

carefully considered. Contentment with the present is not always healthful, and any improvement, however slight, in so grand a work as this is of priceless value.

The question whether Theological Seminaries have produced the best results has been raised, and this, of course, involves the subject now under discussion in *THE HOMILETIC REVIEW*.

There are some characteristics which must be regarded as essential to all Theological Seminaries. These characteristics called them into being, and to surrender them would involve the destruction of these schools.

Theological Seminaries must represent and maintain the highest possible standards of Biblical and Theological Scholarship. This is essential to the prosperity of the Church, whose teachings they are to expound. They are not the fountains of truth, but its expounders and defenders. Here, if anywhere, it is to be expected that all critical questions that arise will be considered and discussed, and errors and falsehoods will be refuted. Theological schools are emphatically set for the defence of the truth, and if no other end were secured by their existence, this alone would justify the means expended in their equipment and support. The attacks that are constantly made upon the fundamentals of Christian truth demand that there shall be somewhere a body of men who, with every advantage of training and with every facility afforded by libraries and special opportunities, shall maintain "the faith once delivered to the saints." The service thus rendered to the Church by these institutions is a matter of history, and needs only to be stated, not proved.

They must also be centres of vital piety. This is as fundamental as the former, and closely allied to it. The harmony of high scholarship and deep piety is an axiomatic truth. The firmest faith is closely identified with the profoundest study, and hence the demand for the maintenance of thorough scholarship in the seminaries is in strict consistency with the growth of piety. They should be places of deep devotion, of heartfelt consecration. The aroma of faith and hope and love must fill all the halls, and sweeten every lecture, and every service. These schools should not only represent formal truth, but "the life of God in the soul of man." The spirit of prayer and praise should be prevalent, both among the Faculty and the students.

Another essential characteristic of a theological seminary is a broad and deep comprehension of the needs of the world and of the kind of men and of preparation most likely by God's grace to secure its salvation. This is necessary to give direction to the agencies which they should employ and the modes of training they should adopt.

Assuming these elements as essential, we can the more readily point out the directions in which reforms may be necessary.

It is believed by many that the regular course for graduation should be lengthened so as to occupy four years. The impossibility of com-