

he is one of our top students. Yet he is well within the top third, and if his scholarship were insufficient for ordination in our church I fear that two-thirds of those who are now ministers would have to drop out.

After mentioning my disappointment at the fact that a letter of this type should seem altogether to ignore the vital spiritual qualifications, I must go on to say that I felt a bit discouraged about the way in which you expressed the first four of your five qualifications. We want to maintain high standards but not impossible ones. I doubt if anyone who has ever come into the ministry of the ... Church could even approach the levels you have described. Take, for instance, your first qualification. I am sure that I myself do not have "the entire contents of the English Bible obviously under control, with no weak spots whatever." Although I have been studying the English Bible for many years, I know that I have still much to learn about it, and that there are many of its sections with which I am sadly unfamiliar.

I have taught a two-year course in Church History three times, but I would still come very far short of being able to fill your second requirement. I certainly could not truthfully say that I am "perfectly acquainted with the problems, trials, discussions of two thousand years of the existence of the Christian church." I have learned a good bit about it, but I would come very far short of such a standard as your letter has described and I doubt if many of our graduates know one-tenth as much in this field as I do.

Your third point is somewhat more generally expressed than the previous two, but it does seem to me that it also is expressed a little too strongly. I am not sure that I have ever known a graduate of the Seminary of whom I would say that he is able "to cope with all the major theological problems." It would need ten years of careful study of theology alone before we could expect a man to reach a standard such as your words seem to imply. I believe that all our graduates could preach on a good many minor doctrines "with a fully systematic theology background", but in order to do so, they would need to spend two or three days on special study of the materials with which we try to familiarize them in Seminary. They certainly could not do it on short notice.

I do not like the wording of your fourth qualification at all. I am sure that I would not be "able to deal death blows to the modernist through ability to handle the Hebrew and Greek texts."