

fully developed system. The question is not really between system and no system, but between a system which is scriptural and true and a system which is unscriptural or one-sided. System men will have. In proportion as they think clearly, they think systematically. Even those who declaim against system, show most clearly that they have a system of their own.

The benefits which flow from such a grasp of the truth, as an adequate mastery of Systematic Theology implies, can scarcely be seriously questioned. The power which it gives in defending the truth, and the ease which it imparts in handling it for the practical ends for which God has given it, are a sufficient vindication of its utility. It is not, therefore, without good reason that this branch of study has always held such a prominent place among those deemed essential for candidates for the ministry in the Presbyterian Church. The genius of Presbyterianism demands for it, the place of commanding importance which it has always held among us. As a section of the Church of Christ, we have ever exalted the truth. And the Presbyterian student who imagines that any list of accomplishments, however valuable in themselves, will compensate for the want of clear and comprehensive views of divine truth, has strangely mistaken the genius of the Church to which he belongs, and the nature of the work for which he is preparing.

It must be admitted that Systematic Theology is, at present, in certain quarters, rather at a discount. The feeling may even have begun to invade our Church. Acting on the good old maxim, "*Obsta principiis*," it may be wise at once to challenge the intruder.

In many cases, the feeling to which we refer is the result of prejudices which will not bear a moment's calm reflection.

The rapid advancement of science and the spread of general knowledge inclines a numerous class to read more or less copiously on almost every subject, without taking the time and putting forth the mental effort necessary to reach clear and fixed opinions on any question. On most topics, their minds are always in a *nebular* condition, and they feel an instinctive antagonism to clear and definite statements. And the unpalat-