

called assacred penmen? Why should they have done more than all the others put together, for the instruction and stability of the church in every subsequent age; except because their erudition proved a useful handmaid to their spiritual gifts?

But not to dwell longer on the case of those extraordinary men, it is cheerfully and thankfully admitted, that many, who could lay claim to neither inspiration nor education, have proved great blessings in the ministry. There is a goodly number of such men, well known and deservedly esteemed, among us. Even some of the very Fathers of our community belong to this class. Far be it then from us to detract from the worth and services of these honoured men, whose praise is in all the churches. But yet it will always be found on examination, that the usefulness of such individuals is owing either to their possessing genius, or to their laboring among people as uncultivated as themselves. A few may become eminent in consequence of possessing genius, which can amply compensate for the want of education; as was the case with John Bunyan, whose natural powers of mind made the untutored Tinker, a mighty preacher and an immortal author. But the generality succeed in the ministry, chiefly because the persons, whose good they mostly seek, are too uncultivated to detect and dislike their improprieties of speech and their crudities of thought. They never can collect and edify an intelligent congregation, who require in the teachers at least as much cultivation as they themselves possess. Illiterate preachers may be exceedingly useful among illiterate people; perhaps even more useful than some others could be, who are eminent for learning. But yet the acknowledged worth of many unlettered ministers cannot be a reason for withholding literary culture from devoted men who wish to serve God in the

Gospel of his Son; because these very ministers are often heard lamenting their deficiencies, and coveting learning as a help for them in their work, and many of them have been known to toil hard for years in order to inform and improve their minds, till at length by self-teaching they became capable of interesting the most cultivated hearers, and of distinguishing themselves as Theological writers. Of this we have a bright example in Andrew Fuller, of blessed memory, who began to preach when very unlearned, but who was so sensible of his disadvantages that he used great diligence to acquire that knowledge, without which he could never be, what he at length became, one of the most valuable men of his time, and decidedly the most useful minister in our religious community.

2. We do not mean, on the other hand, *to contend that Education alone, apart from moral adaptation, can qualify for the Ministry.*—There are indeed multitudes who speak of training for the sacred office, in the same terms as they do of any other professional education, vainly supposing that as learning may make a lawyer, so it may also a minister. It is a notorious fact, that in all secular or state churches, young men are raised to undertake 'the care of souls,' without any regard to their religious feelings. We however utterly reprobate such a notion and such a custom. Much as we desire a *learned* ministry, we desire a *pious* ministry more. The first and most essential qualification, which we look for and demand, is godliness, while we seek learning only as a secondary, though not unimportant preparation. It is our solemn conviction that no literary attainments, no powers of rhetoric, can give fitness for the work, if the heart be not engaged in it. This preparation of the heart in man must come from the Lord, before any other preparation, whether of erudi-