

norant and illiterate clergy have often been a curse, and can never be a blessing to the people.

I had many other things to say on this subject, but have already occupied more space than I intended. My apology is the vast importance of the subject, and the hasty, and, as I think, irregular manner, in which it was passed through the Synod. It may be easily shown that the scheme of a Provincial Divinity Hall is not only undesirable and un-called for, but, on financial grounds, *utterly impracticable*. Should it be adopted, the inevitable effect will be to frustrate the other schemes we have undertaken, and undo all the good that has been done. The Church is already heavily laden with pecuniary obligations, which she will find it hard to discharge. "What, then, is the use of Dalhousie College to us?" is a question which has been asked. I reply—the same use to us as to other people. Was Dalhousie College, however, instituted for our special benefit? I thought Dalhousie College was an institution intended, as it is certainly fitted, to impart a liberal education to the rising youth of the country. If it be maintained *as such*, its value to the province cannot be over-estimated; and, considering the learned and able men who fill its chairs, I think it cannot fail to succeed, provided ecclesiastics do not spoil it.

WM. M. PHILIP.

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On Examination of Candidates for the Ministry.

THE subject of Licensure for the Ministry has begun to be taken up by our Synod. Though not called to do much in this line hitherto, it has been felt that it belongs to a Church to frame rules and to have things in readiness; consequently, a Committee has been appointed on the subject. In the following remarks it is proposed to direct attention to those spiritual qualifications that are indispensable to the candidates for License.

And, first, there can be no doubt that it belongs to a Church Court to examine into the fitness of the candidate. It appoints trials and also conducts examinations, so that it is the responsible body. And what is that fitness that is requisite? To make it consist only in scholarship, or in possessing a moral character, is much beneath the mark. A good moral character would be required in a Teacher, but a candidate for the ministry ought to exhibit something higher and more decisive—earnestness and devotedness, love to the work and to the Saviour, whose work it is; in short, without certain spiritual qualifications, it will be allowed that he is not properly qualified. Scholarship is indispensable, and, to be a workman not needing to be ashamed, he must be able; but then scholarship is not everything, and therefore it

belongs to Presbyteries and Synods to do something in a spiritual direction, imposing and testing the qualifications of entrants. If they do not, they either declare these qualifications are not necessary, or trivial, or that they are unable to guide in the matter, both of which are humbling confessions. A few years ago, Dr. N. McLeod, with the approval of the Assembly, pled for a converted ministry, that he who would win others must himself be on the Lord's side—that he must be more than a mere cymbal or utterer of truths that would be serviceable in converting others to God. Why, then, do ecclesiastical bodies move so little in this spiritual direction? Examine the law or practice of Presbyterians generally, and they will be found defective in this respect. Not all, however, for, to their credit and to the elevation of the ministry, some in this land require their youth to state the motives that induce them to apply for Licensure; and in the States, where matters, happily, are still stricter, a spiritual test may be imposed; but, generally, an amount of Theology and a fair character are all that are judged necessary. But we "do not know the heart, and are no judges." Neither do we know the hearts of intending communicants, and yet ministers, anxious to fulfil their duties as unto Christ, inquire of youth ~~into the~~ motives that induce them to apply; and certainly that minister is either very credulous of human nature, or else most easy-going and perfunctory, who takes for granted that religious inquirers are actuated only by the true and best motives. But if we enquire why youth propose themselves for communicants, is it not equally, nay, more necessary to know, what reasons induce candidates to propose for the ministry? I say *more* requisite, for the latter aspires to be the guide of the flock; and unless they have elevated aims and pure motives, how shall the people acquire them? Like pastor, like people. The latter may be expected to sink down into the level of the former. Then let nothing prevent us from requiring of candidates those qualifications which the nature of the ministry obviously involves, for—

(1.) It is right of a spiritual court to do so, and would tend to elevate the ministerial office.

(2.) It is for the advantage of the candidate himself, who may not afterwards complain that he was without direction as to his course or motives.

And (3.) It would tend to "separate the precious from the vile," the earnest from the indifferent, and devoted from the careless.

In short, it would accomplish a practical benefit.

Now, what sort of test is requisite? Something in the form of a declaration that, from love to Christ and to souls, the candidate has desired the office, and engages to devote himself to its prosecution, would suffice; or