

were bestowed upon them—these, and such as they, are the men who enlarged the sphere of human knowledge, and cultivated the human understanding; and these were sincere and devout Believers. So that if Christianity stood in need of such an argument, (though it certainly does not) it has unquestionably the superiority of human talents on its side.*

That you should have a competent knowledge of this subject, is evident, not indeed to be contentious, as in the former case, but that you may guard your flocks against the inroads of Infidelity. It is often attended with one unhappy consequence, even where people have not adopted its pernicious tenets—which is to abate their ardour in pursuit of salvation. For whilst they see the conduct of some, who, with deliberate malice, oppose the cause of religion; they allow themselves to remain in a state of indifference and neutrality; and even think it highly meritorious. This is one source of that de-

plorable lukewarmness which so generally prevails in every thing that relates to God, to Religion, and its Ordinances.†

To the charge is annexed a catalogue of books proper for the library of a divine, amounting to upwards of 125 volumes, in folio; 55 in quarto; and 200 in octavo. Short characters are given of some, and necessary cautions against exceptionable parts. Such a store of knowledge would be undoubtedly an invaluable acquisition; but such, we fear, as the finances of few clergymen in this country will admit. The scarcity of books is likely to prove the most formidable discouragement to the growth of every branch of knowledge in the province. The most lively method of obviating this want would be to form subscription libraries in the principal towns; which though small at first, would be gradually accumulating, and would at least excite a greater desire for information than seems at present to prevail.

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POETRY.

* See this point very ably stated by the learned Dr. JORTIN, in a Charge he delivered, as Archdeacon of London, May 3, 1765, and printed in the *seventh* volume of his sermons. 'To the Gospel, says he, and to those who embraced it, are due our grateful acknowledgements for the learning that is at present in the world. The Infidels educated in Christian countries owe what learning they have to Christianity; and act the part of those brutes, which when they have sucked the dam, turn about and strike her. — To whom are we indebted for the knowledge of antiquities, sacred and secular; for every thing that is called *philology*, or the *Literæ humaniores*? To Christians. To whom for Grammars and Dictionaries of the learned languages? To Christians. To whom for Chronology, and the continuation of History through many centuries? To Christians. To whom for rational systems of Morality and Natural Religion? To Christians. To whom for metaphysical researches carried as far as the subject will permit? To Christians. To whom for the moral rules to be observed by nations in war and peace? To Christians. To whom for *Jurisprudence*, and for political knowledge, and for settling the rights of subjects, both civil and religious, upon a proper foundation? To Christians. Not to Atheists or Deists, some of whom have been known advocates of tyranny. To whom for the great work of Reformation? To Christians. Let me add; and verily often to Christian Divines.—Great-Britain in this and the last Century hath produced Deistical or Atheistical writers; as Herbert, Hobbes, Toland, Shaftsbury, Collins, Mandeville, Woolston, Tindal, Morgan, Chubb, Bolingbroke, Hume, and some who are anonymous. I shall not enter into a detail of the various things which are justly censurable in these authors; but keeping the present subject in view, I observe that some of them have been ignorant and illiterate; most of them a sort of half-echo-lars and retailers of second-hand wares; none of them eminently learned, or contributors to the advancement of erudition and knowledge in any material article.' JORTIN'S Sermons, Vol. VII.—p. 372, 373. Edit. 1772.

† The last writer of any note that has figured on the side of Infidelity is Mr. Gibbon in his *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. This Gentleman has disgraced his, otherwise valuable, History with disingenuous insinuations against Revelation, and misrepresentations of the primitive Christians. Or to use the words of Mr. Travis, addressed to this author—'You have, artfully enough, suggested ambiguous insinuations, where you durst not hazard an accusation—You have laboured to raise a sneer, where you durst not risk an argument.' This mode of attacking Christianity, has been often practised; but all lovers of truth and candour must hold it in abhorrence. It argues a bad cause, which cannot be supported by fair argument; it implies unmanliness in the assailant, who skulks, as it were, under covert, that he may annoy with more safety. This method is become stale—it should be changed, if it were only for the sake of variety.