

blameworthy by the Assembly which elected them, for executive acts over which they had no real control. It is not wonderful that they hastened to escape from a situation so equivocal and thankless. We have not learned whether steps have been taken to either elect or appoint another Board, but it would not be surprising if it should prove difficult to find men willing to accept office under such conditions. We commented, at the time the Act was under consideration, upon some of its nondescript and unsatisfactory features. It is not unlikely that this event may strengthen the agitation for a complete organization and full responsible government for the Territories.

THE Behring Sea dispute has been from the first, peculiar among international questions, in that the argument has been wholly on one side. The American Government has vouchsafed no explanation or defence of its policy. Even its most zealous supporters have scarcely made a pretence of serious reasoning in support of its claims, while the more honest and candid American speakers and writers have, to their credit be it said, either clearly intimated their doubts as to the justice and tenableness of their Government's position, or have frankly admitted that they had no case. Sometimes, it is true, the admission has been accompanied with some vague assertion as to the necessity of preserving the seals from destruction; but such claims, based on the assumption of a right to do wrong were so manifestly Jesuitical that they really made the logical surrender more apparent. And now, to cap the climax, Professor James B. Angell, unquestionably one of the weightiest authorities in the United States on such a question, comes forward in the *Forum* and establishes beyond dispute the substance of the Canadian contention. It is needless to summarize his article. It is but a clear and able presentation of arguments which have again and again been presented, though probably never before in a shape in which they could reach the eyes and command the attention of so many thoughtful Americans. We do not suppose that Mr. Angell's relations with the Washington Government are of such a character as to warrant the supposition that his article is intended to pave the way to a surrender which has very likely been contemplated from the first. Mr. Angell summarizes his conclusion as follows: "On the whole we find no ground on which we can claim as a right the exclusion of foreigners from the open waters of Behring Sea for the purpose of protecting seals. If we have any good ground and are determined to stand upon it, then we ought to proceed with more vigour in maintaining our policy. To send one little revenue steamer, carrying a small crew, into Behring Sea, and to despatch on each of the captured vessels one man, a common seaman, as a prize crew or commanding officer, is simply absurd." He urges, moreover, that negotiations should be opened at once with a view to an amicable settlement. Such an article from such a source is gratifying. But it only makes deeper the mystery in which the course pursued by the British Government in the matter is involved, and gives some colour to the supposition that there may have been some tacit understanding between the two Governments—a supposition which we cannot for a moment entertain. But what other great nation under the sun would have quietly suffered her subjects to be subjected to such treatment as that to which the British Columbia sealers have been subjected, knowing that the claim asserted by the offending Government was not only utterly untenable and absurd, but was no doubt known to be so by those asserting it?

EVEN in these closing years of the nineteenth century writers of more or less note are found occasionally deprecating the tendency of the times toward a more general dissemination of what is known as higher education. The multiplying of colleges may, they fear, attract to the professions young men who would find more fitting avocations as mechanics, and may result in still further overcrowding the ranks of brain-workers. With the views of such writers we have no sympathy, nor do we in the least share their fears. Education is not alone for the rich, the talented, or the children of the educated. These are, on the contrary, the classes to whom college training is least necessary. Geniuses, indeed, can better dispense with the intellectual discipline gained by systematic study than can men of ordinary intellect. Extraordinary ability will carry its possessor to the front, no matter under what disabilities he may labour. It is the average, common-place man to whom liberal opportunities for mind-culture are the greatest boon. They may not enable him to attain brilliant success, but they will, if faithfully used, add

greatly to his own happiness, and to his value to the community in which he lives. After all, the point at issue is, confessedly or not, but a phase of the old conflict, still so far from final settlement, between the advocates of aristocratic institutions and the champions of democracy—between men who can conceive of no stable society without sharply drawn lines of demarcation separating the classes from the masses, the educated and cultured from the ignorant and rude, the domineering brains from the docile hands, and men who cherish visions of an ideal State, in which education shall be a universal birthright and social caste, a hateful remembrance of a darker age. Had those who look with apprehension at the increasing number of young men who desire a fuller and higher mental training than is afforded by the Public Schools been born a century or a half-century sooner, elementary education of the masses would have found them ranged among its bitterest opponents. The proposition that every man should be taught to read and write would have been in their eyes a revolutionary programme fraught with the gravest consequences to society. Elementary education, however, has become in Anglo-Saxon countries all but universal, the disaster predicted has not taken place, and the man of culture who in this day should propose the abolition of the Public Schools would be looked upon as a phenomenon or a fanatic.

THE assumption that the professions are being overcrowded at the expense of the trades is one often made by those imperfectly acquainted with the subject. As a matter of fact, if lawyers and doctors are overplentiful, so are mechanics. In the trades, as in the professions, there is room at the top; but, as a rule, a first-class mechanic enjoys a much smaller share of the comforts of life, and must content himself with a much lower remuneration than a lawyer or doctor who has been only moderately successful, while the large pecuniary rewards attending brilliant professional success are, so long as he remains an employé, utterly beyond his reach. Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that the advice so often tendered to High School and University graduates, to learn a trade, is so rarely taken. If, however, it were a fact, that the trades were becoming depleted on account of the number of young men taking academical courses, it would be, to our mind, cause not for regret, but for satisfaction. The remedy would lie, not in limiting higher education, but in making it still more general. The threatened congestion of the professions would then be averted by the operation of natural laws, and numbers of educated young men would perforce turn to manual occupations as a means of livelihood. With such an acquisition to the thinking element in the ranks of workingmen, the relations between capital and labour—the most tremendous problem of the time—could not long remain unsettled. Nor could they then be settled in any other way than by restoring to handwork the dignity of which it has long been unfairly deprived, or, perhaps, has never yet attained, and making the market value of the hand-labourer's services not a mere subsistence, but a liberal share of the comforts and refinements of life. However uncertain the improvement of their own lot may seem, workingmen who are making sacrifices in order to educate their children are entitled to an unselfish satisfaction in the knowledge that they are doing a noble part towards the amelioration of the lot of their successors in the so-called humbler walks of life.

AMONG the many unsolved problems of the time may be reckoned that of the future of colleges and universities. In both hemispheres, or at least in the English-speaking countries of both, there is a disturbance of the old ideas and ideals which is likely, sooner or later, to result in a gradual overturn and a settlement on a new basis. The recent opening of Mansfield College at Oxford marks a phase, or perhaps we should rather say a stage, of the movement in the Old Country. The most significant feature of the event is, to our thinking, the intimation that those great institutions whose life is identified with that of the nation are no longer to be regarded as existing for the special behoof of any class or sect, but as the property of the whole people. Henceforth all subjects of the nation are to be entitled to share in their benefits on equal terms. But scarcely second to this in significance is the other fact that the new college has its foundation laid in voluntarism. To argue, as some have done, that the opening of the Congregational College at Oxford is a step in the direction of federation of the kind that is now being attempted in Ontario, and that some are striving for in Manitoba, seems to us a misreading of its significance. The

vital element of the long struggle in England has been the principle that the higher education of the country shall not be subject to ecclesiastical control. The issue in Canada, an issue which is still being fought out in Nova Scotia, in Ontario and in Manitoba, is whether higher education is to be under the control of the State. The Canadian, and perhaps we might say the American issue—though the question seems to be quietly settling itself in the United States—may not be as yet so clearly understood or so fully developed as the English, but many who are opposing the federation movements here see, or think they see, that the control of a political Government may be just as fatal to the higher life, the absolute freedom, the complete development of a university, as is that of a State Church. Voluntarism, they maintain, is the only palladium of intellectual and spiritual freedom in both cases. The question of support also involves an important principle. It is not wonderful that the murmurings of the many against the appropriation of the public funds, to which they are forced to contribute, to costly institutions for the education of the few, wax louder and louder. There can be little doubt that as the power of the ballot passes more and more into the hands of the people, the seemingly just rule that the money which belongs to all must be used only for the support of institutions in whose benefits all can directly share, will come to be an axiom of public administration. The same tendency which impels such old national institutions as Oxford to throw open its doors to all, in the Old World, will tell against the founding of such institutions in the New World. All recent history, both in England and in America, happily shows that the cause of higher culture, like the cause of religion, will lose nothing and gain much from being thrown for support upon the sympathy and liberality of the people.

IS the United States going the way of the ancient republics? There is certainly some danger of it if the facts and figures arrayed by Mr. Thomas G. Shearman may be relied on. According to these statistics the tendency of wealth to concentration in a few hands is more marked in the United States than in any other country. Not only so, but the rich are vastly richer there than elsewhere. His aggregates are almost beyond belief. To conceive of property to the value of one hundred to one hundred and fifty millions of dollars under the control of one man beggars the powers of conception of one who has not become accustomed to think in millions. The state of things indicated by the fact, if it be as we suppose it is a fact, that seventy men represent an aggregate wealth of two thousand seven hundred millions of dollars, and the further fact that 25,000 persons own one-half the total wealth of the whole nation of 60,000,000, is indeed startling if not appalling. According to Mr. Sherman, while the average annual income of the richest one hundred Englishmen is about \$450,000, that of the richest one hundred Americans is not less than \$1,200,000, and probably exceeds \$1,500,000. And the limit of this concentration is, we are told, by no means reached. The process is still going on, and going on in so marked and rapid a manner that Mr. Shearman, leaving the solid ground of existing facts and soaring into prophecy, feels warranted in predicting that, if the present conditions continue for the next thirty years, at the end of that period fifty thousand persons will practically own the whole country. But, happily or otherwise, thirty years is a long time in the history of such a people, and it is almost inevitable that great changes, now unthought of, will take place within that period. It may be hoped that those changes will be beneficial, for unless such occur the upshot must be a catastrophe such as the world has never seen. Meanwhile the problem set before the student of political economy is one well worthy of the profoundest study.

THE Montreal *Star* calls attention to a problem which demands deeper study and a better solution than it has yet received. It says that within a few days three boys were brought before the Recorder as incorrigible, and that only a few weeks since the attention of the police was drawn to a band of boy burglars in that city. It tells also a tale which sounds like the invention of an imaginative newspaper correspondent during the dull season, but which must, we suppose, be accepted as a fact of current history. The story is that in Detroit the other evening a constable arrested eight boys, whose ages range from ten to thirteen, in a cave which they had hollowed out in a vacant lot. The floor of the cave was covered with leaves, a fire was burning, and two dogs were on guard outside the entrance. The place was filled with all manner of