

THE Home and Foreign Record

OF

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF THE LOWER PROVINCES.

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THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION.

III.

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."

Assuming that a sufficient number of young men offer to devote themselves to the work of the ministry, and that, from whatever quarter, their pecuniary resources are adequate to the demands which the six or seven years' course of study will make upon them, it is the Church's duty to see that they have access to seminaries of learning in which they may be trained to be workmen not needing to be ashamed. The Church should, in cases of necessity, provide means for the preparatory studies of her young men. In former years our Church was compelled to this course, and by the old Ficton Academy, the West River Seminary, the Free Church Academy at Halifax, and the Truro College, endeavored to furnish her students with the means of classical and philosophical study preparatory to entering the Hall. Happily this necessity no longer exists. In Dalhousie College, which is a Provincial Institution entirely unsectarian in its teaching and management, our young men have an opportunity to prosecute a preparatory course of study with which the Church may well be satisfied; for, looking at the ability of the men who fill her Chairs, and at the proofs of efficiency furnished by her graduates, Dalhousie must, considering the difficulties with which she has had to contend, be spoken of with unqualified

praise. If Government would do what ought to be done, and what we trust before very long will be done, withdraw all grants to sectarian colleges and throw them into the funds of Dalhousie, its efficiency as a Provincial Institution would be greatly increased, and the youth of these Provinces would enjoy educational advantages which no one would need to go abroad to seek.

But if the Church, except in cases of necessity, is exempt from the work of establishing seminaries in which her students may prosecute their classical and philosophical studies, she should institute and support Divinity Halls where under her inspection a Theological Education may be imparted which will qualify her young men for their life's work. Not indeed that every Church however weak should attempt this; for circumstances might justify seeking abroad for Theological students a training which they cannot be offered at home. But as a general rule Churches which are able should have their own Halls. This secures a larger number of students, fosters loyalty to the Church, and during Hall vacations furnishes a large amount of labor in the Home field which otherwise would be lost. So many admirable text books in all departments of Theological study are accessible at the present day, that the student can sit at the feet of great foreign teachers without leaving his native land. Still, should he desire the benefits arising from travel and from coming in contact with other minds, he could take his last term abroad, or travel for a few months after the completion of his studies.