

I humbly conceive, ought to prohibit all such engagements in the way of preaching or teaching as interfere with his proper business—acquiring fitness for the ministry. Everything is beautiful in its season. Let him be a Minister in due time, but let him first be a student, not merely in name, but in reality.

There is some unpleasant feeling, it is alleged, in reference to both the Committee on Theological Education and the Presbyteries being concerned in the examination of Students. That, I think, will require the consideration of the Synod. If the two parties cannot work harmoniously, one of them, I hope, will be relieved. It is well known that in at least one of the denominations out of which the U. P. Church in Scotland was formed, the Presbyteries usually conducted no examinations between the time of entrance to the Hall and taking on trials for licence. The Student was required to do nothing beyond giving a discourse every year. That plan might be adopted here; but to supersede the Committee would be a very great evil. In fact it would, in some cases, be just about putting an end to examination, and uniformity would, of course, be entirely destroyed. If any object to the classifying of Students according to their proficiency, I would beg to recommend to their consideration the conclusion of Sir William Hamilton's first Lecture on Metaphysics, together with the Appendix. The very fact that the classification is with some a sore point, is no small proof of its importance.

With regard to continuing the Exhibition scheme, that I conceive to be indispensable. I have been assured that, wherever Ministers have been favourable to the cause, the Congregations have been forward in contributing. Many of the Congregations, including some of the largest, have not yet given anything. There ought to be no difficulty in raising what is needed for the present. The Committee, I understand, have hitherto given to all applicants. Perhaps there should be some judicious restriction. Some, it is said, have applied just to get their position in the Hall. If so, they have laboured under an entire misapprehension. Taking an Exhibition is not necessary for that at all. The mistake is easily corrected, by doing, as one has done,—refunding the money.

The notion, I believe, has got into circulation that the students at present are deficient in their literary and philosophical attainments. The result of my inquiries is that several of them are, in these respects, decidedly superior. If some are otherwise, the question remains, with whom does the responsibility lie? A young man is surely entitled to offer himself for admission to the Hall; and if he be received while not qualified, the blame is not his. The Synod has adopted a list of subjects for examination, and has laid down the rule, quoted in your last, that this shall "be now the *minimum* which all Presbyterians\* should faithfully and rigidly demand." Before this rule is set aside as unsatisfactory, let inquiry be made whether it has been observed.

Let me just, in fine, remark that there are certain moderate limits,

---

\* The word "Presbyterians" was a misprint for "Presbyteries."—Ed.