

tarry at Jerusalem until they received power from on high, before they entered fully on their public work. Nor should it be overlooked, that Paul spent three years in silence and separation, acquiring knowledge, before he entered fully on his public work.—Gal. i. 17, 18. Mark well the previous training which the Apostles enjoyed, even though furnished with miraculous supply, and shall we, with but the ordinary endowment, despise the advantages of a course of study, which may prepare us for the more faithful and able discharge of the office of a Bishop? It is a pleasing truth, that wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of Messiah's times.

Is it of no service to a man, who is to preach the Gospel, to understand the original languages in which the Scriptures were written? There are shades of beauty, which no translation can convey, and ideas suggested by a perusal of the original, which would never otherwise occur. Then why not make strenuous efforts to afford this advantage to our brethren in the Ministry?

A great portion of the word of God is given in the form of prophecy. Many of the prophecies have been already fulfilled, and fulfilled with an accuracy so minute, as to awaken surprise, and produce an unsuspecting confidence in the God of revelation and providence. Now in order to perceive this exact correspondence of event with prediction, much and minute historical information is necessary. Then why withhold this from the men appointed by God, to minister to us in holy things, and to open unto us the scriptures?

The Holy Spirit, in conveying to us our Father's will, has laid all nature under contribution for illustrations. The mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms are made tributary to the kingdom of grace. Now to see the beauty, and feel the force, of the Spirit's selections from these sources, some knowledge of natural history is requisite. Then why not afford time and opportunity to our pastors, to store their minds with such instruction, that they may explain the will of God more clearly, and enforce it more cogently?

The Scriptures are the most ancient records possessed by men. They were written in different ages of the world,

and in countries differing in many respects from ours. An acquaintance with the customs, laws, &c. of those ages and people, will very happily subserve the illustration of many portions of the divine record. Moses, contrasting the land of promise with the land which Israel had left, says, "It is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs." Philo gives a description of a machine, used by the Egyptians to water their lands;—he says; "It is a wheel which a man turns with the motion of his feet, by successively ascending the several steps which are within it; but as while he is thus continually turning, he cannot support himself, he holds in his hand a rail not moveable, which keeps him from falling; so that in his work the hands do the office of his feet, and his feet, which should be at rest, are in constant action, and give motion to the wheel." How often were the Israelites, while slaves in Egypt, thus employed, and how irksome such employment! and therefore what a strong recommendation was it of the promised land, that it was not watered with the feet? "But it is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven."

Turn to 1 Sam. xii. 17. Now, do we consider it any special mark of divine displeasure, to see rain or hear thunder in the time of harvest? And yet we find that in this way, Samuel was to prove the displeasure of God against his people for desiring a king. But a knowledge of that climate removes the difficulty. Josephus says, on this passage:—"But that I may prove to you that God is displeased and angry with you for desiring a kingly government, I will prevail on him to make it manifest by strange signs; for what none of you ever saw before in this country shall happen, viz., a storm in the midst of summer: this, by my prayers, will I move God to shew unto you." Hence also the force of Solomon's Proverb, xxvi. 1: "As rain in harvest, so honour is not seemly for a fool." How desirable, then, it is for the elucidation of many portions of the word of God, that our preachers should have their minds stored with all kinds of