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LETTER

TO THE REV. LYMAN BEECHER,

CONTAINING

STRICTURES AND ANIMADVERSIONS,

ON A PAMPHLET ENTITLED

AN ADDRESS

Of the Charitable Society for the

EDUCATION OF

INDIGENT PIOUS YOUNG MEN

FOR THE MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL;

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BY THE REV. FREEBORN GARRETSON.

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NEW-YORK:

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ADVERTISENT.

The undersigned, members of the Committee appointed by the New York Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, to examine Manuscripts, and authorise their publication, having examined the following Letter to the Rev. Lyman Beecher, containing some Strictures on an Address of a Committee of the Charitable Society for the education of indigent Pious Young Men for the Ministry, and signed by Mr. Beecher as Chairman of said Committee, think it their duty to state to the public, that from their personal knowledge of many of the places named, and circumstances stated in the Letter, and from the general information they possess on the subjects therein spoken of, they are fully persuaded that the facts stated are all of them substantially correct. They moreover are of opinion, the strictures are as mild and friendly as was consistent with Christian plainness and honesty; and much more so than the Address appears to them to deserve.

D. OSTRANDER,
W. THACHER,
E. WASHBURN,
L. ANDRUS.

New-York, Dec. 7, 1816.

A LETTER &c.

TO THE REV. LYMAN BEECHER.

SIR,

IN a late tour through some parts of Connecticut, (to visit Churches, and preach the Gospel,) a small pamphlet was put into my hands, called, "An Address of the Charitable Society for the Education of indigent pious Young Men for the Ministry of the Gospel." As I saw your name signed at the bottom, as Chairman of the Committee, I take the liberty of addressing a few lines to you.

I have been endeavoring to promote the Redeemer's kingdom for more than forty years, & through various parts of the continent, I have seen the steadily goings forth of our Immanuel, from whose convincing, and soul-regenerating power, the work has spread from end to end of our country.

It appears to me that you, and your associates, have given a very unfair, and uncharitable representation of the religious state of our nation; whether from design, or for want of better information, I leave your readers to determine. *

* You say—In the District of Maine, containing a population of 228,705, about half the people are said to be without the stated means of grace. Page 5.

In the State of Rhode-Island, the western part, i.e.

As I have travelled extensively through the United States, and have had the help of a general Itinerating medium, I claim a right to know something of the state of affairs pertaining to religion; and duty obliges me to counteract misrepresentations. In that section of the Episcopal Church called Methodists, there are more than two hundred and fourteen thousand in close church membership, who are spread through the union from the Province of Maine to the Natchez, and have the word and sa-

crament duly and piously administered to them: Charity leads us to believe, that a majority of these have experienced a saving change, by faith in the atoning merits of Jesus Christ, & are happy in his love.

I believe it can be made to appear, that our regularly organized ministry alone, preach in at least 7 thousand places statedly, on the continent. Other denominations may speak for themselves, and they have a right so to do. I shall principally confine myself to the sect to which I belong.

In your eighth page you say, "*the United States are,*

cluding half the state, there is but one regular Minister Page 5.

You say in the state of New-York, there are 500,000 destitute of the stated means of grace. Page 6.

You say, in the state of Louisiana, there is not one Protestant Minister. Page 7.

You say of Virginia, of her population, 914,000 are either in the hands of unlettered men, or totally destitute of the means of grace. Page 8.

In a note in page 8, you say of Maryland, from one of your Candidates from Massachusetts, that for 50 miles in every direction from the place where he is employed, there are not more than two qualified or regular Ministers.

more destitute of Religious instruction than any other Christian nation under heaven." Have you Sir, made yourself acquainted with the state of religion in Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Russia? Oh! Lyman, where has your prejudiced heart led you? I am an old man and I trust I love the cause of God: but it grieves me to see the insinuating form of your address, and the thirst for pre-eminence which it seems to exhibit: this coming from one under a ministerial profession,

will, I fear cause the open enemies of Jesus to triumph.

Could you collect five thousand of your indigent young men, (page 8.) in point of numbers you would then be far behind some of the Catholic churches in Europe, who, in all probability have a surplus. Then why not send for some of them to fill your vacancies, if they are (as you appear to think) so much better instructed than our Americans? I doubt not but you would find them sufficiently indigent.

After having made your selection from Europe or elsewhere, suppose the great Head of the Church should say, "Your choice doth not suit me, it is my prerogative to choose men to do my work." If the labourers are too few, let us pray to the Lord to send more into his vineyard. Unless he sends them, they will be a curse and not a blessing. If the blessed God wants a Saul of Tarsus, he can take him from the feet of Gamaliel; or should he want an Amos, he can take him from following the sheep. God will have his way of working, and the pride of man must be prostrated. You have placed your Church in Connecticut, on the highest scale among the states: you have given a short history of it, and have, in your way, prostrated the southern part of the union. Probably you are a native of Connecticut—I was born in Maryland; and as you have, among other southern states, undertaken to degrade the religious

standing of the people of that place, I am willing to contrast the religious standing of both states—say yours and mine.—I am well acquainted with almost every part of both, and as you have fixed your eye on the Congregational Church in Connecticut, I shall fix mine on the Methodist Episcopal Church in Maryland.

You say you have rising two hundred congregations, averaging fifty members each, which makes about ten thousand church members. I have looked over our records, and find that we have in Maryland more than twenty-five thousand church members, who have the pure word, and sacraments offered to them in a regular way, and I shall keep within bounds when I say, they have a weighty, pious, and qualified ministry, that officiate (at least) in five hundred congregations in that small state; and indeed a happy intelligent people, are well pleased with our administration. Other denominations have many respectable congregations. I believe that there are very few in that state, who may not have the bread of life without going far for it.

I now, sir, leave you and your friends to judge whether you have acted the part of a candid, unprejudiced Minister of the gospel, in your representation. You have, sir, been unfortunate enough to denounce those places in particular, where the blessed God, has in a glorious manner poured his gracious influences on the souls of thousands: and I think that any feeling, unprejudiced heart, must be melted into tenderness in seeing, what I have seen in the southern states among the poor Africans. I have not a doubt but tens of thousands of them have been made the subjects of free grace, and unbounded mercy. I will exercise as much charity as the nature of the subject admits of; but I must think that you have evinced a deep root of prejudice, and laid

a foundation for remorse, unless you have done it ignorantly.

Much the same vague account has been given by you of the states of Delaware, and Virginia, and that vast tract of country, containing (as you say) two million of souls. With respect to Georgia, you say, positively, that there are not more than ten qualified for the ministry in the whole state.—[page 8.] I have never been in that state, but I am well acquainted with private gentlemen and ministers, to whom that country and its inhabitants are familiar;—beside their testimony, I have the records of the church and I am authorised to say, that we have rising of ten thousand church members, and ministers and congregations in proportion, in that state. Likewise we have circuits, congregations, and ministers in the state of Louisiana. Not many persons of information will be sufficiently credulous to believe your report; the business seems to be, that there are not many of your order in those parts of the union.

Persons of intelligence, think that your pamphlet would have been better received, had you come out boldly, and said,—There are about three thousand ministers of our sentiments in the United States; we do not believe it possible to have ministerial qualifications without seeing as we see, of course all others are ignorant, and unqualified for the ministry;—at best they carry but a very dim light, like unto a small taper:—we want five thousand more of our sentiments, and as our seminaries are insufficient, let us stir up ourselves, raise an immense fund, and gather the indigent young men: we can better form them on our own model, (as they will be dependant on us) and send them forth to supply the continent, as one man to a thousand: then our great lamp will

shine forth to the extinguishing of all the tapers—those ignorant beings also, will no longer be an impediment to our establishment as on a rock, and then we shall have fine times.*

It does not require much penetration to discover something of this beaming through your address.

Many seem at a loss to know, against whom you levelled your artillery. Perhaps the most general opinion is that it was pointed against all those who are not of your principles, and that you wish to be the prevailing people through the United States.

Supposing you to have selected three thousand Ministers—the Baptists, in their various sections, in the United States are numerous; and the Methodists, including the local and itinerating Ministers, and licensed Preachers, have about the number you speak of—then if we reckon the Ministers of the Protestant Episcopal Church, Moravians, Lutherans, Quakers, &c. &c. your one to a thousand would be overrun. We are in a free country, and I should suppose that other denominations have as good a right as you to choose their Ministers, and mode of worship; but you fall on them, and set them all at naught. Look over your pamphlet.

Were some other denominations to turn the tables

**It appears that those parts of the Province of Maine, which you have represented as destitute of the Ministry; and the greater part of the section of Rhode-Island, which you denounced, have only relinquished their claim to Ministers of your particular order, and attached themselves to a ministry which, as a free and enlightened people they prefer.*

The above note I received from a minister of the Gospel, who has travelled and laboured much in those parts.

and in a collective manner to say as much of your people: For instance—were they to say you are a set of unregenerated men, who make a trade of the gospel, and want to crush every other denomination.—That your collegians, undetermined what profession to take till a little before commencement, & then being told (or conscious themselves) that they have not talents for the bar, were divided for a time, between the Physician & Divine, till at length they preponderate in favour of the latter—come out under a glimmering profession of religion, and say they are called to the ministry. After studying for a few months a theology which will no more hold together than a rope of sand, they take their saddle-bags, and go in search of a call; when they find a salary to their inclination, they settle down, and read their sermons on the Lord's day and are more anxious for the fleece, and to persecute and try to drive other denominations out of town, (especially if the Lord should begin to bless their labours) than for the flock. After years are elapsed, not a soul by their means has been brought to the knowledge of Christ; and if awakenings should take place in their vicinity, they are sure to raise disputations, throw cold water on the work, and if possible put out the fire. That though they profess to be learned, they are only smatterers, and have no spiritual qualifications for the ministry. That the Head of the Church never sent them, and that they have nothing beyond an outward profession. I would ask, Sir, how you and your people would like to be treated, as a collective body, in such a mode as this, in the public print? And do you not suppose that other people have feeling as well as yourselves? Your address, (coming from the seat of learning,) should have been clothed with wisdom, modesty, and humility; and then you

would have taught that pure scriptural lesson, "To do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God."

Some gentlemen were making themselves very merry about your calling on your people to feel for the inhabitants of that moral wilderness (as you term it, page 6) laying near your state, comprising West-Chester, Putnam and Dutchess counties.—The gospel does not prosper in that oblong as we could wish, owing to some hindrances, which I hope will be moved out of the way; however, we have about seventy congregations in your moral wilderness, and about three thousand church members, (not including the city of New-York) most of whom are happy in God: we have penetrated to the feet and tops of the mountains, and many in the midst of the mountains and vallies can shout the praise of God. In almost every neighborhood the people may have the bread of life from the faithful ministers of Christ, who are able to divide the word. However I can tell you for your encouragement, that it is probable, should you send one or two of your indigent young men, they may find a home, especially if they are pious, and can be satisfied with a small salary.

As you did not discriminate in your address, so as clearly to designate any particular sect, some of my friends (possessing both penetration and erudition,) hinted to me that they thought you had the Methodists in view. For several reasons I would have evaded such an impression. The Methodists first arose in London, with Mr. J. Wesley, (under God,) at their head: his brother Charles, Ingham, Whitefield, Hervey, Morgan, and others, composed the first society. All those gentlemen were warm from college, and began to preach salvation by faith, through the alone merits of the Saviour. Many were awak-

ened and brought into gospel liberty. Those were all high-toned churchmen of the established order of Great Britain.

Among the subjects of grace, was a Mr. Maxfield who was moved by the Holy Spirit, first to exhort in public, and then to preach. The power of the Lord attended his word, many were awakened & brought to experience a change of heart, through his instrumentality, and many were astonished and flocked to hear the word. Some said, stop him, we must not suffer lay men to preach. Mr. Wesley replied, nay, lest we be found fighting against God. After Mr. Wesley had full proof of his call from God, he gave him a licence to preach, and sent him on a circuit, and a glorious work went on.* Mr Wesley never decried learning, but pressed upon his pupils the necessity of deep study.

Let any candid man ask, has there been so great a work carried on in any part of Europe, as has been going on in Great Britain and Ireland, from before the middle of last century. If it should be asked, by whom was this great work carried on? I answer, by just men as it pleased the Lord to employ, whether learned or unlearned. It is true, Mr. Whitefield and his followers, at an early period withdrew and formed a separate connection; but there are at this time, in the British connection, about two hundred and thirty thousand in close membership, as Wesleyan Methodists. In England and Wales alone, they have, I am informed, one thousand chapels, accommodating one thousand hearers.

**From hence began an Itinerating Ministry among us, which has been so wonderfully blest through various parts of America, as well as in Europe, and we bless and give glory to God for it.*

on an average ; which makes an aggregate of one million hearers. I have no doubt but that connection has been, and still is favoured with men, wise, and learned : among them are four commentators, who would do honor to any denomination. I am far from saying that they are all learned, and what sect can say it ? but we maintain that grace, and a call from God, are the principal parts, and that without them, we should be as sounding brass and as a tinkling cymbal.

In this country we are people of a comparatively recent standing ; and we have to lament, that we are not advanced as far in grace and wisdom as we could wish ; but we hope we are on the rise. This I can say, I believe there is no connection on the continent who use greater precautions than we do in selecting pious and qualified men for the ministry. When we have proof of the piety, gifts and usefulness of a man who offers himself as a candidate for that holy office, we take him into our school, direct him to a suitable method of study and enforce the necessity of diligence, in order to become a workman that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word. The time of his gradation from the beginning, till he enters into the full ministry, generally is not less than five or six years. During this time if he does not give us proof of his piety, gifts, and usefulness in the church, as a preacher, we send him home. Now when he first enters our school, if he has only a common English education, is studious, and contracts a taste for study, before he attains the full ministry among us, he may attain no small degree of science, and lay a foundation for future improvement whether in the dead or living languages.

A young man from college, boasting his attainments, and ceasing to apply himself to study, will

swindle into a dwarf, while the other youth will be rising higher and higher in piety, knowledge, and usefulness. Various instances of the kind I have known :—Dr. Clark, the commentator, is one. He travelled, preached, and studied till he attained thirteen languages, and an almost universal knowledge of the sciences, and is now principal in translating for the Bible Society in London. A lady said to me of a certain gentleman, “The performance is very good, for that of an unlearned person.” How do you know he is an unlearned person ? “He has never been to college.” Is a college the exclusive place to obtain learning, Madam ? he is now translating the Greek Testament, and will probably also translate the Hebrew. A blockhead who goes to college, will probably return a blockhead.

It was again observed to me by my friends, “They certainly did mean your people.” Why so ? “They spoke so much of a regularly educated, and settled ministry, for they repeated it over and over again.” I observed, if the excommunicated us for being itinerant ministers, we would rejoice, for we were in a good company,—the blessed Saviour, his twelve Apostles, the seventy whom he sent out two and two, Timothy, Titus, and many others, were travelling ministers.

It appears that Ezra was an itinerant minister : and that he and Nehemiah sent out men through the Jewish nation to teach the people. It is certain that King Jehoshaphat, in his happy reign, sent out a tribe of itinerant preachers : “And they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the Lord with them, and went about all the cities of Judah & taught the people. And the fear of the lord fell upon them,” &c. see 2 Chron. xvii. 6—11. Samuel was an itinerant minister, having a circuit which he travelled. 1 Sam. vii. 16.

The settled ministers appear to have been very slow in the performance of their duty, and very probably they had become greater lovers of money and ease, than they were of the welfare of the Church—their congregations appear to have followed their example, and they seem to have been resting on false hopes, or fast asleep in carnal security.

I doubt not but the itinerating ministers found a difficulty at first with both priests and people; for wherever they came there was an alarm; but thanks be to God, notwithstanding all the opposition whether by priests or people, the good work went on, and many of both orders were obedient to the faith, and there were great reformati^{ons}.

Should they object to us on the score of learning, they act inconsistently; for when some of our young ministers, who had scarcely stood out their term of probation, and were not better qualified than our graduates generally are, offered themselves to serve in their churches, they appeared to lay hold of them with avidity, for better for worse; for after changing sides, they thought them fully adequate to the ministry. Indeed, I myself thought them a great acquisition to the party, as they were very clever men.

So you see Sir, the address of your Committee has made a great talk in the country, and in fact, I have not heard one single person in favour of it. I confess I have my fears, that you have taken unwarrantable strides, and that it is not religion altogether which you have in view. I love the cause of God, and can give the right hand of fellowship to pious Christians of all denominations. I am sorry to be laid under this necessity, and if I have used plainness of speech, it has been because I thought your address merited it. Indeed, He whose I am, and whom I serve, has taught me to flatter no man.

glimmering light beaming through your performance, leads us to suppose, that as you are the privileged order in the eastern states, so you wish to be through the whole union; and then, as in your own state, so through the union, you can sit at free-cost near the sessions of legislative bodies.

I shall transcribe a few lines from your sixteenth page. After insinuating that our government is diseased in her vitals, you say "A remedy must be applied to this vital defect of our national organization. But what shall that remedy be? There can be but one. The consolidation of the state governments would make a despotism. But the prevalence of pious, intelligent, enterprising ministers through the nation, at the ratio of one for a thousand, would establish schools, and academics, and colleges, and habits and institutions of homogenous influence. These would produce a sameness of views, and feelings, & interests, which would lay the foundation of our empire on a rock." I suppose such enterprising men are to "undergird the ship," according to another sentence in the same page. "Undergird the ship." This seems to be a sea-phrase, but I suppose the grammatical construction would be, to bind (or twine) about the bottom. I presume by the ship, you mean the government. I would advise you to try and make the people of your own state, and of your own church homogenous; for I suppose there is as great a diversity of opinions in that, as in any of the states. Till you have accomplished this work, perhaps you had better decline attempting to bind (or twine) round the bottom of the general Government.

In many places, on this continent, under the old aristocracy, the prevailing religion (to the south as well as to the east,) was established by law; people

of all denominations were drawn to it as with a cart rope, and some of the poor had their beds taken from under them, and their cattle sold, to pay the settled clergy. The people of the south have so long been accustomed to freedom in paying their respective denominations, that it will hardly be practicable to bring them back to the old standard.

Some gentlemen in the south, a few years ago, expressed a fear lest the Methodists (who were a numerous and consolidated body through the union) should be sufficiently enterprising to get themselves established. I would declare upon the house-top, that did I know a minister of that stamp in our connection, had I twenty voices they should all go in favour of excommunicating him. I have said, and do say, that I had rather be alone in retirement, than in connection with a hierarchy established by law; as I believe it to be among the worst of evils.*

From the time Constantine began to heap riches and honours on the Church, (and Clergy,) she began, and continued to fall, till the Pope could put his foot on the necks of kings. The Gospel is as free as water, and though they who preach the gospel

**When I first went into New-England, about twenty-seven years ago. I was surprised to find that one denomination had the pre-eminence over the rest inasmuch as all had to pay them, unless they presented a certificate at their shrine. I knew it was contrary to the constitution of the United States, and could not stand. How easy would it be for the legislature to tolerate that sect to tax themselves, and let them send in a certificate, specifick of their unwillingness to put their necks under the yoke, and not trouble other denominations, who are willing to support their ministers without the tax of the law.*

should live of the gospel, yet its influence is of such intrinsic worth, that it is amply sufficient to inspire the heart, and open the hands of its advocates to support the faithful, laborious ambassadors of the Son of God, without a compulsive law of human institution.

The blessed Jesus sent out his ministers without purse or scrip. When they returned, he said—Did you lack any thing? they said, Nothing, Lord. Did they go in search of the largest salaries? No. They went out and preached a full and free gospel; the hearts of the people were touched, and their hands opened to give them every thing necessary.

Our connexion is, and always has been supported by the voluntary contributions of our people, and I hope ever will be, while we are worthy of being the depositaries of such inestimable treasure.

It is my sincere opinion, that the less ministers meddle with politics the better. We are under a free government; our rules are the free choice of the nation: we, as ministers, should respect and reverence them, and rejoice and be thankful that we are not under the despotism exercised in other countries. We can worship God according to the dictates of our consciences through mercy, none being able to make us afraid. Under God let us commit the care of the ship to our worthy patrons, the civil rulers of the United States; and let us love, obey and pray for them, that they, under God, may bring her safe into harbour. We ministers, should know our place and duty. Let us undergird the ark, the Church of the living God;—let us endeavor to lead her on, until she arrives safe into the haven of eternal repose.

It is supposed that should you be able to accomplish your wished for design, we should have great persecutions through the country. However, your indigent young men must be very enterprising, each

to bring one thousand to harmonise in your sentiments and plans; indeed the people, especially those to the south, (& I hope throughout the union) would hardly come into your measures, with all the enterprise you, and your young men could be capable of.

I fear your prejudices are local, and in my opinion, it would be of great service to you, were you to travel awhile, and become better acquainted with men and things, and form an acquaintance with pious Christians, whose civil and religious principles differ from yours, and probably you would be led to exercise a greater degree of charity towards your fellow travellers. We all have the same blessed gospel, and profess to be bound to the same place. If you profess to be ministers of Christ, so do we. If you believe you are called of God, so do we. Do you toil and labor in the blessed work of God, night and day? so do we. Are you successful in bringing souls to Christ? I hope, so are we. We are a people of recent standing in your state, and yet our adorable Lord has given us about four thousand communicants there, and I do believe, if you will make yourself acquainted with some of them, and resolve impartially, you will think they have not a less degree of religion than your own people. They may not, in general, be as rich, but I have no doubt that many of them are happy souls. It is thought that we have been the means of awakening hundreds in that state, who have gone to the communion of your church. You may say, we have no right to break in upon your ground, but may go to the back country. We have gone to the back country, and are scattered all over. We profess to be sent of God; his vineyard is as free for us, as it is for you; we are commissioned to go wherever we have a place, and a people willing to hear; & you ought not to object to

the decrees of Heaven. When you make up your quota of eight thousand, we must all be very loving and friendly, not persecuting each other, for if we should, there would be dreadful work. If we should differ a little in our outward garb, or phraseology, we must not get angry, and set each other at naught. Should one have a greater gift, or be more profound in knowledge, or instrumental in doing more good than another, we must humbly acquiesce in the divine will.

You know that one of the disciples said to his Lord and Master, "we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us and we forbade him." Jesus said unto him, forbid him not, &c. When Samuel was very young, the Lord called to him, he did not at first know it was the Lord, till Eli told him. When called again, the lad said, "Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth." The Lord was about to dispossess Eli, and to appoint Samuel. Eli was conscious of the cause, as well as the justice of it, and humbly submitted to the divine appointment, "It is the Lord let him do what seemeth him good." 1 Sam. iii. 18.

You may suppose that our principles are bad. Are you sure that all yours are good? You believe they are, or you would be blameable if you did not give them up, and so should we. The pious, of all denominations, believe in the essential doctrines of the christian religion. 1st. The total depravity of the human family. 2d. The divinity of the Son of God. 3d. That Christ tasted death for the redemption and salvation of man. 4th. That we cannot in part, or in whole, merit salvation. 5th. That if ever we are brought from under the curse of the broken law, and made experimental heirs of salvation, it must be by the free grace and unbounded goodness of God, by faith in and through the meritorious righteousness of Christ.

6th. It is the duty of every intelligent creature to cherish every good motion of the Holy Spirit, and to be found in the use of means, not by way of merit, but in the way of duty. 7th. It is our privilege to have an evidence from God, as Christians: or an assurance that we are his adopted children. 8th. It is our duty, as children of our heavenly Father, to partake of all the ordinances of his house, and to wait on him in the use of means, to persevere in well doing until death, and receive the crown of life.

Do not evangelical ministers, and Christians of all denominations, believe these leading doctrines of the gospel of Christ? Why then cut and slash our fellow travellers, and cast off, or attempt to crush all who do not think with us? Dare we bolster ourselves up, and say wisdom is to die with us? Have not other denominations in your state been blest in their ministry as well as your own? In future let the language of our hearts and lips be, send Lord, by whom thou wilt send, and let the work go on and prosper. It is by no means your prerogative to dictate to the Almighty, who he shall send into his vineyard to do his work; whether he shall have acquired one, two or six languages.—Suppose I set up my criterion, and say, no man can be qualified to preach, unless he understands the Hebrew perfectly. If you want the critical reading of a passage of scripture, or the root of any particular word, have you not recourse to some critical translator, or to your lexicon? and do you not rather submit to their criticisms, than your own?

It is a very possible thing for a man to have no more learning than John Bunyan had, and yet be a very successful Minister of the Gospel. Why did you not say, as some of the Jews said of old—when they saw the apostles that they were unlettered men.

they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus. The ministers of Jesus in our day, must be with him, and taught, and inspired for the work, by him, or they will do no good.—Sometimes the Lord raises up men, (and qualifies them for the great work,) of whom we would the last think. For what purpose? To bring to nought the boasting wisdom of the worldly wise. Look through the blessed word and see David coming from his sheep, with his sling and a few smooth stones, against Goliath. See Elisha, leaving his twelve yoke of cattle, going through the Jewish nation, proclaiming the gospel, and warning sinners against the works of the devil. See Jonah, flying from the presence of God to shun the cross, compelled, as it were, to return and declare the counsel of God to the Ninevites. See Amos, coming forth to the great work, from among the sheep. And see that blessed company, laying aside their nets and occupations, and going forth through the earth, and proclaiming, "The year of jubilee is come, return ye ransomed sinners home."

Now we come to the trying point. Look through Europe and America, and see what great things the Lord hath done within the last age. By whom? By the very men that you have pointed your pen against but blessed be God, we are confirmed in the opinion, that Jesus is to day as yesterday, and will be the same for ever.

Had you pointed out some scripture marks of a call and qualification for the pure ministry, I should have thanked you; but you seemed to lay the whole stress on your seminaries, regularity, and settlement all of which are only the letter. As you neglected the most important part, permit me to touch on a few particulars. The first is, the soul-regenerating

grace of God, and the knowledge of him as a sin-pardoning God. The second is a call from God to the work. The third is, a qualification for the work.

But how shall it be known that a man is called & qualified for the work?

1. He should have an evidence of God's love, & be so enlightened respecting divine things, as in some good degree to understand the spirituality of the holy scriptures, and to know the way of salvation.

2. A gift to edify, and a cordial reception from ministers and people and to be made a blessing to the Church.

3. A pure love for souls.

4. Blest in his labours in bringing souls to Christ.

5. A love for study, and a thirst for more grace and wisdom.

6. A humble, pious walk with God, accompanied by integrity of soul in his work.

7. He can say follow me, as I follow Christ, giving evidence to the flock, that he takes the oversight not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.

Whom the blessed God thus sets apart to minister in his sanctuary, he owns and blesses. Their minds are graciously drawn out in the work, and they sigh for the prosperity of Zion. I do not tell you how many languages they ought to have; but they know that they possess the language of heaven. Learning is excellent, if it be not of that kind which "puffeth up." God owns and blesses his servants. Literature is not confined to colleges—there have been, and are men of celebrity, as statesmen orators, and ministers who never spent one month in a college.

Now Sir, I advise you to take your bible, and read it with prayer and candour. Critically examine the characters of those whom God employed under

different dispensations, and at various times, to do his work, and you will find, that in your discriminations you usurped a prerogative which belongs to God alone.

I hope, in future, that you, and your associates, will be more wise and pious: you will then be less self-confident, and will find it easier to exercise Christian charity towards those who do not think in every particular as you do. The place that now knows us, will shortly know us no more for ever. I have during the time of my ministry laboured for peace, and I desire to have a charitable feeling for all, as far as is admissible. It was with a degree of reluctance that I undertook to write upon the occasion, having a great desire to be in peace with all men but duty seemed loudly to call. I desire neither the honours, riches, or pleasures of the world; but to be a follower of the adorable Jesus, whom I have loved from an early part of my life, and indeed for more than fifty years I have studied the holy scriptures with pleasure.

I remain your sincere friend,

F. GARRETSON.

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