

## SYMPOSIUM.

## IS THE TRAINING FOR THE MINISTRY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA SUFFICIENTLY PRACTICAL?

In complying with the request to help in the discussion of this subject, it should be stated that the writer received no part of his theological education in Canada, has no College of the Church in his mind, and that his criticisms are based on what he has observed, principally in Western Canada, where graduates of all our colleges are laboring. From the nature of the case, the observations made are brief and disjointed, are not intended to cast reflections on any person or school, but to point out defects, and suggest improvements, so that the ministry of the Church may become more efficient. As a Church we are conservative, walking a good deal in the light of tradition, and forgetting that Canada is not Scotland or Ireland, and that, although many of our people are of Scotch or Scotch-Irish stocks, they differ widely from the people of the Mother Land. The Church must be a Canadian Church, adapting herself to new and changing conditions, and determined to do her part in seeking and saving the lost, irrespective of race or nationality. The colleges are instituted and maintained to train and equip men for this work, and hence all members of the Church are interested in their efficiency.

Permit me, at the outset, to point out that far too many students leave college with impaired health. Dyspepsia, indigestion, nervous troubles, and a train of evils noticed are not the result of hard study. Whether in the seminary or elsewhere, men should be taught how to keep the body in a healthy state. Good digestion sends a river full of rich blood to flood the brain: and the minister is hopeful, cheerful, companionable, eager

for work and able to do it; and his sermons will be stimulating and helpful, not thin kine or blasted ears, but full and well favored.

Many of our ministers know but little of the right use of the voice, and several have left the West with throat troubles, caused mainly, if not solely, by a wrong use of the vocal organs; while others similarly threatened have been speedily and permanently cured by a course of training in a school in Chicago. Why should not speakers receive voice-training as well as singers? Are our colleges doing what is necessary in giving compass and flexibility to the voices of their students? It is to be feared that they are not, and hence faults of delivery rob many a good sermon of its effectiveness.

The reading of the Scriptures, of psalms and hymns in public, is also too little studied, and hence not unfrequently the preacher creates a prejudice against himself, by a misplaced accent or emphasis, ere he has had time to begin his sermon. When the preacher reads "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear," one is tempted to ask "did you expect it to sound in his eye, or nose, or mouth?" Or when another reads, "Thou never gavest me a kid that I might make merry with my friends," to suggest that the meaning might be brought out better by moving the emphasis forward to "kid." Urban we have heard pronounced with three syllables, and wondered whether the good man had changed his sex since his death. When a boy at school, fingers have smarted from saying Aristobulus and Steph<sup>i</sup>-nus, and it was deem-