

Three Letters on the Relation of Queen's to the Church

Letter I.

PERHAPS no subject has for years so largely excited the interest of the General Assembly as the consideration of the relation of Queen's University to the Church, and this cannot but be flattering to all connected with the University, but at the same time we feel that the point of view from which evidently a large number in the Assembly regard this subject is wrong. I think that each member of the University is grateful for what the Church has done for it in the past, and for the sympathy which the Church of to-day manifests, in a matter which so deeply affects the best interests of the University; we, however, must not allow ourselves to be influenced by mere sentimentalism.

It is quite evident that if a University would retain an honorable position it must move with the requirements of the age, it must fulfil these requirements, and even perhaps anticipate them. This feeling has, within the last century, led to a complete change in every University in Europe, and not least in the Universities of Great Britain.

The Universities of England, Oxford and Cambridge, were, as we well know, closely connected with the Anglican Church, but the Government felt that this connection must be severed, however painful might be the steps to be taken to accomplish this object.

On the occasion of the appointment of one of the commissions to regulate the administration of these Universities in 1876, the Earl of Salisbury, with evident affection for these old institutions, but with as evident force of reason said, "It is a work I undertake with great reluctance, and I do not think Her Majesty's Government would enter upon it at all if