated by faith. Communion with, and dependence upon, the Saviour, is the great method of imbibing his love, and of doing his work. A Church must wither away and perish, that encourages any to enter her pulpits with hearts unconcerned for the destiny of immortal souls. Where else but in the life of Christ, and at the foot of his cross, can spiritual zeal repair its wastes, and be continually reinvigorated for holy service?

VII. Christ is the model and the help of the candidate in **LIVING TO GLORIFY GOD.** The ruin which sin has made in the world is visible in the exaltation of the creature above the Creator. Grace, in re-establishing God's dominion in the soul, still has to contend with lingering corruption, which tempts and taints all our desires, and aims, and motives. In contrast with this degradation, Christ exhibits human nature aspiring with ceaseless love after the glory of the King of heaven. "Not my will, but thine be done," was the witness of the Saviour's life. Every word spoken, every miracle performed,

every prayer offered, every trial and agony endured, bore relation to the glory of his heavenly Father. "I have glorified thee on earth; I have finished the work thou gavest me to do." How important for a candidate and a minister to learn of Christ "the chief end of man," and to strive to glorify God, whether in life or in death! And as Christ is the model of this holy attainment, so is he our help in making it our own. May the Saviour's grace mortify the self-seeking, and the low, sinful ambition of the human heart, and imbue all candidates and ministers with an earnest longing to promote the glory of God in all that they do or suffer!

In concluding this pastoral letter to our young brethren in the Lord, we pray that each, in particular, may duly consider its contents; and exalt Christ as a model and a help in preparing for the office of the Gospel ministry.

We are affectionately,

Yours in Christ,

C. VAN RENSSELAER,

WILLIAM CHESTER.

In behalf of the Board of Education of the Presbyterian Church.

ARTICLE XIV.

THE DAY OF SPECIAL PRAYER.

BY THE CORRESPONDING SECRETARY OF THE BOARD.

A DAY of *special prayer* has been appointed by the General Assembly, in reference to *the increase of candidates for the ministry*. The following is the resolution, recommending the observance of the day:—

"Resolved, That the lamentable dearth of candidates in the Church, while the call both from the home and foreign fields is becoming more frequent and pressing, is the subject of serious alarm; involving great responsibilities on all concerned, and demanding in the most urgent manner the immediate and particular attention of ministers, elders, parents, and pious young men; and the Assembly express the opinion that constant and earnest prayer should be made to the "Lord of the harvest," both in public and private, until a gracious answer is given in His holy providence; and that the last Thursday of February next, be recommended as a day of special prayer and public instruction on this subject in all our churches."

On so solemn an occasion, and on so important a subject, a few thoughts may be acceptable to our brethren. May God give them efficacy in arousing attention, and in awakening a sense of personal accountability!

I. The necessity of a day of special prayer is obvious from the circumstances of our low estate.

The statistics of our candidates for the ministry summon the Church to the mercy-seat, with an urgency of appeal which no intelligent and zealous Christian will resist. The number of theological students in our different seminaries for the last ten years, has been as follows:—

1844	-	-	-	244	1849	-	-	-	250
1845	-	-	-	257	1850	-	-	-	241
1846	-	-	-	255	1851	-	-	-	254
1847	-	-	-	258	1852	-	-	-	267
1848	-	-	-	246	1853	-	-	-	240

The average for these ten years is 251.

The number for *the present year* is substantially thus:—

Princeton, New Jersey,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	108
Allegheny, Pennsylvania,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	53
Union, Virginia,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25
Columbia, South Carolina,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	38
New Albany, Indiana,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Danville, Kentucky,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	23

Total for 1854, 251

It will be seen that, although the number is a little better than last year, there is no decided and substantial increase; that there still continues to be a lamentable lack of service on the part of our pious youth; and that the number for 1854 is but up to the average of the last ten years. During this period of stationary statistics, there has been an increase of at least six millions to our home population, with greatly increased difficulties in evangelizing it; and the developments in the foreign field have been unparalleled. Awful as this calamity is, in relation to the unfulfilled work and duty of the present generation of Christians, its influence will pass on from year to year, entailing woe and evil on a still wider and more fearful scale. It is obvious that there are strong reasons to justify the Assembly in calling upon the churches to *pray* in a special manner to the Lord of the harvest.

II. The nature of special prayer partakes of the qualities of true prayer in the general. The very observance of a special day for a special object implies, however, prayer *more earnest* than common. A great aim demands the whole heart—the warm, compassionate, enlarged struggles of a soul very earnest in the presence of the All-seeing. Lukewarm supplications are out of place in an emergency. Special prayer must be vehement prayer. It should be also *more*

prolonged than ordinary prayer. Why appoint a time and a season, unless to "seek the Lord and His strength" with supplications, frequent, prolonged, persevering? Although length of prayer is of itself no warrant of an answer, yet when joined with fervour, it shows an intenseness of purpose which the Lord loves to recognize in his saints. Special prayer is, of course, more *definite* than ordinary prayer. It has a singleness and directness of desire which characterizes all its upward glances and utterances. One burden rests heavily upon the heart; and in the present case, how great the burden! The Church of Christ is suffering from the want of holy, consecrated youth, to fill the ranks of her ambassadors. "Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth; the faithful fail from among the children of men." Here is burden enough to seek relief from God. "The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few." The one chief, prominent petition is, that "the Lord of the harvest would send forth labourers into his harvest." Special prayer should also awaken *more penitence and contrition of spirit*. The more earnest, persevering, and definite petitions are at the throne of grace, the more will they ordinarily excite grief in the humbled soul—grief for past insensibility, inadequate views of duty, neglect of performances, general want of fidelity, and special deficiency in prayer and service about the work in question. More *dependence* belongs to special prayer. Faith is the essence of acceptable supplication. When a great public want summons the Church to the throne of the heavenly grace, confidence in God should be in strong exercise. Unbelief is a great sin, and never a greater one than when defiling the worship of the soul in the act of special prayer.

III. The OBJECT of the recommended observance is to secure the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon our youth. The *want* is the lack of candidates; the *remedy* is in the grace of God. The object of invoking the descent of the Spirit is to secure renewing and sanctifying grace for the rising generation; and in particular, that many may be called into the ministry. God alone can do the work to be done. There may be, and there must be, planting and watering; but the increase must come from a greater than Paul or Apollos. The number of youth in American colleges is, in round numbers, 25,000; in academies, 250,000; and in schools, 4,000,000. This immense aggregate of human mind in a formative state, needs the power of God to baptize it into eternal life. Without this holy omnipotence, it must become corrupt, and be a source of corruption; itself dying and smiting others dead. The hope of our youth is in *converting* grace. But beyond this, the Church seeks another baptism for many of them, even that which will inaugurate them into the office of the ministry of reconciliation. This high display of the divine prerogative is made in answer to prayer. The Lord of the harvest, who causes immortal mind to become ripe for heavenly gathering, will send forth reapers, when his saints obey the appointments of his

word. It is in vain to employ incidental instrumentalities—well ordered though these be—unless the Spirit comes down upon our youth and claims them for God, the Church, and the ministry. The great object, therefore, in the approaching season of special prayer, is to invoke the *presence of the Spirit* in our institutions of learning and at our firesides, in order that our youth may be renewed in the image of God, and many of them designated to serve him in the sanctuary.

IV. The HOPEFULNESS of special prayer is an encouragement to the Church to engage in the duty. Has not our blessed Lord so worded the precept, as to imply that the right kind of prayer for labourers will insure his sending them into the harvest field? That glorious text in Matt. ix. 38, like the Urim and Thummim, is the very oracle of God, giving a response of light to every consultation of faith, and distinctly intimating both duty and reward to every adoring believer. The Bible has never given plainer and more direct instruction on any subject than on this very one, the increase of the ministry. Christ's own declaration assures us that prayer for labourers is according to his will; and our hope of an answer is through "the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us." The gifts of the Spirit are communicated with a munificence of condescending love, unknown to the exercises of all human experience; for "if ye, being evil, know how to give good things unto your children, *how much more* shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him." Observe, the *gift* is the glorious one of the Spirit; the *willingness* with which it is given, is "much more" than that of parental love, and it is given to them that "*ask*" him. Can any followers of Christ, looking at the Scriptures, doubt? "O ye of little faith, wherefore do ye doubt?"

But the providence of God accords with the word of his grace. Many a pious father and mother have had their petitions answered in the conversion of a beloved son, and in his call to the gospel ministry. Special prayer has abounding memorials of God's rich grace. Hannah, a pattern of mothers, has had, in Divine Providence, many mothers to follow her example of consecration, and God has given, through them, many Samuels to his Church.

The instances of answer to the special prayers, offered in behalf of young men in colleges, &c., have been very numerous, and very marked and wonderful. Revivals of religion have followed the observances of this particular day in a manner that confounds unbelief. It has been estimated that nearly one-half of all the ministers in some of the New England States have been converted in college revivals. Outpourings of the Spirit have frequently commenced in the midst of the public religious services. The reader is referred to an article in the fourth volume of "Home, School, and the Church," and to preceding volumes, for a few details, which will repay perusal.

The hopefulness of prayer for the increase of the ministry receives its sanction from the word and the ways of God. Scripture and Providence are its glorious witnesses.

V. The DUTIES connected with special seasons of prayer, deserve a pious remembrance. We shall mention three. One is, the duty of *praying before and after* the particular season of special prayer. If the object sought is sufficient to justify the observance of a particular day for the common and united supplications of the churches, throughout the length and breadth of the land, surely it ought to have a place in the daily heart-prayers of Christians. There are times of emergency on this and all subjects; but the duty of praying to the Lord of the harvest has claims upon the regular and affectionate devotions of the closet. At any rate it will not be questioned that every Christian in the land should continue to pray for the specific object before us, *at least* until the present emergency has ceased, and "until these calamities be overpast." It is to be feared that too many content themselves with feeble, or it may be strong, petitions to God on the particular day designated, and then abandon or intermit the remembrance of our Church's wants, and of our Saviour's precept. Brethren, will it be, can it be, denied that to *continue in prayer* is one of the implied duties growing out of the very observance of the specially appointed season? Let us "continue instant in prayer."

Another duty devolving upon the Church, in view of the present emergency, is the duty of *labouring for the cause*, which is the subject of our anxieties and prayers. The petition "Give us this day our daily bread," implies the obligation to use all the means in our power to procure subsistence. To pray for an increase of ministers, and to do nothing that tends to promote it, is an inconsistency of Christian practice which religion cannot sanction. Among the things that may be *done*, are such as the following:—Instruction of the people from the pulpit, on the great topics relating to the Christian ministry; attention to the young on the part of ministers, with a view to the selection of promising youth for an education; the consecration and training of children for the glory of God and usefulness in the Church; the collection of funds for indigent candidates under the care of the Board of Education; public provision for the education of our youth in religious institutions, where their minds may become imbued daily with divine truth; in short, the use of all means tending to exalt the ministry, and awaken the conscience and energies of the Church in reference to its perpetuation, flows directly from "the assembling of ourselves together" in special prayer to the Lord of the harvest. The zealous labours which accompany prayer, are the best proofs of the sincerity of Christian devotion.

Watching for results is another of the duties of a prayerful spirit. "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same," is an injunction of divine wisdom. A carelessness about results shows an indifference

I. The agency of Gilbert Tennent in promoting the revival of religion in the Presbyterian Church was very influential. At the time he entered public life, religion seems to have been at a low ebb, something like the "Moderatism" of the Church of Scotland prevailing in various parts of our Zion. Too many of the ministers, who came over to America, entertained low views of evangelical activity. The alumni of the Log College, on the other hand, were trained to earnestness in the ministry, and united to old-fashioned orthodoxy the power of spiritual religion. A number of churches were refreshed under the ministry of these men before Whitefield visited this country. In 1739 Whitefield makes this record of his first visit to Gilbert Tennent:—

"God, I find, has been pleased greatly to bless his labours. He and his associates are now the burning and shining lights of this part of America. He recounted to me many remarkable effusions of the blessed Spirit, which have been sent down among them. And one may judge of their being true and faithful soldiers of Jesus Christ, because they are everywhere spoken evil of by natural men. The devil and carnal ministers rage horribly against them."

In New York Whitefield heard Mr. Tennent preach, and remarks in his Journal: "*Never before heard I such a searching sermon.*" On Mr. Whitefield's return from Boston, where his preaching had been attended with gracious influences, he persuaded Gilbert Tennent, much against his will, to follow in his path. Whitefield wrote to Governor Belcher, at Boston: "This week Mr. Tennent proposes to set out for Boston to blow up the divine flame recently kindled there. I recommend him to your Excellency as a solid, judicious, and excellent preacher. *He will be ready to preach daily.*" He arrived in Boston just before Christmas, 1740, and preached his first sermon on the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees. During the period of more than two months, in which he remained in Boston, the most extraordinary results followed his ministry, greatly exceeding those of Whitefield's. The Rev. Mr. Prince, author of the Christian History, gives the following account:—

"By his arousing and scriptural preaching, deep and pungent convictions were wrought in the minds of many hundreds of persons in that town; and the same effect was produced in several scores of the neighbouring congregations. And now was such a time as we never knew. The Rev. Mr. Cooper was wont to say, that more came to him in one week, in deep concern, than in the whole twenty-four years of his preceding ministry. I can say also the same, as to the numbers who repaired to me." "By a letter of Mr. Cooper, one of the evangelical ministers of Boston, to a friend in Scotland, it appears he had had about six hundred different persons to visit him on the concerns of their souls, in three months' time. And Mr. Webb, another of the pious Boston ministers, informs me he has had, in the same space, above a thousand."

The following is Mr. Tennent's own account of this visit, which is found in a letter addressed to Mr. Whitefield :—

"VERY DEAR BROTHER,—In my return home, I have been preaching daily; ordinarily three times a day, and sometimes oftener: and through pure grace I have met with success much exceeding my expectations. In the town of Boston there were many hundreds, if not thousands, as some have judged, under soul-concern. When I left the place, many children were deeply affected about their souls, and several had received consolation. Some aged persons in church communion, and some open opposers, were convinced. Divers of young and middle-aged were converted, and several negroes. The concern was rather more general at Charlestown. Multitudes were awakened, and several had received great consolation; especially among the young people, children, and negroes. In Cambridge, also, in the town and in the college, the shaking among the dry bones was general, and several of the students have received consolation." [He then proceeds to name more than *twenty* towns to which the revival had extended, and in most of which he had preached on his return home.] "In New Haven," says he, "the concern was general, both in the college and in the town. About thirty students* came on foot ten miles to hear the word of God. And at Milford the concern was general. I believe, by a moderate calculation, *divers thousands have been awakened*. Glory to God on high! I thank you, sir, that you did excite me to this journey."

Mr. Tennent's success, great as it was in Boston,† was not confined to that section of country. He preached, as extensively as circumstances allowed, within the bounds of his own church; and the revival extended from New England to Georgia. Dr. Alexander, in his history of the Log College, says; "As Mr. Whitefield was doubtless honoured to be the instrument in the conversion of more souls than any other preacher of his age, or perhaps of any age since the Apostle Paul, so Mr. Tennent, among orthodox preachers, undoubtedly deserves to be placed next to him, both in the abundance of his labours and the wonderful success which attended his ministry."‡ Dr. Alexander further observes, in another place: "We, of the Presbyterian Church, are more indebted to the men of the Log College for our evangelical views, and for our revivals of religion, than we are aware of. By their exertions, and the blessing of God upon

* Dr. Sproat, Mr. Tennent's successor in the Second Church of Philadelphia, dates his conversion from this period.

† The Rev. Dr. Cutler, Episcopal Missionary at Boston, makes a lamentation to the Venerable Society, that "Gilbert Tennent afflicted us more than the most intense cold and snow. [The winter was very cold, Long Island Sound being frozen over.] Though he was vulgar, rude, and boisterous, yet tender and delicate persons were not deterred from hearing him at every opportunity. The ill effects of Whitefield's visit might have worn off, if his followers could have been preserved from writing, but they carried on his design with too great success."

‡ Log College, p. 33.

their preaching, a new spirit was infused into the Presbyterian Church; and their views and sentiments respecting evangelical religion have prevailed more and more, until at last opposition to genuine revivals of religion is almost unknown in our Church."*

II. Gilbert Tennent's name stands connected with the *schism in the Church*, which commenced in 1741, and also with the *pacification* of 1758, which resulted in her highest good. It is impossible to go into details on this subject. The immediate causes of the schism were, on the part of the Old Side, a distrust of the Log College as an instrument of ministerial education, and, as a consequence of this distrust, an injunction of the Synod that no Presbytery should receive a candidate without his undergoing a Synodical examination; and, on the part of the Log College men, their intrusion into other congregations, and their harsh denunciation of the other party for loose views of practical religion and want of care in licensing candidates for the ministry. The contest waxed sharp. Both sides were undoubtedly to be blamed; and perhaps no single person so much as Gilbert Tennent. Inasmuch as no doctrinal differences existed, it only took time to heal the division. The parties came together in 1758, Gilbert Tennent being prominent in the pacification; and as a token of good will towards him, he was elected Moderator of the first meeting of the Synod of New York and Philadelphia.

During the division, the Revival, or Tennent party, increased rapidly. At the beginning of the schism, or rather at its full consummation in 1745, the two parties stood twenty-two to twenty-one; but at the union of the Synods, the Old Side numbered only twenty-two, or the same number as at the division, whilst the Tennent party had increased to seventy-two. Thus did the Providence of God set its seal upon animated orthodoxy.

III. Gilbert Tennent had an important influence in *establishing the College of New Jersey, and in promoting its best interests*. He had always been the friend of education, both from principle and policy, and was zealous for the right training of the young. His father's "Log College" had done a great work, but its founder being now infirm through years, and the demands of the country having multiplied, a new institution in a better location was naturally thought of. William Tennent, Sen., died in May, 1746, and by an interesting coincidence of true Christian succession, the new institution, under the name of the "College of New Jersey," was chartered in October of the same year. The friends of the Log College were the originators of the new one. Gilbert Tennent was one of the original trustees. He objected to some of the provisions in the first charter, which were not generally satisfactory; and he was not entirely pleased with the charter finally obtained.† He was, however,

* Log College. p. 40.

† One of the difficulties was, that Governor Belcher insisted that the Governor and four of his Majesty's Council for the province should always be members of the Board of Trustees. Jonathan Edwards, in writing to Mr. Erskine, in 1749, says that "Mr.

a warm and devoted friend of the institution from the beginning. When it became necessary to obtain funds, Gilbert Tennent and Samuel Davies were appointed in 1753, by the trustees and by the Synod jointly, to visit Great Britain for the purpose of procuring aid. The result of this agency was the collection of about \$12,000 from the churches in Scotland, besides liberal sums from friends in England and Ireland. Mr. Tennent identified himself with the college, and greatly assisted in advancing its prosperity, notwithstanding his early disaffection, connected with the charter.

IV. Gilbert Tennent, as a pastor, was the instrument in the hands of God, in *founding two of the most influential and important churches in our communion*, besides setting other enterprises in train. He went to New Brunswick in 1725 or 1726, and was installed pastor in the autumn, 1726. The Rev. Mr. Frelinghuysen, the Dutch minister who had settled there about 1720, took the young preacher by the hand and kindly aided him. For a year and a half his ministry, however, seemed barren. It was during an attack of sickness that his mind became more deeply impressed than ever with the excellence and reality of spiritual things; and on his recovery he commenced searching examinations of the professors of religion, and gave earnest exhortations to the impenitent. His ministry was an effective one. "Although," he says, "there was not any great ingathering of souls at any one time, yet through the divine mercy there were frequently gleanings of a few here and there; which in the whole were a considerable number." "Frequently, at sacramental seasons in New Brunswick, there have been signal displays of the divine power and presence." *Dr. Finley*, President of the College, affirms "that the seals of his ministry in New Brunswick and parts adjacent, where he first exercised his ministry, were numerous."

In May, 1743, Mr. Tennent was called to Philadelphia, to take charge of the Second Presbyterian Church, just organized, and composed principally of converts under Whitefield's preaching. This was a great move for the Revival party. The division in the Synod had commenced at the meeting in Philadelphia only two years before; and although ejected from that body, their great leader was now placed over a large church in the very city where his opponents had hitherto been in the ascendant. The church numbered at the beginning 140 members. The house of worship was built almost exclusively by Mr. Tennent's labours in securing funds. When consulting Benjamin Franklin as to the best mode of proceeding, the philosopher advised him to apply to everybody, which he accordingly did. The result was complete success. Mr. Tennent's preaching, however, was not as much blessed after he came to Philadelphia as before—a change ascribed in part to the practice of writing his

Gilbert Tennent in particular" objected to any connection with the State. The Governor alone was finally allowed to be a member of the Board.

discourses after this period. But his ministry was not without seals; and his church was increased and edified in the faith. Few ministers have, on the whole, left more enduring memorials of a useful ministerial career.

V. The *writings* of Gilbert Tennent were numerous.* They indicate the thorough theologian and skilful casuist. Dr. Alexander says: "Throughout the whole the doctrines inculcated are rigidly orthodox, according to the Westminster Confession. In his didactic discourses he shows himself not only a profound thinker, but a well-read theologian; and often quotes the standard Latin writers of systematic theology, as one who had been accustomed to read them. While he manifests an ardent zeal for the doctrines of grace, he never loses sight of the importance of experimental religion and practical godliness." Elegance of style did not particularly belong to him. As he was a son of thunder in his preaching, so he was straight-forward and unpretending in his writings. If not always smooth in his expressions, he was generally clear in his thoughts. He published much, especially considering the period in which he lived; and it is truly surprising that there has been no republication of any of his writings for the benefit of the present generation.

VI. A few *general remarks* of a personal nature are added to this imperfect sketch. Mr. Tennent was above the common stature; of a prepossessing personal appearance, with a voice clear and commanding. An undisguised and open honesty and sincerity marked his manly face; his manner in the pulpit was earnest and impressive, and his presence filled his hearers with awe. He was a man of great firmness of purpose; endowed with an energy that called out his whole soul in whatever he undertook; abundant in labours; impulsive perhaps in disposition, but magnanimous; born to lead rather than to follow; and greatest in times of emergency and public excitement. He was eminently a man of prayer, deeply conversant with the inward experiences of spiritual religion. In social qualities, he was affable and condescending among his friends, although to strangers his grave and dignified demeanour indicated reserve. He was a man of true public spirit, and his influence was great with all classes, rich and poor, black and white. One of his contemporaries in Philadelphia happily said respecting his declining years and death: "There was a dignity and grandeur in his old age. Wisdom bloomed upon his silver locks; and while the cold hand of time snowed upon his locks, his heart glowed with redoubled love for the church. . . . Nor more dreadful to the man of ease in his possessions is the approach of the king of terrors, than he was welcome to this eminent servant of God. Every symptom of his approaching dissolution, instead of filling his soul with alarms, rather filled him with comfort, and made him impatiently long for the kind stroke that should dismiss his soul. After having borne a long and tedious illness with

* A list may be seen in Dr. Alexander's "Log College," pp. 65-6.

the most invincible fortitude and resignation, the friendly messenger at last came with the joyful summons. . . . And with full confidence in the merits and atonement of his dear Redeemer, he gently fell asleep." Dr. Finley, in speaking of his death, remarks: "He said his assurance of salvation was built upon the Scriptures, and was more firm than the sun and moon."

Mr. Tennent was married three times, but had no children except by his last wife. His second wife was Mrs. Cornelia Clarkson, widow of a merchant in New York. His third wife was Mrs. Sarah Spafford, widow of Mr. Spafford, of New Jersey, by whom he had three children. Of these, his son Gilbert was lost at sea, and one of the daughters died; the other daughter, Cornelia, married Dr. Wm. Smith, of Southampton, L. I., who was a successful physician in Philadelphia. Mrs. Smith had two children, of whom one survives, Miss Elizabeth Tennent Smith, of Philadelphia, the last of a noble lineage.*

Ministers and candidates may derive useful hints from the character and life of the Rev. GILBERT TENNENT—such as these:—

1. Fervent piety is in all generations the source, under God, of ministerial usefulness.

2. The ministerial office descending from father to son is an event always to be admired in Divine providence.

3. The Presbyterian Church is indebted to Scotch-Irish ancestry for some of its best and most faithful ministers.

4. Great influence in the Church may be perverted to do much harm as well as good.

5. The infirmities of great men invite us to praise the grace of God, which so "much more abounds."

6. Ministers should be willing "to spend and be spent" in the service of God.

7. Ministers, who lay "the foundations" in new countries, or in missionary districts, ought to be men of a high order.

8. The use of the press for the publication of sermons and other productions, is sometimes for the edification of thousands, from generation to generation.

9. Educational labours, like those which distinguished the Tennents, will commonly leave their mark.

10. Pacification is better than divisions.

11. Revivals, although often attended with evil, are characteristic of a flourishing condition of the Church.

12. A faithful servant of God "being dead, yet speaketh."

* We are indebted to Miss Smith, for the use of the portrait from which the engraving in the Magazine was made. The *original* portrait, taken at the request of Mrs. Yates, wife of the Hon. Judge Yates, who was a member of the Second Church, is now in the possession of the Misses Yates, nieces of the late Judge, who reside in Lancaster, Penn. The copy is said to be a very correct one. We only heard of the original portrait within a few days.

The preceding sermon on "Walking with God" was selected for publication on account of its practical character, and its suitableness to the purposes of our Educational Annual. It was first published in the year 1746.

ARTICLE XVII.

REVIVAL IN CENTRE COLLEGE, KENTUCKY, IN 1852.

BY THE REV. JOHN C. YOUNG, D.D., PRESIDENT OF THE COLLEGE.*

MR. EDITOR:—You have several times recently alluded, in your paper, to a revival reported to be in progress in the Presbyterian Church, in Danville. Your readers may probably desire to have some short account of this work of grace, as it is known that the effects of such a work, in a church which embraces in its congregation the students of a college, are not confined to a particular town or neighbourhood. Its most important and permanent effects are often, indeed, felt in distant places and in future years. Unless, then, you shall have received some other notice of the facts, you can publish the following brief and hasty sketch:—

From the latter part of January there appeared to be an increase of interest in hearing the Gospel—an increase scarcely perceptible perhaps, except by a preacher, and manifested only in the countenances of the hearers. Coincident with this was an increased sense of duty on the part of some of the pious students to converse with others on the subject of religion. A weekly prayer-meeting was commenced on Thursday night, in the college, besides the one held on Sabbath afternoon. The day appointed for fasting and prayer for colleges, on the last Thursday in February, was observed much more generally by the church here than in former years. But, although the public exercises, both, in the morning and at night, were attended by an unusually large number of the people as well as the students, and there was more than ordinary seriousness, still, there was no marked evidence of God's gracious visitation. On the night of the second Sabbath of March there seemed to be a deep and solemn impression, and a considerable number subsequently referred to the services of that night, as the occasion of their first feeling the influence of God's truth and Spirit in convincing them of their guilt and danger. Arrangements having been made a month before to commence services, preparatory to the Communion, on Thursday, the eleventh of March, we began by holding on that night a meeting for prayer; on Friday and Saturday there was preaching, morning and

* This article originally appeared in the Presbyterian Herald, in 1852. DR. YOUNG, at the time, was Pastor of the First Church in Danville, as well as President of the College.—*EDITOR.*

night. On Saturday morning the congregation was remarkably large, and we noticed a very uncommon degree of interest and seriousness during the preaching. Eight persons were examined and admitted to the Communion.

On Sabbath morning, at the close of the services, according to our custom, when any unusual seriousness is manifested in the congregation, we addressed the impenitent, and invited any of them who might desire the prayers and counsel of the people of God to aid them in seeking salvation, to come forward and occupy the seat in front of the pulpit. While there seemed to be much solemnity of feeling, only two or three persons accepted the invitation. But, at night, the Spirit of God seemed to be poured out in the preaching of his word, and when we closed by repeating the invitation of the morning, between thirty and forty came forward, the most of them young men. After preaching on Monday morning, it was determined to continue the meetings during the week, but not in such a way as to interfere with the recitations of the college. A prayer-meeting was held in the church, at 8½ o'clock, every afternoon, and an inquiry-meeting at the same hour in the session-room; preaching at night.

The manifestations of divine grace appeared to increase, until, on the next Sabbath night, as many as from 140 to 150 gave public evidence of their desire to seek the kingdom of God. With the intermission of Thursday night, the meetings were continued through the ensuing week. They were closed on the night of Sabbath, the 28th, and in the morning of that day ninety-two, who had been examined by the session during the previous week, were admitted to the Communion of the Lord's Supper. To thirty of these the rite of baptism was administered. A considerable number of others have professed a hope of salvation, besides those who have united with our church. Some of them have been examined by the Session, but their admission has been postponed until their parents can be consulted, as they are minors, whose parents are either not professors of religion, or, at least, not members of the Presbyterian Church. Our rule, in all such cases, is to admit only with the consent of the parents. Some have united with other churches, with which their families were connected, and some have, from various causes, deferred for a time their public profession.

Very few of the recent converts have reached middle life. There are, indeed, very few heads of families here, who are not members of the church. The large mass of our recent addition is composed of the youth of the church. Among them are forty of the students of college.

We have witnessed a number of revivals, in which there was much more excitement, and apparently stronger feelings than were exhibited on any occasion during the progress of this work; but we never attended meetings in which a sense of personal interest in the offered salvation of the Redeemer was more general and pervading. There was scarcely an individual to be met with who did not exhibit

interest in the question: "What must we do to be saved?" We do not mean to be understood as expressing either a favourable or unfavourable opinion of revivals marked by strong excitement. We have witnessed enough of revivals, and seen enough of their permanent fruits to have become satisfied that the strength and pungency of feeling, manifested while under the conviction of sin or the apprehension of the Divine displeasure, is *no proof for or against* the genuineness of a conversion. The entire surrender of the soul to God, and full faith in the merits of the Saviour may be *preceded by one kind of law work on the heart or by another*. The character of a *conversion* is not to be inferred from the character of its *antecedents*; and the fruits of a holy life are the results of a new heart, not of the still sinful exercises that precede regeneration.

The church was indebted for very valuable aid to brethren Scott, Snyder, Barnes, and Cheek.

And now, while we ought humbly and gratefully to acknowledge the entire grace of this most unmerited display of God's mercy, in the conversion of so many precious souls, a number of whom we pray and trust that he will use as ambassadors of Christ, we ought not the less readily and thankfully to direct attention to the fact, that this outpouring of the Spirit is another of the proofs, which God, from time to time, is giving to us that "He will be inquired of by his people to do these things for them." This is the third time, since we have been connected with the college here, that it has received a great spiritual blessing, *almost immediately after the observance of the day of fasting and prayer for colleges*. And, although during this period, we have had six or seven other occasions when many were here gathered into the kingdom of Christ, *on none of these occasions* did the college share so largely in the blessing of God, as it did during the three revivals that were connected with the day alluded to. This affords great encouragement to the people of God, here and everywhere, to pray earnestly and continually for the youth of our land; and especially should prayer be daily made for those who, by their education, are training for the exercise of great influence and power.—God alone can make us a holy and a happy people, and he will do it *mainly by the conversion of the young, in answer to prayer*. God alone can enable us to send out ambassadors of the Prince of peace to all nations. And his mighty power, exercised in converting the young, will give us the power fully to enter upon this glorious work.

May we not ask and expect the prayers of all who love the cause of Zion, in behalf of those among us who have recently commenced so young to run the Christian race, that *all* may so run as to attain, and that *many* may be inspired by God to determine that they will devote their lives to persuading others to commence this race, and to encouraging them to persevere in it?

Yours, truly,

J. C. Young.

DANVILLE, April 16, 1852.

ARTICLE XVIII.

EDUCATION FOR THE GOSPEL MINISTRY.

FROM DR. RICE'S EVANGELICAL AND LITERARY MAGAZINE.

"ARE the efforts now making to educate young men for the Gospel Ministry, authorized by Scripture?"

In elucidating this question, our remarks will be arranged under the following heads: 1. The efforts now making to educate young men for the ministry; 2. The object contemplated by those who make these efforts; 3. The Scriptural authority on the subject.

1. The unexampled increase of our population, and the alarming deficiency of ministers, have led wise and good men of different denominations to consider, whether any proper means could be devised for supplying the deficiency, and for extending religious instruction to the vast multitudes who are in danger of perishing for lack of knowledge; and it seems they have all come to the conclusion, to pursue, substantially, the same course; namely, to establish Theological Seminaries, to form Education Societies, and to raise permanent funds for the purpose of supporting Professors to teach, and students while they are taught, those branches of learning which they think adapted to make able ministers of the New Testament—supposing those who pursue such studies to possess other qualifications, which all acknowledge to be of indispensable necessity.

2. As to the OBJECT which the friends of the education cause have in view. Some ill-informed, we will not say—ill-natured persons, speak of the efforts in question, as designed to make ministers of the Gospel without any reference to spiritual qualifications. They say we propose to make men ministers, merely by giving them human learning, as we would train them for any other profession. We call these persons ill-informed, because, if they had made the necessary inquiries on the subject, they never could have entertained such an opinion. The *avowed* design of Education Societies in this country, is to assist young men who appear to possess piety, talents, and a desire to be useful, in improving their minds, so as to qualify them for explaining and enforcing the great doctrines and duties of the Bible, and for exerting a high degree of moral and religious influence in society. Accordingly, much care is taken in selecting those young men, who appear to be distinguished for their *piety*, and they are required to present a certificate, or to furnish satisfactory evidence of their good standing, as members of some particular church. In addition to all this, they profess to have the conviction that it is their duty to devote their lives to the service and glory of God, in the work of the Ministry, if he in his Providence shall furnish them with means to obtain the requisite literary qualifications. If these

means be withheld, they would conclude that it was their duty to serve God in some other calling; but if, in his Providence, he furnish the means of obtaining intellectual improvement, and make the way plain for their entrance upon the work, while he gives them a *heart to it*, and a *delight* in it, and exerts such an influence upon their minds as seems to bear them onward, and to render them comparatively regardless of the motives which might lead them to any other vocation, they think the evidence is clear that they have, what is commonly termed, a call to the work of the ministry.

Now, it will prepare the way for a correct answer to the question, to consider whether it be the *duty* of young men of this description to make any efforts to improve their intellectual faculties, to obtain any additional knowledge, and a greater facility of communicating it, than they now possess?

The exhortations of Paul to Timothy, will throw some light upon the subject. *Neglect not the gift that is in thee, &c. Until I come, give attendance to READING, &c., that thy profiting—or improvement—may appear unto all.* It seems that with all the extraordinary spiritual endowments by which Timothy was distinguished, intellectual improvement was important to him, and he was exhorted to labour after it so diligently that his *proficiency might appear unto all.* It is true Timothy was already ordained to the work of the ministry, whereas, those to whom the question refers, are not. But is there any reason why he should labour to make proficiency in mental improvement, and in Christian oratory—such proficiency as would be seen and felt by his hearers, that would not apply with equal force to those young men who although they have not received ordination from men, nevertheless, give evidence that they have been *separated* unto this work, by the Great Head of the Church? Here is a young man who feels the constraining love of Christ;—his ability ~~at present~~ is very limited;—he can only venture to address a few Sabbath School children, or a small company of the most ignorant persons he can find. Suppose he can now speak so as to edify *these*; yet he desires to do good on a larger scale;—to be able to instruct in the precious truths of the Gospel, persons who would not think it worth their while to hear him; and he verily thinks, and may, consistently with unfeigned humility, think that he has talents, which might be so improved as to enlarge his sphere of usefulness, by gaining the attention of hundreds, and perhaps, of thousands, who would ~~otherwise be inaccessible~~ by him, ought he not to feel a desire for ~~the improvement~~ for the same reason that he desires to be useful at all? Why should he desire to be instrumental in saving one soul, and not desire to be instrumental in saving a thousand? Now the ~~Scriptures~~ not only authorize, but require us to cherish such desires, ~~and not without limitation~~; of course they authorize and require us to ~~the extent which~~ are necessary to accomplish the object to which ~~these desires~~ are directed.

Moreover, it is to be considered that the Head of the Church does

not distribute his gifts without design. If he gives to some of his servants talents which may fit them for the office of *teachers*, it is a proof that he designs them to be teachers; and if these talents are *susceptible of improvement*, that fact indicates his will that they should be improved. If it be wrong for *them* to spend any part of their time in preparation for more extensive usefulness, can any reason be assigned why it was right for Timothy to spend a part of his time in improving the gift that was in him by reading, &c.

But an objector may say, "If they have a call to preach, let them go and preach. A call to preach, is not a call to spend six or seven years in a college." To this we answer, 1. That Timothy had a call to preach, and thousands were perishing for lack of knowledge then, as well as at the present day, and yet consistently with that call it was enjoined upon him as a *duty* to employ a part of his time in improving his ministerial talents. 2. We suppose young men who are preparing for the Gospel ministry, to be now engaged in doing good, in endeavouring to save souls, as far as their talents and opportunities will enable them; and this is as much as could be said of Timothy. For the same reason then, that it was the duty of Timothy to improve his gifts, so as to extend *his* usefulness, it is *their* duty to improve *their* gifts for the same purpose. 3. The call here spoken of, is a call to what?—to go forth immediately with an ignorant, undisciplined, uncultivated mind, to engage in a work which involves so much difficulty and responsibility, that it constrained the Apostle Paul with all the gifts of genius and of inspiration, to exclaim—*who is sufficient for these things!* No:—it is a call to do the *greatest amount of good that can be done, with the talents which God has given them*; and in order that this result may be realized, these talents must be improved agreeably to the direction given to Timothy on this subject; and the student while thus employed, is as really obeying the call of God, as he will be when he shall engage in the immediate work of the ministry.

Now—to come to the point—if it is the duty of such a young man to improve his talents, and if he has not the means of support while labouring to do so, it is certainly the duty of those who *have* the means, to assist him; and it is proper that he should be placed in circumstances most favourable to this improvement; and what could be more favourable than the advantages of Literary and Theological Seminaries? Every argument therefore which goes to prove that it is the duty of a young man who has a call to the ministry, to improve his talents so as to enlarge the sphere of his usefulness, is equally conclusive in favour of the efforts now making to assist in the education of such. If the one is authorized by Scripture, so are the others.

1. The above argument appears to concede that there is nothing in Scripture which *expressly* authorizes the efforts in question. Admitted. But in reply it may be asked, is *express* authority necessary for *everything* we do in the way of promoting the interests of reli-

gion? If so, where shall we find such authority for building houses for public worship? The first Christians had none, so far as we know. But the propriety and utility of such houses are so evident, that it was taken for granted, that the common sense of Christians would lead to their erection, in all circumstances where it would be practicable. God does nothing unnecessarily, and it was not necessary that inspiration should expressly enjoin that which common sense would certainly dictate. All this applies with equal force to the propriety and utility of mental cultivation in those who, without the aid of inspiration, are called to the office of religious teachers; and to the duty of those who have it in their power to assist in giving such cultivation to men who by nature and grace, are prepared to make the best use of it.—Again; where are we expressly commanded to translate the Bible into all languages, and send it to all nations? If the principle of the above objection be correct, this thing must not be done. But who, besides the Pope, and those who have the spirit of popery, will undertake to prove that the efforts of Bible Societies are not authorized in Scripture? It is, moreover, to be considered that the sacred writers did not expressly make provision for any state of things which did not exist at the time when they wrote. But they laid down general principles which the good sense and piety of Christians would lead them to apply as the exigencies of the Church might require.

2. "The Apostles were not men of liberal education." It is a sufficient answer to this objection, to say that the Apostles enjoyed the benefit of our Lord's personal instructions, which was an unspeakably greater advantage than could be derived from the instructions of all the professors at the most distinguished Universities and Theological Seminaries of modern times. Besides, the Apostles were *inspired* teachers. The instructions which they were to communicate to others were imparted to them, immediately, by the Holy Spirit. But as the former of these advantages—our Lord's personal instructions—could not in the nature of things be enjoyed by their successors; and as it was neither necessary nor expedient that the latter should be continued, after the system of revelation was completed, it follows that it is the duty of those who are now called to the office of teachers, to avail themselves of the *ordinary* means of preparation, i. e. means which are found by experience, to be best adapted to enable them to ~~understand~~ the Scriptures, and to communicate the knowledge of ~~their contents~~ to others.

~~John 4~~ "We have no example of a Theological Seminary in the Bible." ~~But~~ acknowledged, the *terms* are not to be found in the Bible. But ~~what were the schools of the prophets of which we read in the Old Testament?~~ Were they not institutions designed to train young men for the prophetic office under that dispensation? If they were not, let those who make the above objection, tell us what they were? and what purpose they were intended to answer? We wish them also to consider this question. If a particular training was necessary

for those who were expected to be taught and influenced by the Spirit of immediate inspiration, is not such training much more necessary for those whose business it is to teach the great truths of revelation without such an infallible guide? It will be found by examination that no argument can be brought to bear against the affirmative of this question which does not go upon the assumption, that those who are called to the office of the Gospel ministry are miraculously furnished with the necessary qualifications for that office. If, however, this assumption is unsupported by either Scripture or fact, then, every such argument must be given up, and the truth which these arguments were intended to overthrow, must remain in all its force and authority. It behooves all Christians to consider their responsibility in reference to this truth. Are not many withholding from this great object that countenance and support which God requires them to give to it? even while the words of Christ are sounding in their ears—*the harvest is great, the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He may send forth labourers into his harvest.* Do they ever offer up this prayer? If they do not, then they are guilty of positive disobedience to the command of Christ. If they do, and *yet neglect to use the means which they have in their power to promote the object*, then they stand convicted of the sin of hypocrisy.

ARTICLE XIX.

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF SOUND LEARNING IN THE GOSPEL MINISTRY.

BY THE REV. SAMUEL B. HOW, D.D.*

THE work of the ministry is, unquestionably, of vast importance and difficulty. It imposes on him who undertakes it a high degree of responsibility, for he is called to watch for souls as one who must give account. The glory of God, the prosperity of religion, and the everlasting interests of the souls of men, are closely connected with the able and faithful discharge of this office. It cannot then be supposed that the entrance on this work, the unskilful and unfaithful management of which is sure to do much prejudice to the cause of religion, has been left unguarded, and that every one who may fancy he has a call has a right to thrust himself into it. Far different from this is the language of the word of God. "How can they preach except they be sent?" is the solemn question proposed by the Apostle.

* Dr. How, who is now in the Reformed Dutch Church, was pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, New Brunswick, N. J., at the time this article was written, in 1822.—Ed.

Suitable qualifications are insisted on as absolutely necessary to the proper discharge of the work. The apostle, addressing Timothy on this subject, uses the following pointed language: "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." (2 Tim. 2 : 2.) When the Lord has work for a man to do, he always qualifies him for that work.

A remarkable difference is observable in the sentiments entertained in the present times, and those entertained in the primitive ages of Christianity, of the importance of the ministerial office and the qualifications necessary for it. Now it is considered by many that, provided a man has piety and zeal, however illiterate he may be, he is qualified for undertaking this work; and many judge previous preparation and study almost unnecessary: nay, some even pretend that it has a tendency to abate zeal and deaden devotion, and are therefore for hurrying persons into the ministry with little or no preparation.

But so high was the opinion which was entertained of the responsibility and importance of the ministerial office, by some of the most eminent fathers of the primitive church, that they shrunk back from it with dread; they judged themselves unworthy of so high a trust and were with the utmost difficulty prevailed on to accept it. Chrysostom calls it "a burthen from which angelic strength might shrink." Nay, we have higher authority than these. What was the language of the great apostle of the Gentiles on this subject? Did Paul consider the work of the ministry an easy work—a work that required but small qualifications? Under a sense of the dread responsibility attached to it, he cried out "Who is sufficient for these things?"

But what are the qualifications which are necessary to make an able and faithful minister of the word of God? We observe in general that these qualifications may be divided into two classes, those which are received from God only, and those which under God may be attained by human industry and application.

First. As pastors and teachers are the gift of the Lord Jesus to his Church, so he qualifies for their work those whom he gives. "To every one of us," says the apostle, "is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." (Eph. 4 : 7.) Hence the apostle charges Timothy to commit the things that he had heard of him to *faithful men*, that is, to men of true piety. This is the first, and this too is the most important qualification.

Genuine piety is not only absolutely necessary for the salvation of a minister as well as any other man, but it is also necessary in order to his being a blessing to the Church. It is true that God may and he sometimes does, bless the labours of unregenerate men, and make them the instruments of converting others; but such men have a withering influence; the spirit of piety decays before them, and mournful spiritual desolation follows.

Secondly. But without dwelling further on this head, we observe,

that there is a second class of qualifications which under God may be obtained by human industry and application—such as arise from a diligent improvement of the faculties of the mind and the cultivation of suitable tempers and habits.

But without entering largely on the discussion of each particular included in this general remark, we shall devote the residue of this essay to the consideration of the importance of sound learning to the gospel ministry; not merely to the respectability, but to the usefulness of the ministry.

Though the Lord Jesus gives pastors to his Church and qualifies them by his grace, yet this does not supersede the necessity of their labouring to the utmost to improve themselves. God has so ordered that nothing good or great is ever attained without labour. The apostle charges Timothy, “till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine; neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery: meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all.” (1 Tim. 4 : 13, 15.) We consider this as decisive, and shall offer nothing further to establish the point. Reading and meditation are particularly enjoined.

We are aware that prejudices against a learned ministry exist in the minds of some truly pious persons, whom we sincerely esteem; and truth compels us to declare, that a lamentable apathy on this subject exists too generally in the minds of Christians.

But where should we desire or expect to find learning if not in the ministry? Do men choose ignorant lawyers to manage their suits at law, or ignorant physicians to heal the diseases of their body? Why then, intrust the care of our souls, the affairs of eternity, to ignorant spiritual guides? What work is there that requires superior wisdom and superior knowledge? To ministers it belongs to dispense the mysteries of the kingdom of God, mysteries which excite the admiration of angels, and which even angelic intellect cannot comprehend. To ministers it belongs to instruct the ignorant; to guide the wanderer; to reclaim the backslider; to comfort the mourner; to direct the inquirer; to warn the sinner, and to encourage the believer.

To ministers it belongs rightly to divide the word of truth; to solve doubts; answer objections, clear up obscurities, establish doctrines, explain prophecies, enforce precepts; in fine, to give to every one his portion in due season. They are set for the defence of the truth, and to them it belongs to repel the attacks of its adversaries. What need then was there for that strong and pointed admonition of the apostle to Timothy, “the things that thou hast heard of me, among many witnesses, the same commit thou”—not only “to faithful men,” but to those “who shall be able to teach others also.” Great stress is laid on this ability to teach others. Hence, the apostle at one time declares, that a preacher of the word should be apt to teach; at another that he should be able rightly to divide the word of truth; to withstand, and by sound doctrine to

convince gainsayers. It is not merely a dictate of sound reason, it is a maxim enforced by the high authority of heaven, that "*the priest's lips should keep knowledge.*"

Still, however, some will object that confining youth to the drudgery of a college life, compelling them to go through the routine of classical studies, and human science, has a tendency to abate their ardour, and to quench the spirit of devotedness to the service of God, which, otherwise, they would feel. For this reason some are for hurrying young men with small attainments in literature into the work of the ministry, and others refuse altogether to contribute anything towards supporting them while they are obtaining an education.

Many remarks might be made on this objection. It might be said, that all kinds of zeal are not pleasing in the sight of God; that covetousness and love of money are often hidden under objections that would seem to flow from regard to the glory of God. But, waiving everything of this kind, we solicit serious and candid attention to the following remarks in favour of *a learned as well as pious ministry.*

I. God has been pleased to build up his Church generally by the instrumentality of able and learned as well as pious men.

Against this observation we know that it will be immediately objected, that the apostles of our Lord were illiterate fishermen, and yet they were chosen and blessed of God to build up his Church. Hence, it is inferred, that illiterate men now, if pious, may be just as well qualified for the work of the ministry, and perhaps more useful in it, than learned men. It is readily granted, once for all, that illiterate men, that is, men who have not gone through a regular course of college studies, have in many instances been very useful. But though they were *illiterate* men they were not *ignorant* men. Most of them regretted that they had not had the opportunity of obtaining science, and there is reason to believe that useful as they were, they would have been much more useful had they possessed it.

In reply, however, to this objection, it might perhaps be sufficient to observe, that the circumstances of the apostles were essentially different from the circumstances in which any man can now be placed; that their case was an extraordinary case; and that, therefore, it should not be pleaded as in point.

But we shall not dismiss this part of our subject thus. We maintain that the case of the apostles proves directly the opposite of what is contended for in the objection. We appeal to it as a proof decisively in favour of the principle which we have laid down, that God generally uses an enlightened and able ministry to build up his Church.

The apostles were illiterate fishermen when the Lord Jesus first called them. But were they such when he sent them to preach the

Gospel? It is from not distinguishing between what they were when Christ first called them, and what they were when he sent them to preach his Gospel, that this objection is urged with such frequency and confidence. A clown may by education be changed into a polished and enlightened statesman. Though previous to their calling by Christ the apostles were illiterate fishermen, yet from the time of his calling them, if you will allow the expression, their education for the Gospel ministry commenced. They entered the school of Christ; for upwards of three years they were his companions; they heard his public preaching; received his private instructions; observed his example, and conversed familiarly with him. Stupid indeed must they have been not to have profited by this; not to have acquired much knowledge and wisdom from the instructions of the great Prophet sent from God; from *his* instructions who spake as man never spake.

But this is the least part of our answer. That our Lord did not intend that the ministry of the Gospel should be committed to ignorant and insufficient men, is evident from the charge which he gave to his apostles just before his ascension. And what was this charge? Did he tell them Go just as you are and preach the Gospel? No. They must be qualified for this work before they go. He commanded them to "*tarry at Jerusalem till they should receive the Spirit, and be endued with power from on high.*" (Luke 24 : 49; Acts 1 : 4-8.)

It was not sufficient that they had been his companions, and received his instructions for three years, they must be furnished with gifts and graces for their work immediately from heaven.

What, then, were the qualifications for the work of the ministry which the apostles possessed? "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost." God himself inspired them, and by his enlightening influence on their souls led them into all truth. He gave them superior degrees of holiness and knowledge, and appointed them to be the inspired teachers of his Church. What now costs years of laborious study, the speaking of other tongues, they had given them at once. "God also bare them witness both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will." (Heb. 2 : 4.) They wrought miracles to attest the truth of their message; they healed diseases; they cast out devils; they raised the dead.

And are these the men who are pleaded in favour of an illiterate ministry? How perfectly ridiculous is this. Never since their days has there been such a ministry in the Church; a ministry so able, so enlightened, so zealous, and so powerful. What! degrade the apostles of our Lord to a level—not simply with the most able divines of the present day—but with those who are the least able? What! degrade men who had been the companions of Christ? men divinely inspired; men filled with the Holy Ghost; men possessed of superior knowledge and superior holiness; men having the gift of tongues

and the power of working miracles—of working mighty signs and wonders—degrade these men by comparing them with any that have ever lived since their days? They stand alone. They occupy a lofty eminence; objects of admiration, and illustrious patterns to all succeeding ministers of Jesus. Where is the minister of the cross who does not shrink from a comparison with these distinguished servants of Christ?

If from the apostles we proceed to consider the primitive Christian fathers, we shall find enrolled among them some of the most celebrated names of antiquity for profound erudition. They were men who defended Christianity by their writings, who built up the Church by their preaching, who recommended the Gospel by the holiness of their lives, and some of whom, as martyrs, sealed their testimony with their blood.

After these venerable fathers had ceased from their labours, the Church became woefully corrupt. But let it be recollected that those days are called, emphatically, the dark ages of the world and of the Church.

Together with the revival of learning was the revival of religion. The Reformers were eminent for their literary attainments. They were the most learned men of the day. They were the great revivers and promoters of learning, and their learning gave them a decided superiority over their enemies.

And who are the men that under God were honoured to be the fathers of the American churches? Not to mention those eminent men who built up the churches in New England; who were the founders of the Presbyterian churches in our land? To be admired they need only to be named. Burr, and Dickinson, and Edwards, and Davies, and Bostwick, and Blair, and the Tennents, and Finlay, and Witherspoon, were ornaments and blessings to our country.

When we look abroad and contemplate the character of the missionaries, who have been and are now employed in the conversion of the heathen, we find this to be the fact, that those who have been the most distinguished for their success, are precisely the men who are most distinguished for their learning and piety. Elliot and Brainerd, Schwarts and Vanderkemp, were far from being illiterate. Did not Martyn's learning, under the blessing of Heaven, greatly contribute to his success and usefulness among the Persians? Could Carey, or Marshman, without an acquaintance with the original languages of Scripture have given them to the Hindoos, or Morrison and Milne to the Chinese? And, had it not been for the labours of eminently learned and pious men, would not we, ourselves, to this very hour, have been destitute of the word of God? To us it would have been a sealed book. But,

II. It is an interesting fact that for ages past, schools have been established for the instruction of those who were designed to minister in holy things. This is our second argument.

1. Among the ancient Israelites there were the schools of the prophets, in which young men were piously educated, to prepare them for being instructors of the people. These schools appear to have been established in the time of the prophet Samuel, and he is by some considered the founder of them. Fleury, in his *History of the Ancient Israelites*, says, "there was a great number of these prophets from Samuel's time, but more especially from the days of Elijah and Elisha, to the Babylonish captivity. These holy men, after the patriarchs, preserved the purest tradition of the true religion. Their employment was meditating upon the law of God, praying to him often, day and night, both for themselves and others, and inuring themselves to the practice of every virtue. They instructed their disciples, explained to them the spirit and meaning of the law, and opened to them the sublime mysteries relating to the state of the Church, either upon earth or in heaven, after the Messiah should come, that were hidden under allegories of things sensible and seemingly mean. They instructed the people, too, who came to hear them upon Sabbath and other feast days."

It is the opinion of learned men, "that it was God's ordinary method to call those persons out of these schools, whom he employed in the discharge of the prophetic office." (*Stillington's Origines Sacrae*, p. 97, book ii. ch. 4, § 5.)

2. Among the primitive Christians, too, academies were erected in several large cities, designed especially for the education of those whose attention was turned to the work of the ministry. In these schools they were instructed in the different branches both of sacred and profane literature. Mosheim is of opinion, that these establishments should be attributed to the apostles themselves, and to their injunctions to their disciples. He also asserts, that the apostle John erected a school of this kind at Ephesus, and Polycarp one at Smyrna. (*Ecc. Hist.* vol. i. cent. 1, part ii. chap. iii. § 7, p. 116.)

One of the most famous schools of antiquity was that at Alexandria, which is generally supposed to have been established by St. Mark, and which produced some of the most distinguished preachers and teachers of primitive times.

3. At the time of the Reformation vast pains were taken by the Reformers to instruct pious young men, previously to their entering on the work of the ministry.

Wickliff, who has been called the morning star of the Reformation, and who is declared to have possessed a lofty genius and extraordinary learning, was a celebrated professor of divinity in the University of Oxford.

John Huss, the celebrated Bohemian Reformer, who was burnt by the Council of Constance, and who was distinguished by his uncommon erudition and eloquence, was a professor of divinity in the University of Prague.

Luther and Melancthon were both of them famous professors in the University of Wittemberg, and Calvin and Beza at Geneva, and

crowds of pious youth who were afterwards eminently distinguished as preachers of the Gospel—men of eminent piety, of eminent zeal, of eminent devotedness to the work of the ministry, who were blessed in the conversion of multitudes of souls, and many of whom suffered martyrdom for the cause of Christ—crowds of such pious youth attended their lectures. One of the first objects of the Reformers in England, was to get able professors of divinity in their universities, that the young ministers might receive suitable education, and thus be able to repel the attacks of the enemies of the Reformation. It was from their universities that the most eminent preachers came; and some of the most distinguished of their martyrs, who, in the days of the bloody Mary, sealed their testimony with their blood, had sat as scholars at the feet of Bucer and of Martyr.

4. Ever since the days of the Reformation the most eminent servants of Christ have considered it of the utmost importance to perpetuate a learned ministry. Without mentioning the illustrious and venerable divines of Europe, who have been distinguished not only for their own personal piety and learning, but who also were blessed under God to be illustrious instruments of promoting the interests of true piety and science, we would call your attention to the pious ministers who first settled our own country. Their piety and devotedness cannot be questioned; yet so deeply sensible were they of the importance and usefulness to the Church of a learned ministry, that they used their utmost efforts to obtain and perpetuate such a ministry. It is to their piety and liberality, that we are indebted for most of our colleges, especially for those which hold the highest rank. Holy men of God, in their zeal for his glory and the prosperity of his Church in our land, established these institutions with a special view to the education of pious young men for the Gospel ministry; and they continue among us venerable monuments of their wisdom, their piety, their liberality, and their devotedness to the cause of Christ.

Surely these two facts, that God has been pleased generally to use and greatly to bless a learned ministry, and that men the most eminent for piety and usefulness, have always been anxious to secure such a ministry in the Church, speak loudly in favour of sound learning in the Gospel ministry.

III. The great business of a minister of the Gospel is to expound sacred Scripture. The original Scriptures are written in languages which have long ago ceased to be spoken. Will any one say, that it is unimportant whether a professed expounder of the Divine word is or is not acquainted with this word in its original language? Again, the Scriptures contain a series of prophecies relating to the most important events; commencing from the creation and reaching to the end of the world. An accurate acquaintance with history is necessary to trace the fulfilment of these prophecies. Besides they have

a peculiar symbolical language of their own, and are perfectly unintelligible to those who are unacquainted with their language, and the laws for interpreting them. There are, moreover, in Scripture, a vast number of allusions to the customs, the governments, the amusements, and the productions of eastern countries. To understand all these requires a vast range of learning; nor can any man who does not possess at least a respectable portion of it, be justly esteemed an able minister of the New Testament, who can rightly divide the word of truth.

IV. But the peculiar circumstances in which the Church is now placed, render it highly important that we should have a learned ministry. The Church has heretofore been assailed by brutal force; and imprisonment, and fines, and death, have been the chosen means of its adversaries to oppose it. Such times have passed away for the present. In our own day the Church is surrounded with enemies who are subtle, bitter, and learned; and the way by which they assail our faith is by pretensions to superior rationality and learning. Learning, like everything that is good, may be abused. Money in the hands of a pious man affords him the means of being greatly useful, and in the hands of a wicked man of doing much mischief: so learning, according to the use which is made of it, is either a powerful instrument for the promotion of true religion, or against it. Sensible of this, the enemies of Christianity have occupied almost every branch of polite literature, and used it to the disadvantage of the Church. Indeed those particular branches of science which are most extensively diffused and cultivated, and which, therefore, most directly influence the public mind, seem to be receiving a cast decidedly infidel. Infidel histories, infidel poetry, and infidel systems of philosophy, together with infidel novels, are widely spread, and multitudes have drunk in the poison. Thousands, and of these thousands, multitudes of youth, have by these infidel writings been seduced and ruined forever.

And what is still more dreadful, many of these infidels, who bitterly hate all the peculiar doctrines of Christianity—for I consider infidels and Socinians as the same—have assumed the name, the garb, and the functions of the ministry of the Gospel. They make vast pretensions to learning, to candour, to liberality, to free inquiry, and even to superior benevolence and piety. They talk of biblical criticism, and researches into antiquity, and false translations of the Scripture, and various readings, and the collation of manuscripts, and interpolations and emendations, and by their effrontery and confidence, would stun and confound the opponent who is not versed in their wiles, and furnished with sufficient learning to meet them. These men are endeavouring to direct and to give a tone to the current literature of the day. In fact, Christianity is at this moment undergoing among us a fierce and tremendous trial. Jesus Christ appears now to have his fan in his hand, and to be winnowing his

Church, and trying who among those who profess to be Christians are the friends, and who are the enemies of his Gospel. But who are to meet such enemies of our faith? Evidently they must be combated with their own weapons. Men sufficiently learned, who are able to detect all their artifices, to unravel their sophisms, and to overwhelm them by a clear demonstration of the truth, must be opposed to them; and it is truly mortifying to reflect, how few such men there are in our churches. True learning is always favourable to Christianity; it is the abuse of learning that is unfavourable to it. Ministers are set for the defence of the Gospel; they must be able to defend the truth, to answer the objections and cavils of infidels, and to expose and to refute heresy; and the state of the Church at the present time loudly demands an able and learned ministry.

V. But if an able and faithful ministry is thus to be desired, what is our duty in relation to this subject? Unquestionably to take immediate measures to secure and increase such a ministry. This Jesus Christ expects of us as a proof of our love to him and his cause.

We are aware that it will be objected, that the liberality of the Christian public has been abused, that it has been thrown away on insufficient men, who are destitute of those talents which are necessary for the work of the ministry. This objection is perhaps in part true. But admitting that in some instances Christian liberality may have been misapplied, is the real good that has been done to be overlooked and forgotten? How many illustrious men, who have been some of the brightest ornaments of the Christian ministry, and the greatest blessing to the Church, have received that education which qualified them for their career of usefulness from the benefactions of their Christian friends. It was thus that Doddridge, and Davies, and Buchanan, and a multitude of such men, were introduced into the Christian ministry. Two considerations, however, are sufficient to silence every objection, and to excite us to the most earnest zeal on this subject.

1. Many pious young men, of distinguished talents, but of scanty means, are now buried, and their services perhaps lost forever to the Church, because the hand of Christian liberality is not reached out to assist them. Young men of wealth, of enterprise, and of ambition, are allured by prospects of worldly gain and honour, to more lucrative professions; and, until they possess that spirit of piety, of devotion, and of zeal, without which no ministry can be exemplary or useful, we must earnestly desire it may be thus. The Lord preserve in mercy his Church from an unconverted ministry, however learned or distinguished in other respects it may be. But, we repeat the fact, young men of distinguished piety and talents, are now buried, and their talents lost to the Church, for want of support in acquiring an education. They offer their services to the

Church; they apply to us for support, and we have been compelled to tell them, we have no funds to assist you.

2. The present number of ministers is by no means sufficient to supply the wants of the Church; several hundred congregations are without pastors; and large tracts of country are wholly destitute of the preaching of the word, and we have not ministers to send to them.

Year after year the General Assembly of our Church have repeated this lamentable fact, and called upon our churches with great solemnity of appeal, to awaken to a sense of the importance of the subject; but, our churches seem to be asleep. It is truly astonishing that wealthy Christians have not done more to aid this cause with their wealth; and the members of our Church at large are surely bound to contribute their assistance. The small pittance of one or two dollars, annually appropriated by the members of our Church, generally, to this important object, would be sufficient to answer all our wants, and yet this pittance is withheld.

The following remarks of the great Dr. Owen, deserve to be seriously pondered: "We are bound to serve God with all that is ours, and with the first fruits of our substance in every kind. Somewhat of whatever God hath given unto us, is to be set apart from our own use, and given up absolutely to him as a homage due unto him, and a necessary acknowledgment of him. To deny this, is to contradict one of the principal dictates of the laws of nature; for God hath given us nothing ultimately for ourselves, seeing we and all that we have are wholly his. And to have anything, whereof no part, as such, is to be spent in his service, is to have it with his displeasure." (Owen on Heb. vol. 2, p. 357.)

In conclusion, let us remember that the ministry is appointed by Christ, as the grand means to be employed in the conversion of sinners. It pleases God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them who believe. It is truly gratifying to behold the zeal which is manifested to distribute the written word of God. We rejoice in the existence of this zeal, and pray for its increase. But we should always recollect, that it is the appointment of God that the living teacher should accompany the written word, to expound and enforce it, and that without the living teacher, the written word will be most generally neglected by the great mass of the community. The depraved hearts of men are averse to the purity of religious truth; and where there is not a living preacher to arouse and call their attention to its reality and importance, we find it almost uniformly neglected. Those places that are destitute of the preaching of the Gospel, are most generally also without religion; the word and the worship of God are neglected, and men live and die in ignorance, in carelessness, in unbelief, and in impenitence. If we have then any love to the souls of our fellow-creatures, or any regard to the prosperity of the Redeemer's kingdom, we should earnestly desire and labour to secure an able, learned, and faithful ministry.

ARTICLE XX.

MYCONIUS AND HIS DREAM.

FROM GILLIES' HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS.

WHILE FREDERICK MYCONIUS was yet in a monastery, he read privately Luther's books, which the other friars took very heinously, and threatened him for it. Afterwards, being called to be a preacher at Vinaria, he at first mixed some Popish errors with the truth; but, by the illumination of God's Spirit, he at last began to preach against Popery, and to hold forth the truth clearly in Thuringia, which spread so swiftly in one month's space, and was so greedily embraced, not only through Saxony, but through many other countries, as if angels had been the carriers of it. At Dusseldorf he preached the Gospel sincerely and purely, though to the hazard of his life; and, at Cullen, he maintained a public disputation with the friars, which was afterwards printed. With the like constancy and faithfulness, he preached the doctrine of the Gospel in Brunswick, in Cella of Saxony, and in other parts of Westphalia. Also in divers public conventions at Smalcald, Frankfort, and Nuremberg, his counsel being asked, with much courage and zeal he handled the affairs of religion, seeking to promote the glory of God, and the profit and welfare of the Church.

In 1528, Henry the Eighth, of England, fell out with the Pope, for not divorcing him from his wife Catharine of Spain, sister to Charles the Fifth, by reason of whose greatness the Pope durst not do it; whereupon the King of England sent over to the German princes (especially to the Duke of Saxony) to confederate against the Pope, and to join with them in an agreement about religion; upon which occasion Myconius was sent over into England. But, coming thither, he discovered the King's hypocrisy about religion, not only by the six articles about that time established, but also by his imprisoning of Latimer, and cutting off the Lord Cromwell's head, and burning of Mr. Barnes, &c., and by his seizing upon all the abbey lands: whereupon he left England, and being come home, in 1538, he was called by Henry of Saxony to visit and reform the churches of Misnia, together with Luther, Jonas, Cruciger, &c.

In 1541, he fell into a consumption, whereof he wrote to Luther, that he was sick, not to death, but to life: which gloss upon the text pleased Luther very well, who wrote back to him, "I pray Christ, our Lord, our salvation, and our health, that I may not live to see thee and some others of our colleagues die and go to heaven, and leave me here alone. I pray God, that I may first lay down this dry, exhausted, and unprofitable tabernacle. Farewell, and God forbid I should hear of thy death whilst I live." A while after, Myconius recovered, according to this prayer, though his disease

seemed to be desperate, and outlived it six years, even till after Luther's death. Upon which Justus Jonas, speaking of Luther, says, *Iste vir potuit quod voluit*, "That man could have of God what he pleased."

Myconius was a man of singular piety, of solid learning, of an excellent judgment, of great zeal, accompanied with admirable candour and gravity. He died in 1546.

MYCONIUS'S DREAM.—In the life of Myconius, the friend of Luther, as given by Melchior Adam, we have the following beautiful and striking account of an event which proved the turning-point in his history, and led him to devote his energies to the cause of Christ. The first night that he entered the monastery, intending to become a monk, he dreamed;—and it seemed as if he was ranging a vast wilderness alone. Suddenly a guide appeared, and led him onwards to a most lovely vale, watered by a pleasant stream; but of that he was not permitted to taste:—then to a marble fountain of pure water. He tried to kneel and drink—when, lo, a crucified Saviour stood forth to view, from whose wounds gushed the copious stream. In a moment his guide flung him into the fountain. His mouth met the flowing wounds, and he drank most sweetly, never to thirst again!

No sooner was he refreshed himself, than he was led away by his guide, to be taught what great things he was yet to do for the crucified One whose precious wounds had poured the living water into his soul. He came to a wide-stretching plain, covered with waving grain. His guide orders him to reap. He excuses himself by saying that he was wholly unskilled in such labour. "What you know not, you shall learn," was the reply. They came nearer, and saw a solitary reaper toiling at the sickle with such prodigious effort, as if he were determined to reap the whole field himself. The guide orders him to join this labourer, and seizing a sickle, showed him how to proceed. Again the guide led him to a hill. He surveys the vast plain beneath him, and wondering, asks how long it will take to reap such a field with so few labourers? "Before winter, the last sickle must be thrust in," replied his guide. "Proceed with all your might. The Lord of the harvest will send more reapers soon." Wearied with labour, Myconius rested for a little. Again, the crucified One was at his side, wasted and marred in form. The guide laid his hand on Myconius, saying, "You must be conformed to him."

With these words the dreamer awoke. But he awoke to a life of zeal and love. He soon found the Saviour for his own soul, and he went forth to preach him to others. He took his place by the side of that noble reaper, Martin Luther. He was stimulated by his example, and toiled with him in the vast field, till labourers rose on every side, and the harvest was reaped before the winter came.