

sible to the successful prosecution of your future work. This is at the foundation of a profitable ministry. Ignorance of the mind of Christ, as expressed through Apostles and Prophets, is a radical defect. Every acquirement must be directed towards the great end of knowing what is the mind of the Spirit in the revealed will of God. A way leading to the Cross must be found from every subject. With the flowers you gather from the domain of literature, you will weave a garland for the brow of Jesus. Let it become an absorbing passion of your soul to grow mighty in Scripture. No class of workmen can rise to eminence in their craft, without skill in the use of the instruments peculiar to their trade—the soldier who knows nothing of the use of the weapons of war is a nonentity in an army. The weapons then of our warfare ought to be well known, and moreover kept bright with use in the heavenly struggle. Shorn of strength, and unfit for any noble achievement must that soldier be, who goes forth to battle in the holy war without the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. A full and wide knowledge of divine things is necessary to make the minister “a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, able rightly to divide the Word of Truth.” This prominent place occupied in the kingdom of God by the ever-blessed Word, shows that it is no strange thing when the enemies of that kingdom lead on their hosts to attack and destroy the Holy Scriptures. It is a feature of the age for which the men of God must be prepared. Superstition on the one hand, and scepticism on the other, unite in the same aim—to supplant, remove and destroy the Word of the ever living God. In varied forms, through every age, aggressive movements have been made on the citadel of Truth; yet still it stands secure—for the Word of the Lord endureth for ever. The tactics of the foe may change, but the same abiding hate leads to fresh efforts to take away the key of knowledge. Constant vigilance and enlarged wisdom should therefore distinguish those who are entrusted with its keeping. Every scribe of the kingdom requires to be well instructed. The teachings of the Spirit of God will so reveal the preciousness of the discoveries made by God to man for his eternal salvation, that entering into the spirit of the Holy Volume it will be valued and understood. A sense of personal ignorance and weakness will cut off all sympathy with that vaunted “light in man” deemed superior to the light of God’s Book. Can it be viewed as ought but an impertinence to bend and change the spirit and meaning of the whole volume of Revelation at the suggestion and dictation of an unsatisfied reason, leaving unconsidered and repelled the evidence of the authority by which the utterances of the lively oracles are upheld? Having ascertained its right to speak, we reverently follow where it leads. To an honest interpretation there will be a ready and constant assent. Nor can sympathy be felt for men who employ the terms of evangelical religion to give currency to another gospel which is not another. The voice is Jacob’s, but the hair is Esau’s. In these days error often wears the garb of religion. There is, however, a keen discrimination imparted to the student of the covenant of mercy, which enables him to detect the presence of lurking ill, and with the “Ithuriel spear” of truth, to touch and unmask the vile brood of ignorance and pride. We glory in the truths of salvation as fixed, nor can any scorn as to the shackling of free thought rob us of our boasting. No philosophy feels itself fettered by the acknowledgement of the fixed laws of nature. True philosophy braces its strength, and climbs to nobler heights of discovery, from the recognition of these laws of the Great Eternal, and can religion occupy a lower level, and admit that with the changing phases of human society, its averments and assertions may be changed and modified? Nay, verily—for then its every pretension would become a delusion and a snare. The Bible then we view as possessing an authority not to be altered by age, nor modified to please the tastes of men. We claim for it supreme regard. It discusses the most exalted subjects—ascending into the heights of heaven, and descending to the depths of hell—looking with broad and general glance on all the goings of the myriads of the human family, and yet diving into the secret recesses of every heart. The mighty God, the Lord, hath spoken. A strong, fruitful and soul-saving ministry is consequently characterized by a devout and scholarlike attitude