

lege is? There, a goodly number of youths, hopeful as to gifts and character—and we trust we may say, hopeful especially from the experience of the Lord's work in their own hearts—are under training for the ministry in this land.

Oh! if it be that we are not remembered in the prayers of the Churches, we fear that the dew of the Holy Spirit will be withheld from us. And even in this address we would not omit to remind you, dear brethren, of your duty to pray for the College, and to stir up others, as you are severally called, and enabled to influence them to become intercessors with God in behalf of the College, even its directors, its teachers, and its students.

And again, brethren, if it be that the College is not sustained by the liberality of the people—and we are bold to remind you that you are to be their exemplars, and that you must stir up and direct their liberality—then what can be the result but the decay—yea, the ultimate extinction of the College.

Remember that its only foundation is in the liberality of living Christians: alike unchartered and unendowed, should this fail it, it must perish, and with it the fond hopes which many have cherished, that it was to be honoured by the Great Head of the Church, to do something to the advancement of his cause in these regions, and in these latter times. We acknowledge, brethren, that it is painful to contemplate even the possibility of such an issue. But we advert to it only to remind you how it is to be averted.

Dr. Chalmers, when speaking of a provision for “the ecclesiastical and educational wants of all the people of the Free Church,” gave utterance to this sentiment: “Should the Free Church fall short of this lofty aim, the failure will be at the door of her own clergymen.” Now, should the Presbyterian Church of Canada fall short in her lofty aim to raise up an able ministry, commensurate with the widening fields that stretch around her, the failure, we would say, must lie mainly at the door of her clergymen. We say mainly, and we trust that our brethren in the ministry will ponder their responsibility, and act faithfully under it. But all our people have their responsibility too, and those of you who are called to rule in spiritual things, and those who are appointed to be stewards of your several congregations in temporal things have a greater share in this responsibility. And, dear brethren, in those cases in which contributions have not been made among you for the current year, grant us the requests which we now respectfully, but earnestly, and we may say confidently, prefer; first, that you should meet together, as the representatives of your several congregations and mission stations, and consider what share of the whole sum required for the College for the current year your several congregations should raise, and how it should be raised; as whether by yourselves personally or by the agency of collectors chosen for this work; secondly, that you give yourselves in the Lord's strength to carry out your own resolutions on this subject, and that without delay; and, thirdly, that you would, for the encouragement of others, report to the Record the contributions raised by you.

Not doubting that you will consent to us in these things, and in all that we have now set before you, We are, dear brethren, with christian regard, yours respectfully, in name and by appointment of the Acting Committee of Knox's College,

WILLIAM RISTOUL, *Chairman,*
JOHN McMEYERICH, *Treasurer.*

ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE OPENING OF THE SESSION OF KNOX'S COLLEGE, 20th OCT., 1847, BY REV. RALPH ROBB, OF HAMILTON.

GENTLEMEN:

I am sorry for your sakes that it has fallen to my lot to address you on this deeply interesting occasion. I had fondly hoped that some one far more competent to the right discharge of this duty would have undertaken it; and I still trust that not many days shall have elapsed before, in the gracious providence of God, a servant of Christ, eminently qualified, by the gifts and graces bestowed upon him by the Head of the Church, shall have arrived among us, to devote his whole time and attention to the direction and superintendence of your theological studies in this important and rapidly growing institution. The office of Theological Professor is, in my estimation, by far the most important in the christian church. The character and attainments of the future ministers, and consequently those of the church itself, depend, under God, on the labours of him who fills that office.—The accuracy of his views, the tone of his sentiments, the extent of his learning, and his ardour and enthusiasm, will naturally be regarded by the youth under his charge as the standard which they must endeavour to reach. It is impossible for any man, however gifted, rightly to discharge the duties of this office, whose time and attention are occupied with the various and infinitely important duties of the pastoral office. The duties connected with either of these offices demand the whole time and undivided energies of the most gifted servant of God.

Some of you, I understand, are still engaged with the preparatory studies of literature and philosophy. Let your attention be fully given to these studies; you will find the knowledge acquired in these classes of vast importance to the study of theology, the highest and noblest of all the sciences.

All knowledge is important to the theologian, and fitted both to aid him in his investigations for the information of his own mind, and to furnish him with illustrations when engaged in communicating knowledge to others. Literature and philosophy, though not essential to the christian—for God often makes choice of the ignorant and foolish to confound the wise and the learned—are nevertheless necessary to him who is to be the teacher of others. A knowledge of the philosophy of language, or general grammar, and especially an acquaintance with the languages in which the scriptures were originally written, is of vast importance to enable the minister to ascertain the mind of the spirit in the sacred record. Logic, which teaches the laws which guide the exercise of the intellectual powers, is of great service to the theologian, in enabling him to study with success the truths which he investigates, to detect the errors of the false reasoner, to give order and arrangement to his own conceptions, and to enable him to state them with distinctness and perspicuity.

The mind or soul of man is the object which our ministrations are designed to affect. It is the purpose of God, by the gospel, to enlighten and sanctify the soul,—to set it free from the bondage of corruption,—to purify the conscience,—to subdue the will, and bring it into an accordance with the will of God. Hence the necessity of the minister of the gospel being minutely acquainted with the philosophy of mind. If it be necessary for the artificer not only to be acquainted with the nature and uses of the tools which he handles, but also with the nature of the materials on which he works, it is surely no less necessary that the minister of Christ should be instructed not only in those glorious doctrines, by faith in which his own soul is to be saved, and which he is to preach for the salvation of others, but also in the laws of mind—should study with care the condition and character of those whose immortal destinies must be affected by his ministrations, that he may know what motives to urge, and when to urge them—how to rouse by reproof, to direct by counsel, or soothe by the invitation and promises of mercy.

These statements, which go to prove the necessity of a well-educated ministry for the right dis-

charge of the ordinary functions of the sacred office, will be confirmed, when we take into account the various attacks which have been made on individual truths of the gospel, by the advocates of error and the assault of the infidel, mainly through errors in science, and a philosophy falsely so called. For example—the heresy that denies the necessity of the special work of the spirit in conversion, has been defended and propagated by means of false metaphysics, by erroneous representations of the laws of mind and the nature of the will. The most daring and impious attacks have been made on the whole scheme of divine revelation, and on the evidences, which his works so abundantly furnish, of the being and perfections of God, by the false metaphysics of Hume and others, who, from the high places they occupy in the literature of their country, have been enabled to exercise an extensive influence for evil on the minds of others, and have perverted the faith of not a few.

In our own times, the principal assaults of the infidel have been made through the physical sciences, especially geology. But religion has nothing to fear from discoveries in science, or the onward progress of the human mind. That “ignorance is the mother of devotion,” is a maxim not to be found in the bible. Christianity does not prefer the darkness, but produces her claims in the light of day. She is no adversary to true philosophy and science, but rather allures us to the study; for it is a self-evident maxim, that any one truth, when properly understood, will be found to be in harmony with all other truth. What is true in religion will never be an error in science.

But how necessary is it for him who is placed as a sentinel on the walls of Zion, the defender of the faith, once delivered to the saints, to come forth to the combat fully armed himself, and skilled in all the stratagems and devices of the adversary, to be able to meet him on the field of his own selection, and there to strip him of the armour in which he trusted—to snatch the weapons from his hands and know how to wield them in defence of Zion's bulwarks. This is a work that has been nobly achieved by Jonathan Edwards in his treatise on the will; by Butler, in tracing the analogy of religion, natural and revealed, to the constitution and course of nature; and only to mention another champion of the faith, the lamented Chalmers, the recent announcement of whose departure, as has been beautifully remarked, “has already awakened the echoes of the world;” who was so deeply versed in science and theology, and could, with matchless eloquence and power, assert, illustrate, and defend the truths of both, and point out the existing harmonies; who, with a giant's strength, was so able to deal with adversaries already in the field; and whose far-seeing sagacity could descry the movements of the distant foe, see through his devices, and foretell the nature of the coming contest; who, in an article written by him a short period before his death, when treating of the errors in mental philosophy and in theology, which have obtained such prevalence on the continent of Europe, announced that “the great coming battle for the truth must be fought in the field of metaphysics.”

But however important a knowledge of these sciences is, to fit the minister for the right discharge of the sacred office, that he may be thoroughly furnished for every good work, still your time and attention must be chiefly occupied with the study of theology. This is unspeakably the noblest and most interesting and attractive of all the sciences. Without a knowledge of it, the pastor cannot properly discharge any of the duties of his office. It is the grand theme of all our ministrations. Jesus Christ and him crucified is the centre truth, around which all the other truths of theology cluster, and all combine in displaying the manifold wisdom of God,—a theme which has engaged the study of the most powerful human intellects,—into which the angels desire to look, and which shall occupy the studies of eternity.

As in the case of the other sciences, if we would make any considerable progress in the knowledge of theology, it must be studied systematically,—that is, its truths must be classified and examined in their proper order, and according to the dependence and relationship to one another.