

regarded liable to criticism, then those who hold the most sacred and exalted position men can occupy—a position which demands the very highest qualifications of head and heart, may not claim exemption from similar scrutiny. Indeed, it is a duty laid upon the church by apostolic injunction to “try the spirits.” Instead, therefore, of combating all sorts of critics in the innumerable details of their too often shallow and vexatious assertions, it appears to us that there are certain things which should be insisted upon as fitted to stop the mouths of gain sayers and to promote the interests of truth. They are such as the following: *Ministers should be men of thorough education.* The Presbyterian Church has always insisted upon this. Six years of diligent study is the very shortest period of preparation by which young men in Canada can enter her ministry. And this is the exception rather than the rule. Seven years, four in Arts and three in Theology, being the rule. Besides our college provides for a fourth session in Theology, thus extending the course over eight years in all. And we are glad to observe that our ably conducted preparatory classes are now simply auxiliary to University work, and that those taking advantage of them are passing on to a degree in Arts. Let students for the ministry take advantage of the best University courses our country provides, thus mingling freely with candidates of other professions, let them receive the critical and comprehensive theological training which our Halls afford, and let them energetically continue through subsequent life the methods of severe and accurate study enforced in college and then neither they nor the people to whom they minister need have any special anxiety about the doings of small critics. *Ministers should be men of courage and decision as well as possessed of ample intellectual resources.* It is only thus that they can command permanent respect and influence and be ready to maintain the truth against all comers. It is painful to witness the pliability of some—the skill amounting to craftiness with which they can take on the hue of their surroundings—and the obsequious spirit in which they seek applause from all quarters. Their aim seems to be not to teach forcibly and fearlessly what they know to be true, but to discover how they can safely and smoothly glide along the current of popular thought and feeling. They can therefore praise opinions and beliefs which are diametrically opposed to each other and contrary to the Word of God as well as to the principles they have themselves publicly avowed. They can excuse and indirectly justify vices indulged in by persons of high social standing and can carry their fluent eloquent flattery to such an extent as to make people blush who are not peculiarly sensitive if only by it all they can secure a little larger following. You will find them in secular gatherings of all sorts, in ladies’ sewing circles, in parlors, at public receptions, at revival meetings—everywhere, and always constrained to say some pleasant little thing about themselves and others—an unavoidable allusion to their own

learning and benevolence, their Catholicity of feeling and the goodness of the community, or something else equally undeniable. These are the creatures whose career encourages critics and sceptics, whose conduct gives occasion to scoffers to grow bold and to assert that ministers can be found to endorse any forms of thought and moral obliquity. And such charges can only be repelled by the exclusion from the sacred office of theological mollusks—creatures without moral backbone—and by the manifestation of that manly courage which holds to truth, because it is truth, and to right, because it is right despite of consequences. *Ministers should be men of piety and zeal.* This requisite can never be dispensed with. We do not mean ability to say sweet sentimental things, to assume pious tones and attitudes. No, but that they should be men of faith, prayer, and spiritual power derived from the indwelling of the Holy Ghost and their clear and comprehensive grasp of the truth of God. Men of firm and unwavering conviction who cannot help testifying, working, and suffering for the cause of Jesus Christ, not in the spirit of cowards prone to apologize for their calling and their very existence, not in the spirit of hirelings casting in their minds how every deed will lead to self-promotion, but in the spirit of the Master who came “not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many.”

OUR LOCAL NOTE BOOK.

THE car of college life goes rumbling on. The middle milestone has been passed and day by day grows smaller in receding distance. The studious passengers are aboard again, all save two or three whose places have been promptly filled. Refreshed by welcome rest, we have entered on the final trip, and, with mutual wishes for a bright new year, turn longing and expectant eyes toward the session’s ever nearing terminus.

WE would urge the claims of the Scholarship Fund of the Alma Mater Society upon the graduates and others. There is not anything in the treasury at present. Several, we understand, are competing for the scholarship this session, and in order that the successful competitor may be awarded, the funds will need to be extensively replenished. It is earnestly hoped that the Alumni of the College will consider this matter, and respond to the call of the treasurer.

WE understand that the Sabbath afternoon Lectures, delivered in the David Morrice Hall during this session, are to be issued early next Spring in a handsome 8mo. volume. The Senate has accepted the offer of the firm of W. Drysdale & Co. to publish them, and the work will be pushed with characteristic energy, and, we trust, with satisfactory results. This is a new departure in Canadian Collegiate work, and one which seems timely and deserving of the utmost encouragement. Many who have