

interest of the youth of our land. He had great pleasure in introducing to them the Honourable, the Minister of Education for Ontario. The Hon. Mr. Crooks, on rising, was received with hearty and prolonged applause. He referred to his visit to the Convocation of four years ago, and of the desire he had to note the progress of the institution in the intervening time. He paid a compliment to the zeal and energy of its founders, and was glad to know that it had gained and was still gaining an influential position among the Colleges and Universities of the country. He considered it a very important step, as well as one connected with very many delicate interests, when the Government of which he was a member assumed the control of public instruction. His colleagues had selected him to fill the important post of Minister to that department. If he possessed no other qualifications, he believed it was of great advantage to him as Minister of Education that he had himself been educated in the Province. He had passed through all the grades of the Public Schools in Ontario, through Upper Canada College and the University of Toronto, and he believed that the experience of our native schools would be of use to him in the discharge of his ministerial duties. Of the public High Schools, he said that they were now such as to place within the reach of all the advantages of a sound and liberal education, while the Provincial University acted as a kind of finish to the Public Educational system. He then proceeded to give some account of the circumstances which had called Albert University into existence, paying a merited compliment to Bishop Carman, to whom its success in a great measure is due. After some reference to the causes which conduced to the use of a University, he sat down amidst enthusiastic cheers. The Chancellor made a few remarks on the state of the University, and dismissed the audience with the benediction. At eight o'clock in the evening a large number of the Alumni and students sat down to dinner in the new dining-hall at the College. Besides several prominent men from the town, the dinner was graced by the presence of the Hon. Mr. Crooks and the Rev. J. T. Gracey, M.A., of Clifton Springs, New York, and Missionary Editor of the *Northern Christian Advocate*. The usual toasts and responses were given, and the evening's entertainment closed at eleven o'clock.

VI. Extracts from Periodicals and Papers.

1. OXFORD UNIVERSITY REFORM.

The Conservative Government under which we exist at present came into office as a defence against the worrying and harassing vigour of the previous Administration, but it seems to have caught the infection of vigour from its predecessor, and even to have taken the disease in an aggravated form. The Gladstone Government was satisfied with disestablishing an effete church in Ireland, and doing tardy justice to a great nation for a piece of culpable negligence on the part of the Home Administration. The Disraeli Government flies at higher game. It proposes to turn upside down the relation which has always existed between the Indian Government and the Secretary of State for India, and to insist that, for the future, the affairs of two hundred and forty millions of people shall be regulated by an official sitting in a snug room in Downing Street at one end of an electric telegraph wire, the other end being in Calcutta, or Simla, or wherever the Governor-General of India may happen to be. It proposes, further, to remodel the hereditary monarchy of Great Britain and Ireland, and (I quote Mr. Disraeli's words—words which any lackey in the kingdom would have been ashamed to use) "to add splendour to the British throne" by setting up a shoddy title of "Empress" in addition to the old historical title of Queen. It also contemplates, in connection with France and Italy, the financial re-establishment of a wily bankrupt potentate, and to perform in Egypt the miracle which baffled the ingenuity of the Israelites of old—to make bricks without straw. And, by way of reaping from its labours abroad, it has turned its attention to one of the most powerful interests in England, the two great Universities, and has introduced a measure into the House of Lords which, if it passes into law, may mould for good or for evil the character of one of our great centres of culture and education for generations to come.

It is on this bold flight of the present Government that I propose to send you a few lines to-day.

Five-and-twenty years ago the Universities were doing, comparatively with their resources, but little good. They were governed by antiquated codes of statutes. Legislation was initiated and the government administered by a Board consisting of the Heads of Houses and the Proctors—an administration which has been well described as an "organized torpor." Debates on University matters were, by statute, conducted in Latin. None were admitted on

matriculation who could not sign the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, and college fellowships were restricted to those who could solemnly declare themselves, under the Act of Uniformity, to be members of the church. Professorial teaching hardly existed. Fellowships, with one or two exceptions, were given by favour or for considerations among which learning was the least. The requisites for election at All Souls' College at Oxford, for instance, were birth, dress, and a modicum of learning. The dogma contained in the words, "Bene natus, bene vestitus, et moderate doctus," comprised the modest catalogue of attributes for eligibility. Scholarships were nearly all close. Clerical restrictions were invariably imposed upon those who held any position of authority, and—to sum up the matter in three words—the ecclesiastical spirit of the Middle Ages brooded over the whole life of the Universities.

But a mighty change has come over them in the last quarter of a century. In 1850, Lord Russell issued a Royal Commission to enquire into the state, discipline, studies, and revenues of the Universities, and in 1854 and 1856 he introduced measures founded on the report of this Commission and passed them into law. Under these laws the Universities have been regulated until the present day. Since then there has been good and useful work done where there was little but idleness and inactivity before. In 1850, the whole number of Oxford undergraduates was 1,402; in 1875, they numbered 2,240. The scholarships are now for the most part, open to competition, and the more important fellowships, instead of being given away by favour or by the accident of birth, are held by those who have gained them by examination. Outside the University circles, too, the University influence has steadily extended. Examinations of pupils trained in middle-class schools have been organized; academical lectures and classes have been established in populous centres; and a "Public Schools' Examination Board" has been set on foot for the purpose of examining thoroughly and independently the leading schools in England. These schools in their turn direct their energies to train up scholars qualified to compete for the University prizes. The head-masters of the fifteen great public schools, nearly all the head-masters of 180 metropolitan and provincial grammar-schools, and most of the assistant-masters in all these schools, are graduates of Oxford or Cambridge. The great body of the clergymen and barristers, all the bishops, and nearly two-thirds of the judges are University men, the national schools and the public board schools are for the most part managed by clergymen who have been trained at one of the older Universities. The Education Office is made up of Oxford and Cambridge graduates. Out of 123 school-inspectors all but ten or twelve come from one of the two Universities. The Civil-Service Commission, in like manner, which superintends the examinations for the civil and military service, is recruited from the same stock, all the commissioners, secretaries, directors of examinations, and examiners having been selected, with the rarest exceptions, from one or other of the older Universities. The present House of Commons, which is not one in which culture predominates, contains not less than 225 members who were educated either at Oxford or Cambridge. In Mr. Gladstone's original Cabinet ten Ministers out of fifteen were Oxford or Cambridge men. In the present Cabinet, Mr. Disraeli is the only Minister who has not received a University education. If he had enjoyed that advantage, his eccentric imagination might have been toned down, and his taste for tinsel and theatrical effects might have lost some of its exuberance.

From these statistics it is obvious that the Universities are doing good work; but Lord Salisbury thinks that they ought to do better. During the time of Mr. Gladstone's Administration every institution in the country was called upon to give an account of itself, and to show cause why it should not be reformed, and the two Universities were no exceptions. A Commission was appointed to investigate the state of the finances of the two Universities, and to report upon them. It was precluded from entering into the general question of the reform of these institutions, or from issuing any recommendations as to the application of endowments. An opportunity of making enquiry as to the effect of the legislation of 1854 and 1856 was thus lost; but, as regards Oxford, Lord Salisbury has entered the field as a reformer. He finds that the report of the Finance Commissioners has brought out a better state of things than was anticipated. The total revenues of the two Universities amount to about £750,000 a year, but it does not appear that this large sum is to any great extent misappropriated. The bursars who have the control of the college affairs have proved themselves to be, if not heaven-born men of business, at least fairly economical stewards of the collegiate property. But it has been manifested at the same time that there is a striking disparity in the expenditure of the different colleges—that whereas some colleges educate their students at £80 to £100 a year per head, others spend £250 to £300 on the same object. It appeared also that the colleges are rich while the University is poor, and that a considera-