

A THOROUGHLY EDUCATED MINISTRY.¹

AT first thought we are surprised to find that the best established principles should need reconsideration and resetting in every age. Yet the explanation is not difficult. Some new pressure of circumstances, or some trait of mind in a part of the new generation, gives renewed prominence to the old objections against the settled principle, and temporarily overshadows the more weighty reasons for it. For every practical question has two sides, *contras* as well as *pros*. Then, it is forgotten that those objections were as maturely considered as they now are by us, when our fathers determined the system for us, and were properly overborne by the affirmative considerations. We are tempted to think that the contrary reasons have never been regarded as they deserve to be, and that we have a new light on the subject, until our innovating experiments, by their failure, teach us again that our predecessors had really looked more thoroughly around the subject than we had. Such a process has been for some months engaging a part of our church, as to the general requirement of a thorough and classical education of our ministers. The two awakening essays which appeared in the October and January numbers of this *Review*, entitled "An Inquiry into the Aggressiveness of Presbyterianism," are not the only outgivings of this movement. The overture of the Bethel Presbytery, pleading for a ministry without any classical acquirements, and other declarations, evince the unsettled mind of many. Our discussion, therefore, does not derive its whole importance from the wide attention which the brilliancy, force and plausibility of those essays are exciting.

The most of the points, so well made in them, we concede. Aggressiveness ought to be a prime trait of every church, and test of its fidelity; for what else is her great commission from her

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Lord, except a command to be aggressive until she has conquered the whole world? She ought to be able to reach the poorest and lowest. Presbyterial supervision ought to be wiser and more effective. There is a startling lack of ministers, calling in trumpet tones upon Christian men. Looseness in examining candidates, false and deceptive verdicts of a scholarship which does not exist, and literary indolence in the applicants, are painfully inconsistent with our rules and professions. The practical relations of our seminaries to our Presbyteries are most anomalous and mischievous. Our constitution, though of well proved wisdom, is not inspired, and therefore its betterment is not impossible. In our author's pungent presentation of these points, we heartily rejoice. The one point on which we take issue with him is his proposal to revolutionize our system of training ministers, in order to overtake our aggressive work more rapidly.

The argument for this proposal is drawn from a comparison of our numbers in the four Southern Atlantic States with the numbers of the Baptist and Methodist Churches in the same regions. The allegation is that they, no older than we on this ground, have each made fivefold progress over us, in number of ministers and members. This fivefold growth is ascribed mainly to the facility and speed with which they multiply ministers and cheapen their labor, by reason of their not requiring classical education of them. The inference is, that we must imitate those denominations, so far as to cease to require—though we shall still invite—such training of our candidates. The author thinks that we need ministers whose grades shall differ in this sense, to perform the different kinds of missionary and pastoral work.

First, the fact assumed needs inquiry. Is it true that each of these denominations has done five times as much real work for Christ and souls as our own? Our author claims this, and rather dogmatically forbids us to go behind their statistics, or to deduct any more from them than from our own, for inaccuracies. It is impossible for sensible men, acquainted with stubborn facts, to submit here. Our own statistics may be loose; but theirs are doubtless far looser. This could not but result from the independency of the Immersionist churches, and from the notorious facility with which the Methodists demit or resume their church membership. Are all the hundreds of their "local preachers," in any continuous sense, laboring in the ministry? Is not the

country notoriously sprinkled over with members who have not been to the Lord's table for years, whose families frequent no church or Sabbath-school?

But both denominations have become far more numerous than ours. We freely admit it; yet we do not admit that this has been the result of the inferiority of our system of rearing our ministry. Twenty other solutions of their success are listed; and but little influence seems to be assigned to any of them—none at all to the most—by our author. The really influential causes of their comparative numerical growth do not appear in his list.

One is, the broad scriptural catholicity of the Presbyterian Church. It is the most liberal of all churches, receiving all true penitents to membership, of all shades of doctrinal opinion, having no *shibboleth*, communing with all, unchurching none, who teach the essential rudiments of salvation. Now, everybody condemns other people's *bigotry*; yet every carnal man is naturally a bigot as soon as he ceases to be a mere indifferentist. Hence, this wide catholicity of our church is an obstacle to her popularity with the carnal, because she firmly refuses to give them this gratification of pride and dogmatism, or to allure them by any partisan bait; but holds out only the pure and enlightened love of the holy truth of the gospel. It is well known, indeed, that this adverse world is in the habit of calling the Presbyterian the most bigoted church, at least next to the Popish. People think so, because she sternly refuses to cater to their secret bigotry.

But a second influence is more potent: our church presents to the world the humbling doctrines of the gospel with faithful candor: man's death in sin and inability for all spiritual good; his entire dependence on efficacious grace; the demands of a perfect law; God's eternal and essential punitive justice; the worthlessness of man's works and sentiments for his justification; the everlasting doom of contumacious sin. These are the doctrines which carnal man hates. He also dreads perdition. Yes, with a selfish dread. And therefore is he charmed with any theory of redemption which takes off any part of the edge of these hated truths, and yet makes plausible promise of escape. The Methodist church is avowedly Arminian, and the Immersionists are partially so; the independency of the latter has borne its usual fruit, the artial relaxation of the old Calvinism of the denomina-

tion. Arminianism is semi-Pelagianism, repolished and reconstructed. There are a few modern improvements. These were probably intended by Mr. Wesley to make a compromise between the Arminianism of Episcopius, Grotius, and Whitby, and Calvinism. But there is no compromise. The attempt to patch the old garment with new cloth only results in a lack of consistent juncture in the Wesleyan theology, which gives occasion, in that church, for all the shades of preaching, from moderate Calvinism down to almost blank Pelagianism, according to the personal impulses of the ministers.

Again, in competition with the Immersionist churches, Presbyterianism meets a capital disadvantage in scripturally refusing to countenance any shade of ritualism. She does not permit her sacraments to be misunderstood on that point by any one. Everybody comprehends, as to her, that she sternly rejects every plan for manipulating sinners into a state of salvation by a ceremony; that she refuses to allow any process less arduous than that of a living faith, a deep repentance, including "the full purpose of and endeavor after new obedience," and a holy striving in duty and life-long watchfulness. It is true that all better Immersionists profess to discard ritualism also in their dipping; but in spite of their disclaimers, the inordinate importance given to that form, with their close communion, practically encourage both a ritualistic and an exclusive temper. To the carnal, and even the partially sanctified heart, it is very seductive to find one's self exalted by a *shibboleth* and a ceremony into a spiritual aristocracy, sitting nearer God's throne than other Christians. This powerful attraction Presbyterianism will not and cannot use.

But doubtless the chief cause of the numerical spread of the other churches, and especially among the ruder classes, is the employment of "new measures." These, the anxious-seat, the altar of penitents, and others, known as "revival measures," have hitherto been almost universally used by Methodists, and generally by Immersionists. They are as influential as they are deleterious. They cater to the strongest passions of the sinful heart. By parading in public the vivid, and often the hysterical, emotions of penitents, and especially of females, they offer to the populace that spectacular excitement which is as fascinating to them as bodily intoxication, and draws the gaping crowd as powerfully as a hanging, a horse-race, or a pugilistic battle.

These measures also engage the passion of sympathy, a passion as universal as it is misunderstood. They allure the awakened carnal mind, by flattering it with the permission, yea, the direct encouragement, to adopt a gust of sympathetic excitement, a fit of carnal remorse, with the calm of the natural collapse which succeeds it, and a shallow, spurious hope, in lieu of that thorough work of mortifying sin and crucifying self along with Christ, which, we teach, alone evidences a title to heaven. No wonder that these "measures" have been found a prime enginery for religious self-deception; the patent process for building wood, hay, and stubble into the fabric of the visible church, instead of precious metals and stones. If our consciences would permit us to resort to these measures, we could burn over wide surfaces, as others do, leaving them, as they do, blighted and barren for all more scriptural methods. Thus this unhealthy system works against us, not only by sweeping the multitudes, by unsound means, into these other communions, but by searing and hardening what is left, so as to unfit them for our sober but safer methods.

These are the differences which account, so far as merely natural means are concerned, for the greater facility with which these denominations gain popular accessions. It may be said that, in urging these points, we are guilty of making "odious comparisons," and of insinuating, at least, disparagement of sister churches. If our reasonings on these points are untrue, then we are thus guilty. But if we are correct, then loyalty to truth requires us, in studying the comparison of results to which we are challenged, to state the true solutions. But we state them in no spirit of arrogance or insolence towards others; for we accompany these points with deep and sorrowful confessions of the imperfections of our own household. The nominal membership of all the churches, including our own, is, doubtless, deplorably mixed. Witness the prevalent worldly conformities; the incursions of dissipating amusements; the decline of family religion and discipline; the Sabbath-breaking by communicants, and even ministers; the loose and unscrupulous methods of "making money;" the indifference of multitudes to the obligations of old debts; the practical prayerlessness of countless families and individuals. The correct inferences to draw from all these corruptions are: that any conclusions whatever from these hollow numbers, as to the methods of a real and spiritual effici-

ency in God's work, are mainly out of place, and untrustworthy; that the number of counterfeit coins among our supposed gains are too large to leave much place for prudent counting up; that the church of Christ at this time is called to study *genuineness* much more than numerical increase.

If the question be raised, why the church does not grow faster? we are persuaded that the real answer, which most needs looking at, is the one which our author dismisses most hastily: that the fault is not ecclesiastical, but spiritual. The real *decideratum* is not new methods, but fidelity to the old, a true revival in the hearts of ministers and Christians themselves, a faith that "feels the power of the world to come," a solemn and deep love for souls. What we most need is repentance, and not innovation.

We are persuaded, however, that the Southern Presbyterian Church is contributing to the general advancement of Christ's cause, along with sister denominations, in ways of her own, which are not to be measured by numerical results; and it is not arrogance, but truth, to view these contributions. In the natural "body there are many members, yet one body, but all the members have not the same office;" and it is so in the ecclesiastical body of the visible church-catholic. Presbyterianism is providentially fashioned and employed to do for Christendom her own peculiar part. It is the conservative branch of the family of churches, checking the departures of all the others from sound doctrine. It is the exemplar of scriptural organization. It is the sustainer of the more thorough education of both ministry and laity. And we assert that, constituted as poor human nature now is, it is entirely reasonable to expect that Presbyterianism cannot, in the nature of the case, both perform all these her peculiar precious functions, and also compete successfully for the largest and most promiscuous numbers. The two results may be now incompatibles. And hence it may be justifiable that Presbyterianism should make the practical election, and pursue these vital results which are peculiarly assigned to her in providence, though at the cost of resigning the more promiscuous numerical greatness. The normal school cannot have as many pupils as the popular school; to do so it must cease to be normal.

The issue raised, then, is this: whether it is not now our duty to give up our constitutional requirement of a classically learned

ministry, and provide another grade of ministers, equipped only with piety, zeal, and an English training, in order to gain these numerical accessions, like our Immersionist and Methodist neighbors. It is not proposed that we shall lower the standard of learning in our Seminaries, or discourage such as have taste for it from acquiring classical training; but that there shall be another wide door into our ministry, by which a large number of ministers of another grade shall be permitted to enter, with only an English education. On the other hand, we hold that our present theory of preparation should be left unchanged, and only more faithfully executed. The extent of this is, not to make classical learning so essential to the being of a ministry as to refuse the character of a valid minister to those who are without our training, but to assert that *it is a true source of increased efficiency*; and hence, inasmuch as every one who avouches the obligation to serve Christ ought to feel obliged to serve him the most and the best possible, we conclude it to be our duty to gain that increase of capacity for service.

The first reason we urge against innovation is, that it opposes the deliberate judgment of the wisest and best of our fathers, when viewing and deciding the very same problem. Is it said that the tremendous emergency arising out of our growth of population has put a new face on the question, in the presence of which they would have decided otherwise? No. Dr. John H. Rice, for instance, foresaw precisely this increase and this emergency. He looked full in the face the figures disclosing the slow relative growth of Virginia Presbyteries. And in the presence of these express facts this is what he did in 1825: he devoted his great powers to pressing these two points, the evils of an uneducated ministry, and the equipment of Union Seminary. Never, for one moment, did the facts sway him and his co-workers to favor the hurrying of a single partially educated man into the field; their only idea of the remedy was, to provide means as speedily as possible to give the most thorough education to the largest number of ministers. The same thing was true of the fathers who began the creation of Princeton Seminary in 1811, Ashbel Green, Archibald Alexander, Samuel Miller, and their comrades. The same was true also of Moses Stuart in New England, and the men who created the Congregational (American) Education Society. They saw the solemn

emergency; they appreciated the church's slow progress in overtaking it; they refused all other remedy for it than the one to which they devoted their energies; means for the thorough education of more numerous men to reap the perishing harvest.

But it is suggested that there is substantial difference in the case now, because we now have a rich and profuse literature in English, covering all the departments of theological learning, whereas, when the Presbyterian constitution was first devised (say 1649-1651), all was locked up in Latin. We are told that, even at the day of Albert Barnes, he had nothing in English to begin with, save Doddridge's Family Expositor.

This greatly misrepresents the facts. We must remind readers, first, that the dates of the creation of our constitution, as an American church, are not those of the Westminster Assembly, but are 1729, 1758, 1789, and especially 1820. At the last date, which marks the real establishment of our polity, the English works on all the branches of divinity bore as large a ratio to the Latin then accessible to American scholars, both in quantity and value, as at this day. To make it much otherwise, indeed, at the epoch of the Westminster Assembly, one must strangely forget the works of the great English Reformers a century before, from Cranmer onward, many of which were in English. He must forget that the age of the Westminster Assembly was adorned by such writers as Lightfoot, Richard Baxter, Manton, John Owen, the prince of expositors, Joseph Caryl, Sir Robert Boyle, Bishop Hall, Matthew Poole, the Scotchmen Baillie, Henderson, and Rutherford, the evangelical prelates Usher and Leighton, the poet and divine John Milton, and a multitude of others. These men illustrated every part of biblical learning by works which, to this day, are mines of knowledge for the more pretentious moderns, and that, not only in Latin dress, as Poole's "*Synopsis Criticorum*," but also in English, as the same author's "Annotations."

Now, when we add to this noble catalogue of English biblical lore of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the yet more profuse works of the eighteenth and the early part of the nineteenth, how much is the trivial assertion of Barnes worth? Not to dwell on the profound works of the scholars of the Anglican Church, such as Dean Prideaux, Bishops Hammond, Bull, Stillingfleet, Warburton, Waterland, Pearson, we remember that

age witnessed the critical labors of a Bentley and a Mill, the Hebrew Grammars (in English) of Bayley, Fitzgerald, Joseph Frey; the Lexicons of Parkhurst and Frey, the publication of Dr. George Campbell's Gospels, the vast and unsurpassed work of Dr. Lardner (*Credibility*), the prophetic studies of Sir Isaac Newton and of Bishop Newton and Dr. Faber; ministers had possessed Doddridge from 1740; McKnight from 1756; Dr. Benson from 1735; Paley's *Horae Paulinae* from 1790; Blair on the Canon from 1785; Lowth's critical works from 1787; Whitby from 1761; Dr. Gill from 1763, unsurpassed, perhaps unequalled, by any commentator since, who wrote on the whole Bible; Matthew Henry from 1706; Scott from 1790; not to dwell on the long line of American divines from Drs. John Cotton and Cotton Mather down to Jonathan Edwards. No, the framers of our constitution did not require learning of their ministry because the stores of information were then locked up in Latin, but because they knew that knowledge of the originals of the Bible was essential to make a competent teacher in the church. Nor are the English books of this age on divinity more learned, or accurate, or useful, than the former; they are more frequently feebler rehashes of the very materials already gathered by those admirable old scholars.

We have, then, the battle to fight over again for the utility of thorough education, and a knowledge of the "dead languages," to the pastor. Let us again define the ground we assume. It is not that the Christian ignorant of the classics may not get the rudiments of redemption out of English books, or may not so teach them to another as to save his soul. It is not that this plain man's ministry is invalid, because he is no classic. It is not that such a man, if greatly gifted by nature and grace, may not do more good than many weaker good men with their classical training. But we assert that this training will be, to any man, gifted above his fellows or not, an important *means of still greater efficiency, correctness, authority, and wisdom*, in saving souls, and that the lack of it will entail on any pastor a considerable (comparative) liability to partial error, mistakes, and injury of the church and of souls. Now it is each minister's duty to love God, not with a part, but with all of his heart; and to serve him, not only as well as some weaker brother is doing, but with the fullest effectiveness possible for him, he being such

a man and in such circumstance as he is. It should be with each minister as with the faithful and devoted bondsman. He may be gifted by nature with a giant frame, so that with a dull and inferior axe he cuts more wood for the master in the day than another with his natural feebleness who has the keenest axe. By "putting to more strength," he may even cut the average day's task. But if, by grinding his axe thoroughly, he is enabled to cut even two days' task in one, if he loves the master he will grind it. And even if his day is advanced towards the middle of the forenoon, if he finds that an hour devoted even then to a thorough grinding, will result in a larger heap of wood well cut by nightfall, he will stop at that late hour to grind.

Now, as to the high utility of classic culture to the educated man, the arguments which have convinced the majority of well-informed men for three centuries, have by no means been refuted by the multiplication of books in English. Latin and Greek are large sources of our mother tongue. No man has full mastery of it until he knows the sources. Translation from language to language is the prime means for training men to discrimination in using words, and thus, in thought. There is no discipline in practical logic so suitable for a pupil as those reasonings from principles of syntax, by processes of logical exclusion and synthesis, to the correct way of construing sentences. As a mental discipline, this construing of a language, other than our vernacular, has no rival and no substitute in any other study. And if the language to be construed is idiomatically different from the vernacular, with its own genius, collocating thoughts and words in its own peculiar order, as is the case with the "dead languages," this fits them best of all to be implements of this discipline. It is the best way for teaching the young mind to think. We do not dwell on the culture of true taste, and the value of the fine models presented in the classics. It may be retorted that there is fine writing in English too; why may not this cultivate the taste? We reply; these English models are moulded after the classic, if they are really fine. Is it not better to take our inspiration from the prime source than the secondary? Moreover, they are usually so imbued with classic allusion and imagery that only a classic scholar can understand them. True, Milton wrote in English; but the reader needs to

be as much a Latin and Greek scholar fully to comprehend him as to read Virgil and Sophocles.

But the prime fact which determines the question is, that the Bible was given by God in Greek and Hebrew. The Greek New Testament and Hebrew Old Testament alone are God's word. No translation or commentary is infallible. No man who must needs "pin his faith" as to the interpretation of a given phrase upon the "say so" of an expositor that "this is just what the Greek means," can be always certain that he is not deceived. Does one say, this is all the laity have? Just so; and therefore no such layman is entitled to become the authorized teacher of others. "The analogy of the faith" may give the intelligent English reader practically a certainty that his translators and expositors do give him the more fundamental and obvious truths of redemption without any substantial error, and that he may be sure of his own salvation. But it ought to be the aim of the religious teacher, who undertakes to lead others, to attain accuracy also on the lesser points. No atom of revealed truth is useless to souls. The lesser error may perchance be the means of leading some soul to the greater, even to the destructive, mistake. The duty of the pastor to go himself to the fountain head of the exposition may be illustrated thus: an author offers to him his English commentary on Scripture designed for the English reader. The pastor receives it and says, "That is well. But, Mr. Expositor, you yourself tested your own expositions by the light of the original Greek?" "No," he answers, "writing only for English readers, I myself stopped at the English version!" That pastor would throw the commentary from him with indignation. But the pastor is the commentary of his charge; they have the same right to require of him that he shall not stop short of testing his expositions to them until he gets to the infallible standard.

Again, it is often the pastor's duty to defend the correct exposition of the truth against impugners. How can he do this successfully unless he is able to argue for the translation he assumes, when he is always liable to be assailed with the assertion: "I deny that the original means what you say." Shall he meet assertion only with bald assertion, while confessing that he himself is not qualified to judge whereof he affirms? This would be a sorry polemic indeed. For instance, the pastor

ignorant of Greek has declared that the word rendered in the Scripture "*justify*," does not signify an inward and spiritual change, but only a forensic and declarative act of God in favor of the believing sinner. The Roman priest rises and says: "Holy Mother Church teaches the opposite; how do you know what the word signifies?" "I read what I asserted in Dr. Hodge's English Commentary on Romans. He says so." "But Holy Mother Church is inspired. Is your Dr. Hodge inspired?" "No." "Do you know Greek, so as to assure us, yourself, that he may not be mistaken?" "No." "But," the priest adds, "the church is not only infallible, but knows Greek perfectly; and she asserts, of her knowledge, that you and your Dr. Hodge are mistaken." In what a pitiful attitude is this "defender of the faith" left, although he is, in fact, on the right side, with nothing but an assertion and a confession of ignorance to offset a more confident assertion.

It is worth remarking also, that an incomplete knowledge of the original languages is not to be despised in the pastor. A tolerable knowledge of the rudiments, which would not suffice him to originate independent criticism, may enable him to judge intelligently of another's criticism of the original. Or it may furnish him with the weapons to overthrow completely the arrogant assailant who knows no more than he does and yet boasts much. A young pastor in Virginia was once debating, during a series of days, the "Thomasite" creed with its founder, a man of boundless dogmatism and pretension. He, like the Anabaptists of Luther's age, denied the conscious existence of the soul apart from the body after death. He boldly asserted that he knew Hebrew; that the Hebrew Scripture gave no countenance to the idea of separate spirit in man; for that the word currently translated soul in the English version meant only a *smelling bottle*! The young pastor related that when Dr. Thomas began to parade his Hebrew he began to tremble, for he had the guilty consciousness that the dust had been gathering on his own Hebrew books ever since he left the Seminary. But the intervening night gave him an opportunity to examine them, and his Lexicon at once cleared up the source of the impudent assertion, by giving him under שְׂדֵה ("breath," "soul") the phrase from Isaiah iii. 20: שְׂדֵה בְּרִי "smelling bottle" (bottles of odors). All, therefore, that was necessary was to take this Lexicon to

the church next morning, read the extract, challenge all competent persons—of whom there happened to be none present—to inspect his citation, and show the absurdity of reading “smelling bottle” wherever *וְנִחַן* occurred. Thus, as he humorously stated, he hewed Dr. Thomas to pieces with his own smelling bottle. Here a small tincture of Hebrew answered a valuable purpose: without it, our advocate would have had nothing but assertion to oppose to assertion. It should also be admitted that a critical knowledge of the Hebrew tongue is less essential to the pastor than of the Greek, and its lack less blamable. For the New Testament résunés and restates all the doctrines of redemption contained in the Old Testament. Hence, he who can be sure that he construes all the declarations of the New Testament aright, cannot go amiss as to any of the doctrinal statements of the Old Testament, though he has only the English version. But even this admission cannot be extended to the historical statements of the Old Testament; and as they have an interesting, though subordinate, value for illustrating the plan of redemption, the minister who knows Greek but not Hebrew cannot be fully on the level of him who knows both. For, in general, there is a sense in which the best translation cannot fully represent its original. Pope’s Homer shows us Pope rather than Homer; Dryden’s Virgil, Dryden fully as much as Virgil. There are shades of thought, connectives of words and ideas, idiomatic beauties and aptitudes of expression, which a mere translation does not reproduce. These points, lost in any modern version, are not essential to the getting of the fundamentals of redemption; but they clothe the teachings of revelation in a light and consistency which he that undertakes to teach others ought not to slight.

There is a practical testimony to this argument. It is found in the example of some of the best of those excellent and useful men who have found themselves in the Baptist or Methodist ministry without classical knowledge. They, seeing its vital necessity to the guide of souls, have given themselves no rest until they have acquired, often by unassisted study, a competent knowledge of the New Testament Greek at least; many also of the Hebrew. Their consciences would not suffer them to remain without it.

This position is also sustained by this very simple and natural

view. 1 Timothy iii. 2, requires of the presbyter-bishop "aptness to teach." This cannot mean less than didactic ability to explain the gospel correctly; and we may grant that this would be sufficiently conferred by fair general intelligence, perspicuous good sense, the gift of utterance, familiarity with the Scriptures of the New Testament, and a personal experience of gospel grace. The intelligent tradesman or mechanic in Ephesus might possess these. But ought not the modern pastor to possess this *minimum* qualification? Should he not be abreast, at least, of the Ephesian mechanic? Let it be remembered that this Greek, now the classic "dead" language, was then the vernacular. The educated Englishman must be no mean Greek scholar to have that practical mastery of the idiom which this mechanic had, granting that the mechanic had not the knowledge of the elegancies of Greek which the modern student may have sought out. But more than this: the events, the history, the geography, the usages, the modes of thought, the opinions, which constituted the human environment of the New Testament writers, the accurate understanding of which is so necessary to grasp the real scope of what they wrote, all these were the familiar, popular, contemporaneous knowledge of that intelligent mechanic in Ephesus. He had imbibed it in his daily observation, reading, and talk, as easily and naturally as the mechanic in Charleston has imbibed the daily facts about current politics, cotton shipments, familiar modern machinery, or domestic usages. But to us now all this expository knowledge is archæologic! It is gained accurately only by learned researches into antiquity. This imaginary picture may help to put us in the point of view for understanding our argument. We may suppose that the chasm of eighteen centuries is crossed, so that an Ephesine scholar—not mere mechanic—appears in Charleston now, and it is made his duty to instruct his Greek fellow-colonists in the municipal and state laws. But they are printed in English, a tongue strange to him, antipodal to Greek in idiom. Well, this difficulty may be surmounted by learning English, or, as our opponents think, simply by purchasing a translation of South Carolina laws into Greek; though how this translation is to enable him to *guarantee* his clients against error in their legal steps passes our wit to see. But this obstruction out of the way, he begins to read. He finds enactments about property in "cot-

ton"! What is cotton? The wool which old Herodotus reported grew on trees in Nubia? And property in steam engines! And in steamships! And in steam cotton-compress engines; and in stocks of railroads, and in banks, and in government securities! And of buying and selling cotton futures! And of valuable phosphate works, etc., etc. What a crowd of surprises, of mysteries, of astonishments! How much to be learned, after the knotty, sibilant, guttural English is learned, before the book has any light to his mind!

We thus see that the plain Ephesine mechanic elder had immense advantages over us, inuring directly from his epoch, contemporary with the events of redemption, from his vernacular, from his providential position for understanding the sacred books. But we again urge the question, Are we "apt to teach," unless we make up our deficiencies to a level somewhere near his? The modern who has become a learned Greek scholar and archæologist has not done more than reach the level of this Ephesine elder. It were well for us if we had reached it.

Only one other point in this wide field of argument can be touched. The great apostasy of prelacy and popery was wrought precisely on that plan of a partially educated ministry which is now urged on us. As time rolled on, antiquating the language and the facts and opinions of the apostolic age, the church forgot the argument illustrated above, and vainly fancied that she would find the requisite "aptness to teach," as Timothy found it, in pious men taken from the mass of society. Men read church history now under an illusion. When they hear of the pastors and fathers of the early church as writing and preaching in Latin or Greek, because these are the learned languages now, these must have been learned men! But it was not so; these languages were their vernaculars. True learning was not the requisite for the ministerial office in the patristic ages. A few, like Jerome, had biblical learning; the most were chosen without it, precisely on the plan now recommended to us. The Latin pastor knew no Greek nor Hebrew, but read his Bible from a translation, precisely as our author wishes his new evangelist to do now. The Greek pastor knew no Latin nor Hebrew. The result of that experiment is indelibly written in church history. the result was the gradual development of popery; the "dark ages;" the reintroduction of idolatry; the mass, bloody per-

secutions, and the corruption of Christianity. This lesson is enough for us; we do not desire to witness the repetition of the experiment. It was by just such expositions, founded on a translation, for instance, that the great Augustine, ignorant of Hebrew, and nearly ignorant of Greek, but energetic, eloquent, and confident, introduced into the theology of the Latin church those definitions which it took all the throes and labors of the Reformation to expunge; which made *μετάνοια* mean penance (*pœnitentia*); *δικαίωσις* mean conversion, and faith (*fides*) a derivative of the verb *ἔτι*, "it is done," thus representing faith as a work. Shall we be told that Protestants have now learned that lesson so well that there will be no danger of their being again misled on those points, even by uneducated guides? Perhaps not on those points. But who can foresee on what other unexpected points? The ingenuity of error is abounding.

Reference is made to a literary revolution which is to extrude the study of the classics from their place, and substitute other (modern) languages for them, or modern sciences; and it is claimed that this revolution has gone so far, and is so irrevocable, that in making the classics a requisite for preaching we narrow our field of choice to one-fifth of the fully educated young men of the country. We see no evidences of such a revolution as permanent. We see, indeed, a plenty of rash innovation; but there is no sign that the educated mind of Christendom will submit to such a change in the methods of liberal culture. The business school is relied on, indeed, to make architects, engineers, and clerks; but real education, in its higher sense, still resorts to the classics as the foundation. Germany, for instance, "the school-mistress of the nations," has her "*real-schulen*" for the training of the men who are expected to devote themselves to the "bread and butter sciences;" but her *gymnasia*, where her youth are prepared for the professions, hold fast to the most thorough teaching of the dead languages. The plea that we limit ourselves away from four-fifths of our young men by requiring classical training, is refuted by this simple view. Tho' educated, in any mode or form, are a small fraction of any population. Suppose, now, we retort, that by requiring that sound English education in divinity, which is described to us as so desirable and sufficient, we preclude ourselves from the whole field of choice, except that small fraction;

wherefore we should require no education, classical nor English, but ordain the common mass-ignorance. The reply to this our sophism would be patent: that while the church will not ordain ignorance, she does not preclude even the most ignorant, because she proposes to educate (in English) and then ordain all worthy applicants. But if classical training is essential to the minister's best usefulness, as we have shown, the very same reply avails for us. The church does not exclude the four-fifths of the cultivated English scholars, by requiring of all classical knowledge; because her call is to come forward and accept a classical education, and then be ordained. The man who is fit for a minister will not refuse the additional labor for Christ, when he learns that it is requisite for his more efficient service of Christ. But it is said, the man whose heart God hath touched, may have no Latin, and may be middle-aged, and may have, moreover, a family on his hands. The classical process is too long for him to attempt. To this the answers are two. Very few men at middle age ought to be encouraged to take up the clerical profession. They must be men of peculiarly good endowments of nature and grace, or both they and the church will have to repent the unseasonable change of profession. And second, for those peculiar cases our system already makes full provision. To any fit man's plea, that the preparation required of him by the church is hopelessly long, she has this answer: no such man, however behindhand in his training, ever fails to receive, among us, the aid and encouragement to carry him through the desirable training. Her answer is, to point to that noble and honored class of her ministers represented by the planter, James Turner of Bedford; the ex-carpenter, Dr. J. D. Matthews; the ex-ship captain, Dr. Harding; and to say to all like-minded men, if Christ gives you the *will*, we pledge ourselves to give the *way*.

It is urged that, by our requirements, we actually limit God's sovereignty. He may have elected the devout man without Latin, while we practically refuse to have him. That this is a "begging of the question," appears from one remark: suppose it should be that God's election and call are to a thorough education, and then to preaching. But whether this is God's purpose is the very question in debate. To assume the negative is to beg that question. Should the affirmative be true, then

our requirements are not across, but in the very line of God's purpose.

We are pointed to the inconsistent execution of our system, to the perfunctory examinations of Presbyteries, the shameful ignorance of some candidates, the practical setting at naught of our own constitution; and we are told that we have just enough of the old system, in name, to drive off from us the good men who make no pretence of classical knowledge, and yet not enough to keep out other men as ignorant, and less honest. Now, on this we remark, first, that this charge is not brought by us, but by others; and it is not our mission at this time to affirm it. But, secondly, if it be true, the inference drawn from it, that our slow growth and small success mainly are caused by a lack of this class of less educated ministers, will find its complete refutation in the facts charged. For surely no other solution of our scanty success need be sought, if those discreditable facts are true. If courts of Christ's church thus trample on their own profession and their own rules; if they thus dishonestly certificate ignorance as scholarship, assisting such impositions on society; if the young men who become our pastors have no more conscience than to contemn and waste the precious opportunities for learning provided them by the church, so as to come forth from them pretentious dunces; if such grovelling laziness in the season of preparation is the measure of these young men's energy and devotion in their ministry, *there* is a mass of sin at once abundantly sufficient to insult our God, grieve his Spirit, and effectually alienate his help. Our quest is ended. There is no need for our looking one step farther to find out what is the matter. Such a ministry cannot be blessed of a truthful God, and cannot succeed. The one work which remains for us is, not to change our constitution, but, with deep repentance and loathing delinquencies so shameful, to return to it, and live up to it. Let us try that first. If these charges are true—which it is no task of ours to affirm—let us execute our righteous rules in examining and licensing in such a way that God's truth shall be honored, real merit recognized, and dishonest indolence shamed and banished from among us. Then, perhaps, we shall find that our ministry will be efficient, without innovating on the wisdom of our laws, approved by the experience of centuries.

It is argued that since society includes various grades of taste, culture, and possessions, our church is suffering for the lack of different grades of ministers. But we thought that the *parity of the ministry* was one of the corner-stones of our constitution. Methodists, or prelatists, can consistently have different grades: for they retain some features of hierarchy. Our church, in its very essence, is not a hierarchy, but a republic. Now, there is one sense in which, with an equally thorough education, we shall have, not grades, but sorts of ministers endlessly various, and adapted to all the various parts of our work. No two minds are exactly alike; no two temperaments. God, who bestows the different shades of nature, provides for this variety; that is enough. All we need is to do as our author so well inculcates in his January number—allot the right man to the right work by our Presbyterian supervision. This is entirely compatible with parity. "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." But when we begin to make a substantive difference in the educational privileges of ministers, to train them for different grades, these will soon be virtually marked as higher and lower grades. Ultimately, the forms will be moulded to the virtual facts, and we shall have, like the Methodists, the beginnings of a hierarchy. And whereas it is supposed that the more cheaply trained preachers will be specially adapted to the plainer and poorer congregations, our knowledge of Presbyterian human nature makes us surmise that these will be the very charges to insist most upon having the fully trained minister, and to resent the allotment of the less learned to them as a stigma and a disparagement. It is much to be feared that the new grade will be obstinately rejected by the very grade of hearers for whom they will have been devised.

The *desideratum* claimed is, that there shall be a way, like the Methodist mode, for giving many ministers their adequate training without the expense and delay of segregating them for years in scholastic institutions, along with a useful occupation in parochial labors. Now, we are struck with the thought that our constitution provides expressly for just this way. It nowhere makes a college or a seminary an essential. All that it stipulates for, in the way of means, is a two years' training under "some approved divine." This, of course, throws the door wide open to the incoming of the very ideal painted. The young man may

join any experienced pastor, assist him within or without his field of labor, pursue his studies under his guidance, in connection with these evangelistic labors, present himself before Presbytery, and, if his "parts of trial" are adequate, demand his licensure with the full sanction of the present constitution. Now, if such a mode of training is so desirable, is so strongly a "felt want," how comes it that none enter into this open door? Why has there been such a rarity of such cases in our church since 1825? Why are not many learned and wise pastors—of whom we have so many—thus bringing on many godly candidates? The obvious reply is, that the good sense of the church tacitly preceives this training unsuited to the times. Pastors practically feel this, churches feel it, and the young men feel it. It is the same feeling which is to-day operating in the Methodist Church to make them substitute this method of training, long so peculiarly their own, by one more nearly like ours. In a word, the door is already open. If the Christian community felt its need of this way, it would use it. It does not use it; and the inference is that really it does not want it.

We have been told that by this way we should get a cheaper ministry for our new fields. Men thus trained, not having spent so much in their training, would work on smaller salaries. Now, the only experience we have does not support this hope. Most of the Methodist evangelists were trained thus; but they really receive better salaries than the Presbyterian. When the various allowances are added up, theirs is found a better paid ministry than ours.

The urgent comparisons made between our method and that of Methodists and Baptists cannot but suggest another thought: that we, if we make the proposed change, shall be in danger of "putting on their old shoes just when they are throwing them away." If these denominations are good exemplars for us, then it is to be presumed that they understand their own interests; their fine results indicate wise management. Now, it is significant that both these denominations are now expending great effort in making certain changes in their methods of rearing ministers, and that these changes are in the direction of the way we are now advised to forsake. They have tried, and are trying, two different ways. They are in a transition state. Before we make their way our guide, it will be well to wait and see

which of their two ways they are going to approve finally for themselves. If we are correctly informed by those who are in closest intelligence with their influential men, these are yearly less and less satisfied with their old species of training, and more and more desirous to have all their ministry improve the advantages of the excellent seminaries of theology which they have founded. Hear, for instance, the testimony of Mr. Price in the *Southern Presbyterian* :

“And, in proof of this view, it is a remarkable fact, that those very causes to which this writer ascribes their more rapid growth, are becoming more unpopular every day with those denominations. While he and others in our church are advocating a lower standard of ministerial qualification, that we may keep pace with the Baptists and Methodists, these denominations are directing the most intelligent energies of their respective churches to raising their grade of scholarship ; their uneducated men are losing caste and influence ; the ministers coming forth from their theological schools are establishing a public sentiment and a more rigid rule of systematic theology, and of clear and accurate statement in doctrine, before which the loose and extravagant discourses of a class of preachers that once exercised a powerful influence fall under sharp censure, and are even occasionally exposed to ridicule.

“There are unlearned men in these churches, and such may be licensed and ordained in ours, under our provisions for extraordinary cases, whom the most intelligent are bound to respect as called of God, and whose usefulness none can deny ; but when our Baptist and Methodist brethren are casting off certain methods, which they have weighed in the balance and found wanting, it becomes us to consider well before we take up that which they throw away, especially when they are free to confess that our example, and the evident fruits of our more thorough training, have powerfully impelled them towards change.

“The writer in the *Review* has heard of the Cumberland Presbyterians. If he has been correctly informed, he will find that no branch of the Presbyterian Church has, in proportion to its numbers and resources, more colleges, universities, and theological schools. If he attends their General Assembly, he will be impressed by the distinct and painful line of demarcation between their learned and their unlearned men. And when he sees and hears some of the latter, though he may find much to admire in the vigor of their speech and the vigor of their labors, he will not wonder that, as a people, our Cumberland brethren are making, perhaps, more vigorous efforts than any other Presbyterian body to educate their ministry, and thus obliterate one of the distinctive features upon which they went out from us. When the Rev. Dr. Lyon brought into our General Assembly, some years ago, a report against certain proposals of union with the Cumberland Presbyterians, he did not hesitate to present, as one of the arguments of the committee that he represented, that, by such a union, our church will be brought under the control of an overwhelming majority of uneducated men. If some of the theories now in vogue among us are put into practice, we may reach this alternative without uniting with the Cumberlands ; and they, in turn, by raising their standard, as they now seem determined to do, may be in a position, by and by, to raise the same objection to a union with us.

We are reminded that our system now requires a longer and more expensive preparation than the other liberal professions. And why should it not, when our professional tasks are infinitely more responsible? But facts here argue on our side again, in that society is steadily demanding a raised standard of preparation from lawyers and physicians. Is this the time to lower ours? The well-furnished young physician, for instance, gets, in his youth, a pretty fair classical education; then he reads medicine a year with some doctor; then, if he graduates in one year (most have to spend two) in a good school of theoretic medicine, like that in the University of Virginia, he does remarkably well; then he goes into a New York or Baltimore hospital one or two years, to get the clinic instruction. And even the plainer country neighborhoods are now requiring so much of training of their doctors! The other professions are advancing largely; it is no time for ours to go back.

It has been often and justly remarked that it requires more mature training and ability to teach unenlightened minds accurately than cultivated ones. It was considered by discerning persons the crowning manifestation of Dr. John H. Rice's trained capacity, that he could not only preach to the edification of General Assemblies in Philadelphia, but could go then to the Bethel Seamen's chapel and preach with equal effect to the rough sailors. If we are to bring poor and rude communities into our denomination, then they will need the best trained, not the inferior, minds, to inculcate on them our logical and profound system. And as regards the frontier communities, there is no greater mistake than that of concluding that, because their exteriors are rough, the ill-furnished minister will suffice to instruct them. The testimony of Dr. N. L. Rice, for instance, in the Assembly of 1857, was wholly the opposite; and he spoke of his own knowledge. Said he: "The garb of the frontiersmen may be rough; their dwellings may be cabins; but they include the most independent, active, inquiring minds anywhere to be found in America. It is the fact that their minds and temperaments are such which has made them emigrants; the plodding, the slow, the minds that like to lean on precedent and prescription, and are content to be led—these stay in the old neighborhoods. It is the adventurous minds who seek new fortunes. A very large portion of them are men of thorough

education. The educated emigrant is most often a 'free-thinker,' so-called; for one main impulse which pushes the man of culture to brave the roughnesses of the frontier is, that he has broken all intellectual trammels, if not all sound restraints of orthodox thinking. Hence we find these frontier societies seething with most eager speculation, questioning all old foundations. To suppose that the good man of slim intellectual resources can control these minds is the most fatal mistake. The man who is to command them needs to have the most mature resources of learning at the readiest possible command. He needs to be a walking library, of the most advanced learning, not only in divinity, but in all connected studies." This witness is also true of our Southern frontiers. You shall see the "cow-boy" of Western Texas, sometimes reclining on his greasy blanket to read a pocket edition of Horace or Moliere. In their "shanties," alongside of the whiskey-jug, will be found the writings of Huxley, Bradlaugh, and Büchner, with the *Westminster Review*, and the works of Renan. Our evangelists confirm Dr. Rice's testimony, and tell us to send none but thoroughly furnished men to the frontiers.

It has been supposed that great gain would result from the alternative of an "English course" in our seminaries for such candidates for the ministry as could not find time or means for mastering the original languages of Scripture. A manual of church history might be taught, it is supposed, without involving Latin or Greek; and the exegetical and doctrinal studies would be founded on the English version alone. Were the teachers in these seminaries entitled to any consideration in this discussion, their friends might perhaps raise an embarrassing question on their behalf. Their time seems to be already fully occupied in the teaching of the fuller course to their classical students and the exposition of the Greek and Hebrew Scriptures, which alone are the *ipsissima verba* of God. Shall they cease to give this course, in order to do justice to the other class of their students? Or shall they give the latter class a light, perfunctory, Sabbath-school course, such as they will have time for? Would such a little sketch be a worthy training for a Presbyterian minister?

It will behoove the advocates of this system to consider three consequences which are very distinctly involved in it.

One is, that it will admit the imperfect education of a great many more men than should be entitled, according to the new plan itself, to enter the ministry upon it. Men's over-haste, or indolence, or ill-considered zeal, or self-confidence, will prompt many of the candidates to plead that they also are poor enough, or old enough, or gifted enough, or married enough, to claim to enter through the English door, of whom the judgment of our innovators themselves would be, that they had no grounds for claiming that easier way. The pressure of churches and Presbyteries for more laborers to be speedily gotten will assuredly second their pleas. The result will be the general breaking down of our standard. The majority of our ministry will be the uneducated, the minority the educated, as it was in the other denominations in those old ways from which they are striving so hard to escape.

The second will be, that the students of the English course will be much at the mercy of the professor for their doctrinal and exegetical opinions. When the teacher gives his construction of the text, if the English pupils attempt to say that the English version, or the commentaries thereon, seem to sustain another meaning, he has only to reply: "I assure you, young gentlemen, that the original supports only my construction; and if you understood that language, you would see it to be so." That is, to those students, an end of debate. Or else they must learn to hold their teacher in suspicion and disesteem, as a man capable of imposing on their ignorance. There will be one caste of minds which will resent this mental domination, the self-sufficient and crotchety. The consequence will be, that to this class their teacher will be no guide; but this is the class to whom influential guidance will be most necessary. Now, we surmise that this sweeping power in the professors of our seminaries will not be very agreeable to that large class of our presbyters who cherish along with us a well-grounded jealousy of seminary dictation, and all other forms of centralization. It may be said, our present professors may all be trusted. But they cannot remain always. Unhappily, such things have been known in seminaries as heretical professors, and yet oftener as crotchety professors, fond of riding exegetical hobbies. Shall we arm these with this dangerous power of leading off the English students after their error?

The third consideration is, that if the new plan of training is to be carried on to any successful extent, we must reconcile our minds to become a "broad church." We must lose our doctrinal unity. Again, we advance the experimental evidence as the most solid. All the denominations which practice the methods of training ministers proposed become broad churches. The Immersionists are a broad church; we have ourselves heard Calvinism and Arminianism preached in it from the same pulpit. The Cumberland Presbyterian is a broad church. The Methodist is a broad church. As we remarked, the Wesleyan theology receives from Methodist ministers various interpretations, from moderate Calvinism down to Pelagianism. There are ministers and presiding elders who hold the perseverance of the saints, just as we do. The church of Alexander Campbell is a broad church; he himself declared that in it "all sorts of doctrine were preached by all sorts of men." In this we are not reproaching these denominations. We use the phrase "broad church" in no sense offensive to them, but as a ready and familiar phrase to describe a condition of things among them on which they congratulate themselves, namely, a tolerance in the ministry of the same body of different schools of theological opinion, within the scope of the fundamental doctrines of salvation. But we only point to the fact that it has been the conscientious fixed policy of us Presbyterians not to have these doctrinal diversities and contrarieties among our official teachers. We receive all shades of opinion, compatible with true repentance, to our communion; but we require the voice of our official body to give one sound as to revealed theology.

Now, the experience cited above proves that if we are willing to lose this doctrinal harmony and unity, the chief glory of a church of Christ, we have only to imitate these other denominations in their method of training ministers. The explanation of the result is easy. Human minds are imperfect instruments of thought, and their opinions naturally tend to variety and diversity. Again, the religious world teems with competing clashing doctrines, each striving for recognition and pressing itself on others with its utmost ingenuity of argument. The proposed method of training, by reason of its comparative brevity and imperfection, must leave its pupils more pervious to the in-

jurious religious errors which obtrusively meet them. These different "grades" of preachers will not have the unifying bond with each other of a complete *esprit de corps*. The result will be doctrinal divergence; and our church must either submit to become a "broad" one, or be again rent by schism. We are aware that there is no patent infallible process, in fallible men's hands, for transmitting a doctrinal homogeneity from age to age. But the means which comes nearest, the only means of any tolerable efficiency is, under the grace and light of God's Spirit, the thorough education of ministers in an orthodox theology, and that by similar methods for all. Thus not only is the competent knowledge of the divine science acquired by all, and the practical skill in moral reasoning and exposition, which detect error and sophism in false doctrines, but all imbibe, so to speak, the Presbyterian and orthodox idiosyncrasy of mind. The doctrinal affinity in the correct creed is propagated through the whole body. Now, he who really doubts whether the Presbyterian theology is right, may also doubt whether it is proper to employ these influences for unifying and stereotyping men's belief in it. But those who, with us, are sure that our theology is right, will also feel that it is not only allowable, but our duty to wield those influences for making our theology permanent in our ministers' minds. It is the only human way to avoid the tendencies to "broad churchism."

In conclusion, we most emphatically affirm all the regrets expressed at our lack of a holy aggressiveness, and every ardent aspiration for a remedy. But this remedy is not to be found by innovation upon our system, but in the reformation of the persons who work the system. What we need is not a class of imperfectly educated ministers, but repentance, holy yearnings for souls, prayer, and more abounding labor by educated ministers; more family religion and true Christian training in households, which is, after all, the Presbyterian's main lever; more self-consecration in our laymen; and especially our employment of the "dead capital" now lying unused in our eldership. The elder need not be a "local preacher," after the pattern of the Methodist "local," but the intelligent elder ought to be something much better; active in spheres of work which the church needs much more than sermonizing or formal "preachments," viz., catechetical instruction, teaching the gospel from house to

house, oversight, social meetings, exhortations, Sabbath-schools. Do we feel a "crying need" in our out-lying destitutions for such work as this, and for laborers to do it more cheaply than the educated evangelist? This is precisely the work which intelligent ruling elders ought to do. All the elders in Scripture, ruling and teaching, were required to be "apt to teach." Our conception of the New Testament organization of the congregation would not *pull down* a part of the ministers to an uneducated level, but *lift up* all the elders, including the ruling elders, to the level of *official teachers*. Each congregation was governed *and taught*, not by a one-man power, a sort of local prelate, but by a board, a plurality of elders, all of whom were teachers, though not all of equal teaching authority, learning, or gifts. But, to ensure full intelligence and permanent orthodoxy, we should require the presiding elder in this board to have the full equipment of well attested theological learning. One such man, thoroughly furnished, presiding over the board, and regulating and harmonizing their joint instructions, would give a sufficient guarantee of soundness in the faith. The others under him, in their less authoritative teaching sphere, would safely fill in the details of the work. The ruling elder would not act as catechist as though he were an independent integer, but as a member of the board, under its direction, and especially under the direction of the president, who is fully trained and tried; even as he, in his public work as authoritative herald of salvation, does not act independently, but under the control of *his* presbyterial board, the Presbytery. Thus the didactic work of each congregation would assume a largeness, occupying several men's hands; while the thorough theological furniture of the one man at the head would guarantee doctrinal safety in the whole. Such was evidently the apostle's conception in the pastoral epistles