

I close by some allusion to one of the greatest events in the life of the University, the practical consummation of confederation with Victoria, and its approaching establishment in the park as a federating college. I am sure we all heartily congratulate Victoria on the rapid progress of her stately pile, and wish her a long and prosperous sojourn in her chosen home. I am ready to repeat to-day these words, which I used in 1887, as to the scheme, then yet under negotiation :

For myself, while I have always been free to express my opinions, and to press for the adoption of the absolute best, I have always been willing to agree to the best practicable plan if that should be an improvement on the existing condition of things, even though it might fall short of the absolute best. We must first secure a basis on which all will be willing loyally to work ; and, secondly, a basis which possesses the elements of stability combined with reasonable elasticity. Thirdly, in that basis proper strength must be given to those elements both of Victoria and of the state college in which there is to be separate life and action. Each must have security for its work and life going on free and untrammelled, the state supplying the substantial needs of the state college, and the church those of the church college. Fourthly, the basis must involve a large measure and sphere of common action which shall give to the whole the cohesive force calculated to result in strength and co-operation, harmony and progress. Fifthly, the basis should give adequate financial strength to the state institution in all its parts, both to the professoriate and to the college staff. No man can possibly, with honesty, accept this plan with destructive intent. If a denominational college, such as Victoria, prefer to maintain a considerable staff and do a considerable part of the arts teaching under her own roof, we may differ in opinion as to the wisdom of that condition, but we must bow to the decision ; and, if we do bow to the decision, we must accept the plan with that element of the plan, honestly determining that, so far as we are concerned, it shall succeed if our good-will may help it on. We cannot honestly accept, and then try to weaken this part of the plan, either by removing to the University professoriate the subjects stipulated to be taught in the college, or, on the other hand, by depriving Victoria of the advantages of the aid given by the large number of subjects to be taught in the University professoriate. For my part I have always been anxious to see as many subjects as possible taught by the University professoriate and so taught in common, and to provide that no changes shall be made save such as, by general assent, experience shall have shown to be for the common good ; and I would deprecate some expressions which have been used and which seem to indicate an apprehension that an effort might be made to hinder the successful discharge by the denominational college of the function which it is to retain. No such effort can honestly be made. Her success will depend upon the strength of her staff, as the success of University College will depend upon the strength of its staff. The financial arrangements to give that strength to University College staff are of prime importance and the Government must look to them. The financial arrangements of Victoria College are her own concern, and we can only say that we wish her well. I shall heartily rejoice if, by the ultimate success of this plan, we may create both a formal and substantial relation between the Provincial University and a great denomination, and thus add strength to the cause of higher education by the adoption, on national and absolutely unsectarian principles, of a united and concentrated effort to produce the best results.

You know that I have never disguised the opinion that the plan, like most plans for remodelling or adding to old structures, shows in some parts signs of compromise and of adjustment to existing facts, falls short in some respects of an ideal symmetry, and, indeed, is in some minor aspects hardly capable of logical defence. But it was the best that could be agreed on ; it has been loyally accepted ; and I believe it will be loyally worked in a spirit of mutual confidence and good-will. So worked it will succeed ! In accordance with the basis I have quoted, statutory provision was made for securing to University College what was thought to be an adequate staff, and she was given an independent existence within her sphere of the same nature as that which Victoria retains within hers. Those who are deeply interested in University College have up to this time submitted in the general interest to the postponement of her statutory and most obviously urgent claims to additional professorial strength. We have even supported increases to the fees for college students, the proceeds whereof will go temporarily to meet University demands.

The financial straits of the institution may even yet compel a considerable further delay in the complete performance of our obligation to University College. But it is now, or, at any rate, in a very few weeks, I believe, it will become the very first claim on any increase in our available resources. I am strongly of opinion that, pending satisfaction, such increase should be largely devoted to partial performance. As regards the great work to be done for the general good