

## The Week.

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It is a red-letter day in the annals of Canadian education on which the first step is taken towards University Confederation by the transfer of the Methodist College from Cobourg to Toronto. The first step is not likely to be the last. Trinity College will, in time, find that its basis is too small for a separate University; the abler and the more active-minded are the members of its staff, the more conscious they will be of that fact; and though it seems to be anchored to its present site by its new and beautiful chapel, even that tie will hardly prevail in the end over the vital interest of the institution. Queen's will probably be more obstinate, but Queen's will come in at last: it cannot possibly hold its own in the end against a great Provincial University. While Principal Grant lives, his vigorous personality will probably remain unsubdued: then softer influences will steal over the heart of Queen's; otherwise Knox will expand and become the Presbyterian College. It is needless to rehearse the arguments which have prevailed in the case of Victoria, or to demonstrate again that a combination of our resources is indispensable to the production of anything really worthy of the name of a University. The lingering fear as to the danger to be encountered in the scientific lecture-rooms of a secular University by religious faith will, we are persuaded, prove unfounded. At Oxford and Cambridge, the Universities of the Anglican Clergy, there is sufficient sensitiveness on this point, yet we are not aware that there has been any complaint, though the tendencies of scientific thought are exactly the same in these as in other professoriates. Among other safeguards, a professor, even though he may be heterodox, is a cultivated man and a gentleman, and his natural disposition will be to avoid giving offence to his audience. Nor, on the other hand, do we share the apprehension of undue clerical interference with scientific teaching. Public opinion is now too strong in favour of giving free course to scientific truth. Something, perhaps, in this respect, and with regard to the working of the scheme generally, will, for a time, depend on the Chancellor, and it is to be desired that, for the future, he should be non-political, and free from any but Academical influence. It would be difficult, perhaps, to find words entirely acceptable in which to congratulate the Methodist Church on the redemption of its ministers from local and exclusive education. But the Province may be congratulated on the transfer of a body of students, destined to wield so much influence, from the close atmosphere and the dusky shade of the local Seminary to the free air and broad daylight of the National University. A special vote of thanks is due to Dr. Dewart and Dr. Potts, the latter of whom, we rejoice to see, has accepted the Educational Secretaryship of the Methodist body. It must be extended to Dr. Nelles, in spite of his mysterious change at the last.

As an offset against the happy accession of Victoria to the Provincial University, we are sorry to observe that another local and denominational college, the Baptist College, at Woodstock, is about to apply for a University charter. The Government cannot possibly believe that the application ought to be granted. Their own conduct with regard to Confederation shows that they are of the opposite opinion; but they may be hampered by the consequences of their weakness as in the case of London. The concession of University powers to London was not untainted with nepotism; and the conditions of efficiency which were imposed upon the grant were, as might have been expected, completely evaded by colourable endowments. Are institutions sometimes scarcely superior in equipment to a High School to be invested with the power of granting degrees, upon their own examinations, in all the departments of human knowledge? Can there be a more palpable fraud? If it is deemed that degrees are obsolete, or aristocratic, or in any way unsuited to the circumstances of Canadian society, let them be abolished, and let each place of education stand on its own commercial footing, and be judged simply by results. But if degrees are to be retained, and the State is to stamp them as certificates of proficiency in learning and science, let them be genuine, and not as a great mass of them here and in the States are now—impositions on the public. In the States, the system of "one-horse" and sectarian Universities is the despair of all the friends of high education. It is also a social evil, inasmuch as the ease with which sham degrees are obtained tempts a number of ambitious and ill-advised

youths away from business or the farm to intellectual callings in which they cannot be useful or happy. A Government which propagates it here, and at the very moment when we are struggling not unhelpfully to get out of it, will have little claim to the gratitude of the friends of Provincial education.

At the distribution of prizes in Upper Canada College, the Lieutenant-Governor came out boldly in favour of the preservation of the College. Nor is it likely that the position which he has taken will ever bring him into conflict with his constitutional advisers. The trembling balance in the scales of which hung life and death for Upper Canada College has turned in favour of life. That the position of the College is anomalous, and a survival of the state of things which existed before the foundation of High Schools, is true. But a survival, even though it be also an anomaly, is not necessarily an evil. The Collegiate Institute in this city, being a most excellent and flourishing institution, cannot complain that it is blighted by the presence of Upper Canada College. Divided among the High Schools, the endowment of Upper Canada College would be a mere dribble, while that which was torn down could never be rebuilt. To call the College a Canadian Eton is fantastic; the conditions of Canadian society are such that an Eton, for good or evil, can never exist here. But besides an antiquity which here is respectable, and the associations which have gathered round it, it has an educational character of its own. It is in some degree independent of the machine, and of the political influences by which the machine is worked. M. Victor Duruy, the French Minister of Education, boasted that at the word of command given by him the same lesson commenced at the same moment in all the schools of France. The effect of this intense centralization and of this monotonous uniformity on the French mind has not been entirely good. But at all events the Minister of Education in France is a Duruy, a man taken from the highest rank of intellect and thoroughly qualified for his office. We cannot always command such men as Provincial Ministers of Education, and, therefore, a spark of freedom with us is the more to be prized.

It was in the latter days of the Second Empire that M. Victor Duruy was inspecting a school, the show boy of which was called upon by the master, in compliment to the Minister, to mention the principal glories of the Empire. The boy glibly answered, "The Mexican Expedition and the Crédit Mobilier." The Mexican Expedition had then failed, and the Crédit Mobilier had collapsed. The boy, who was supposed to be a budding Republican indulging in impertinence against the Empire, was promptly taken aside and punished. On reference to the authorised text-book, however, it was found that he had simply repeated what was there set down. Our school text-books are not compiled under the influence of an Empire, but they are occasionally compiled under other influences; and their availability as engines of propagandism has not been entirely overlooked.

PREPARATIONS are being made for the commencement of the new Parliament Buildings, and the day of doom for Toronto's park has come. It is too plain what will happen. More buildings, in course of time, will be wanted, and the ground for them will be taken. Probably the legislators will desire a hotel near at hand, instead of having to return after midnight to the Queen's and the Rossin, and a hotel near at hand they will have. Toronto's park is not the queen of parks; but it is much better than none. Our people enjoy it in the summer afternoons, though the Prohibitionist preacher with his sulphurous declamation may vex the sweet summer air. Above all, it is the playground for the boys, and without a playground boyhood can be neither happy nor healthy. The mischief is irreparable, for High Park, even if it were properly laid out, is too far from the dwellings of those who want a park most, and it is too hilly for a driving park or for a playground. Why could not the Parliament Buildings have been rebuilt on their old site, in the centre of business, where they ought to be? If it had been necessary to drop a session of the Legislature, nobody would have been the worse, and the money thus saved would have been something towards the cost of the new building. If the whole sum had been provided in this way, perhaps no great calamity would have ensued.

WE sometimes imitate English fashions when they are not applicable to our country, and we had better strike out a course for ourselves. Let us imitate them when they are good. Heavy dinners with a multiplicity of courses are going quite out of fashion in London. Lighter and simpler repasts are taking their place. This is an improvement in every respect. Among other things, by diminishing the cost of entertaining, it enables more people to entertain, and thus promotes sociability, of which, in spite of the growth of Toronto, we have too little. Small parties are also now the