

"All evangelical denominations, especially in this country, acquiesce in the necessity of *piety* and of a *call from God*, as requisite for the ministerial office. The Presbyterian Church in the United States has never wavered in her testimony on these two points.

"In regard to the importance of *EDUCATION* to the work of the ministry, there is more difference of opinion; but in our own Church there has always been a uniformity of sentiment on the subject. The principle is supposed to have the full sanction of the word of God.

"Under the Jewish dispensation, the Priests and Levites were not ignorant and illiterate men. The Levitical cities were places of learning. The officers of the sanctuary were secluded from the rest of the tribes, and appointed to dwell in towns where they had opportunities of education adapted to promote intellectual fitness in the discharge of their sacred functions. In later times there were "schools of the prophets," as at Nainoth, Jericho, Ramah, and Gilgal, for the instruction of prophets and the sons of prophets. And in the synagogues, which are commonly supposed to have been established later still, there were scribes and doctors of the law, who possessed the gifts of teaching in connection with qualifications of learning.*

"Under the New Testament dispensation, its Head, the first-born among the prophets, was pre-eminent in all knowledge and learning. Born among the lowly, he was not content to keep down to the natural level of their ignorance. He increased in stature and in wisdom. At the age of twelve he already astonished the doctors in the temple; and when he commenced his public work, all the treasures of knowledge abounded in the perfection of his intellectual nature. Does not the wisdom and learning of the Saviour intimate that those who seek, in his stead, to plead with men to be reconciled to God, should strive to possess the highest intellectual attainments within the reach of human effort?

"The Apostles, originally illiterate and comparatively unlearned, were three years under the personal training and instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ. They enjoyed his intimate communion; they heard his public discourses; they lived under the light of his example; they witnessed the manifestations of his intellect and heart, and they had the unparalleled advantages of his free and persevering teachings. If never man spake as he spake, so never man taught as he taught. Not only is the apostolic instruction a plea for learning in the Christian ministry, but it justifies the course pursued by our Church in requiring that the interval between the call to the office and entrance on its duties, should be, in general, a period of preparatory study.

"But the fact that immeasurably exalts the position of the Apostles above that of all other ministers was their endowment with miraculous gifts of inspiration and of tongues. The Holy Spirit enlightened their minds, so as to keep their authoritative teachings free from all admixture of error, and gave them the gift of tongues to communicate freely to others their revelations. Thus gifted with thoughts and with tongues from God, they became the pattern of an enlightened and powerful ministry. Peter, who was called while throwing his net into the sea, was enlightened to become a ready penman of the Lord, and to give to the Church the two epistles that bear his name; whilst the hand of John, which was mending a net, at the Saviour's call, wrote a Gospel, three epistles, and a great book of Revelation. Apostolic example is the most powerful plea God ever made to the Church in favour of a learned ministry; especially if we include the case of Paul, learned in all Jewish and Pagan know-

* No illiterate person, or mechanic, was allowed to speak in the synagogue under any circumstances, but only the learned. See Jennings's Jewish Antiquities, Book II. Chap. 2