

THE ' VARSITY:

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THE WESTERN UNIVERSITY.

We have found ourselves wondering recently if the silence that seems to have prevailed in the press concerning the Western University is but the forerunner of its speedy extinction. Very little seems to be said about it, at least in public. In private it may have been arousing more attention, but whatever has been said has not been, we think, of a character to impart new life to the semi-defunct institution. We have heard it spoken of occasionally by those who should be well posted about it, and we have heard only one opinion and one hope—the opinion that the Institution could not long survive the separation from its foster father, the late Bishop of Huron, and the hope that the day of its death would come soon.

We have already in the past in the columns of this journal expressed our opinion very fully concerning the Western University. For reasons which we have placed freely before the University public, we are strongly opposed to its continuance. And as time goes on, this, our opinion, is strengthened rather than weakened. In our last article upon this subject we referred more particularly to the objections to the foundation of the University on general principles, our chief arguments being, (1) opposition to the needless multiplication of Universities, and (2), our especial opposition to the Western University because, even in its Arts' Department, it is strictly denominational. We propose in this article to leave these points untouched, and to refer more particularly to the personal policy adopted by the late Bishop of Huron in founding the University. The time has now come when we believe the final blow against it should be struck. The late Bishop of Huron, the Right Rev. I. Hellmuth, D.D., has removed to England, and the Very Rev. Dean Baldwin has been elected in his stead. The new Bishop will assume active charge of his diocese in a few days. One of the first decisions he will be called upon to make will be concerning the Western University—whether he will continue the policy of his predecessor or abandon it to its fate, and upon his decision hangs, to a very great extent, its life. From the high reputation he has already attained in the church, we believe he is a far-seeing, able, and earnest man, whose one aim will be to advance the best interests of his Diocese.

It is no part of our policy, as an educational journal, to expose or refer to the actions of private individuals. We hold ourselves, however, bound when there has been any want of rectitude in dealing with our educational interests, to expose what we believe to be wrong. We therefore lay before the public what we believe to be the facts concerning the Western University. With the late Bishop of Huron's private character we are not concerned. With his public educational policy and the motives that prompted it we are concerned, and we propose to criticize them unsparingly.

We venture to urge upon the new Bishop the inexpediency of supporting an institution that has such a questionable record as the Western University. There are many things in its history that an honorable man could not be otherwise than ashamed of, if the responsibility of the authorship were fastened upon himself. The simple fact of the matter seems to be that the late Bishop of Huron, who was the founder of the University, and apparently its only enthusiastic supporter, had not so much the educational interests of Western Ontario at heart, as his own financial interest. He was the principal stockholder in the Hellmuth Boys' College.

For some reason that College in latter years was not financially successful. It possessed a building and grounds on which a large amount of capital had been invested. The Bishop seems to have conceived the brilliant idea of organizing a new University in London, and of transferring to it the property of the Hellmuth Boys' College Buildings. He did not propose doing this, however, without the Hellmuth Boys' College receiving some consideration for the property thus transferred. To enable him to be more completely the master of the situation; the luckless shareholders of the Hellmuth Boys' College were persuaded to sell their shares to the Bishop for one half their face value. The Bishop thus completely controlled the Boys' College. And now comes an instance of his magnanimity. He was of course desirous of liberally aiding the new University himself, and so he sold the property of the Hellmuth Boys' College at a certain price to the University, and himself presented the University with a large portion of the purchase money, we believe \$10,000. This was, of course, very generous, but when we remember that the value placed upon the Hellmuth College property by the Bishop was \$67,000, while its actual value is said to be very little more than one half of this, it will be readily seen that his conduct was not altogether disingenuous.

The Bishop, after deducting his gift of say \$10,000, was still some thousands of dollars to the good, having unloaded the property of the defunct Boys' College to the new University at a remunerative price. Whatever money was paid in up to July, 1881, on account of the Western University (amounting, we believe, to many thousands of dollars), with the exception of about \$1,600, was absorbed in the purchase of this property, the greater part of the purchase-money passing into the hands of the Bishop, who was now really the chief, if not the only, stockholder in the Hellmuth Boys' College. In July, 1881, the Bishop complied with the laws of the University Charter, and filed in the Office of the Provincial Secretary documents showing that the Western University possessed property to the value of at least \$100,000. The total property of the University as then filed was as follows:

I. SCHEDULE OF PROPERTY TRANSFERRED TO THE WESTERN UNIVERSITY BY HURON COLLEGE.

| | |
|---|--------------|
| 1. College grounds and buildings in London | \$ 35,000 00 |
| 2. Library and furniture in College | 2,500 00 |
| 3. Present cash value of mortgages and stocks held for the use of the College..... | 58,000 00 |
| | <hr/> |
| | \$ 95,500 00 |

II. SCHEDULE OF PROPERTY OTHER THAN HURON COLLEGE PROPERTY HELD BY WESTERN UNIVERSITY.

| | |
|---|--------------|
| 1. Real estate purchased from Hellmuth College in the City of London for | \$ 67,000 00 |
| Less Mortgage | 21,850 00 |
| | <hr/> |
| | \$ 45,150 00 |
| 2. Promissory notes uncollected | 6,645 00 |
| 3. Cash in hand | 1,600 00 |
| | <hr/> |
| | \$ 53,395 00 |

It will thus be seen that nearly the whole of the endowments and property consisted of that transferred by Huron College under the deed of affiliation. A declaration was filed by the Secretary of Huron College stating that he was familiar with the nature of real estate in London, and that the Huron