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Références éditoriales

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2. Theological education should be detached from the universities and high schools and carried on in seminaries. These should afford opportunity for young men to draw aside from the world for purposes of study and of the practice of piety. Labadie gives a full chapter to the careful regulation of the life of a seminary community. It must not only impart information but instill love for God and zeal for his work. With a pastorate so trained all ecclesiastical gatherings from the national synod down to the smallest groups must serve as means for the deepening of the spiritual life.
3. Only men who are specially called of God to become pastors should be considered for the pastorate. No other considerations should enter in. The examinations of candidates should be adjusted to this basic consideration.
4. With regard to the pastorate emphasis must be placed upon pastoral work, diligent home visitation, catechization, holding of conventicles, and the religious instruction of parents so that they can instruct their children. The pastor must even keep an eye upon the public schools so that the teachers do not place too much emphasis upon pagan authors.
5. Pastors who are concerned about a reformation must work in fellowship with one another.

Gradually Labadie's relationship with his synod became strained and a heated controversy ensued, the ramifications of which were noticeable throughout the Reformed communion.¹⁾ It was most intense from 1666-1670. In the meantime Labadie had become increasingly impressed with the ecclesiology of the English congregationalists. His full acceptance of congregational principles of church government is in evidence in a tract ²⁾ in which he insisted that no ecclesiastical authority has a right to make laws which are binding upon individual congregations and that such congregations owe no obedience to this authority except as such obedience is founded upon the Word of God. For that reason no one can be suspended by this authority if he is certain of the approval of Christ and his true followers. It was only a matter of time for Labadie to be suspended, an action which the synod took in 1669. His type of Pietism, which presently began to move in a separatistic direction, was gradually discredited among the various Reformed synods. Even the Pietists within the Reformed communion began to repudiate his leadership.



¹⁾ For details see Goeters, p. 183 f.

²⁾ *La puissance ecclésiastique bornée à l'Écriture et par elle*, etc., 1668.

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