

## 3. THE EDUCATION OF PREACHERS.

There is perhaps no subject connected with the Christian institution in regard to which men differ more widely, than ministerial education, and in our investigations of the matter we shall take the liberty of noticing some views which we think most detrimental to the cause of Christ. In fashionable circles, a kind of light theological literature is preached with the best success. A class of men who fear not God, and who generally believe not his word, are the preachers. In the days of the Apostles, the ministers of Satan were transformed into messengers of light, and it is most singular that about two-thirds of the popular clergy in Germany at this hour, regard the sacred oracles as mere *myths*,—representations of false facts. In England perhaps most of the truly attractive clergy not only doubt the truth of the Bible, but preach a kind of philosophical skepticism; and in the United States many manifest much more confidence in their own peculiar views of expediency and powers of system-making, than in preaching the word of life. Unitarians, Universalists modern Spiritualists, *intuitive* theologians, new-light seekers and speculatists, universally profess not to believe the written oracles as the highest religious authority. Hence they rely not for success upon a preached gospel, and of course they must possess a varied and popular learning for which their adoring auditors will pay the best price. The consequence is, the flowers of Shakspeare, Bulwer, Milton, Young, with the more recent novelties, are retailed for gold under the sacred garb of religious teaching.

If we mistake not, many Christians, or such at least as profess the Christian name, are disposed to join with the parties in acquiring this kind of "a theological education." The consequence is, we have in our country many seminaries styled "Divinity Schools." Into these institutions no doubt many pious men are received, but from the character of most of the preachers made, we suppose young men are matriculated and pass through the course without a serious thought upon the high and holy responsibilities of a minister of the word. On this subject we find some sage declarations in the April number of the London Quarterly for 1856, in an editorial connected with the Haldanes, which we suppose may interest our readers. It seemed to be the ambition of Robert Haldane, to spend a large estate in combatting the "Protestant infidelity" of Europe. Though unlearned in the languages and popular literature, he courageously attacked the theological seminaries