

the arrangements of the State. They received the highest patronage, professorial chairs were founded by the Emperors, and they were perpetuated by princely endowments. The principle was recognized that the future influence of the State was based on the education of the youth of the country.

If Rome had the Athenæum of the Capitol, Greece gloried in the most perfect training schools at Athens. Those of Plato, Isocrates, and Aristotle appeared to discharge the functions of a university in giving to the most distinguished men of the time their mental training. It is held by some writers that even the external organization of the university dates from this period in the history of Athenian culture, and that the educational plan and discipline of these schools represent an early form of the modern Faculties.

If there were no academic dignities precisely similar to our modern degrees, bestowed at those schools of antiquity, we may be sure that the students hailed with no little satisfaction the announcement that they had passed the Trivium or Quadrivium; and we know that in those days, as at present, it was an object of ambition to claim as their Alma Mater a school which had established the highest reputation for excellence.

Turning to Egypt, we find at a period when internal animosities and political discords were disturbing all other countries, when the other nations of the world were ravaged by war and were sinking from its effects, literature and science were drawn to Alexandria, and a famous school was founded which kept alive the embers of knowledge and preserved mankind from relapsing into barbarism. Alexandria, founded nearly three centuries before the Christian era, became the repository of all the learning of the civilized world. The library of the

Ptolemies, destroyed by Cæsar half a century before Christ, was the finest in existence. It is said to have contained 700,000 volumes. This library was attached to a magnificent establishment for the cultivation of learning, in which teachers and scholars were maintained at the king's expense. This establishment, known as the Museum, had a sub-division into departments or schools, where the different branches of education were taught as in the Faculties of a modern university. The schools were Mathematics, Literature, Astronomy, and Medicine. Minor branches were classified under one of these general headings, and the schools were presided over by men of great distinction. Euclid was at the head of the mathematical school, where his "Elements of Geometry" were first studied—a work which has held its ground as a text-book for nearly twenty-two centuries. Pre-eminently the school of medicine achieved great renown, and the reputation of having passed as a student at the Alexandrian Museum was regarded as a sure passport to professional success. Late events have particularly directed the attention of the English-speaking family to this ancient seat of learning. A few months ago our flag was borne to Alexandria, and the British sailor directed the grandest engines of destruction ever produced by human skill to silence a people but a few degrees removed from barbarism. Such are the vicissitudes of time. When the people of the British Islands were painted savages, and centuries before they ceased to be barbaric, warring tribes, the commerce and civilization of all nations converged at Alexandria. Alexandria was then the intellectual metropolis of the world, and it presented an example of a system of education from which it may be said the university of to-day has been modelled.