

gives a practical significance to the widening of the intellectual horizon, and the expansion of knowledge in so many unlooked for aspects. In whatever light we view it, the practical importance of higher education, as a grand factor in material progress, becomes ever more apparent; and the economic value of applied science is already so universally appreciated that scarcely any limit can be set to the demands for ampler services. And while we are looking with sanguine eagerness on this birthtime of our Western domain, the old East is waking up to new life, and testifies its sympathy in the trials of our own University. Europe and America are paying back their debt to the birth lands of letters and civilization. Schools and Colleges are being planted in British India; and letters and science receive a hearty encouragement in Japan; at the very time when the recovered tablets and inscriptions of Babylonia and Egypt disclose evidence of an Eastern civilization dating fifteen centuries before the Christian era, and startle us by their novel elucidations of sacred and profane history.

But while the East is brightening with a new dawn; and the Old World seems everywhere awakening to a sense of the practical value of intellectual culture, even in its most recondite aspects, it is with a sense of amused wonder that our attention is challenged by a sudden outbreak of disparagement of higher education from sundry very dissimilar quarters. Man has once more plucked of the Tree of Knowledge, and it proves, as of old, to bear both good and evil fruit. Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers; and instead of fostering it till its later fruitage: not only crafty statesmen, and selfish speculators, eager in the pursuit of gain, denounce the popularizing of education; but some whose own example is the best evidence of

its worth are found preaching a gospel of ignorance as the panacea for the age. The Czar of Russia is credited with the assertion that education lies at the root of Nihilism, and all its attendant troubles. Bismarck, we are assured, traces the industrial discontent, and the world-wide social revolts, of which Germany has its full share, to the same source. High ecclesiastical authorities greet with like monitory warning the ever-widening diffusion of knowledge. That an outcry against the mischievous popularization of knowledge should reach us from Russia, and find a sympathetic echo in the breast of Germany's astute and imperious ex-chancellor, need not surprise us. But it is impossible to see without regret a tendency among our own intelligent working classes to regard with jealousy and disfavour anything beyond the public school work, as though High Schools and Colleges were designed solely for a privileged caste, and not for the people. Even in our Legislative Assembly this sentiment has found utterance; while traders and speculators join in a common wail over the diversion of the rising generation from industrial pursuits. Our forests are in danger of being neglected by the lumberman; the plough, of rusting in the weedy furrow; and the counting-house and store of being deserted, while our young men overstock the professions, and waste a profitless life in genteel penury! If such is really the case it may be safely left to work its own cure. Poverty has no special charms even though it flaunt a doctor's title, or hide its threadbare garments under a barrister's gown. But is it really so? When the Act of 1853 established the University on its present basis, the population of Toronto amounted to about 40,000; now it is reckoned at upwards of 150,000 souls. It is surely a natural result of this, with its