

would be able to perform a great and noble work, for the Great Master, for many years. A very successful minister in one of the large cities of the Western States, in a letter which I received from him last winter said that whilst attending one of our Theological Seminaries in Canada he was ashamed to tell people that he was well, for *good health* had almost become synonymous with *blockhead*. It was a rare thing to find a hale student; and this lamentable state of affairs he attributed largely to prizes.

Now the class of students above mentioned, possessed of bright intellects yet feeble bodies, is as ambitious as any other, so that when prizes are offered for competition, they too, as well as others more robust, engage in the struggle; their mind, however, is too active for the body, and soon the nervous system becomes very feeble, examinations approach, and as they do the excitement increases, the parties nerved by the hope of success press forward. Examinations are over, results announced, Mr. A. is gold medalist or prize man, having carried everything before him. Convocation evening arrives, he is just able to be present, his name is called, see, he stands up a shattered wreck, and receives his honors amidst the wild applause of the assembly and the highest possible eulogiums of the professors, notwithstanding the fact that the cold hand of death has already severed almost every cord of life that binds the soul to the shattered wreck, and that death already sits, a hideous monster, enthroned upon his pale haggard brow. A few months and his remains are born by sorrowing friends and consigned to the tomb. A pall of grief hangs for many a day around his alma mater. He receives his laurels just in time to have them engraved upon his tombstone. Surely empty honors, yes empty; and this is just one of the many evils, the legitimate progeny of a base prize system. This is not picturing something imaginary. The names of some of the brightest intellects that ever passed through any of our Canadian colleges, and who thus terminated their career, are still fresh upon the memory of some of us. We might name them, but did we do so, it would certainly rekindle feelings of the deepest sorrow in the bosom, both of professors and students of a sister college, for all of whom we have the deepest respect. Certainly, this is an extreme case, yet not single. And it is a very easy matter to point to many physical wrecks, who are burdens, both to themselves and to the congregations that have been so unfortunate as to call them. A weak, sickly minister is a poor acquisition to any congregation.

Some condemn and censure these for allowing their ambition to carry them so far; certainly they are culpable, but let us not be too severe in our condemnation. It is not such an easy matter for those who are ambitious and are possessed of a superior ability to refrain from engaging in these struggles for medals and prizes, since it is too true that a student is almost wholly judged, both *in* and *out* of College by this standard; and if successful in this