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PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE JOURNAL,

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## Theological Colleges and Higher Education.

IN certain quarters the opinion is firmly entertained that the influence of the pulpit is on the wane. We are told with appalling solicitude that the world is now passing through a transition state. It is about to cast aside the worn-out garments of religion and old dogmism. In a generation or two hence it will come forth arrayed in the beautiful garments of a so-called gospel of humanity. Christianity must be superseded. At best it is only fit for an age of semi-enlightenment. Now we have the dawn of a better day. We are complacently assured that there was a time when the Church was the custodian of all the learning of the age, when, with few exceptions, clergymen were the only educated men, when ecclesiastics were the chief officers of the state. But now "the old must give place to the new," "Life greatness in these later years." The Church is out of harmony with the spirit of progress which now animates society. It must be cast aside as a useless impediment.

These champions of progress who thus inveigh against the Church leave an interesting problem unsolved. They do not venture to affirm what the wonderful outcome of the present throes of society is to be. It is to be a something remarkable and glorious to which is given the phonic name of "Gospel of Humanity." A student's small is not the proper place for entering upon the de-

fence of the Church. Besides, such a defence is unnecessary. These censors of the Church who tell us with oracular authority that it must go are usually empiricists. We desire to meet them on their own ground. In answer to the charge that the Church is losing its influence and power we ask them to look around them. Let them take the single question of education as a criterion. The Church by their own admission was the conservator of education in the past. It is so still. Where is the university of any great distinction in America that does not largely owe its greatness to theological colleges? If we take our own university of McGill, which has had to overcome many obstacles before attaining its present influential position, we shall find that its classes are considerably supplied by students of the different theological colleges of the city. Its growth is largely dependent on the growth of these colleges. If we examine the list of students we shall see that a large number of those who come from a distance are studying with a view of entering the Ministry.

We must not, however, measure the work done by theological colleges by the actual number of students who study with the Ministry in view. We are glad to be able to say that although theological graduates may not be able to give much financial support to their *alma mater* they are able to do and are doing a better work for it. They are able to influence young people to go to the university of their choice to pursue their studies whatever profession they may have in view. We do not think we arrogate too much when we say that, at least, in country districts no man has more power in guiding the young in their studies than the parson. To him young men come for advice touching this matter. Parents ask his advice as to the institution of learning to which they shall send their children. In many of those, who cast sympathetic glances upon the earnest minister and who regard him as a perfunctory being in the world, would only look back upon their past history they might find that they did listen to the advice of their pastor with profit. They will also discover that now, as well as in the past, many of the ablest university professors are taken from the ministerial ranks. We feel safe in asserting that the Church is still the greatest educational force in the country.

We believe that in many respects Canada is in a transition state, that upon the use that is made of the present period will largely depend the future greatness of the different cities of Canada. Montreal is apparently to be the