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CLOSING NOTES.

THE sessions being practically closed at the theological seminaries the formal closing draw, once more, the eyes of the Church on the colleges. In the prosperity of the college the average Presbyterian takes great pride, for the Church loves to sustain the reputation of her ministers as learned men. What is sometimes forgotten, however, is that the prosperity of an institution of learning does not altogether depend on the eminence or relation of its professors, but also, and largely on the liberality of the Church. A college needs funds as well as brains. When to the duty of reading and teaching is added that of subscription-collector the energies of the professor are sadly divided and of course the class suffers. Alumni Associations and College Societies share in the work of finding the ways and means, but the time has come when the professors ought to be relieved altogether of begging for funds; so that free from financial worry, their time and talents can be devoted to the utmost, to the proper duties of their appointments. The present condition of affairs is unsatisfactory and ought to be radically changed in the best interests of the Church.

The great work undertaken by the colleges is worthy of a larger place in the thought of the people than it occupies. Periodically, on occasions as the present week afford, the press reports the closing proceedings and publish appeals. To arouse a wide-spread and abiding interest—an enthusiasm—in these institutions, the necessity for thorough training, and the means available for furnishing it, should be made familiar to all the congregations. An alumni should never tire of keeping the work, claims and responsibilities of his theological Alma mater, before his people, and we venture to say that if presented reasonably and attractively the people would never tire of hearing these matters spoken of.

The Colleges, as a whole, possess strong men—strong in scholarship and strong in character, and we are old-fashioned enough to place character above learning. It is a case where both are best. The imparting of knowledge, however necessary and important, gives way to the forming of character. The professor not only teaches his students in the various subjects of his chair, he also sets before them an ideal after which to strive in their lives; and as a good man is better than a mere learned man, so the student who imbibes elevated ideas in the class-room will prove more useful in the vineyard than the student whose best recommendation is a gold medal. A discussion is looming up on the training of young men in the practical work or the ministry. No doubt there is room for improvement in all that is being done, for even the most accomplished men are sadly deficient in myriads of attainable things. That new weapons may

be added to the preacher's armory goes without saying. To the suggestions made of training in music and elocution, we add that of giving a place on the curriculum to students prayer-meetings conducted by the professors and city pastors. Why not? Surely nothing could be more fitting nor more productive of real pulpit power. The right heart will send forth its praise in a better and more feeling strain than will the cultured lip; a preacher burning with a love for souls will find words and vocal modulations suitable for dying sinners. Fear not that he will not. The tender hearted pastor at the side of his dying brother or at the grave need not think of Belle's rules of elocution or of the Neff School of oratory. Fancy a Duff, or a MacKay studying the niceties of the rising or the falling inflection when pleading for the perishing ones of India or Formosa! The thing is absurd. Quarrier does not get his thousands of pounds a year for his orphanages, by observing certain rules for breathing, but by the travail of faith. A due cultivation of the physical organs is useful, for instance volume and distinctness of tone may be developed to the advantage of people and pastor. A harsh voice may be curbed by vocal gymnastics, but such as these things are simple and within the reach of all without the aid of a special collegiate training. We find fault with no laudable effort made to improve pulpit discourses and the service of the Church, but we do object to mere surface work. The root of the matter is the heart, and with the heart the Holy Ghost must deal. If the world is out of joint to-day it is because of two much head and two little heart.

If the Christian life and character of the student are to be moulded at college, no less must they impress themselves upon the people among whom the student will labor when he becomes a minister. Therein lies the great interest of the people. Men of profound piety are needed in the Church. Leaders in godliness whom even the veterans in the ranks can follow; men of prayer; pastors with the salt of grace that will reclaim and preserve the communities in which their lot is cast, and if the colleges furnish such men they have discharged their highest duty. If the people have got into the way of looking over the lists for the man with the gold medal rather than for the man of the golden censer, it is to be regretted, but neither the colleges nor the Church should be carried away from the true ideal of the ministry, by popular clamour or demand.

The ideal minister never ceases to be a student. The school in which he studies is broader than the college. His field is his parish, his books his people. Their wants, and needs, their circumstances and peculiarities he becomes familiar with and while the manse library must not be neglected, the closet and the cottage will get much of his time. The student makes a beginning in this direction when he leaves for the summer mission work entrusted to him by the church. It is a very important part of his training and ought to be carefully supervised. The experience thus gained will prove valuable, in most cases, for after life. At the student stage mission work on well-defined lines proves a useful commingling of the practical with the theoretical and brings out the stuff a man is made of. In times gone by the Presbyterian church was very cautious in the matter of permitting students to preach, and the common rule was that a man should be licensed before entering the pulpit. A via media in this as in most things is the correct course, and Committees are right in seeking for evidence of Christian experience and fitness in other respects in those appointed to