

Montreal College has advised the retirement of three students during the past session. Probably all the colleges could profitably do something of the same kind. Let them strive after quality rather than numbers, and we shall hear little more of cumbersome devices to narrow the gateway of entrance into the ministry of the Church. We have machinery enough now. All we need is to work it a little better to secure the end aimed at.

THE COLLEGE CLOSINGS.

LAST week saw the College Closings with their interesting ceremonies, their words of weighty advice, and their tender leave taking. We doubt not the heart of the Church goes out with the young ministers who are now face to face with their life work as consecrated servants of the Lord. How shall they stand the day of trial? Of all the incidents connected with a closing ceremony, the departure of the young graduates is the most interesting and the most momentous. To their training they owe much, and the equipment received in the class room, if wisely exercised, will be precious aid in the battle for souls. But the grace of God in the heart, the indwelling of the Spirit must be relied upon, if acceptable service is to be rendered in God's vineyard. The honors conferred at Convocation attract the eyes of the Church and of the public to young men of distinguished scholarship; how often is profound piety and sacred ambition "born to blush unseen" at the College Closing? Yet more important is it to the young minister to be truly called of God than to be able to win the highest college honors in theological studies. Therefore it behoves the distinguished men to remember that as they step down to the arena they have to fight the battles for the Master with many and varied weapons, a knowledge of sin and of fallen human nature being more useful than a knowledge of Greek roots and Hebrew points, more serviceable to know the social conditions of struggling, striving humanity in the many spheres of life, than to know Hegel, Hodge or Ritschel. Yet it is gratifying to find as the results of the examinations at the various colleges—Knox, Queens and Montreal, especially, that the devoted young men who have chosen the ministry as their sphere of labor are mentally endowed so as to prove their merit in that respect and to win fairly very high distinction in the fields of scholarship. That they may consecrate themselves anew, and in humility seek to turn their mental gifts to to the glory of God, and not of themselves, is the prayer and hope of the Church.

PROFESSOR ROBINSON'S FAREWELL.

THE singular ability displayed by Professor Robinson in his inaugural address in the Bloor street church, when he was welcomed to the professoriate chair in Knox College still remained in men's minds, so recent has it been, when they listened to his farewell address as Professor in St. James Square Church last Thursday. The too brief period between these two events merely served to confirm the high opinion formed of the Professor's fitness for the chair when he first came amongst us. And his closing address was a fitting word to his fruitful labor at Knox. His words to the students showed that young as he is himself, he has grasped the essentials of the preacher's life. They must needs have a message to the people and only by study of the Word could they have a message, and the more diligent their study was pursued the higher and brighter that message would be. Their message, too, was to be an independent one, not plagiarized from men or books. He coun-

selled them to test thoroughly all new views before accepting or propagating them. They should never preach in a mist or doubt. They were never to forget that there were those in their congregations who were hungering for the truth, and that they were in the pulpit to give them the bread of life. Therefore they must never go into the pulpit unprepared. They should also be pastors. The function of the pastor was to teach his flock that there was something better and higher than worldly pleasure. He was to care for the young and the sick. He was to ward off the vultures of sin and temptation which were continually threatening to swoop down on the young and carry them off. But there was another goal, and in accomplishing it they would also accomplish the first two. The highest and best of all was to do all to the glory of God. This was their sole message, namely to make men honor and love and adore the Heavenly Father. In closing Prof. Robinson gave utterance to some strong words of personal affection and regard for the Principal, the Professors and students of Knox College.

THE PREPARATORY COURSE.

IT will be heartily conceded that the conclusion arrived at by the authorities of Knox College to modify the Preparatory Course, has been a step in the right direction. The object in view is to secure greater excellence and lessen the cost of conducting the work in the Preparatory Department. First, it has been decided that henceforth students who hitherto would have studied at Knox College, prior to entering the theological classes, will study at the University of Toronto or such other university as may be approved of by the Senate of Knox College. The preliminary studies at the university shall be arranged by the Senate, or by a committee thereof. These recommendations will be forwarded to the General Assembly, by which body they will doubtless be approved, and the other colleges who will be supplied with copies of the new plan are expected to follow the same course. This means that the cost of the Preparatory Course will be saved to the College, and that the work will be done at the University. The full university course for the B. A. degree will not be required, but a course equal to or better than that given up will be required and the standard will be maintained or excelled. For some time past there has been a distinct desire for some such arrangement, and the reference to the same in His Excellency, Earl Aberdeen's address to the students of Knox College last fall were evidently inspired with the object of indicating the course about to be adopted. Now that Knox College has advanced in this matter it is to be hoped the other colleges and the General Assembly will heartily acquiesce.

THE DEITY RECOGNIZED.

In the latest Australian despatches we are told that the work of confederation has been materially advanced of late. The Committee has agreed on a report which, if acceptable to the colonies, will be the constitution of the new Federal State. The name suggested is The Commonwealth of Australia and the Federal Capital will be a new city on Federal Territory. A noticeable and satisfactory recommendation is that which recognizes the Almighty in the preamble the words being "Humbly relying upon the blessing of Almighty God." It will be remembered that sometime ago it was agreed that no reference be made to the Deity in the constitution, but an agitation sprang up which has resulted in the recognition here quoted. The non mention of the name of God or of the term Providence was a concession to a secularizing movement which seemed at first to be formidable, but when the matter was placed fairly before the people it was discovered that the cry of "no God" was from a few noisy agitators whose pretence to represent Australian thought has been effectively repudiated.