

the several Churches. In that manner we shall best carry the spirit of the Gospel into our literature and philosophy, with their various departments of reading, for the instruction or amusement of the people, and at the same time impart to the popular religion something more of thoughtfulness and intelligence than it would otherwise have.

It is preposterous, in our day, to regard elementary schools, especially elementary schools without the element of religion, as sufficient to secure these two great objects, or indeed to secure, in any sense, what is worthy to be called the education of a free Christian people. The safety of the State, as well as the progress of true religion, imperatively demand an acquaintance with many higher branches of learning, and demand also the wide diffusion of that learning among those great middle classes of society upon the morality and intelligence of which the public weal chiefly depends. When, therefore, Christian Churches undertake the founding and support of universities and higher seminaries, if they conduct such institutions in a broad and liberal spirit, they are doing one of the best things possible for the general good. Universities or colleges so created may be ill-endowed and feeble for a time, but they will not remain so. They will keep pace with the progress of the country, and, as the American examples are beginning to show, they will at length outstrip, both in wealth and influence, those institutions which depend upon the support of the State alone. All the great universities of the world (as we have the high authority of Prof. Goldwin Smith for saying) have grown great through successive private benefactions.

So far as the Methodist Church of Canada is concerned, both here and in the United States, she has had one definite line of action from the beginning, which is to combine education with the preaching of the Gospel, and to maintain colleges for the training of youth under religious but not sectarian influences. It is a noteworthy fact that while several of the Methodist Colleges of the United States already have endowments of about a million of dollars each, the last General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church decided to attempt yet greater things, and to enter upon an energetic movement through the whole Church in 1884, for a centenary fund, the chief portion of which is to be devoted to higher education. Our own General