no volition has any moral value except as it is determined by a preceding moral principle or disposition—a moral spontaneity; and of course it is applicable to bad as well as good acts of choice. Let us then read the foregoing utterance in relation to bad acts of choice: This is the general notion, not that principles derive their badness from actions, but that actions derive their badness from the principles whence they proceed; and so that the act of choosing that which is bad is no further sinful than it proceeds from a bad principle, or sinful disposition of mind, which supposes that, therefore, it is not necessary that there should first be thought, reflection, and choice, before there can be any sinful disposition. If the choice be first, before the existence of a bad disposition of heart, *what signifies that choice?* Now, Edwards was maintaining against Taylor that Adam was created in righteousness, "with holy principles and dispositions." *Whence, then, the sinful principle or disposition which determined the first sinful act of choice?* And if there was none, *what signified that choice?* We answer: there was no preceding sinful disposition which determined it; but, alas, that unnecessitated and avoidable act of choice, originated and determined by Adam's will, had a significance which is marked upon the everlasting ages.

JOHN L. GIRARDEAU.

ARTICLE IV.

A PLEA FOR THE STUDY OF HEBREW.

It is a well established principle of the Presbyterian Church, that her ministry should be educated. This doctrine she holds in unison with most of the Reformed Churches. The well known arguments, behind which they have entrenched themselves on this point, need not be here enumerated. It may be stated, however, that the doctrine, if we may so term it, is one that is gaining ground. Even those evangelical Churches which have hitherto

deemed it of no vital importance, are beginning to turn their attention to the matter, and to view it in a more favorable light. In consequence of her views upon this subject, consistently sustaining theory by practice, the Presbyterian Church has ever been among the foremost in providing for the education of her candidates. She strictly binds them to a course of study in college and seminary that requires at least six years for its successful prosecution. The Church has laid down as many requirements, and been as strict in enforcing them, as we could expect. We would not have her go any farther in this direction than she has already gone. The field to be cultivated is sufficiently broad. The standard which the student is theoretically required to attain is sufficiently high; we would not have it raised. The remarks about to be made are not, therefore, to be understood as applying to the curriculum of our seminaries. As long as the Church is responsible for the candidate's education, she discharges her duty. But when the student finally quits the walls of the seminary, the point arrives at which the Church ceases to be responsible for the direction of his studies, and the responsibility is transferred to himself. It is to this class that we wish more particularly to address the remarks about to be made. We suppose the young licentiate to ask the question: "Shall I prosecute my Hebrew studies after leaving the seminary, or shall I suffer them to drop?"

It will hardly be denied that very few of our young ministers do prosecute their Hebrew studies after entering upon the active work of the ministry. They breathe a sigh of relief, and exclaim: "We are done with Hebrew." The Hebrew Bible is laid aside, and soon becomes

—"to dumb forgetfulness a prey."

The dust of months and years accumulates upon it. The undisturbed worm is the sole visitant to its pages. It holds its unmolested way through leaf and back. You need not ask the owner whether he uses it. Open it. The musty smell tells its own tale, and that tale is a tale of neglect.

It was formerly a custom, almost religiously observed in some of our colleges, that a copy of the Calculus in use should be

solemnly buried on the day of graduation. The whole class would appear as chief mourners. In solemn array they would bear the book to the designated spot, and there bury it out of sight, in token that they had forever buried from sight and thought its odious equations. This is just what very many of our ministers practically do to-day with their Hebrew Bibles.

When we come to inquire into the causes of this state of things, we find that there are several which concur to bring it about. At the very outset of his theological course, the student finds the opinion prevailing that the Hebrew language is a bore and its study a drudgery—a thing to be endured, as the galley slave must endure the toiling at the oar, but a thing no more to be enjoyed than the galley slave enjoys his irksome task. The force of public opinion, strong everywhere, is especially strong in institutions of learning. The student immediately falls under its influence. A few enthusiastic minds may see beauty in the simplicity and dignity of one of the oldest languages, and earnestly seek to master it; but they are generally laughed at for their pains. The majority will give their strength to other matters, and give to Hebrew only the grudging attention that a schoolboy, eager for his bat and ball, gives to his Xenophon or his Cæsar. Should they be solicited to pay more attention to this study, the question *cui bono* is asked; no one appears to answer, and the matter is adjudicated against the friendless language.

When the student comes to leave the seminary, feeling that he is just freed from a troublesome task, as far as this study is concerned, he finds nothing in the opinions or the habits of the ministry to combat, but everything to encourage, his willing neglect. He is told that whatever else he may fear, he need entertain no fears as to the result of his examinations in Hebrew. This is in most cases true, and for the very best of reasons. In many Presbyteries not a man can be found who is capable of conducting a Hebrew examination, worthy the name of an examination. A few questions are asked, remarkable for nothing except their elementary character. But a few moments suffice to show that though the candidate's attainments are slim, the attaiments of the examiner are yet more hopelessly slim. The whole thing

degenerates into a farce. The impression left upon the minds of Presbytery, candidate, and spectators alike, is, that this is a mere routine or red tape matter, and may safely be dismissed from the minds of all until another candidate appears upon the scene, when the farce shall be repeated. Not only, then, is it a fact that the ministry neglect this study, but, considering the circumstances, it is a fact which was to have been expected. It is none the less, however, in the opinion of the writer of this plea, a thing to be deplored.

We proceed now to answer some objections, and to urge some reasons why the study of Hebrew should not be neglected. We trust that if our arguments do not prove convincing, they may at least be thought worthy of attention. The chief objection urged to the continuance of the study is based upon the assumption of the inutility of such a course—not an absolute, but a comparative inutility. There are so many things, it is said, that will give a better return for the labor spent upon them. Why should we spend our strength for naught? The minister has at best but little time for study; should he not spend that time in cultivating more fruitful fields? By way of answer, it may be remarked that this objection has been made against all the higher branches of study—against logic and psychology and moral science. It is based upon the wide-spread but erroneous doctrine that we should confine our attention to what are called practical studies. Were this doctrine logically carried out, it would prove fatal to culture and progress. Learning itself would commit a *felo de se.* Link by link the chains of thought would be shortened, until there would be none long enough to draw water from the deep wells of truth. We must plough deep if we would obtain a vigorous growth of ideas.

Again, let it be remembered that if this argument is to be pressed, it should cut far deeper, and lay a prohibition upon the study of the language in the seminary. Are we prepared for this which ought legitimately to follow? Let us see, now, what may be said in favor of our plea. At the outset we may state that we have the judgment of the Church. What is the design of that part of the Constitution which enjoins the study of He-

brew? for it is the law of the Church that every candidate under her fostering care shall study it—why? Is it merely as a means? The faithful study of this language, as the faithful study of any language, is valuable as giving to the mind exercise, and thereby strengthening all its powers. This was no doubt one reason; but it is not the only one. Was not the knowledge of this language, in the opinion of our fathers, at least, an *end* to be desired? Nay, was not this the chiefest reason for its study? The other is merely incidental. A man may obtain the finest kind of exercise hoeing in his garden; but his purpose is not to get exercise, but to raise vegetables. The company in which the study is found shows this. The student is supposed to have completed his special course of training before he reaches the seminary. Here the studies are to be eminently practical—such as shall have a direct tendency to fit him for his work. Theology, Church History and Government, Biblical Interpretation and New Testament Greek, and Archaeology, are all studied, because they are directly to fit the student for the coming labors of his calling. They are, each, part of his furnishing and his armament. It was therefore evidently the intention of the framers of our Constitution to place Hebrew in the same category. We have, then, the authority of the Church. Shall that be almost a dead letter, and be carelessly contemned every year by those who, in other respects, exalt it as a wonderful compendium of wisdom?

But there are special arguments. A student, whenever it is practicable, ought to drink at the fountain head. Suppose that he may acquire the same knowledge in two ways. He desires, for instance, to discover the exact shade of meaning of a passage in the Old Testament. To obtain this knowledge, he may consult a commentary, or he may pursue an original investigation. The latter course, when practicable, will be worth far more to him than the former. Benefit is derived from the exercise of the faculties of the mind. He obtains the gratifying reward of industry. The mind is grateful for being trusted, and not merely made the porter of other men's thought. A sense of responsibility is thrown upon the judgment, which tends to strengthen it

and make it more careful and trustworthy. That which passes through the alembic of one's own mind is in a better condition to be used by that mind. Original investigation gives a tone of decidedness to our convictions and teachings.

Again, the majority of our ministers find that, even when most actively engaged in pastoral work, they are all the better for earnestly pursuing some branch of study; and the question arises, What that study shall be? The minister will of course give attention to general science, but here he must confine himself to the results obtained by other explorers. The pastor cannot possibly plunge into the fathomless depths of investigation that geology or chemistry open up. For original study, then, the languages afford him the best opportunity. And here Hebrew has an advantage over all others, because, if he studies the Hebrew in its purity, he must study the Bible. Greek, besides the New Testament, gives him the lofty thought and consummate method of Aristotle, the wonderful history of Thucydides, the wisdom of Socrates, and the almost inspired common sense of Plato, and, above all, the living and life-giving eloquence of the ideal orator, Demosthenes. But Hebrew takes him to the very fountain head of history and bids him marvel at the majestic simplicity of Genesis, Joshua, and Judges, opens to him the more than Socratic wisdom of Proverbs, and waits till he grasps the lofty images of Prophecy, or kindles his enthusiam at the fire that burns in the book of Job. If Latin leads him to the purity and eloquence of Tully, Hebrew takes him to the sublime utterances of Isaiah; and the Commentaries of Cæsar are far excelled by the band that guides us through the rapid conquest of Canaan.

Or look at it from another point of view. The man who cultivates eloquence, who seeks by every legitimate means to arouse men to action, who would express himself in "thoughts that breathe and words that burn," must cultivate the imagination, must store his mind with striking analogies, must be inspired with something of the spirit of poetry. The Hebrew, like all Oriental languages, is picturesque and poetical. A striking analogy is often found in a single word, and there is the sugges-

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tion of a poem in a line. It may be said that we have all these advantages in the English Bible. True, we have many of them, and yet who does not know that much of the vividness, the picturesqueness, and the force of a language is necessarily lost in the process of translation. It is well known that no poem especially can bear translation without losing something of that delicate aroma that lingered around it in its native garden and its native air. When you translate it, you strip it of that grace which was born with it, amid the throes of genius, and you adjust to it garments which often fail to fit. And this lack of fitness must be increased when the language vestments belong to different families, widely separated ages, and diverse civilisations. Analogies and similes are frequently, it is true, transferred, but by common use in our every-day language their origin is forgotten and their beauty unappreciated. But when we find them in a new and unfamiliar language, they come upon us with all the stimulating vividness of a new discovery. We cannot therefore derive the full benefit here suggested, unless we go to the old language itself.

Again, consider that the Hebrew Bible is one of the very best and simplest commentaries on the English. To discover the original meaning of a word is often like throwing open the window of a darkened room. As the light streams in, forms hitherto dim and shadowy stand forth with the clear and distinct outlines of well-known objects. We might give many examples of this, but two will suffice for illustration. The word translated *sanctify,* means, originally, to separate. A sanctified person or thing, therefore, was one *separated* from all others of the same class, and *set apart* to the service of God. See how much this adds to the clearness of the concept of which this word is the sign. The Old Testament word for *faith* comes from a root meaning to make steady, thus bringing out the idea of that practical reliance which is of the very essence of saving faith, and denoting that steadying effect which it exercises, not only over the intellect and the heart, but over the whole life.

Once more: the study of this noble language cannot fail to act in some measure as an antidote to the weak and watery style which the literature of the day is too well fitted to beget and

nourish. The infant sometimes draws death from the same breast from which it draws life. We must, to a large extent, seek our literary *pabulum* amid the publications of the day, and too often the tainted leaven infuses corruption into the fermenting style of the young.

The age tends to superficiality; young men come forth with great pretensions and great expectations. Their encyclopedic attainments are calculated to startle. And yet too often this is illusory. There is the breadth, but not the depth. There is the glitter, but not the gold. They lack that sweep of pinion and that vigor of stroke that lifts the eagle toward the sun. It avails not to have much and varied knowledge in the multiplied branches of human investigation, unless there be also depth and justness of thought and keenness of vision. Truth lies beneath the surface. We must dig for her diamonds, we must dive for her pearls. Anything that antagonises the mushroom learning of the day must be beneficial. Let us lay the foundations broader and deeper with lexicon and grammar. We need to commune not only with Augustine and Calvin, with Turrettin and Hodge and Dabney, but also with Gesenius and Fuerst, with Davidson and Deutsch. Our Southern Church is already widely known for her orthodoxy and for her unswerving fidelity to the incomparable symbols of the Presbyterian faith. Let her be equally widely known for her scholarship and her ability and determination to stand on that high plane of learning on which Melanchthon and Calvin placed the Church of the Reformation. Let her do this—not for the pride of learning, or the exulting joy of superiority, but for the glory of her King; that she may bring to his altar a richer sacrifice, and offer there with vows of consecration not only the strength and service of her body, but the power and service of her mind; that she may bear her continued testimony to the value of an educated ministry; that she may have young men upon whose shoulders the mantles of ascending scholars may fall, to cover a double portion of their spirits; and lastly, that she may cover her front with that broad and burnished shield of learning that shall turn aside from her vitals the poisoned darts of superficiality and ignorance.

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