

The Varsity

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TORONTO, November 20th, 1900.

OUR RELATION TO THE STATE.

The financial support of the University of Toronto by the Province of Ontario is matter of no less vital importance to the people of the Province than to the University itself. Unfortunately, however, to judge by the action of their government the good people of Ontario are either strangely ignorant of this fact, or else indifferent to their own best interests. While their neighbors to the south are most active in their support of state universities—the State of Michigan, for example, taxes itself annually to the extent of \$300,000 for this purpose—the people of Ontario are backward in their support of the Provincial University. They do not grant it a cent of revenue annually; have not made it a grant of any kind since the year of the fire, and besides have not paid for the lands they seized from it as a site for the Parliament buildings. Repeated appeals to the government by the University authorities for further financial aid have at best been met with evasive promises which amounted to nothing.

Though the laxness in the performance of duty to the University on the part of the Government is a cause for some discouragement, it is no ground for the opinion which we sometimes hear expressed that the University's connection with the State should be severed. Such an opinion is as dangerous as it is foolish, especially so at a time when Queen's University has demanded and obtained government aid, and, becoming more aggressive, is attempting to establish claims to a position of equality as a State University with the University of Toronto. Now, if ever, the just claims of our own University to the position of sole State University in the province, and its importance as such to the people at large, should be made clear and emphatic.

In the first number of "Queen's University Journal," Professor Shortt disputes President Loudon's contention, made in his convocation address, that the University of Toronto is the only really State University in the province. Professor Shortt claims that Toronto received its original charter in exactly the same way as did Queen's, as a grant to a denominational body, viz., the Church of

England. This, however, is a clear misstatement of the facts of the case. Certain clauses favorable to the Church of England were indeed inserted in the charter, but the charter itself was not granted to the University as a denominational institution at all, but as the University of the people, and such it has remained from that day to this. On the other hand, all Universities in the province, such as Trinity, McMaster, and Queens received grants of charters independently altogether from the State, as purely sectarian institutions; and as such they are not entitled to a cent of the people's money, although Professor Shortt would claim that because they received a *charter* they are in an equal rank, in their claim for support, with the State University. As well might it be argued that chartered banks have equal claims to support from the people with provincial prisons, asylums, etc.

If then the University of Toronto is the only State University in the province is it not a matter of some surprise that the people do not support it better? Certainly, in the United States, state support of universities is liberal and universal. Almost every State in the Union supports a university of its own, and an effort is now being made to establish a National University which will be supported by the Federal Government. There, State support does not in the least discourage private endowment, monumental evidence of which fact is found in such cases as that of James Lick, who endowed the University of California with \$1,650,000. Indeed most people would rather support the child of the State than some denominational or privately endowed institution which is apt to be dependent, insecure, inadequate, imperfect, expensive and exclusive.

Of the benefit of the University to the people at large it is hardly necessary to speak. It bears something of the same relation to society as the brain bears to the physical organism, in that it trains men who are to become intellectual leaders of their fellow-men—increases ability and renders it more effective—and is the home of the highest learning and a center of the intellectual progress of the race. Moreover, in Ontario the University of Toronto is an organic part of our educational system, of which the other parts are the public and high schools, it therefore deserves just as much encouragement and support as either of the other parts with which it is vitally bound up.

When we come to seek a rational explanation for the fact that the people of Ontario do not support, as well as they should, the only University constitutionally entitled to their support, the only acceptable one seems to be that they do not *realize* the needs of the University, and the advantages derived from it. Education of the people, then, is the only remedy. This is what certain of our University men are now setting out to accomplish, and with that object they have instituted the Alumni Association. They have learned a lesson from American colleges, that effective work is secured by organization. Local Alumni associations are being formed all over the country. Before long they will be in existence in every county, city, and large town in the Province. With our