

Theology and the Rising Ministry.

BY T. TROTTER.

THE day is past when men question the value of collegiate education to the minister. So high a level has popular education reached, and so many and exacting are the demands upon the modern pastor, that every aspirant to the ministry feels he has little chance of strong continuous influence in the pastoral office unless well-disciplined and well-informed. And since this discipline and information can be obtained so much more thoroughly and rapidly under the guidance of able instructors and the other helpful conditions of college life, than alone, in the fragments of time that can be snatched from the pressing duties of the ministry, it is no longer an open question whether the candidate for the ministry is not greatly advantaged by collegiate preparation for his calling.

A question, however, which is still very much alive among students for the ministry, is, whether arts and theology are both necessary as parts of their collegiate preparation. This is not surprising. Each new generation of young men comes up, innocent of the strenuous demands which later life will make, full of the impatience incident to youth, and appalled at the prospect of four years in arts and three in theology. Is there not in this seven years' stretch a waste of precious time, bordering on self-indulgence? Are there not many men who, with much less time at college, have become very useful? And since the arts work naturally precedes the theological, the question oftenest takes the form of whether theology may not safely be allowed to go by default, in the case of a man who has won his arts degree and has acquired the mental discipline which that implies.

I venture to enter a plea in behalf of the theological course.

Not the theological as opposed to the arts course, whenever it is possible by any perseverance and self-sacrifice for a man to take both; for the degree of appreciation and masterfulness with which one will come to the study of the great subjects of theology will depend largely upon the thoroughness of his discipline and the breadth of his general culture previously acquired. The man who has mastered his mathematics is the man who will bring to homiletics and systematic theology, that power of analysis and straight-grained thought which is so desirable. He who has mastered the linguistic and literary studies, ancient and modern, of the