

however, at present, so much concern myself with the question, whether such education should be provided within the walls of a denominational college as with the question, whether it is indispensable that it should be provided at all; and I am sure of the concurrence of as many as are acquainted with the state of opinions on this subject, both in Europe and America, in saying, that a deeper sense begins to prevail of the importance of a comprehensive system of mental discipline for students of divinity. This I state, both that I may bespeak from all our friends a candid appreciation of any contemplated enlargement of our educational scheme, and that I may counsel studious youth patiently and gladly to conform themselves to these conditions of their honourable undertaking and design. Be not so much in haste to be prepared, as to be well prepared, for the work which is before you. Do not undervalue any of the branches of learning to which your attention may be required, nor go into the error of attaching yourselves with enthusiasm to some one study, because it may happen to coincide with your natural turn of mind, or gratify your peculiar taste, dedicating to it all your talents and energies; while you content yourselves with a nominal attendance on other classes in the prescribed course, and with a perfunctory execution of their allotted tasks. That sagacious and profound thinker, Locke, in his suggestions for the right conduct of the understanding, has remarked: "If men are for a long time accustomed only to one sort or method of thoughts, their minds grow stiff in it, and do not so readily turn to another." This, therefore, to give them this freedom that they should be made look into all sorts of knowledge, and exercise their understandings in a wide variety and stock of subjects. The insight into the even less connected with one's proper business, is advantageous, as accustoming the mind to all sorts of ideas, and to the proper way of examining their habitudes and relations. This gives the mind a freedom, teaches it a sagacity and eagerness, and a suppleness to apply itself more closely and dexterously to the bends and turns of a matter in all its researches." If even, for the sake of mental discipline, he thus recommends a wide acquaintance with the circle of knowledge, especially is this necessary for the theological student. It is difficult to make distinction as to their value, or bearing on his ultimate object, between the claims of mental philosophy or physical; between logic or rhetoric; between mathematics, glorying in the exactness of its demonstrations, and natural and civil history, with all the valuable data which they supply for the deductions of moral and probable reasoning. Each of these contributes in a valuable degree to the invigorating of the mind, or the providing materials of thought, or enabling us to communicate knowledge to others, with the best effect. Any of them is underrated, if neglected altogether; none of them may be held to supersede any of the rest.

It is my hope that our hours of lectures and recitations may be so arranged that you may be able to profit by them, without being overloaded with a multiplicity of engagements, or deprived of the needful leisure for thought and study in the interval of class hours. I am strongly convinced that any solid acquisitions in learning must be the effect of repose, retirement and silence—that to be in a perpetual bustle, hastening from the prelections of one teacher, to the prelections of another, and having the mind distracted with a vast diversity of objects at the same time, is unfavourable to proficiency. Though various knowledge—yea, all knowledge—so far as attainable, is to be aimed at, yet our advances are to be made leisurely and deliberately. "*Quæ salutem humani, quæ ferre reculant,*" must be the measure of every one's undertaking.

It is necessary that there be time to read, as well as to think. Some important additions, you will be glad to know, have been made to the Library. Between recent purchases and gifts, about five hundred volumes have been added to our collection.

Among these are works in various departments of profane and sacred literature:—portions, for example, of the writings of the early Fathers, and productions of the European Reformers and Theologians of the 15th and 16th centuries. These, with some valuable additions in the department of Biblical Criticism and Oriental Literature, will supply gratification to the industrious student, and will provoke an honourable ambition to converse with the great minds of a more ancient, as well as of our modern, day. I think it has been greatly to the disadvantage of the pulpit, that the writers on dogmatic theology, belonging to what may be termed the Augustan age of British and European learning, have not been more studied of late years. If the Latin language, in which many of these great minds have enshrined their thoughts, be an obstacle to familiar converse with them, that only demonstrates that a defect exists in another department, which we should be more anxious to repair, than willing to perpetuate. This need not hinder our bestowing a proportion of our attention on the recent contributions which German, still more than Dutch, or American, Theologians, have made in the department of hermeneutics. Though I think the writings of their critics and philologists have been overpraised; yet they have brought some valuable objections to the illustration of the evidence of our faith, and to the exposition of the sacred books, in opposition to the assaults of rationalism; and it is well that we should keep up some acquaintance with the Olshausens, the Hengstenbergs, the Hagenbachs, and others, who have assisted to stem the torrent of a wild and licentious criticism, as well as philosophy, which threatened to sap the foundations of Christianity, and even overturn the first principles of all truth.

But I am not disposed to admit that a minute attention to exegetical theology, or the niceties of philological criticism, is more important than an enlarged and comprehensive acquaintance with divine truth in its great outlines, and internal relations and harmonies. No one, of course, who values the Bible, will regard as unimportant the science which concerns itself, with the ascertaining the text of Scripture, and determining its just meaning. So far criticism is indispensable. We must recur to it in every question of polemics. It is common sense to affirm that if the Scriptures are on every point to be the rule of faith, we must know what the Scripture really says. But there is, we think, a danger of magnifying hermeneutical science to the depreciation of theological systems—of attaching by far too much importance to the assaults of modern infidelity, or neology, and letting ourselves down from the tone of confidence with which we are entitled to speak of long-established truths; as if the whole of Christianity were yet a question, and the very safety of the citadel were compromised by some small affair of a various reading, or some conjectural emendation of occasional clauses. Let philology have its due; but it is well to remember that to be sound interpreters, it is not enough to be minute critics in words and versions. The principles of a sound logic are essential to real hermeneutical skill and accomplishment: the power of tracing the relation of Scriptural ideas, as well as words, and of opposing to the sophistries of special criticism, the harmonies of Divine revelation. It enhances in our opinion, the value of dogmatic theology, when we see the Ernestis and Tholucks, and Rosenmüllers, and Heinrichs of Germany, compromising truth in so serious a degree, even while opposing themselves, with success to certain devices of the common enemy: pulling down with the one hand, while they build with the other; not because their criticism is valueless, but because their knowledge of the analogy of faith is defective. The prostration of the infidel philosophy of the past century was, after all, accomplished most effectively by the application of well known and received principles of sense and reason: and the battles of Christianity and of Protestantism are mainly to be fought in the panoply by which the ground was already won:—the great errors of our own times—the errors

of Romanism and Puseyism, as well as neologism, may be met and confounded, by the application of principles long ago established from the word of God; depending less on minute scanning of occasional phrases, than on the great prominent revelations of Christianity, on facts recognizable by the senses, and deposed to by all history, and on the eternal moralities of the decalogue. To this standard, too, would we bring all the sophistry by which American or other theologians would justify slavery,—that God-dofying system which reduces man to the level of a brute; intercepts the light of Heaven's saving truth from a portion of God's rational offspring; and annihilates and dissolves relationships which the law of Christ; and of nature, has made inviolate. That such a system should be gravely palliated by men pretending to be interpreters of Scripture, were scarcely to be believed, were it not avowed; and it is justly that the philosophical Vines, while reflecting how long an obvious principle may lie hidden from wise men; or how slowly, after generations, a truth seen afterwards, as in the light of intuition, to be undeniable, may make its way to universal tolerance or acceptance; has singled out the amazing acquiescence of many ages, and even Christian sects, in this inhuman, degrading traffic—this abominable crime!

[In the latter portion of his discourse, the Rev. Doctor enlarged on the value of time—on the connection between a due improvement of academic opportunities, and probable success in subsequent life,—and adverted both to the difficulties and the encouragements which a Gospel ministry, especially in such a country as Canada, has to reckon upon.]

KNOX'S COLLEGE AND THE TORONTO ACADEMY.

It cannot fail, we think, to give pleasure to every man of a benevolent mind, to contemplate the origin and progressive development of those literary and scientific institutions, which, in a new country especially, are calculated to diffuse among the inhabitants the benefits of an enlightened and improved system of education, before which the clouds of ignorance and superstition are destined eventually to vanish, as the mists from steaming lake or leafy forest before the light of the morning sun. If this is really the case, it must afford a subject of pure and lasting gratification to the members and friends of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, to reflect that, amidst all the difficulties which they have to encounter as settlers in a country just beginning the career of improvement, and subjected to the pecuniary burdens which press on the energies of their infant congregations, by the necessity of erecting new edifices in which they may assemble to worship God, according to the simple but sublime ritual of their pious forefathers, they have yet succeeded, by dint of their own voluntary exertions, in originating and putting into a train of successful operation, a literary and theological institution, which, without the least appearance of over-weening vanity, we may say, will stand a comparison with institutions of a similar kind, belonging to other denominations of Christians in the country, accounted numerically stronger, and richer, than they, and which will yet not suffer by the comparison.

Having been called in the providence of God to visit Toronto lately, I derived much pleasure, during a three days' residence within the walls of Knox's College, and as a guest at the hospitable board of the highly respected Principal of the Institution, in attentively observing the various plans in operation, both in the Academy and College, for the educational training of the young, and having had some practical experience for many years in guiding the studies of ingenious youth, both in Scotland and in the province of New Brunswick, I am desirous that the hands of the professors and tutors of the establishment, should be strengthened by the public expression of my deliberate and approving opinions of their honorable and useful