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ART. I.—*An Appeal in behalf of the views of the eternal world and state, and the doctrines of faith and life, held by the body of Christians who believe that a new church is signified (in the Revelation, chapter XXI.) by the New Jerusalem, embracing answers to all principal objections.* By the Rev. S. Noble, minister of the New-Jerusalem church, Hatton Garden, London.

ON the 29th of January A. D. 1689, according to himself, but in 1688 according to others, there was born at Stockholm in Sweden a man, who is known to the world by the name of Emanuel Swedenborg. He was the son of a Bishop in Sweden, was himself a good scholar, made considerable attainments in science, rose to the order of nobles in the kingdom, travelled extensively over Europe, exhibited amiable dispositions, was kindly treated by his monarch, Charles XII., wrote voluminously, and at last died in the city of London in the year 1772, aged either 82 or 83 years and 2 months. During the earlier parts of his life he made some important contributions to science and the arts; but that which has given him the most notoriety, was

through the whole of Blackstone's Commentaries once a year; and that he did so to give consistency, method and unity, to all the otherwise scattered and heterogeneous acquisitions of the year. We entertain no doubt, that a similar practice with regard to the equally logical and more commanding system of Turretin, would do more for a masculine theology and an energetic pulpit, than cart loads of religious journals, epitomes from the German, and occasional sermons.

*Attributed to
Hodge & J.A.P.*

ART. VI.—*The Power of the Pulpit.* By Gardiner Spring, D.D. New York: 1848.

IT is highly creditable to Dr. Spring's published writings, that they command a ready sale, and reach a large circle of readers, without any thing, either in their plan or execution, to excite or gratify a morbid curiosity. The topics treated for the most part are familiar, and the mode of treatment, though elaborate, by no means either startling or seductive. Their success must therefore be ascribed to the general soundness of their author's views, and still more to his weight of character and eminent position.

To this general statement, the volume now before us is a partial exception. From its first appearance, it attracted more attention than any of its predecessors, not only among Presbyterians, but in other churches, and this feeling of interest seems likely to continue and increase. But it is somewhat remarkable in this case, that the public curiosity has fastened on a single chapter near the close of the volume, and in its eagerness to feast on this, has, perhaps, done injustice to the rest. Whether this effect is owing to any thing peculiar in the actual position of the public mind, disposing it to feel a special interest in the subject of the chapter now in question, or to some superior vivacity and zeal displayed in that part of the work itself, we shall not venture to determine. But whatever be the cause, we cannot help believing that this chapter, if it had been published as a tract, apart from the highly respectable but less entertaining matter by which it is accompanied, would have had a circulation, and perhaps an influence, beyond any of the author's former publications. This indeed is no impossible result even

now, especially as the work, by a happy accident, has made its appearance at the very season most propitious to its practical effect and extended circulation.

The foregoing statement will suffice to justify us in confining our attention to that portion of the work which has especially arrested the attention of the public, the rather as the subject therein treated is entitled to the most deliberate consideration, and abundantly sufficient to fill all the time and space we have at command. The subject of the twentieth chapter is the training of men for the pulpit and the pastoral office in general. Dr. Spring avows his preference for the private method of theological education, by pastors, to the public or academical method now almost universally adopted in this country. His argument is reducible to these three propositions; that the ministry has sensibly deteriorated; that this deterioration has in part arisen from theological seminaries; and that this deteriorating influence of seminaries is owing, in great measure, to the practice of making men professors who have had no pastoral experience.

Our readers need not to be told that this is a most serious matter. Considered merely as a question of principle, it demands a grave consideration. But its importance becomes vastly greater when we look at the effects of a decision. If the doctrine of this chapter is true, if the impression which it is adapted and apparently designed to produce, should become general; then not only must those of our professors who have not been pastors, be dismissed from office, which would be a small matter, affecting only some two or three men in the whole church; but all theological seminaries should at once be suppressed, and a large proportion of our churches would be constrained to look upon their pastors as a dwarfed, degenerate race, tainted and crippled in their preparation for the sacred office. The first proposition, upon which the others rest, is vastly wider than the superstructure built upon it. If it be true, that the power of the pulpit is diminished and diminishing, whether the evil be imputed to professors or to pastors, to unsanctified learning or to secular ambition, to Hebrew or to stock-jobbing, the condemnation takes a fearful sweep. This whole argument against seminaries and non-pastoral professors, rests on the assumed degeneracy of the clergy. If they, on an aver-

age, are better or even as well fitted for their work as their predecessors, the whole argument falls to the ground. Let it be distinctly understood that we are called to grapple with a question which concerns not one or two professors merely, but a whole generation of ministers and the churches which they undertake to serve. It is therefore a question of the highest interest which is here presented. Has the ministry degenerated, and if this must be conceded, is the deterioration to be referred to their academical training?

We shall scarcely be credited by those who have not read Dr. Spring's book, when we say that there is no pretence of argument or evidence in support of his first and main proposition. The deterioration of the ministry is taken for granted, as a notorious or admitted fact. It is however neither notorious nor admitted. Nine out of ten, nineteen out of twenty, of all the intelligent men whom we ever heard speak on the subject, smile at the suggestion as an absurdity. They admit that names once adorned the church, to which we have none now to compare; just as history holds forth statesmen, orators, poets and artists, without any rivals of their fame in the present generation. But the question relates to the general efficiency of the ministry, not to extraordinary men, at any time rare, and at no time the product of education, but the gift and messengers of God. We do not hesitate to say that the great majority of competent judges regard the assertion that the ministry of our age and church, taken as a whole, are less qualified for their duties, less devoted, or less efficient, than their predecessors, taken as a whole, just as preposterous as the assertion that the arts, agriculture, and commerce of these United States have all retrograded during the last fifty years. Dr. Spring seems to have mistaken the unreflecting disposition, which is often indulged, to laud the past and detract from the present, as the expression of a settled conviction resting on satisfactory evidence. This disposition is very strong in men of a certain age or of a particular temperament. To such men nothing is right, and nothing as it once was. The world, the country, morals, religion, every thing which makes men good or happy, is on the wane. We have often heard men deplore the change which has occurred in the mode of travelling. When they were young it was a serious matter to go to a neighboring city;

weeks were spent in preparation for the journey, and a solemn adieu was bid to wife and children. Then the family relation was duly cherished; people were not forever on the wing, disregarding domestic ties in their feverish pursuit of excitement. This is well enough for sentiment, but a very frail foundation for an argument against steamboats and railroads. In the medical convention recently held in Baltimore, an old gentleman rose and said that with all the progress of science, and all the improvements in medical education, they had no such physicians now as when men were trained in a doctor's shop, and practised with simples. No one, however, took this to heart, or proposed that medical schools, lectures, and hospital services should be given up. No one was led to doubt that the medical profession as a whole was better educated, and furnished better physicians than the domestic practitioners of a former generation. Why then in so grave a matter should the vague declamation which even good men often fall into, be made the foundation of formal argument against the prevailing mode of theological education? Dr. Spring has erected his battery on quick-sand. He has taken for granted that which he ought to have proved. If the ministry is not deteriorated, then all he has written in this chapter, is solemn declamation and mischievous misrepresentation.

There are many causes which tend to produce this disposition to overrate the past and disparage the present. Men are apt to retain, in later life, the estimate of objects formed in childhood. The school-boy often looks upon the graduating student as a mature and even great man, and this impression may be cherished throughout life, especially when the opportunity of comparison with some acknowledged standard has been early lost. Names which we heard pronounced with reverence and admiration in our childhood, may still suggest the same associations, even in comparison with others more entitled to respect, but with which our acquaintance is more recent. Our whole point of view is changed. We naturally in our youth looked up to those so much our superiors in age and knowledge, whereas in mature life, such a man as Dr. Spring can find few to whom his upward gaze can be directed. He sees only such as are on a level with himself or below him. Unconscious of the change which has been silently going on in himself, he is disposed to think there are now no such men as those whom he once rever-

enced. Besides this, the lapse of time produces an illusion perfectly analogous to that of local distance. As the eye, in viewing a remote object, often discerns only what is bright and lofty, while every thing that is mean or offensive is concealed from view; so memory perpetuates the greatness and excellence of former generations, when these qualities really predominated; and brings them into advantageous contrast with the present, where the good and evil appear mixed, and the evil, from a natural cause easily detected, even unduly prominent. Of the distinguished men of former days we know little more than excellencies; their foibles and faults are, in a great measure, lost to our view.

The same illusion is promoted by the habit of confounding form with substance, and because the men of one age do not practise the same methods or exhibit the same aspect with their fathers, hastily concluding that they do not hold their principles, or labour in the same great cause. One of the strongest proofs that the gospel is of God may be derived from the co-existence of immutable constancy in that which is essential, with indefinite flexibility in that which is dependent on change of time and circumstances. Some of the worst practical errors have arisen from the vain attempt to make the gospel better than its author left it, by giving uniformity and stiffness to the very things which he designed should shape themselves to meet emergencies. To those who labour under this delusion, every change of form and method, even that which is essential to the efficacy of the system in existing circumstances, is regarded as a dangerous defection from the good old ways, and as a symptom of professional or personal degeneracy. Those, on the other hand, who believe that every age has something peculiar to itself, even in the application of the same unchanging truth to the production of the same result, are very little influenced by such proofs of deterioration, and are even apt to think that if the good men, from whom they are accused of defection, were alive now, they would do the very things in which that defection is asserted to consist.

Perhaps the greatest source of error on this subject, is the habit of judging of an age by a few conspicuous men. Dr. Spring and his single-minded converts are disposed to ask, Where are the men who can compare with Edwards, Whitefield and Davies? So we may ask, Where are now to be found the equals of Bacon, Shakspeare and Milton? Does the absence of such men prove

that the Anglo-Saxons have degenerated, that society has retrograded, or that our systems of education are worse now than in the age of Elizabeth or Charles? Men are apt without reflexion, to adopt this false standard of judgment. We sigh after such men as Edwards and Davics. Men of their generation were disposed to ask, Where are the Owens, the Howes, the Baxters and the Flavels of the age of the non-conformists? That age in its turn asked, where are the Luthers and Calvins, the Melanethons and Farel's of the Reformation period? And so on as long as men have been men. Homer was as contemptuous of the age in which he lived, as Dr. Spring can well be of the present generation. Though there is this strong disposition thus to magnify the past, to judge it by the standard of its extraordinary men, Dr. Spring is the first writer, so far as we know, who has ventured to attack important existing institutions, on the vague impression of the degeneracy of his contemporaries, without first taking the trouble to prove that as a body they are in fact degenerate.

If men are disposed to judge too favourably of the past, because of a few great men, they are no less prone to pass unjust judgment on the present, because of a few marked cases with which they happen to be familiar. Instead of denying the existence of such cases, let us honestly admit them; let us even allow them to be magnified and multiplied beyond the truth; but let us not consent that they shall be regarded as types and samples of the ministry at large. What if some of our young preachers are transcendental? What if some of them do make too much parade of learning, or affect a philosophical abstraction, quite destructive of all practical efficiency? What if some do babble about art and aesthetics, or write poetry for ladies' magazines or albums? This no more justifies a sweeping condemnation of the whole contemporary race, than a like condemnation of our fathers would be justified, by showing that in their days, there were ministers whose talk was of bullocks, who made better butter than sermons, or whose interest in the funds was greater than their interest in religion. There are always such exceptions in the best of times; at any one time they are apt to run in one mould. Great men and little men are alike apt to grow in clusters, or to shine in constellations. The succession of such follies is like that of diseases, certain though inexplicable. If the

foibles of our less successful candidates are just now rather poetical, artistical, and philosophical, than agricultural, financial, or political, the change is perhaps not so much for the worse as some may imagine. At all events, the new sort should not suffer disadvantage from the fact that the very nature of their weaknesses brings them more into public view, and more into contact with city congregations and the city clergy, than the weaker brethren of an earlier day, who hastened to withdraw themselves from public view in farms and stables, banks and brokers' offices. If the young men of the present day are more apt to be Pharisees, to make broad their phylacteries and to sound a trumpet before them, this only puts them at a disadvantage in comparison with those ministerial Publicans, of other times, who used to sit at the receipt of custom, unobserved and unmolested. In a word, the devious paths by which young preachers go astray, are not one but many, and it does not follow that because one is crowded now, that no other has been crowded before, or will ever be again. Still less does it follow that because some of our young men are conceited, all of them are worthless; that because some do not know what they are in the pulpit for, "the pulpit," as a general thing, "is less powerful than it was in the days of our fathers."

These suggestions are sufficient to show that the disposition to extenuate the present in comparison with the past, though natural, is not to be trusted. It is not confined to ministers in advanced life, nor is it restricted to the church; lawyers, doctors, merchants, statesmen, are all prone to indulge it. It was quite as often manifested in past ages as at present, and if we confide in its dictates, we must conclude that not the ministry alone, but all professions, and all departments of society, are beyond measure in a worse state now than they ever were before; because according to this view of matters, every age is worse than that which preceded it.

We are not content however with merely showing that Dr. Spring has assumed what he ought to have proved, and that his assumption is unauthorized, due to a disposition easily accounted for, but a most unsafe guide, we go further and maintain that every thing is against the fundamental doctrine of this whole chapter. It is confessedly difficult to compare the present with past ages. We know the one far better than we know the

others. We cannot get any satisfactory standard of comparison, or appeal to any competent and authoritative judge. Still all the evidence is against the assumption on which Dr. Spring has founded his argument. All probability is against it. Has not the country advanced, not only in population, but in agriculture, in commerce and the arts? Has not the general improvement and the intellectual progress of the people, been uninterrupted during the last fifty years? Has not education become more and more widely diffused, taking the country as a whole? Have not our schools, academies and colleges been greatly multiplied, and greatly elevated, so that those who graduated at some of our colleges thirty years ago, could hardly now be admitted to the lower classes of the institutions of which they are the alumni? Has not the demand of the people for superior cultivation and attainments in all public servants, greatly increased? and has not professional education made a corresponding progress? Have not medical science and medical training advanced? Has not, in short, the whole country been going forward in all the forms of life? If these questions must be answered affirmatively, and we know no one who would deliberately give a negative reply to any one of them, then it would be a most startling and unaccountable fact, if the ministry alone, in the midst of this universal progress, were either stationary or degenerated. We do not believe it. In the absence of all proof, and without even the pretence of argument in support of this deterioration, to take it for granted as a conceded fact, is as gross a sin against logic as was ever committed. How is it with the church? has the church been going backward for the last fifty years? On the contrary have not all denominations of Christians, our own among others, made astonishing progress during that period? Have not our churches been multiplied, our members, ministers, presbyteries, synods, increased beyond all example? The Presbyterians in this country have risen in that time from three synods to thirty embracing some three thousand ministers. They have now near four thousand churches, and more than three hundred thousand communicants. The contribution for religious purposes are not less than six hundred thousand dollars annually, in addition to the amount paid for the support of the ministry, building churches, and the numerous contributions not included in our

ecclesiastical statistics.* Since the disruption of our church in 1838, our own division, then little more than one half, is in all respects nearly equal to what the whole then was. This rapid extension of the church, this increase of her resources and efficiency, is not something merely outward; it is the manifestation of a corresponding increase of inward life. No one can doubt that there has been an elevation in the general standard of piety, liberality and efficiency, corresponding in a good degree, to this vast increase of numbers. Dr. Spring, we presume, will not assert, in the face of all this evidence of progress, that the church has really been going backward. And if he admits that the church has thus rapidly advanced and is still advancing, is he prepared to say that the ministry is deteriorated? Is he willing to maintain such a solecism as that a church may be prosperous in all that is good, increasing in numbers, in efficiency, in purity, in orthodoxy, and its ministry be getting worse and worse? This cannot be. He must either maintain that the church in this country is going down, decreasing in all that is good, or he must retract the reproach which he has cast on a whole generation of his brethren.

We appeal not only to this progress of the church in proof that the ministry is not deteriorated, but we ask whether there ever was a time when the ministry of the Presbyterian and of other churches stood higher, in public estimation, than they do at present? Do they not take their stand in the first rank of the educated men of the country? Are they not among the foremost in all works of literary, benevolent and religious enterprise? Is not their character for purity, sincerity and devotion as elevated as that of any body of ministers of equal number in the world? Is not the influence of the church which they represent and guide, far greater for all good purposes than it ever was before in any period of our history? Where is the rampant infidelity of the last generation—where are we to look for evidence that the kingdom of Satan is here pressing the church into a corner? It

* These statements are not meant to be precise, exactness for the purpose in view is not necessary. The statistics of our own part of the church, as given in 1847, include the following particulars—Synods 22, Presbyteries 118, Candidates 343, Ministers 1713, Churches 2376. Additions to the communion of the church, 13,274; whole number of communicants reported, 179,453; contributions for religious purposes \$310,164. Newly organized churches reported to the Board of Missions, 70.

is only a few months since one of the most influential high-church and tory organs of Great Britain, said it was a conceded fact, that Christianity had a more extensive influence, a deeper hold on the public mind in America, than in any other country in the world. We maintain that all these facts are utterly inconsistent with Dr. Spring's theory, and are a complete refutation of the whole argument of his twentieth chapter. If the church in this country is really thus increasingly influential, then it cannot be true that the ministry is degenerated.

We might appeal on this subject to other sources of proof. We might, if the thing were proper, take presbytery by presbytery through our church and compare the present members with their predecessors. In some individual cases the comparison might be favourable to the men of the last generation, but in the general, it would beyond doubt be the reverse. In looking around us we can hardly fix on a congregation whose present pastor is not decidedly in advance of his predecessor of the last generation, not only in scholarship, but in devotion to his work, and in efficiency. There is not a church which has not greatly increased in numbers and in liberality. In very many of them more is now given twice over for benevolent purposes than was formerly paid for salaries, while the pastor's support has been well nigh doubled. The average of scholarship, cultivation and efficiency has been greatly elevated. While thirty or forty years ago, we had a few eminent men, we have now a multitude of ministers of highly respectable talents and attainments. Acquisitions then rare, are now common. Where there was then one Hebrew scholar, there are now hundreds; where there was then here and there a well-read theologian, it is now rare to find a Presbyterian minister who is not a well educated man. We may take any other standard of comparison, and the result will be the same. We may refer to the records of the church for instances of ministerial delinquency, and see whether they are more or less numerous now than formerly. We may refer to the amount of labour performed; to the numbers brought into the church; to the efforts made for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom; to the band of domestic and foreign missionaries; to the self-denial and sufferings cheerfully or patiently endured by the younger ministers of this generation. Are these the men to be held up as a degenerate race? Are the mass of the present generation of ministers, who

are bearing the church onward with such wonderful success, and on whose labours God has looked with such marks of his favour, are they to be reproached as a generation of pigmies? We have no faith and little patience for such representations as those in which Dr. Spring has indulged, and on which he founds his argument. So far from the ministry having degenerated, the reverse is obviously the fact. As a class they have advanced in education, in devotion to their work, in their efficiency, and in their usefulness. We appeal to the progress and increasing influence of the church, as undeniable evidence of the truth of the assertion. The clergy, as a body, have now a higher character, and a better and a wider influence than the clergy of this country ever before attained. We do not ascribe this rapid increase of the church, and this improvement in the ministry to theological seminaries. That is not our argument. We are acting on the defensive. Dr. Spring says the ministry has degenerated, and therefore theological seminaries do harm. We say the ministry has not degenerated, it has vastly improved. If this is true, Dr. Spring's argument falls to the ground.

Here we might rest the matter. Dr. Spring's three propositions are, the ministry has degenerated; seminaries are the cause of this degeneracy; non-pastoral professors are the great cause of this evil influence of seminaries. If the first of these propositions is disposed of, as without any violent breach of modesty we may assume to be the fact, the others collapse of themselves. We feel, however, impelled to go on, and examine our author's mode of reasoning in their support.

Suppose that we admit that the ministry has deteriorated and the whole church degenerated since the institution of theological seminaries, does it thence follow that seminaries are the cause of these great evils? Is *post hoc ergo propter hoc* a logical mode of reasoning? We complain of Dr. Spring's argument as indiscriminating and unphilosophical. There have ever been periods of rising and falling in every church. The proximate causes of these changes are generally numerous, and often difficult to detect, and subtle in their operation. It is only for superficial declamation on a platform that it answers, to fix on some one fact and make it bear the whole responsibility. If we are to credit our anniversary orators, we must believe that the particular evil they assail, or the particular good they advocate, is the

cause of all the good or evil in the world. This mode of arguing does not suit a grave discussion, designed to lead to important practical results. The highly educated, orthodox, and spiritual clergy who accompanied the early settlers in New England, were gradually succeeded by a race of ministers lax in doctrine and worldly in spirit. After the times of Edwards, there was a gradual reaction and revival, until a new race of orthodox and devoted men appeared upon the stage. These changes took place under the same system of ministerial training. In Scotland, without any change in their system of theological education, the Melvilles and Hendersons were succeeded by the Moderates, and the Moderates again by the Chalmers, the Cunninghams and Candlishes of the present day. The men of the Free Church were trained under the very system which produced the lukewarm errorists of the preceding generation. So it was in France and in Geneva. The institutions founded by Calvin and which sent forth a succession of devoted pastors, without any change in their organization, produced their degenerate successors. The rationalists of Germany have been brought up on the same plan as that under which the strictly orthodox ministers of the seventeenth century were educated. What if some one, in the days of Scotch degeneracy, had argued as Dr. Spring does now. The ministry of this age are far inferior to their predecessors; therefore our system of ministerial training is all wrong. He might be met by another logician of the same class, at a later period, arguing that because the self-sacrificing and efficient ministers of the Free church were trained in the Scotch universities, that system must be the best in the world. Thus we should have the same system proved to be both good and bad. A mode of reasoning which leads to contradictory conclusions must be fallacious. If therefore the ministry of our generation were even as degenerate as Dr. Spring assumes it to be, it would not follow that seminaries are the cause of that degeneracy. There are other influences which bear on the character of the ministry, besides the mode of their theological training. It is not enough to show that the deterioration is subsequent to the institution of seminaries, to justify throwing the responsibility on them. Admitting then, for argument's sake, the deterioration of the ministry, which however we utterly deny, Dr. Spring has not made good his case against seminaries.

This is far from being the only logical sin to be found in the chapter under review. Dr. Spring gives the whole matter up. After having painfully erected his house of cards, he pushes it down with his own hand, that no one else may have the pleasure of seeing the catastrophe. A large part of the chapter before us is consumed, not merely in asserting, but in proving, that the change in the mode of ministerial education has a necessary tendency to weaken the "power of the pulpit." But near the close of his whole argument, the author, in a beautiful tribute to the senior professors of "our seminaries," speaks of them as having made and kept those seminaries what they are; he represents the evils which he had before described as still prospective and contingent on a time, "when the places they have so long occupied shall be occupied by men of no pastoral experience." (p. 391.) Seminaries then as yet have done no harm. The virus has not yet begun to operate, and the melancholy influence which had been described as exercised by seminaries, was so viewed only in prophetic vision, as the future consequence of changes which may be entirely prevented. If the bias of the system is still latent and inoperative after forty years of trial, may we not hope that it is imaginary, and that the deterioration of the ministry, if real, must be referred to some other cause? At any rate Dr. Spring cannot take both positions; seminaries have deteriorated the ministry; and pastoral professors have prevented the evil influence of those institutions. The latter of these assertions destroys the former.

There is in our author's argument on this subject no wide and manly view of the whole field; no comparison of the advantages and disadvantages of the public and private systems of instruction. There is nothing but a one sided exhibition of the matter in discussion. Advantages common to both methods are set down as peculiar to one; all evils are clustered on one side, and all virtues on the other. Among the advantages ascribed to the old method of instruction are the following: that the young men were not only listeners but enquirers, and were encouraged to be disputants; that they took their turn in conducting worship; that they attended popular religious meetings; that they mingled in society, became acquainted with men and things, and acquired good manners. From this a stranger might be pardoned for inferring that at present, students are forbidden to ask questions, that their

disputatory propensities are carefully suppressed, that they are never called upon to lead the prayers of others; that they never attend prayer meetings or religious lectures; that they are rigidly excluded from society; and that all this is the natural result of the seminary system. Such a stranger might well wonder to be told that even in the largest classes students are permitted to ask questions, with an unrestricted right of interrogation in private; that many students spend even an undue proportion of their time in regular debates among themselves or in the presence of their teachers; that most of them habitually lead the devotions of their fellow students or of the families where they reside; that a multitude of sabbath schools, societies and lectures, have been maintained by them for more than thirty years; that they sometimes labour in revivals not only singly but jointly and for weeks together; that they have as free access to company as they would have in a pastor's house; and that the danger of excess, in this as well as other sources of enjoyment, is at least as great as that of abstinence or privation.

The truth is, Dr. Spring draws upon his own imagination. The real evils and dangers of seminaries he does not touch, while those which he ascribes to them, they who have better means of knowledge, see to be imaginary. He directs his battery against a figment of his own creation. We do not pretend to know what Andover may have been in the first years of its existence; but we certainly know of nothing now corresponding to the picture here presented. To those who are actually engaged in the course of study at any of our institutions, the light in which they are here presented must be almost ludicrous. Some of them will certainly be surprised to learn that the great evils of the system are monastic seclusion and excessive learning. It does not seem to have occurred to Dr. Spring as possible that foppery, idleness, frivolity, could ever gain an entrance into such a body, and that while he is solemnly deprecating an undue devotion to scholastic lore, the teachers to whose influence he thinks the evil owing, may be vainly striving to impart the elementary ideas of theology to some of these supposed recluses. He little imagines that while he is scared at the evils of scholasticism and the neglect of practical interests, a large part of the student's time in most of our seminaries is spent in the manœuvring of committees and societies, bearing directly on the great benevolent

enterprises of the day. We make no attempt to hide or palliate what we regard as evil tendencies, because we wish to show how perfectly unlike they are to those which exist in Dr. Spring's ideal seminary, and at the same time to illustrate the utter insufficiency of pastoral experience, however long and otherwise successful, to supply the knowledge of facts without the trouble of investigation.

In comparing the advantages of the two methods, Dr. Spring connects some things in the relation of cause and effect, which we should scarcely have expected to see joined together. He says, for example, that students of theology, under the old regime, were taught less than they are now, but studied more, thought more, wrote more, (p. 393.) Does he mean to say the first of these produced the others? Was it because "their minds were not so richly furnished," that "they were better disciplined"? Was it because they had "less learning and fewer attainments," that "they were abler men, abler casuists, abler polemics, abler, more instructive, and more practical and acceptable preachers of the gospel"? We do not now ask for the proof of this unqualified assertion; but we do ask for the philosophy of the fact, for some explanation of the nexus between any of these pairs of phrases, beyond Dr. Spring's affirmation that "the consequence was" so and so. Perhaps he will be gratified to learn that under the new system also, there are men whose minds are not richly furnished, who have little learning and few attainments, who hear few lectures and transcribe none at all, and who may therefore be expected to have minds better disciplined, to be abler men, abler casuists, abler polemics, abler, more instructive, and more practical and acceptable preachers of the gospel, than their more conscientious and "scholastic" brethren.

Another misapprehension under which our author appears to labour is, that the course of study is unbroken, a continuous imprisonment of three years in duration. Whereas the truth is that in all our seminaries the exercises are suspended for more than three months of the year, and that a large proportion of the students spend this interval in active labour, as teachers, colporteurs, missionary preachers to the boatmen on our waters, and in other destitute fields. The amount of time thus spent is constantly increasing, and even those who do not thus employ themselves, are usually visiting their friends and getting a glimpse of civilized

society before returning to their savage keepers, scholastic studies, and monastic cells.*

The want of pastoral supervision is lamented as another crying evil of the seminary system. It is obvious that so far as this evil exists it is the fault of the men who conduct the system, and not of the system itself. There is nothing to prevent such supervision, but every thing to favour it. We are very far from saying that our professors are as faithful in the discharge of this duty as they ought to be; nay, it is with them as with pastors, some have a much better gift for that particular service than others. Still we should risk little in saying that more confidential intercourse has often taken place between a single theological professor and his pupils in a single week, than takes place between some city pastors and their large congregations in a year.

Admitting the inconveniencies which more or less attend the present system of instruction, does that prove it to be worthless? Is there any method of improvement which involve no sacrifice of something good, at least for a time? Every hour of study carries with it the abandonment of some amusement. The boy sent from home to school or college loses for a time and frequently forever the advantage of domestic culture and parental discipline. But who proposes to abolish schools and colleges on that account? And yet because the theological student, during his course of study, cannot be at home, or in the parsonage, or in society, or any where else but at his book, the system is a bad one. With equal reason might a man refuse to take a sea voyage for his health, because he cannot ride on horseback or frequent public libraries on ship-board. The simple question is,

* In the address of Dr. Hopkins, delivered at the recent Anniversary of the Tract Society it is stated that "during the past year one hundred and six students connected with seventeen theological seminaries and colleges, had employed their vacation in colporteur labours among the destitute with a summary of results as follows: Whole number of families visited, 39,947; families conversed and prayed with, 21,461; number of volumes sold, 42,644; number of volumes distributed gratuitously in destitute households, 10,021, besides 712,000 pages of Tracts: number of prayer meetings held or public meetings addressed 931; number of families destitute of all religious books, 4,271; families of Roman Catholics or other errorists, 3,157; families destitute of the scriptures, 1,952, of whom 1,776 were supplied." This is only one of the societies in whose service such students find employment, Many are engaged in the service of the American Sunday School Union, the Bethel Society, and similar associations. The labour thus employed is very great, and the opportunity of culture in practical knowledge is by no means inconsiderable.

whether the voyage is necessary for his health. If so, the objections become puerilities. In like manner, if attendance on a seminary course is found to be the surest and most efficacious method of obtaining the necessary knowledge, to object that the man while there cannot be elsewhere, is as idle as it would be to object that sleeping hinders a man from eating, or that a servant sent upon an errand cannot at the same time be at work at home,

Closely connected with this fallacy is that of finding fault with seminaries, because they do not in addition to their main design do some thing else which is desirable, but which they are not intended to accomplish. Thus we are told that students, after passing through a seminary, ought to acquire practical experience with a pastor. Very good. This might be an excellent arrangement. We are no advocates for the premature entrance of young men on the work of the ministry; the more of all kinds of useful discipline and experience they can obtain the better. If those having the authority choose to adopt this plan, or to make the course longer and narrower, as in Scotland, by employing half the year in study and the other half in pastoral apprenticeship, the seminaries are the last quarter whence any objection would be heard. But until some such arrangement is effected, it is no more just to charge seminaries with not doing their own work first and something else afterwards, than it would be to blame colleges because they do not teach their undergraduates theology or law or medicine.

Another injustice of the same kind but more serious, is the attempt to throw on seminaries the responsibility of acts performed or not performed by presbyteries. The seminaries of the church according to their very constitution are without ecclesiastical authority. This feature of the plan was guaranteed by the Assembly to the churches, as its records show. No Theological Faculty can take a single step towards the licensure or ordination of a student. The power of the Presbyteries, in this respect, is absolute, and their responsibility undivided. If they see fit to relax the rigour of their requisitions or the thoroughness of their examinations in the case of seminary students, let them see to it, and answer for it to the church and to themselves, but let them not attempt to justify their neglect by sharing their responsibility with others. Dr. Spring asserts, not only in

his own name, but in that of his whole presbytery, "that but for the fact that they have spent three years in pursuing their theological course, and but for the recommendation of their professors, not a few of them would have been refused their license to preach the gospel." (p. 388.) We doubt very much if a single instance has occurred, within the last ten years, in which the Presbytery of New York has been induced to license any man on either of the grounds here stated. What individual professors may have done, we know not; but we do know that the faculty of the Princeton Seminary, at least, gives no such recommendations. So far from its being the case that students are passed because they have completed a three years' course of study, they are almost always licensed long before its close, and sometimes in direct opposition to the wishes of their teachers. For a course of years the Princeton professors struggled hard against the practice of allowing undergraduates to be licensed; and now that they have been compelled to yield, it is certainly hard that they should be made to bear the blame of that which they so long strove vainly to prevent.

There is only one point more, in Dr. Spring's attack on Seminary education, as the cause of ministerial deterioration, which we think it worth while to notice. This is his strange idea, that the system is a new one and peculiar to America, a kind of rash experiment which has been going on among ourselves for less than half a century. What does he mean by Seminaries? If he means our schools of theology with all their minute details of organization and instruction, his arguments can only be applied to one, for no two are in these respects alike. If, on the other hand, he means the practice of assembling students of theology at one place, to pursue their studies under a distinct class of professors, then we do not understand his representing as a new experiment what has always existed in the Reformed churches since the Reformation. That he is not unaware of the historical fact, is clear from his allusions to the practice of the German, Genevese, and Scotch, as to their choice of professors. The only way in which we can account for this misrepresentation is by supposing that our author means to call the system new, in reference merely to the early practice of the American churches. But he might as well call cities an American invention, because none existed in our first colonial

settlements. This is not a mere error of expression ; it affects the author's view of the whole question, by leading him to look upon the infant state of our colonial churches, during which the European modes of education, though desired, were unattainable, as a deliberate rejection of those modes. To this infant state he seems to wish we could return, although he reckons it, for reasons not by any means conclusive, now impossible. He might as well argue against General Assemblies as an unsuccessful American experiment, because we had none when our whole church was confined to the Philadelphia Presbytery. As soon as that presbytery reached the requisite dimensions, it divided and became a synod ; and as soon as that synod became too unwieldy, it resolved itself into several, and constituted an Assembly, not as an American invention, but exactly on the old Presbyterian model. In like manner our enlightened fathers, when their grammar schools were no longer sufficient, established colleges, with a specific view to ministerial education ; and when these no longer answered the enlarged wants and expectations of the age, professional seminaries were added to complete the system, not as a new invention, but in zealous emulation of all the Reformed churches in the old world, every one of which, so far as we know, has its theological faculty. To compare the state which we have reached with that at which we set out, is to argue that because we do not like the present fashion of men's clothes, we will return to those we wore in infancy. If any should insist upon this change, the rest would be apt to say as Voltaire said in answer to Rousseau's panegyric on a state of nature, that although he felt an irresistible desire to return to it he was now quite too old to think of going on all fours again.

This argument against seminaries is but a revival of the discussion about the comparative advantages of public and private education. If a boy could be thoroughly educated at home, it might be well to keep him there, but as this is impossible, colleges are deemed essential. Although there are evils incident to a public education, yet there are also evils connected with the private plan, so that even if the education it secured were equal to that obtained in a college, there still might be great doubt which should be preferred. But as it is evident that few parents or tutors can give a boy the advantages to be derived from a college with its corps of professors, its apparatus and libraries,

no one now hesitates to encounter for his child the dangers incident to a public education. It is the same with regard to seminaries. There are evils incident to a public professional education, and there are also many incidental advantages connected with it, such as the collision of minds, the formation of friendships, similarity of views, sympathy and mutual confidence, &c. &c. On the other hand there are advantages and disadvantages incident to the private method of theological training. It might be hard to strike the balance between these incidents of the two systems. The church, in adopting the Plan of the Seminaries at Princeton and in Allegheny, and giving the enumeration of the benefits to be expected from them, clearly expressed the conviction that even as to these incidental and subordinate matters, the advantage is on the side of the public method of education. But when we come to the main point, the professional training itself, there is an end of all competition. No one man engaged in the constant routine of pastoral duty, can be expected to do as much in the way of teaching as three or four men devoted exclusively to that work. You might as well expect a colonel of a regiment in the field to give a scientific education to his subordinate officers. He may be an abler man than any of the professors at West Point, but he has too much else to do, to be an efficient teacher. The whole question really is whether a thorough education for the ministry is desirable. The Assembly and the church have decided this question. They have said that the candidates for the ministry "must be familiar with the original languages of the Holy Scriptures;" that they must be skilled in the interpretation of the sacred text; that they must be versed in the antiquities of the church; well acquainted with the evidences of our faith; well disciplined in theology, didactic, polemic and casuistic; well instructed in ecclesiastical history, and in the true principles of the organization and government of the church. To attain this end, they decided, as all other Reformed churches in the old world had done before them, and as all enlightened churches in this country, have done either before or since, to establish theological seminaries. Those old enough to know any thing of the plan of pastoral instruction, deprecate the very thought of the church receding to that method. Men of extraordinary minds will work their way to eminence, under any sys-

tem; but for ordinary men it would be a ruinous change. The method formerly pursued was not uniform, different pastors having different plans. It was however very common for candidates to be licensed as soon as they left college, and then to put themselves under the direction of some minister. While under his care, they rode about the country "candidating," the minister correcting their sermons, and directing their reading, until they got a call. This would last some three, six or twelve months. The education of the ministers of the last generation was received in college. All that followed, with rare exceptions, was their own work, after they began to preach. The proposal to revert to the old method is therefore virtually a proposal to discard all professional education for the ministry.

Dr. Spring's argument against seminaries is only an echo of the argument commonly urged against our national military academy, and will be responded to by the same class of men. Our fathers, it is said, fought the battles of the revolution without a scientific education, and where are the men to compare with them? The war, now through the mercy of God just brought to a close, has taught, we hope, the country the lesson, that it is a useless sacrifice of blood and treasure to rely on undisciplined valour in the day of battle. It was the scientifically educated officers of the army who achieved the late victories in Mexico, which have few parallels in the history of modern warfare. It is of no account to object that experience can not be learned at West Point. Very true. That is not what men go there to learn. They go there to learn what renders experience rapidly attainable; to get the knowledge and training which enable men to turn everything to account in the hour of trial. It is no less vain to object that pastoral experience is not to be obtained in a theological seminary. That also is true. Such experience can be gained only in the pastoral office. But put a well educated and disciplined man into that office, and he will gain more experience in a year than a man without education would gain in a life time.

The real dangers and deficiencies of our seminaries have not been touched upon by Dr. Spring. They were not intended to give pastoral experience, but to give learning, to discipline the mind, to cultivate piety and the social affections, to bring a number of young men together to act upon each other, and to

become friends prepared to act heart and hand in the service of the Lord. The danger is not in the system but in the men. Everything depends, under God, on the professors. If they are not of the right kind, their influence on the students must be to the last degree injurious. If Dr. Spring had chosen to direct his battery to that quarter, he would have assailed the weak point; he would have found no disposition to resist; he would have awakened the consciousness of deficiencies and neglects, which must have stopped the mouths of most teachers at least; and he would, at the same time, have called the attention of the church to the real point to be guarded. No one can estimate too highly the importance of vigilance as to the character of the men entrusted with the work of training the future ministers of the church; and no one can be so well aware of their shortcomings as those who fill that office. We would honour Dr. Spring for every effort to arouse the church to a sense of its obligation as to the conduct of its seminaries, but we deprecate as unjust and injurious all attempts to shake, to no good purpose, the well considered confidence which the church has placed in the system itself.

We shall say very little on the third proposition which our author advocates, viz. that the evil influence of seminaries arises, in a great measure, from the practice of filling theological professorships with men who have no pastoral experience. We shall not do more, in reference to this point, than indicate some of the inaccuracies of fact and argument into which he has inadvertently fallen. He says, "It is a wise arrangement of the theological seminary of the Presbyterian church, that the professors shall be ordained ministers of the gospel." (p. 379.) This rule, in Dr. Spring's opinion, ought to be interpreted as meaning "stated pastors." But however interpreted, and however wise, no such rule exists. The only rule upon the subject is, that the Professor of Didactic and Polemic Theology shall be an ordained minister. And even this, we are assured by one who took an active part in the founding of the seminary, was originally so framed as to admit the appointment of a layman, if ordained before his actual induction into office. We do not mention this as a desirable arrangement, but simply to show the nature of the premises from which our author sometimes argues, and how widely he differs from the fathers he so much vener-

ates. This mistake is the more surprising in one who has for several years presided in the Board of Directors, and is now providentially its highest officer, and who took an active part, within ten years, in the inauguration of a professor, who, at the time of his election was not even a licentiate, nor so much as a candidate for licensure, and who did not become an ordained minister until six months after he received his professional instructions from the lips of Dr. Spring himself.

Our author's argument from history is no less unfortunate. He admits the historical fact that some influential errorists "have been settled pastors before they became professors." His answer is, "They were men who were good men and true, and who became corrupt after they left the pastoral office; if these things be done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" (p. 389.) It seems then the great safeguard on which he relies is insufficient. It is not enough for a professor to have pastoral experience, his only security is continuing to be a pastor. It happens, however, that almost all the great defections in seminaries have occurred in men who continued to be pastors while acting as professors. To hold these offices in plurality was the favourite plan of the Moderates in Scotland, which was opposed by the evangelical party, and has been repudiated by the Free Church. It was and still is the custom in Geneva, where Socinianism was gradually introduced and has so long reigned. It is a common arrangement in Germany itself, whence Dr. Spring would gather his most impressive warnings. The truth is, he is leaning upon a broken reed. This dependence on anything external, as a security for the soundness of the seminaries or of the church, is very short-sighted. Unless, by the grace of God, piety and truth are upheld in the ministry generally, no such external precautions are of any worth. Harvard did not apostatize until the pastors of Boston had departed from the faith. If God keeps the church pure, the seminaries cannot become corrupt. If the pastors continue faithful, the professors will be constrained humbly to follow their steps.

To enforce his doctrine of the absolute necessity that every professor should have been a pastor, our author draws a most forbidding picture of a professor without pastoral experience. Who sat for the portrait, or what may be the fidelity of the likeness, we do not presume to say. It has very much the appearance of a

fancy sketch. Things in nature are not all light or all shade. But Dr. Spring has painted the professor all darkness, and the pastor all light. It does not appear why every professor must be cold and dry, unacquainted with men, ignorant of the human heart, incapable of impressive, practical preaching; preferring learning to religion; whose sermons must be theological essays; whose commentaries, should he write any, must lack the right savour; whose reviews, and even whose experimental works, must want vitality. Has not our author mistaken the personal defects of some unfortunate professor, whom he had in his eye, for the essential characteristics of the whole class? One cannot see why a professor, by the grace of God, may not possess some warmth of heart; why he may not gather from intercourse with hundreds of educated youth some knowledge of human nature; why he may not have frequent intercourse with other men; why his daily exposition of the scriptures to a body of candidates for the ministry may not come as near to real preaching as much that is often heard from the pulpit. In our younger days, we have often listened to theological lectures, which we regarded as means of grace; and have heard, even from German lips, truly devotional expositions of the scriptures. Dr. Spring's view of the matter is very discouraging. Professors, we know, have been in the habit of regarding the evils he depicts, as personal faults, and not as inseparable from their office. And we suspect that if our author could only secure the appointment of truly humble, fervent men to our theological chairs, he would be rejoiced to find them infusing something of that savour into their instructions and sermons, which he seems to think belongs exclusively to pastors.

Dr. Spring is very confident of his position. He says the more the thing is considered the more obvious will "the absurdity" appear of putting men to train pastors, who have no pastoral experience. This assertion, to a certain class of minds, will no doubt appear decisive. It is, however, precisely on a par with the assertion that it is absurd to set men to train officers for the army, who have never seen a battle,—an absurdity practised with good effect by all the civilized nations of the world. It is found that men who never saw blood, can teach mathematics, engineering, gunnery and tactics; and our fathers were absurd enough to think that a man, who had not been a pastor,

might teach Hebrew, Exegesis, Theology or Church History. We do not undervalue pastoral experience. The more experience a man has of any kind the better; and there should be in all seminaries a professor of pastoral theology, to whom the widest experience in the pastoral life would be invaluable. Our author's whole difficulty arises from a confusion of thought as to what a theological seminary is, and is designed to accomplish. It is intended mainly and directly to impart the requisite knowledge for the work of the ministry; experience is to be acquired in the field.

The position which Dr. Spring assumes is in some respects a singular one. He admits that theological seminaries must be maintained, and yet the whole drift and design of his argument is to prove them to be an evil. He labours to show that as an experiment they have failed. We had a better ministry without them. The only proper conclusion from his argument is that seminaries should be abolished. That we have them; that money has been invested in their endowment; that public sentiment is in their favour; will convince no man that they ought to be continued. If what he says is sound, it is the obvious and imperative duty of the church, to abolish at once all such institutions and revert to the old method of ministerial training. It is very true the thing cannot stop there. The arguments which our author urges against seminaries are applicable, in the main, and with far greater force, not only against colleges, but against a learned ministry altogether. Dr. Spring is aware of this. He could not fail to see the real bearing of his argument, and hence his frequent protestations of zeal for a learned ministry. In these protestations he is doubtless sincere. If, however, a man, in this country, argues against colleges, and insists that boys ought to be taught the languages, mathematics, natural philosophy, mental and moral science, rhetoric, &c., by their parents, whatever his zeal for literature, he does in fact argue against a liberal education. If he argue against the military academy, he argues against a scientific education for the army. In like manner, an argument against theological seminaries, and in favour of each pastor teaching Hebrew, the exegesis of the Old and New Testament, theology in all its departments, church history, &c., &c., is an argument for an uneducated ministry. To be consistent, Dr. Spring must object

to candidates for the ministry being educated in colleges. Their training for the sacred office commences in the college. But there also they are secluded; there too they are deprived of the supervision of their pastors; there they are under scholastic influences and exposed to many sources of evil; there they can gain no pastoral experience, and get no insight into their future practical duties. They must therefore get their academical as well as their professional education from their pastors. It being an obvious impossibility that any pastor, no matter what his learning or his ability, can have the time to instruct theological students in those branches which the state of the church and of the world shows to be necessary, any proposal to throw this task on pastors is a proposal that the work should be left undone; and no amount of zeal for a learned ministry can save the advocate of such a proposition from the responsibility of opposing theological learning. The unavoidable result of the adoption of such a plan would be, that the mass of ministers would be ignorant men. Here and there a man of superior abilities and advantages would tower above the rest, and in the hands of this small class, all influence and authority would be concentrated. There is no surer way to exalt the few than by depressing the many. Our theological seminaries are the great levellers of the clergy. They secure a general equality of culture, and prevent this marked ascendancy and power of individuals. Dr. Spring feels that his argument goes too far. He knows that the enlightened judgment of the church is against him. He cannot be blind to the fact that if the Presbyterians were to lower their standard of theological education, they must resign their position in the country, give up to other denominations the service of God in resisting error and promoting truth, and be content to see all their youth of promise seeking elsewhere the knowledge their own church denied them. In a recent debate in the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, on an overture to increase the number of their "Divinity Halls," Dr. Cunningham said, the real question was, "What is the right mode of providing an adequate and efficient theological education for the ministry of the Free Church of Scotland?" He urged that there should be a faculty of four professors, two of Didactic Theology, (including history), and two of Exegetical Theology, one for the Old Testament and one for the New. He-

brew is to be learned before entering on the proper theological course, which is to continue four years. In all this the Assembly sustained him. Compare this scheme with Dr. Spring's plan of pastoral instruction! Our author proves nothing or a vast deal too much. His book will furnish a welcome excuse for those who are desirous of an apology for refusing aid to our theological seminaries, and it will be the great authority for those who are opposed to all literary and professional education for the ministry. We run no risk in making this prediction. Unless we are misinformed, it has already been turned to both these accounts. To get rid of an unsightly branch, he has tried to fell the tree.

SHORT NOTICES.

ART. VII.—*Differences between Old and New School Presbyterians*, by Rev. Lewis Cheesman, with an Introductory Chapter by John C. Lord, D.D. Rochester: 1848.

With the author of this volume, we have no personal acquaintance; but from a perusal of the work, we have been led to the opinion, that he is not only a thoroughly orthodox man, according to the standard of the Presbyterian church, but also that he possesses a strong, discriminating mind, and has taken much pains to attain accurate knowledge on the subject on which he has written.

Some, no doubt, are of opinion, that the least said, on this subject, is best; but if ever a reconciliation between these two great sections of Presbyterians, shall take place, it will be in consequence of an impartial investigation of the points of difference between them; and by a return to sound doctrine by that party which has departed from the theology of the standards received in common by both parties. Discussion of doctrinal points, without acerbity, cannot but be useful at all times; but especially when undue excitement has subsided; and when many begin to inquire for the "old paths."

We are aware that there are those who think that there is no important diversity in doctrine between the parties; and that