

THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO.

(From the Christian Remembrancer for October.)

[CONCLUDED FROM OUR LAST.]

There are, we imagine, three principal points to be discussed in connexion with the question of the University of Toronto...

We shall not undertake to argue the point whether education ought to be based on religion. We are thankful that the affirmative is now all but universally acknowledged.

To go to another point. Is there to be no place in a Christian country where the young are to be systematically instructed in Christian doctrines?

There is another reason why it should be undertaken by them, which will readily be understood by any experienced person; and that is, that none but a practical teacher can adequately ensure that the knowledge communicated shall be really received and digested.

Will you (the Founders of the University) endeavour to make a collection of essential doctrines? Who then shall decide what are essential and what not?

And what thoughtful man, what conscientious man, will you find, who will consent to be bound up to any joint stock system, and to say to his pupils practically, as he must do, if he consents to instruct them on such a system...

Since we cannot turn our thoughts to another plan,—since we cannot find any means of teaching merely essential truths, what if we employ to instruct our youth teachers of the connexion or sect to which he himself belongs?

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We might mention a fourth scheme, if the business were about the instruction of mere children; viz. that a single instructor should teach the doctrinal views of all the various denominations to which the pupils belong...

We know of only one more method which can be suggested; viz. that the founders of the University should establish that form of doctrine and that mode of worship which approves itself to their own conscientious conviction...

But there is another question raised by this attempt to cancel the charter of King's College, and that is, the question of the Royal Prerogative. Upon that subject we have not to express an opinion altogether *de novo*...

“I think I can show that there is no exception to the rule I have laid down in the legislation of Great Britain in other words, that there is no University here which has been erected by act of Parliament. The statutes passed in the 13th Elizabeth, were not charters erecting the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge...

We therefore cannot but regard it as a great blot and stain upon the late Whig Administration, that they should have permitted any interference, by the local Legislature, in an affair of that nature...

But not only is the creation of an University an act of sovereignty;—the interfering with a charter of any kind is an infringement both of the prerogative and of the rights of the subject. It is a principle of the constitution, (as Mr. Draper has well stated it), that no power in the country has the slightest power over a charter...

Again, even on the ground of policy, should not the Church of England be sustained, as always tending to loyalty and union? Is that equally certain of other bodies? Who are the religious bodies who are urging you to break in upon the charter of King's College?

of persons who were not intended to have the ultimate management of the affairs of the College. We have no wish to cast the slightest imputation upon the integrity of a single individual of those who at that time composed that body...

We need scarcely repeat our earnest hope that a Conservative Administration will sanction so flagrant an act of tyranny as that of rescinding a charter, even though it have been tampered with by Act of Parliament; or weaken the Crown, by making it consent to its own degradation...

Having disposed of these two questions, we come to the third, viz. the practical inquiry, what should be done in the present case with the University of Toronto.

The first question which arises is, Why should any thing be done? You have an Institution which you have not long since set into active operation; which you have furnished with Professors diligently and patiently engaged in their various occupations...

What, then, can induce you to wish to interfere?—You will tell us, perhaps, that you are urged by political necessity; that you are bound to govern the colony by means of its local legislature, upon the principle of endeavouring to satisfy the local legislature...

But you have not always acted upon this plan of conceding right to might. You are now supporting your Governor General, in maintaining the Royal prerogative, upon a point which is, in most respects, of much smaller importance than this.

We say all this on the supposition that there is a strong disposition throughout Canada to force the destruction of the University as a religious institution; but our best information leads us to the conclusion that this is far from being the case.

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But the greatest objection to the council, as at present constituted, is the absence of religious unity.—No one is required to be a member of the Church of England, except the president, or to be pledged to any thing beyond the vague “Declaration of belief in the authenticity and inspiration of the Scriptures, and in the doctrine of the Trinity”...

the Wesleyans liable to constant division? Are not a large portion of those in Canada at this very moment absorbed into a new sect, the Millerites? How long, then, are they likely to remain a political party of any importance?

But you say that, although these may divide *ad infinitum* amongst themselves, they will still remain united against the predominance of the Church; and in that way will embarrass the Government, unless conciliated by concession. We beg, then, to suggest whether there is not this probability, that the better and more orderly will be more and more absorbed into the Church, as sound education extends its influence...

We desire not to be mistaken. We abhor all intolerance, all persecution. We would concede to every thing that can be deemed conscientious, the freest liberty of action, unless it interferes with the public peace, with private or corporate rights.

In the first place, we object to the constitution of its council. What can be more anomalous, or absurd, in a body composed of ten members, besides the chancellor and president, than to appoint that four of them should be the Speakers of the two Houses of Assembly, and the Attorney and Solicitor General?

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As it appeared as if we were passing through a stony heath when Bethlehem opened on the left of which was a deep ravine. The village is situated on a declivity of the hill on our right; and on an imposing level on the left, which impends the above ravine, stands in solitary dignity the church and convent, erected over the inn where “the Star of Bethlehem” first emitted its splendour.

Experience, in the long run, will show that what quarter commerce must be had. We lately saw an application, made from one of the trustees of an American College, to parties in England, requesting an abstract of the Oxford statutes, and advice on such modifications as might fit them for the United States.

persuaded, that if the institution is worked according to the animus of those who procured the alterations in its charter, its direct tendency must be to promote infidelity (that is, indifference to all religious belief) throughout the Province; and a more pernicious infidelity we cannot conceive.

But besides the objections to the constitution of the council, it appears to us that its functions are far too universal. Taking the charter literally, there is nothing of the most cheerful character which ought not to come under the supervision or direction of that body. Now, we do not deny that it may be proper, in the first instance, (as was done in the case of the University of Durham), to appoint a body with universal powers; but then it ought to be with the understanding that this body should be empowered to constitute other dependent bodies to carry out such functions as cannot with convenience be reserved to itself.

We observe that a convocation has been provided for by the charter, but we understand that no such body has ever met; nor are we much surprised, for the very constitution of that body is left to be provided by the statutes of the council; and, from all we hear of the constituent members of that body, we can see great difficulties in the way of its settling any constitution for a convocation.

There is one more point about the amended charter which appears to require attention; we mean the direction that “no religious test or qualification shall be required for degrees in any faculty.” What can have been the views of those who made such an enactment, we can hardly conceive.

BETHELEHEM.

(From the Narrative of a Voyage from Liverpool to Alexandria, &c. &c. By the Rev. N. Burton, LL.D.)

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which extends between this district and the Dead Sea, We entered the monastery by a spacious hall, which in more flourishing days had been a magnificent church; the columns of the pious St. Helena adorn the interior; despotism, however, and the slow but sure hand of decay, have marked it as their victim, and denuded the walls. I was surprised at the smallness of the door, but was informed it was to prevent the predatory spirit of the Arabs, who, were there sufficient room, would ride into the hallowed courts and insolently levy their unjust contributions.

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THE CHRISTIAN SIMEON.

(From a Sermon by Dr. Shortt, Bishop of Sodor and Man.)

The external circumstances in which the immediate followers of Christ were placed, were so totally different from those in which the majority of Christians of the present day are situated, that the song of Simeon may at first sight appear quite inapplicable to the case of any one of us; but it is one particular beauty of the Christian dispensation, that being a religion of motives, we are able to draw the most effectual assistance, and to derive the most important lessons, from observing the feelings and tempers of those, who not only differed entirely from us in what they were called on to do and suffer, but were placed in situations inconsistent with our present condition.

Simeon was now old, and we will suppose that the servant of God, of whom we are tracing the spiritual state, is old too, and well stricken in years. There is an early and a happy death sometimes granted to the servants of Jesus Christ; there is a premature decay of body which softens down the fervour of youthful desires, which makes the young Christian anxious to be loosed from earthly cares and earthly weaknesses; there is a Christian compliance with the will of God, which fills the soul of the bodily sufferer with a higher and heavenly comfort, which enables the dying child to support his grieving relatives, and to furnish consolation to the more aged Christians whom he is about to outstrip in the road to heaven; but as what belongs to the dying saint of more mature age, differs not materially from the pious thoughts which fill the bosom of the Christian whose mortal career is sooner closed, we will not confine our thoughts to how a Simeon of this age may exclaim in faith, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace. The same graces which are recorded in Saint Luke have attended this servant of Christ: he has been a just man; he has been convinced by the word of God that a strict performance of earthly duty is that obedience which the Almighty has placed most within the power of human beings.

The servant of God, whom we are describing, is devout too. He has learnt, by sad experience, how little his knowledge of the will of God has led him to obey—he has learnt how hard it is always to do right; and how much he must exert all our faculties to try to benefit our neighbour. Human reason may establish this law from the examination of the Bible; but human reason cannot excite the motive.—Human reason may tell us, that we ought to do so;—but to wish to do it is the difficulty. The Holy Ghost was upon Simeon.