

## OBJECT OF MINISTERIAL EDUCATION.

This, we think, is beginning to be better understood and appreciated. It is of the utmost importance that correct views in relation to it should everywhere prevail, especially at a time when the pecuniary aid of each professed disciple of Christ within the limits of the state, is needed to carry out and complete a work which has been so auspiciously commenced. It is possible, that there may still be some who regard ministerial education as a process resorted to for the purpose of transforming men into ministers without the necessity of a divine call or the qualifications of the Holy Spirit. They may suppose that it is so designed merely to teach candidates for the ministry to use beautiful and poetic language, to place at their command the figures of rhetoric, to write and read from the pulpit, polished and brilliant essays on moral and religious subjects, to abound in fine classical allusions, and to discourse politely and elegantly of Greece and Rome. Or, if it be admitted that it in any degree expands their sphere of thought and knowledge—it is only that they may place human learning in the room of the teachings of the Bible; and where there is a lack of interest in the gospel itself, that they may be enabled to entertain their readers with something which is not the gospel; thus rendering the cross of Christ of none effect. It may be said that in this way young men are trained to vanity rather than to humility, that they are supplied with the knowledge that *puffeth up*, rather than with the charity that *buildeth up*, and are taught to regard it as their peculiar privilege to supplant, thrust aside, and treat with contempt all other ministers old or young, who do not enjoy the literary advantages which they can boast.

Now, if there are any who can suppose that this is what is meant by ministerial education, nothing can be farther from the truth. We may have very inadequate notions of it ourselves, but whatever we mean by it we most assuredly do not mean this. And if there is any young man professing to be an educated minister, who has furnished in his own manners and character the model from which such a conception could be drawn, he is one who gives the fullest proof that he was never called of God to the sacred ministry. Not only so; he furnishes the most decisive evidence that whatever may be his pretensions to an education, and though he may have spent twenty years within the walls of a college or theological institution, he has yet attained only to a *smalling*. He is quite likely one whose lot it has been to inherit originally but a very meagre intellectual endowment; and it must have baffled the utmost exertions of his teachers to possess his brain with the least just idea either of himself, his fellow-man, or his God. It is possible that the training of even twenty years more would effect but a very unimportant modification, either in the capacity or contents of such an intellect. It would be the greatest injustice therefore, to regard an individual of the above description as a fair representation of that numerous class of talented and deserving young men who, with hearts glowing with the love of Christ, are now pressing to the gates, and crowding the halls of our literary and theological institutions.

The true design of ministerial education is stated; and when stated, we are sure it will commend itself to every pious mind. It is not to *make* ministers, but to furnish the requisite training to those whom God has called to the sacred work. It is to furnish them with facilities for the highest moral and religious culture, to supply them with such mental discipline as will teach them the use, and put them in full command of all their intellectual powers, to qualify them to interpret for themselves the original Scriptures, and to teach to others, in the most effectual manner, the truths which they contain.

Every discerning mind will perceive that this must unavoidably embrace a wide and extensive field of thought and study, no part of which can be safely neglected. There may be sincere piety where there is great ignorance of moral relations. The Holy Spirit teaches the mind no new truths. He only prepares the heart for the reception of truth, and imparts to it all its efficacy. Hence the necessity of instruction for Christians in general, and still more especially for those who are candidates for the Christian ministry. As to intellectual discipline, it is obvious that, neglecting this, the candidate for the ministry can never make an *entire* consecration of himself to God, but in his attempts to serve his Divine Master, must at best employ but a pit-

iful fragment of his moral and intellectual being; for according to the very laws of his mental constitution some of his highest powers, and those which constitute the dignity and glory of his nature, lie comparatively dormant till they are aroused and nurtured into strength by exercise and discipline. The influence of culture and habit in the increase of intellectual power, and in almost creating new faculties, is well known to those who have the slightest acquaintance with mental science.—Yet no degree of intellectual power can enable one to interpret a dead language without a previous acquaintance with the facts of the language, and a knowledge of the history, manners, customs, and domestic life of the people by whom it was spoken. Hence the necessity of instruction in biblical antiquities and in the laws of biblical interpretation.—The importance, also, of a preparatory study of biblical theology in its various departments, for those who are to teach the doctrine of Christ to others no one will question.

Now it is very possible, that the arrangements adopted by the churches for securing to their rising ministry an education, embracing all the objects here contemplated, may be defective in many respects; but these are the objects at which we are to constantly aim, with all the light and wisdom furnished us by the Great Head of the church. And who can say, that an institution of learning wisely organized for the accomplishment of these ends, whose advantages shall be open to all who are preparing for the christian ministry, would not be worth infinitely more than all the *pecuniary cost* which would be required for its erection and support? We leave candour to give the answer.—*Rochester Paper.*

## Nature of the Atonement.

The following is from a work lately published in England, from the pen of Rev. John Brown.

There can be no doubt that the death of our Lord was *penal*. Men meant it so, though, as they meant it, it was unjust. God meant it so; and, as he meant it, it was the just expression of holy displeasure against sin.—Christ died for sins—he was made a curse. The death of Christ was the manifestation of God's abhorrence of iniquity.

But of whose iniquity? Not that of the immaculate, perfect sufferer. There was no iniquity in him. Men drew the conclusion, from the number, and continuousness, and variety, and severity of his suffering, that he must be a great sinner, to be so "smitten, stricken of God, and afflicted," though none of them could convict him of sin. Even the judge, who condemned him to die, declared that he found no fault in him. The true account of the matter is that long ago given by the evangelical prophet: "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; he bare the sins of many. All we like sheep had gone astray, and we had turned every one to his own way, and the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all." "Exaction was made, and he became answerable:"—that given by the holy apostles, he "became a curse in our room," we being deservedly accursed. He "suffered the just in the room of the unjust." He "bare our sins," not his own, "in his body to the tree," and thus "Messiah was cut off, but not for himself," but for us sinners.

This view of our Lord's death increases the mystery of his love, but it removes in a great degree the mystery, both of his sufferings generally, and of their peculiar form. We shall wonder to all eternity, and that wonder will continually increase, that he should have taken our place; but we cease, even now, to wonder that, having taken our place, he met our deserts.

When we take into account our Lord's absolute moral purity and perfection, we are driven to the conclusion that his penal death was vicarious; and when we take into account his divinity, we are drawn into the conclusion that they were expiatory—that they were intended—and that they have been effectual for that for which nothing else could have been effectual—for the expiation of man's guilt—the ransom of man's soul. If he who died is indeed the image of the invisible God—the Prince of the whole creation—the Creator, and Preserver, and Proprietor of all things—who is before all things, and by whom all things subsist, assuredly in him we have redemption through his blood. His stripes heal us. He has made an efficacious sacrifice for sin, when he offered up himself. He has taken away sin. He has finished transgression, made all

end of sin, and brought in an everlasting righteousness. His death, being the punishment of our offences, is our justification; and, being our justification, leads, in the first instance, to his resurrection, to be followed in the due order by ours. Yes: the "blood of Christ, who, through the Eternal Spirit, offered up himself a sacrifice without spot unto God, purges the conscience from dead works to serve the living God."

And now light begins to shed itself on these strange dispensations, and we begin to see that there is close connection, intimate dependence, glorious harmony, between the two great announcements of our Lord, both of them necessarily at the time clothed in enigmatical language: "I am soon to be put to death on a cross, like a criminal, and an expiatory victim for the sins of men;" and as the result of this, "Yet a little while, and the world is judged, and its prince is cast out—all men are drawn to me, 'the Crucified.'" Surely, already we see, that not only are God's thoughts and ways strange—not our thoughts—not our ways—very different from ours, but that they are transcendently excellent, wise as well as wonderful, that "as the heavens are high above the earth, so are his thoughts above our thoughts, his ways above our ways."

I conclude my remarks on this part of the subject with a reflection, which I hope has already risen in the hearts of you all. Oh, how should we esteem, admire, and love this magnanimous, generous Saviour! How strong a mind! how large, how warm, how tender a heart! He not only knew that he was to die—very soon to die—but to die like a felonious slave—to die as an expiatory victim. The scourge—the cross—the spear—the shame and spitting—the cutting taunt—the brutal gibe—the loud execrations of his enemies, and the silent suffering of his dearest friend, and her who bore him, standing by the cross—the burning thirst and the cold sweat—the exhaustion and the agony—the harassment of hellish suggestions, and the soul-oppressive weight of the sadness produced by the overclouded countenance of his Father—all these were distinctly anticipated; and though he did, as he well might, say, "Now is my soul troubled," he did not say, "Father save me from this hour." No; he said, "For this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name." He set his face as a flint, and refused to be ashamed. He did not fail, nor was discouraged, till, with a voice of triumph, he could say, "It is finished;" and then, meekly bowing his head, resigned his spirit into the hands of his Father, well pleased for his righteousness's sake. Was ever magnanimity—was ever love—like this?

## The Cross humbles but Elevates.

As the Gospel comes to *save*, that very fact implies a lost, perilous, miserable condition. But it is not so much any mere statement of the greatness of man's ruin, though there are numerous and alarming statements, that gives us the deepest impression. The nature of the provision for recovery does this most effectually. If we estimate the nature of a disease by the unusual and alarming nature of the remedy employed to cure it, what shall we say of the greatness of man's ruin, when we consider the mode devised by infinite wisdom for his recovery? If there was nothing but the precious blood of the Son of God that could ransom man—if no sacrifice could avail save that of Him whom all the angels of God worshipped, and that sacrifice involved the most intense suffering of the august victim, then we cannot but exclaim, How great the guilt and terrible the ruin of the human soul! How emphatic and cogent the reasoning of the Apostle. "If One died for all, then were all dead!" The Cross and its bleeding burden, what an announcement it makes of the greatness of the ruin of the human soul!

How certainly must such a contemplation send the thoughtful mind into the lowest depths of humiliation. "What am I, and how low in shame, guilt and ruin must I have sunk to need such an interposition! What a tremendous evil in the sight of the Infinite Ruler must my sins be, if he could accept no less a sacrifice for them!"

A right view of the Cross of Christ is suited above all other things to send the human soul down into the lowest depths of humiliation. What an unworthy creature of God it shows us to be. How it sinks him in his own esteem. Nothing can do it so effectually.

But while he thus sinks, there comes over him, in his descent, a strange sensation. He reasons, "True, I am vile and utterly un-

worthy. I could shrink into the merest atom in the humiliating consciousness of my sin. But my soul is valuable. How can it but be so, since such a price has been paid for it? Since One so glorious has undertaken its deliverance, and gone through such scenes of personal humiliation and suffering, that He might secure it, how vast its value in his esteem. And who, but its Maker and Redeemer, can justly estimate its worth? And such a price having been paid for it, it must be precious beyond all finite power of estimation."

There is no testimony to the dignity and value of the human soul, in the sight of God, and the intelligent universe, like that which is shown in the plan of mercy to save it. Look at its structure—wonderful it is in its noble capacities and powers, and wonderful the interest the angels of heaven feel in its welfare. But when we see "Him by whom all things consist, and who upholdeth all things by the word of his power"—when we see him shrouding his glory in human flesh, and going in person down to the lowest form of human degradation and suffering, to save the soul, then it is that we get an idea of its value, such as nothing else can give.

It is thus that the cross humbles yet elevates, shows man how deeply guilty and unworthy he is, and yet shows the boundless value and preciousness of his soul. It bids him go down into the deepest valley of humiliation in view of his sins; but bids him also look in wonder and love at what God declares by Redemption, concerning the noble position held by his soul in the scale of rational existence.—*N. Y. Observer.*

## That One Word.

"I never can forget that word which was once whispered to me in an inquiry meeting," said a pious man once to a friend. "What word was it?" "It was the word ETERNITY. A young Christian friend, who was yearning for my salvation, came up to me as I sat in my pew, and simply whispered 'Eternity' in my ear, with great solemnity and tenderness, and then left me. That word made me think, and I found no peace till I came to the cross."

The sainted McCheyne (our Sumnerfield), was once riding by a quarry, and stopped to look in at the engine house. The fireman had just opened the door to feed the furnace with fresh fuel; when McCheyne, pointing to the bright hot flame, said mildly to the man, "Does that fire remind you of anything?"—The man could not get rid of the solemn question. To him it was an effectual arrow of conviction. It led him to the house of God, and will lead him, we trust to heaven.

A single remark of the Rev. Charles Simeon, on the blessings which had resulted from the labours of Dr. Carey in India, first arrested the attention of Henry Martyn to the cause of missions. His mind began to stir under the new thought, and a perusal of the Life of Brainerd fixed him in his resolution to give himself to the dying heathen.

It is said that Haslan Page once went through his Sabbath school to get the spiritual census of the school. Coming to one of the teachers he said, "Shall I put you down as having a hope in Christ?" The teacher replied, "No." "Then," said Mr. Page very tenderly, "I will put you down as having no hope." He closed his little book and left him. That was enough. God gave that young man's soul no rest till he found a hope beneath the cross.

A member of my church, not long since, overtook a lady on her way to the prayer meeting. She asked the young woman if she ever thought of her own salvation? The lady, thus addressed, replied that during all her life she had never had one word spoken to her before about the salvation of her soul! Within a month from that time she became a devoted member of the flock of Christ.

Fellow disciple! have you never yet spoken one word to an impenitent friend about the most momentous of all questions! Then I fear that you will find no one in heaven that you were the means, under God, of sending there. Though you may reach the "many mansions" yourself, I fear that your crown will glitter with no splendors. It will be a *starless crown*.—*Presbyterian.*

## Remove the Extinguisher.

Dr Taylor of Norwich, said to John Newton: "Sir, I have collected every word in the Hebrew Scriptures seventeen times: and it is very strange if the doctrine of atonement, which you hold, is there, and I have not found it." "I am not surprised at this," said New-