

For the REVIEW.]

## "L' UNIVERSITÉ."

The institution thus spoken of in France is so great, and yet so distinct from other "Universities" that we may well recall once again what it is.

*L' Université de France* means the whole state department of higher education, including not only the faculties—that is the universities almost, as we should say—of Paris, Lyon, etc., but also the *lycees*, the higher schools, whose teaching embraces much of the teaching of our colleges.

There is, then, no such entity as the "University of Paris," as by a slight error an article was lately headed in this REVIEW. There is the Faculty of Paris, *l' Académie de Paris*, as there is the one of Lyons or of Bordeaux, and, I think, fourteen in all. The old universities of France were suppressed at the new modelling under Napoleon. But now after nearly a century of this post-revolution continuation of pre-revolution centralizing, a great change is coming. Independent universities are to be formed out of *l' Université*, and again there will be really a University of Paris, and a rivalry in intellectual things between separate living bodies at other large towns of France. There is felt to be something unreal and forced in the life of these portions of the great centralized institution. This may have had its work to do in the bringing of uniformity into French public life; but the best tendencies now are towards diversity. May this and other long-suffering common school-ed countries feel these tendencies more and more. There is hope, when even the logical French feel that system is but a means to an end.

One other thing may I say? The writer in the REVIEW said that the Catholic faculty of theology in Paris is no longer paid by the State, while the Protestant one is. Quite true. But the reason is not far to seek. The Catholic church in France as in America has not acquiesced in the severance of State teaching from dogmatic religion. And in this refusal she has, as is well known, many Protestants on her side. In France the Protestant church is tolerant of dogmatic differences, even to toleration of Unitarianism, and naturally then falls in with a secular, but not immoral State. But the State in France would not refuse to pay the Catholic faculties of theology, if the Catholic church was willing to acquiesce to the State's attitude towards dogmatic religious teaching—a thing of course impossible. W. F. STOCKLEY.

The largest gold coin in circulation in the world is stated to be the gold "loof" of Annam, the French colony in eastern Asia. It is a flat, round piece, worth about sixty-five pounds sterling. The next in size to this unwieldy coin is the Japanese "obang," which weighs rather more than two ounces and a half, about equal to ten English sovereigns.

## TOPICS FOR THE SCHOOL ROOM.

The expedition of seventeen of the graduates of Bowdoin College, under Professor Lee, to the Labrador coast, has just returned *via* Halifax, where the explorers were generously entertained by the local government. A small party was detailed to explore the Hamilton River up to the Grand Falls, reported to be 2000 feet high—the grandest in America. After great fatigue two reached the Grand Falls, which is estimated at less than 200 feet in height. The canon of the river is magnificent, far beyond Niagara, 500 or 600 feet of a vertical cut in hard Archean rock. There are a number of smaller falls and rapids from the edge of the plateau, which may give altogether nearly the reported total of 2000 feet of a fall.

An American vessel has been seized by the Russians in Behring Sea. The Americans will either have to acquiesce in this or acknowledge the British contention that Behring Sea is not a *mare clausum*.

A party of British seamen pic-nicing on the island of Mitylene, about sixty miles from the entrance to the Dardanelles, caused a great sensation in Europe. It was reported that the British had seized the island in order to checkmate Russia.

The recent quick passage (20 days) of Canada Pacific mail steamers on the Pacific ocean has attracted world-wide notice. A British regiment returning from China to England is to make the trip eastward by the way of Canada. This will be the first actual test of the capabilities of Britain's new highway to the east. What other routes are there? Why is the Canadian route preferable?

A great famine is prevailing in Russia owing to the failure in the crops. There is great distress in many places and some of the people are actually starving. What are the chief exports of Russia?

Rich gold mines have been discovered in Alaska. To whom does Alaska belong and how was it acquired?

The insurgents have completely defeated Balmaceda's (pronounce Bal-ma-tha-da) forces and the ex-president committed suicide at Santiago. Indemnity for losses will be demanded by foreign residents.

There is a war scare in Europe. The recent visit of the erratic German Emperor to the British and Austrian courts, coupled with the hobnobbing of the French and Russians, has caused general uneasiness. Russia has disregarded all treaties and her warships now navigate the Dardanelles; her objective points are Constantinople and India. France is smarting over British occupation of Egypt and German occupation of two of her Rhine provinces. Should a war break out the active contestants would probably be France and Russia on one side and Germany, Austria, Italy and Great Britain on the other. What is the meaning of the different allusions in the above? What is meant by the "eastern question?" Should such a war take place where would be the probable battle grounds?