

THE UNION SEMINARY MAGAZINE

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I.—LITERARY.

THE REV. ROBERT LEWIS DABNEY, D. D., LL. D.

Robert Lewis Dabney was born in Louisa county in Virginia, on the 5th of March, 1820, of good old Hanover lineage. In June, 1836, he entered the Sophomore class, half advanced, of Hampden-Sidney College. He completed the remaining part of the Sophomore, and the Junior course, and left the college in 1837. He then taught a country school for two years. In December, 1839, he entered the University of Virginia, from which he retired in July of 1842 with the degree of Master of Arts. He again taught a select private school for more than two years. In October, 1844, he entered Union Seminary in Virginia, took the full three years course in two years and was licensed to preach in May, 1846. He spent one year as a missionary in his native county, at the end of which time he was called to be the pastor of Tinkling Spring church in Augusta county. Here he performed for a considerable time the functions of the pastorate to a large church and those of the head teacher of a classical school. After a pastorate of over six years he was elected to the chair of Ecclesiastical History and Polity in his *alma mater*, Union Theological Seminary, which he filled until 1870. Meanwhile, in 1869, he had been appointed Adjunct Professor of Theology, and he was made full Professor in this department in 1870. He continued to dignify this important chair until 1883, when owing to bronchial troubles he was warned by his physicians to seek a milder climate. Accordingly he accepted an invitation to the chair of Mental and Moral Philosophy in the University of Texas, at Austin,

But still further, the value does not all accrue to the teacher and pupil. The minister himself is benefitted, or rather his power for usefulness is extended. His interest in the school begets an interest in him on the part of teacher and pupil. A child will love any person that loves it, and will be influenced by such a person. As the boy meets that minister on the street in the afternoon he remembers the talk of the morning and is drawn nearer to him. The parents, too, hear of his visit with pleasure, are drawn to his church and rendered more susceptible to his influence.

In short, there is every reason for taking a deep interest in the common school. It was established for the public good, so was the pulpit. It was established to lift men into a higher purer atmosphere, so was the pulpit. It was established to make men better, so was the pulpit. It was established to roll the world a little nearer heaven, so was the pulpit. If these are some of the objects of the school, the minister, who must ever have the salvation of these precious souls in view, cannot fail to recognize it as one of the most powerful agencies for good in his town or community, and as such countenance, aid, encourage and advance its influence in every possible way.

HOLIDAY.

The Xmas holiday at Union this year consisted of one day only. The trustees seem to think this wise, the boys respectfully though most heartily disagree with them. While the student body is inclined in all things to be in subjection to the "powers that be," in this matter the editor is absolutely sure that he is voicing the sentiment of the entire Seminary in entering an earnest protest.

Take as a basis of that protest the facts as seen here during the past Christmas. About one-fifth the entire number of students packed their valises and went home or elsewhere for a week or more. A number left for a shorter time, several who remained on the Hill declined to go on recitation, those who went to classes made almost no preparation. Yet in spite of these empty benches the course moved steadily on. The work continued, though it was practically all done by the professors. If the idea is to keep the faculty at work then the abolition of holiday is a great success.

As the boys returned they found themselves out of joint with the work. They did not and could not renew their work as quickly as would have been the case had they been allowed to take it up where they dropped it. Even those who had been in their seats had been there in a desultory sort of way and had not the same relish for the work as if they had enjoyed a total rest.

But some one may say the boys ought not to have left the Hill, but to have quietly and faithfully stuck to their work. If so, then take as a basis, and a good and sufficient basis for such action the examinations at the close of the half session. The strain of those examinations is far greater than that of the ordinary work. When they were concluded there was an absolutely necessary reaction. One day was not sufficient for that reaction. The students felt that necessity and acted upon it. If the holiday is to be permanently abolished then let the examinations go with it.

Further, some may say that if there is no holiday there will be no temptation to spend money going to and from home. This is unjustifiable. It could only be applicable in the case of those who receive aid from Presbytery. But the amount of money that such men receive will in no way be changed by keeping them here during Christmas. If they have simply the means to tide them over the year and go home then they must deny themselves elsewhere. If they see fit to deny themselves of something else for this pleasure then no harm has been done.

Taken all in all the students of the seminary wish most heartily to go back to the good old ways of resting for a week and making merry around the Christmas fire.

As most of our readers know, the controlling Synods of the Seminary have ordered its removal next fall to its new quarters at Richmond.

This marks an era in the history of the Seminary, and the Magazine proposes to signalize that event by making its March-April issue a mammoth number. That number will contain a history of the Seminary during the seventy-four years of its existence, together with a brief account of the work of its alumni at home and in the foreign field. It will also contain a