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ART. I.—REVIEW.

Book on the Soul, First part. Book on the Soul, Second part. By the Rev. T. H. Gallaudet, &c.

THERE is, perhaps, no field for benevolent enterprise, which has been more neglected, or which promises a richer harvest to the cultivator, than the preparation of suitable books for children. It is somewhat surprising that the attention of philanthropists has been so little turned to this subject, and that while so much has been published of late on the importance of education, and of commencing our efforts early, so little has been done in the way of furnishing the means of communicating knowledge to the minds of children. At first view, it seems an easy task to prepare such books as are needful for the instruction of youth; yet when we come to ponder the subject deeply, we cannot but confess, that it is a work of extreme difficulty. We do not speak of the elementary books which are needful to teach the art of reading: these, however useful, communicate no instruction to the mind; they only furnish one means of acquiring knowledge. We refer to books adapted to the minds of children in the several stages of their development, and which are calculated, especially, to train the thoughts, 'to teach the young idea how to shoot;' and by which their

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the Koran itself. We have often thought, that a selection of historical passages from that book, reduced to order, with grammatical notes and a vocabulary, would answer the ends of a chrestomathy for mere beginners most completely. It is highly important that the learner's first acquaintance with the written language, should be formed upon the Koran. Amidst all the dialectic variations of a tongue which is spoken from the great Sahara to the steppes of Tartary, there is a large proportion, both of words and phrases, every where the same. These are the words and phrases of the Koran, which religious scruples have preserved from change, and religious use made universally familiar. He who is acquainted with the language of the Koran, has the means of oral access to any Arab, and to almost to any Mussulman. He may not understand as yet the many variations of the vulgar from the sacred tongue, much less the local diversities of speech; but he has the foundation upon which these rest, the stated formula from which they are mere departures. He will also have acquired a measure of that knowledge, with respect to facts and doctrines, which no man can dispense with, who would either vanquish or convert the Moslem.

ART. VI.—ON CERTAIN ERRORS OF PIOUS STUDENTS IN OUR COLLEGES.

IT is pleasing to observe that, in our Church, almost all disputes with regard to the importance of an educated ministry have died away. Great as is the demand for labourers in the Lord's vineyard, it appears to be acknowledged that ample literary and scientific discipline is equally demanded. Hence the eyes of Christians are turned with peculiar interest towards the hundreds of young men, who are at this time engaged in preparatory studies, with a view to the sacred office. Of these, a large number are to be found within the walls of our colleges, engaged in that part of their preliminary discipline, which, when we look to its bearings on future usefulness, must be seen to yield to no other in momentous importance. It may be assumed, as a maxim universally conceded, that the first steps in all mental and moral training are most carefully to be directed and watched, as giving character to

all that follow. Yet next in the order of importance to the earliest lines of intellectual discipline, we are constrained to place that part of education which is effected at college. It is here that the boy, just rising to adolescence; and escaping from the more arbitrary rules of the ordinary school, begins to contribute towards the formation of his own character, undertakes to judge for himself, and marks out his future path, with some degree of boldness and independence. It is here that the nobler foundations of the structure are to be laid, in the acquisition of languages, sciences, literature, history, and the principles of taste, philosophy, and morals. And from the critical period of human life in which these acquisitions are made, the tone of future character is usually taken, and that for life, during the academical course.

If this statement, even in general, or to any considerable extent, is just, it needs scarcely to be added that no caution can be superfluous, no solicitude unwise, which is directed towards the regulation of minds, subjected to concurrent influences so varied, perilous, and operative, at this turning point of life. Much of the hope of the church is staked upon the faithfulness, diligence, and discretion of the beloved youth who are placed in these circumstances, and it cannot be inappropriate to present some hints and cautions, with special reference to their necessities and danger.

There is a measure of humble docility, which is absolutely requisite in every one who sustains the character of a learner. This is due, under all circumstances, from youth to age, from the incipient scholar to the learned guardian and mature instructor; but more especially under circumstances like these, where the voluntary pupil submits himself to the guidance of experienced wisdom, and in order to usefulness in the Church, enters that path which the Church has marked out. The Christian student is bound, for a season, to suspend his private judgment, as to particular branches of study, in filial reliance upon the prudence of those whose superior opportunities and experience enable them to make a wise decision. It is worthy of consideration by our youthful candidates, that the course of study in all our colleges is substantially the same; and that, as it now exists in most of them, it has been framed with reference to the Church, and in a great number of instances by those who have been taking counsel for the education of ministers. Hence every scholar might be justified in the presumption, that it is the course most approved by the

unanimous wisdom of discreet and pious men, and therefore worthy of a fair trial.

We regard this docile temper, and modest subjection of mind, in the young, as no small part of that moral discipline which collegiate education promotes, and which is necessary for future advancement. Youth is proverbially impatient, and fond of seeking compendious methods, royal roads to science and active usefulness. Those who are tempted to such irregularities, should be reminded, that it is just here they should apply the curb to their restive propensities, and check the inordinate desire of freedom; that their situation, time of life, and inexperience, unfit them for judging aright with respect to the path in which they ought to walk; and that the most honourable, the safest, and the most Christian course, is to consign themselves, with undeviating regularity, to the guidance of those under whose care they are providentially placed.

A little observation upon this subject, under circumstances not unfavourable for a correct estimate, has led us to believe that the error to which we have alluded is common in all our institutions; and, unfortunately, oftener observed in candidates for the ministry than in others. For this there is an obvious reason. Young men of zeal and piety long to be actively employed in the Lord's vineyard, and view every thing as an unwelcome hinderance, which does not appear to them to have a direct and immediate bearing upon their great work. They judge thus of many subjects, indeed, which are of the greatest moment, and sometimes neglect the very discipline which their minds most need. There are some, for instance, who, from sloth or impatience, become disgusted with the study of the languages. They are unable to perceive what connexion there is between classic poesy or heathen fables, and the preaching of the Gospel. Forgetting how much of a faithful minister's life should be spent in examining the original Scriptures, and how much the knowledge of one language contributes to the acquisition of all others, they suffer the only period of life in which they have all the necessary facilities for this attainment, to pass by unimproved.

A more frequent occurrence is a similar judgment with regard to mathematical science. Ignorant persons can scarcely ever be made to understand how abstract reasoning about number and quantity, ratio and equality, can be of any use: and ignorant students are often found to cast aside (as far as

they can) the pursuit of these studies, with the pitiful sophism, that they never expect to be surveyors, almanac-makers, or navigators. It is only necessary here to allude to the truth that it is the intellectual habits formed by these studies which give them value in a collegiate course. Tradition attributes to Dr. Witherspoon the adage that *Euclid is the best teacher of logic*; and in this pithy saying the whole argument lies in a nutshell. When we have heard a young man decrying the study of mathematics, we have generally found that it was precisely the kind of culture which he needed to systematize his vagrant thoughts, discipline his feeble reason, and give some stability to his vacillating judgment. No man ever undervalued the science who knew any thing about it. And since the ministry of the gospel demands minds trained to habits of close and rigid investigation, there is no part of our academical education which should be more sedulously cultivated. The idle and imbecile should not be encouraged in their discontents by youth who are preparing for usefulness in the cause of the Redeemer. Let the latter take counsel of learned friends, and they will soon be convinced, that deserters alone speak evil of this cause.

Similar observations might be made respecting almost every item on the catalogue of studies. To every objection, there is one answer, which we desire to be pondered by pious students. No young man, at the commencement of his course, is qualified to pass judgment upon any part of it. It is absurd to pronounce upon a way before one has travelled it; or, standing at the entrance, to receive the testimony of the feeble or fearful renegades who rush backwards with precipitation, taking offence, peradventure, at the impracticable *pons asinorum*, and, like a certain fabled fox, desiring to inveigle others into the same fellowship of ignorance. Let those be consulted who have mastered the difficulties of the journey, and, with one voice, they will exhort to the undertaking.

It is one of the signal advantages of a public education, that it trims down the arrogance of youth with regard to the studies which they shall pursue. The private scholar is governed by his likes and dislikes, his caprices and disgusts; and as it is usual to *hate* an enemy whom we cannot *conquer*, it is common to hear every science in its turn maligned by those who have left it unmastered. In a well regulated college, there is a force put upon these petulant whims, and the pupil is constrained to go so far in each walk of varied know-

ledge, as to bring his powers to the test. The false independence of the home bred and conceited youth is visibly reduced by the wisdom of established plans, and the competition of rival minds. Now the Christian student ought to be free from many of these influences. From conscience, from experience, he ought to distrust his own judgment. As the servant of the Church, charged with this particular duty, and laid under an obligation to acquire certain mental furniture, he ought as scrupulously to comply with every requisition, as if it were the great business of his life—which, indeed, for the time being, it is.

The secret cause of this indisposition to certain parts of academical labour, is too often simple *sloth*. This it is the undoubted duty of the pious student to mortify. He should learn “to endure hardness” in mental, as well as bodily toils. “I find nothing,” said David Brainerd, “more conducive to a life of Christianity, than a diligent, industrious, and faithful improvement of precious time. Let us then faithfully perform that business which is allotted to us by Divine Providence, to the utmost of our bodily strength, and bodily vigour.” And it was remarked by Buchanan, in a letter to the venerable Newton, that although the mathematical studies of the university were little to his taste, and scarcely connected, by any link which he could perceive, with his future labours, yet he diligently pursued them, put a constraint on his natural predilections, and yielded himself to their absorbing abstractions as a part of his Christian *self-denial*. This is an example worthy of every Christian student. The “greatly beloved,” Martyn was influenced by the same motives in those toils which caused him to be designated, while at Cambridge, as “the man who never lost an hour.” It is with pleasure that we hold up the last mentioned servant of Christ, for the imitation of Christian students. To our surprise, we find him treated by some American writers as a man of eminent piety and indefatigable diligence, but as being by no means distinguished for natural endowments and extraordinary genius. Here we must again dissent. It was something more than plodding assiduity which placed him at the head of hundreds in the university, both as a classic and a mathematician. This was no ordinary competition, and with no ordinary men. In all his subsequent labours, compositions, and controversies, we discern the evidences of genius, rare and eminent. We especially deprecate this derogation from his

native talents, because it countenances the cant of idlers in our public institutions, who are disposed to attribute all laborious study to the dull and toiling drudge, and to make diligence incompatible with genius.*

It is a rash judgment for any young man to pronounce any portion of his prescribed course of study to be useless: for no one can determine where his lot is to be cast. If a missionary, he may, at some future time, regret that he cannot, as Martyn once did in the Persian court, defend the true system of the universe; or like our countryman, Mr. Poor in Ceylon, correct the errors of heathen astronomers. Viewed as disciplinary toils, all these pursuits are important, and "in all labour there is profit." It will be too late to regret these neglects, when such acquirements are proved by sad experience to be necessary; and it is plainly the safer course, to gain the knowledge, when the opportunity is afforded, rather than hazard the sorrow and mortification of future days.

The practical error to which we have adverted, in the case of those students who single out favourite subjects, to the neglect of their prescribed employments, is pregnant with evil consequences to themselves and others. The very habit of self-will and self-pleasing, which is thus fostered, is alien to the character of a disciple. It should be laid down as a principle of action by every candidate for the ministry, that his time and his talents are not his own, but belong to Christ and his Church; and in accordance with this, he should avail himself of all the light which shines in the results of long experience. These results are embodied in the ordinary literary and scientific arrangements of our colleges; and while many desire to see the academical curriculum extended, and enriched by the addition of new topics, no sound scholar will

* How different is the judgment of one who knew him well—the Rev. C. J. Hoare. "Mr. Martyn," say he, "combined in himself certain valuable, but distinct qualities, seldom found together in the same individual. The easy triumphs of a rapid genius over first difficulties never left him satisfied with past attainments. His mind, which naturally ranged over a wide field of human knowledge, lost nothing of depth in its expansiveness. He was one of those few persons, whose reasoning faculty does not suffer from their imagination, nor their imagination from their reasoning faculty; both, in him, were fully exercised, and of a very high order. His mathematical acquisitions clearly left him without a rival of his own age; and yet, to have known only the employments of his more free and unfettered moments, would have led to the conclusion, that the classics and poetry were his predominant passion."

consent to curtail it in any of its dimensions. Every young man should labour, during his enjoyment of these privileges, to treasure up such knowledge, and form such habits, as the past experience of the Church has shown to be available towards the defence or propagation of religion. An erratic and imperfect course of study must always end in the same result—shameful ignorance of many things which every minister is expected to know: habits of soft indulgence and dread of mental labour; and a mind undisciplined and unsymmetrical in its actings and growth.

But we must likewise have some respect to the influence of such neglects upon the whole literary community of a college. No where is the youthful believer more like a city set upon a hill, than in our great institutions. No where is he watched with a more lynx-eyed scrutiny, by irreligious companions. Every line of Christian example here rises to importance, and the pious student is bound to be a pattern of regularity, attention, obedience, and diligence, as well as of private piety. When we consider the motives which conspire to urge such an one forward, we might well expect that Christian students should be, as a class, the most distinguished scholars in every college. And were this the case—were it seen that in study, as in all things else, the pious youth is influenced by considerations higher than mere ambition—what a lustre would thereby be reflected upon the profession of godliness, and how greatly would the standard of piety be elevated among the rising generation!

In a number of instances which have come under our observation, candidates for the ministry have neglected certain important branches of learning, under the pretext that they wished to dedicate the time thus gained to the study of theology, or to active labours of religious benevolence. We are constrained to say, that the conscience which approves such a course is strangely unreasonable and unenlightened. *Festina lente* should be sounded in the ears of such precipitate theologians. In a certain sense, the study of theology should employ the whole life of every Christian: that is, he should be engaged in the daily study of the Scriptures, and of instructive and practical works. But the application to the science, *ex professo*, has its proper place at a later period. The wisdom of the Church has decided, that, as a general rule, the two parts of preparation for the ministry should be kept distinct. The college and the theological seminary are not to encroach upon

one another. Such are the arrangements of our colleges, that nothing becomes a subject of instruction which is not necessary; and the aggregate of these subjects is great enough to shut the door, in the case of every conscientious student, against all other employments, except in the brief intervals of leisure, which are little enough to be conceded to devotion, exercise, and recreation. In a well ordered institution, there are no hours left for extraneous pursuits. And if we have already succeeded in showing that no department of science can be neglected without serious loss, it follows that the pretext of studying theology is idle and insufficient.

The time must indeed seem long to many an ardent candidate, before he can enter upon the peculiar and sacred path of his future work. Yet it is never to be forgotten, that we serve our Master as truly by due preparation, as by faithful execution. Our duty is always that which is due *to day*. Labours, like sufferings, are allotted to us day by day; and sufficient to every hour is its own proper employment. Even if, like David, the pious student should never actually begin to build the temple of the Lord, but be cut off by death before he has finished his preparations, he will not fail of his reward; he will be accepted as one who has "had it in his heart" to devote himself to God.

There is no possible advantage in thus anticipating a study which will soon arise in its proper place. In order to pursue it now, much of present duty must be neglected; it must be conducted in the most hasty manner, and under great disadvantages. The greater the interest of the student in these irregular employments, the more flagrant will be his irregularities with regard to college obligations. And, what is most unfortunate, the under-graduate who is betrayed into this path, is apt to make this passing glance at a vast and important subject, a pretext for neglect of it in his subsequent course. If the motive be a wish to proceed more rapidly than the prescribed term of preparation, he is deceived by a fallacy, which has already introduced scores of unfurnished men into the ministry. This haste is inordinate and most injurious. Great as are the necessities of the Church, she asks for those who are "thoroughly furnished." It may be seriously questioned, whether the cause of religion would not gain more by the addition of one or two years to the preparatory course of each individual, than she would lose by this delay in their entrance. She would gain, in the strength, maturity, learn-

ing and wisdom of well disciplined and experienced minds; just as an army would gain by taking recruits from adult men, able to bear fatigue, rather than from beardless youth, whose feebleness might sink under the first labours of the campaign. At the invaluable period of youth, within which a collegiate course falls, one year may be said to be worth any two years of subsequent life, with reference to these particular attainments. The sciences which come under review during this period, if they are now neglected, will be, in all probability, neglected for ever. Let the pious student hearken to the experience of those who have gone before him, and remembering that the duties of the theological student are distinct, and severally important, let him reject every temptation to abridge his present opportunities. The same specious reasoning which leads the under-graduate to employ himself about studies not comprised in the college course, will be sufficient to hurry him through the theological seminary, and perhaps, after a twelvemonth of direct preparation, into the ministry. It is painful to observe the readiness of so many candidates, to content themselves with a bare smattering of science, and to hasten through their appropriate trials, as if they were the merest formalities.

All these remarks apply with full force to the case of those who neglect certain branches of their studies in college, upon the pretext that they are employed in active labours of an evangelical kind. Every thing is beautiful in its season; and this is the season for patient and conscientious preparation. "There is a time to every purpose under heaven: a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;" and we regard the premature engagements of pious students, in teaching and exhortation, to be unseasonable and unrequired, just so far as they detract from the completeness of their academical pursuits. To a certain extent, it may be desirable, for under-graduates in our colleges to employ themselves in Sabbath schools, and other religious efforts; but we have known some who have so far exceeded the limits of duty and propriety, as to make these their principal engagements, and thus to exhibit a deleterious example of irregularity and unscholarlike carelessness.

The ingenuous and conscientious student, may gather from what has been said, the following plain conclusions. *First*, that providence, by placing him among the privileges of a college, has made it his duty to task his utmost vigour in the ac-

quisition of every important subject there taught. *Secondly*, That it is the part of modesty, duty, and wisdom, to confine himself to the circle of attainments, prescribed by the academical corporation. *Thirdly*, That the special and appropriate preparations for the ministry, and the active labours of the same, should not be anticipated at this important period.

The details of the foregoing observations may appear to some of our readers to be unimportant and uninteresting, yet nothing should be so considered which bears directly upon the training of the ministry. The noble resolution of the Assembly's Board of Education, to take on their funds every qualified young man who shall apply to them for aid, will call forth at once an army of youthful candidates. Many of them will be placed in our colleges, and be exposed to the temptations which have been mentioned. Those who are specially charged with their supervision will be the last to consider these suggestions unimportant.

ART. VII.—ARTICLES OF THE SYNOD OF DORT.

The Articles of the Synod of Dort, and its rejection of errors, with the history of events which made way for that Synod, &c. Translated from the Latin, by Thomas Scott, rector of Aston and Sandford, Bucks. Utica, William Williams, Genesee street.

THE history of the Synod of Dort, from which Dr. Scott translated this work, was drawn up by the delegates from South Holland, at the request of the Synod; and when the Acts of the Synod were published by authority, this narrative was prefixed. It was probably written by *Festius Hommius*, who was one of the deputies from South Holland; and a man of great worth and learning; who, from the commencement, had as much to do with this controversy as any other person. No Synod has ever met in the Reformed Churches, the proceedings of which were so important and interesting as that of Dort. It was not merely a national Synod, but received delegates from most of the Reformed Churches in Europe. Those who were about to attend from France, were, for some political reasons, prevented from tak-