

in its relations to Scripture and revealed religion ; and still another, who has paid great attention to patristic lore and scholastic theology and the history of doctrine ; while his companion is more versed in history, sacred and profane, the development of the church, and in modern literature, English and German. Not a few whose attainments in classics, mathematics and philosophy are sufficiently meagre, have acquired a thorough knowledge of the English Bible, and from the use of the best and most recent commentaries possess a fair knowledge of biblical criticism and careful exegesis, even though their knowledge of the original languages of Scripture and of patristic and scholastic theology may be limited. The ultimate results are that only a few really learned or profound theologians or erudite and accurate scholars are found in any denomination. The great majority of the ministry after entering upon their special work prosecute only such studies as more directly contribute to their work as preachers and pastors, and not a little of what they spent a good deal of time in attempting to acquire is found to be of little practical value and is laid aside. The results of the most profound scholarship and the keenest and most learned criticism are now brought within the reach of ordinary scholars by full and fresh commentaries in our own tongue or excellent and accurate translations of the best writers of other lands. Very few indeed, we opine, even of those who have a creditable acquaintance with ancient languages, would venture to place their own personal investigations or criticisms above the opinions of the great and acknowledged masters in this department. Many students necessarily, even without anything blameworthy in their conduct, can only attain a moderate degree of proficiency in several departments. And from the fact that their time and energies are so divided if not distracted by the multiplicity of subjects presented to them, their acquirements in any department are less thorough and extensive than they would have been had the range of subjects been less extended. All knowledge is in itself valuable and may be rendered subservient to the work of the ministry, but all branches of knowledge are not equally important and serviceable to the preacher ; and a thorough acquaintance with a few branches of study is a better mental discipline and of more service to the preacher than a slight acquaintance with many.

Following the bent of his own mind, or the direction of his earlier studies, or influenced by his surroundings, the pastor will usually select one favorite subject for continued and exhaustive investigation, which will not only freshen and strengthen his mind, but add to his stores of useful knowledge, whence he may draw in the preparation of his discourses. The training for the pulpit should have reference to the work to be performed, and inasmuch as diverse gifts are bestowed and various ministries are required—as teaching, preaching, pastoral work, and evangelistic services—some option in the course of studies