

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION.

A recent article in THE ATHENÆUM calls attention to the removal of the Theological Department of Acadia College to Toronto and the consequences likely to result therefrom.

Perhaps it is too soon to discuss the results of the action taken at Halifax, but it seems fitting that the subject of ministerial training should be given some prominence in discussions on Education. For in as far as Educationists aim to inform and elevate the people they have few, if any, agencies more potent than the men who are seen "toiling for the spiritually indispensable not daily bread, but the bread of life." Preachers do not, so much as in the past, have a monopoly of learning, but the nature of their office and the methods of their support bring them into closest relations with the people, so that whatever culture they possess will be effectively used. The preacher's strength of thinking, his breadth of knowledge, his literary style and his general taste will be clearly seen in the community where he labors. Perhaps no man does more to influence the general range of thought and the degree of general culture: for the preacher gathers the best and most influential more than a hundred times a year and gives them his best thought on subjects which he and they regard as most important.

It must be remembered also that as culture spreads the range of preaching must be wider. "The thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns," and the preacher is to translate the truths of revelation into the thought of his own time. To do this he must think with his time and for it. It will not do to preach a system of theology which is the result of the religious thinking of a former generation. The truth must reach the life of to-day through men who are in vital sympathy with their age. Printing will not displace but help such preaching; civilization will not grow beyond it. It

will always be needed and used, and never in vain.

But if these statements, of which space will admit no expansion, be true what are the inferences for the Baptists of these Provinces?

First that they should understand and appreciate the work they are now doing for Ministerial Education by affording a liberal training to their future pastors. Let it be well understood that the making of a minister is nothing less than the making of a man; that the measure of the man's power, and the value of the college course will be evident. No training in Theology alone will adequately prepare the Minister for efficient service to the thinking, questioning multitudes who will seek intellectual and spiritual guidance from him. To bring our academic and collegiate Institutions to the most efficient state will be the best possible service for ministerial training.

Our second inference is for preachers. They should know their power as educators and therefore aim to grow in knowledge as well as in grace. The interests dearest to them cannot be fully assured without severe thinking and earnest study. Sermons that give no evidence of a living thinking man who is speaking to the earnest seekers of to-day will soon lose their power.

College students should infer that they may learn much from the sermons and religious discussions they hear. During their course they attend some hundreds of religious services. Though Theology has no place in the curriculum it has no small place in their education. In view of the thought, philosophical and religious, of the present time, ought not the college graduate to be expected to have an intelligent view of the great religious questions generally discussed in our literature? PEW.

'Ignorance is the curse of God,
Knowledge the wing with which we fly to Heaven.