

originally delivered by the inspired writers, for the instruction of mankind; and, thirdly, to introduce, as opportunities present themselves, and in the way of actual application, whatever I know of the principles and rules of interpretation, and all such collateral illustrations as I may be able to draw from Antiquities, Geography, Oriental Manners and Customs, Physical Science, and so forth; together with Criticisms on the state of the Text, Various Readings, and whatever else usually comes within the range of Biblical Literature, of which, indeed, I am, as already explained, with Exegetical Theology, I am desirous that it should form a course.

In the Old Testament, we shall begin at the beginning of Genesis, which will lead us at once to some of the most interesting and momentous subjects, both historical and doctrinal. And with the Original Hebrew, I wish also to read the Greek of the Septuagint, which is the Greek beyond all others, best fitted to aid us in the interpretation of the New Testament. The only books required for this section of our studies will be, a Hebrew Bible, a Hebrew Lexicon, (I beg to recommend Gesenius) a copy of the Septuagint, and any Greek Lexicon—Schleusner's Lexicon of the Septuagint is perhaps the best. With regard to Commentaries on Genesis, I feel considerably at a loss what to propose, not knowing any one easily accessible, and at the same time of transcendent merit. Bush, however, may at least be easily procured; and though intended to be popular, and by no means original, it contains a good deal of valuable critical matter.

In the New Testament, I propose to commence reading the Epistle to the Romans, which will introduce us at once to the very centre of the Christian system—particularly to what Luther so justly styled the article of a standing or a falling Church, the doctrine of justification by grace through faith. The books required here will be, what you doubtless all possess—a copy of the New Testament in Greek; or, should any of you have occasion to purchase, I should recommend, for a critically good edition of the simple text, that revised by Hahn, which may be had for a moderate price. Next, a Lexicon of the New Testament, though not absolutely necessary, will be exceedingly useful, and Robinson's, upon the whole, deserves, I believe, the preference, though Schleusner's, whatever faults it may have, possesses the great merit of amounting almost to a Concordance. It will also be of great advantage for you to have either Winer's Grammar of the Idioms of the New Testament, which I regret to say, is rather costly, or Stuart's Syntax of the New Testament Dialect, which is more easily procured. For Commentaries, Hodge, perhaps, will be found most suitable. The abridgement is within every one's reach. Both Stuart and Tholuck also, are eminently learned, and though neither of them free from errors, both deserve to be consulted. McKnight likewise contains much that is valuable, mingled with a great deal that is exceedingly erroneous. Calvin on the Romans, though not usually ranked among critical, or at least philological commentaries, is replete with excellent doctrinal and practical remarks. Haldane also, and a multitude of others, are in various degrees deserving of attention. I should further strongly advise you to furnish yourselves with a Concordance of the New Testament. There is an abridgement of Schmidt, which sells for a trifle, and really answers every purpose.

In regard to our third and subordinate department—Ecclesiastical History—I understand by that, not what is sometimes given under the name, viz.: the History of the Church, only till the period of completing the canon of Revelation. A late Professor of Church History in the University of Edinburgh, whom I attended, proceeded on this latter idea, and said that his course might be otherwise styled Chronological Divinity. But by Ecclesiastical History, I mean the History of the Church, or of what has borne the name of the Church, from our Saviour's time down to the present day. This History I propose to divide into three portions—first, from the commencement till the time when the Bishop of Rome became a temporal prince; second, from that epoch till the dawn of the Reformation—say the beginning of the fifteenth century; and third, from thence till our own times. In the study of the first and third of these portions, I am anxious that we should proceed somewhat strictly. In regard to the middle period, which includes the Dark Ages, we may considerably relax, satisfying ourselves with general ideas of a state of things in which there was so little either to please or to instruct. With the view of distributing these three portions over our four Sessions, I propose to embrace in the present, the greater part of the first portion,

proceeding as far as we can overtake, but keeping in view as a conventional terminus to be aimed at, the Council of Nice, or at least the Edict of Constantine, giving an Imperial sanction to the Christian Church. For next session, should Providence permit us to undertake it, we may proceed from the period at which we formerly left off, to any point which may be noticable amidst the darkness of the eleventh century. In a third session, starting from thence, we may advance towards the gradually rising light till Luther shone forth, by God's special favour vouchsafed, a Luminary to the world. There will still remain for a fourth session, the History of the Reformation and of the Reformed Churches, especially in Scotland and England, including our own Denomination, and those which have more recently arisen, as well as the History of Missions, both Foreign and Domestic. For books there are several well-deserving of attention. Gieseler's Compendium, I believe, is exceedingly accurate and full. But the British translation, which alone is of moderate price, is not yet complete, and as the work partakes very much of the nature of a chronicle, the perusal is uninteresting. Waddington's Church History, of which there is a cheap American reprint, is well deserving of recommendation; while Neander's General Church History, and his Planting and Training of the Christian Church, are vastly beyond any recommendation of mine. They both require, however, to be read with great caution and discrimination; and the perusal of them may, as I humbly conceive, be very well deferred till a more advanced period of your studies. Upon the whole, then, I feel disposed to adopt as a Text-book, Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History. Munroe's Translation—an American book—of which there is a very cheap British reprint, which has also the advantage of being revised by the late Dr. Reid, Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Glasgow, is decidedly the best. Mosheim's Commentaries on the Affairs of the Christians before the time of Constantine, I should strongly recommend; were it not that the book can scarcely be obtained. Some more minute details will be required, but these may be afterwards given in private.

And now, when we reflect on the situation we occupy, what manner of persons ought we to be? What manner of men, with such a profession in prospect?—What manner of students, with such subjects in hand? How zealously and unreservedly ought we to devote ourselves to the investigation of truth! How cordially ought every gleam of light to be welcomed, and when any new jewel of truth, however minute, is discovered, how eagerly and thankfully ought it to be added to our store, and prized above rubies and gold! And while in pursuit of such treasures, every region of the world, physical, intellectual and moral, is to be explored and ransacked, let us especially labour in the mine of the Divine word. Let us search the Scriptures with earnestness, humility, and piety. Let us with all fervour implore the great Author of Scripture to open our eyes, that we may behold wondrous things out of his law, and let us, with the docility of little children, receive the teaching he may be graciously pleased to impart. "With the lowly there is wisdom." "The meek will be guide in judgment, and the meek will be teach his way." Humble, earnest, ardent, steady, pious, is not the only, but it is one indispensable qualification for successful Theological study. "Bene orasse est bene studuisse," is a maxim which may be fanatically and perversely carried to an absurd extreme, but rightly interpreted, it is pregnant with momentous truth. Let us never forget the words of Him who spake as never man spake—words so fraught with deep and solemn instruction,—"I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." Not only will piety prompt to those askings, in answer to which God assures us he will give wisdom to such as lack it; but piety, wherever it is possessed, does itself, in fact, constitute that spiritual discernment, by which, to a great extent, the object is secured. Let us see, then, that we bring a devout and holy spirit to our task, putting off our shoes from off our feet, for the place whereon we stand is holy ground. No less anxious let us be, that we lose not such a spirit amidst our work. Familiarity with Divine things, unless we watch and pray, may breed contempt; and miserable will be the exchange if, while we grow in knowledge, we decline in grace.

Before concluding, let us just, in a word, advert to one or two considerations, of an animating, exciting and exalting nature—fitted to relieve a little the somewhat sombre aspect of our present position. And,