

In connection with these thoughts, your Committee proceed to notice *the duty of pious young men to seek an education*. Where young men possess all other needful qualifications for the ministry of God's word, and the way to *mental cultivation is open*, we hold it to be their duty to seek it. We are fully sensible of the strong claims which will often be made for the immediate exercise of their gifts; and we do not venture to say that these claims may not be sometimes so urgent as to justify their yielding to them, and thus submitting to all the subsequent pain and toil which a modest and sensible youth must necessarily feel in thus devoting his life to ignorance in many respects insuperable. But with these exceptions, and perhaps they ought to be more rare than they are, we hold to our proposition—It is the duty of our pious youth possessed of ministerial gifts, to *seek an education*.

This appears from a consideration of a general law by which God is pleased to govern human conduct; which is, *to adapt our means to our end*. When a man is called to devote himself to the work of the ministry, it is not to address a particular individual, or one particular class in society only, that he is called. Such may be the call of many a *private christian*. The range of the *ministerial* call is much wider. The minister of Christ devotes himself to his master's service, in whatever way his services may be demanded, he goes forth as a herald of the cross to society *at large*. The rich and the poor, the learned and the unlearned, all equally come within the scope of his ministrations, and hence, if he would adapt his means to the end, he must aim at that varied information, which, with the grace of God, and the teaching of the holy spirit, will qualify him to meet all the varieties of station and human character.

We arrive at the same result, when we reflect on the duty incumbent on every christian *to improve to the utmost every talent committed to his trust*. Every thing we have is a talent. If the religious young man, possessed of ministerial gifts, has also an opportunity to obtain an education, these are his talents. Is he improving them to the utmost if he neglects that opportunity? Say not he improves his talent best by preaching. He may still preach, though studying, if necessary; and we take it now to be conceded, that with education his ministerial gifts will generally be more available than without; is he then improving those talents to the utmost if he remains in ignorance?

"*The call of God*," in such cases must be a call to *seek an education*. We allude of course to those who have the means, and are not peculiarly pressed to immediate labour. The ministerial call is never a call *merely* to embrace this or that opportunity to preach. It respects the future as well as the present; it is a call to devote not an hour, or a day, but a life; and hence, it involves the necessity of obedience to the principles above named. The rules which God has laid down for our guidance are, as already stated, that we should adapt our means to our end; and improve our talents to the utmost; and hence, when he calls a man to his sacred service, he calls him to obey these rules. The inward working of that spirit which prompts him to devote himself to the work of God, will also prompt him, if viewed aright, to see it his duty to set about that work in a way accordant with the divine procedure, and

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