

The lack of a Faculty of Music in the University of Toronto has long been sorely felt. No one now needs to be told of the high educational value of this subject. The President of University College is to be thanked by all lovers of this art for the encouragement and patronage which he extends to the scheme of Chamber concerts, thus securing for undergraduates the best substitute in the circumstances for a regular course in music. It is to be hoped, however, that if the confederation scheme is carried out due provision will at once be made for instruction in this most important subject, so that our talented native musicians may be no longer attracted to and retained by other countries.

THE UNIVERSITY CONSOLIDATION SCHEME.

Our readers will find in another column the scheme of University consolidation for this Province, prepared at a recent conference of heads of colleges and universities under the presidency and at the instance of the Minister of Education. The conference was several times adjourned, and as all its sessions were long, the discussion of the present state of higher education and of the best means of improving it must have been very thorough. The scheme will no doubt disappoint the expectations of many on account of its want of symmetry and its illogical character. Some of the proposals are manifestly the result of compromises, and can be defended, if at all, only on that ground. But we have no doubt that these peculiarities can be plausibly if not satisfactorily explained, and that the reasons for this peculiar distribution of subjects as between the proposed Provincial University and the proposed Provincial College will be made clear in the course of the inevitable discussion of the next few weeks.

The first impression produced by a perusal of this document is that an important crisis is impending in the history of higher education. Its adoption by college authorities generally would bring about something like a revolution, and one that is much needed. The great obstacle to the better performance of university work proper in Ontario is the want of funds, and only by some scheme which will harmonize interests and consolidate resources can more funds be obtained. The futility of trying to compete with several of the American universities, which are within easy reach of our students, will be apparent to any one who considers that while the united endowments of all our universities do not amount to one million dollars, the endowments of several American universities amount to several millions each. Neither the cost and inconvenience of attendance at one of these great and rapidly developing seats of learning, nor any consideration of patriotism will suffice to prevent ambitious young men from going abroad for an education which they cannot procure at home at any cost or sacrifice. The exodus of this class has so far been limited, but unless something is done to remove the cause, the natural effect will be the rapid development of a movement which threatens to drain this country of a type of young men whom it can ill spare.

The ratification of this scheme by the Legislature, if it is embodied in an Act of Parliament, will mark an important era in the chequered history of the Provincial University and College. In order to understand its full significance it is necessary to recall a few of the more striking changes in their constitution. The policy of setting apart certain lands as an endowment for the promotion of higher education was a wise and thoughtful one. For it this Province is said to be indebted to Governor Simcoe, at whose instance it was adopted nearly a century ago. For almost half of that time, however, very little was done in the way of utilizing the endowment, owing chiefly to the undeveloped state of the country and the fierceness of the political conflicts which occupied the public mind to the exclusion of education, both higher and lower. Part of it was devoted about fifty years ago to the foundation of Upper Canada College, and the rest was appropriated by the Anglican Church and absorbed in the establishment of King's College as a strictly denominational institution. Had the fund not been diverted in these two ways from its original purpose, it is extremely improbable that any second university would ever have been instituted in Ontario. Queen's and Victoria were established almost contemporaneously with King's, the former as a Presbyterian, the latter as a Methodist university.

Subsequent events seem to prove that if the founders and promoters of these two institutions had devoted themselves to the restoration of the endowment to its proper use, the wrong would have been speedily righted and future complications of an embarrassing kind avoided. In 1849 the endowment was secularized by the Baldwin Act, and King's College, no longer sectarian, became a Provincial seat of learning with both teaching and degree-conferring functions, under the title of Toronto University. In this form it endured for only three years. One aim of the Baldwin Act was to secure what the present scheme has been devised to accomplish—a consolidation of university interests and resources, so as to promote efficiency. Experience showed that it was not well adapted to bring about the desired result, and in 1852 the

Hincks Act separated the teaching and degree-conferring functions, assigning the former to University College and the latter to the University of Toronto. The new constitution was modelled avowedly on that of the University of London with its affiliated institutions, in the hope that the other still youthful universities of the Province would abandon their degree-conferring powers and take their places in a federal system.

The hope was vain, however. Instead of doing so, they united with Trinity, which had been founded to take the place of King's as an Anglican University, in a determined effort to secure portions of the Provincial endowment for themselves. This attempt was unsuccessful, because there was found to be no surplus to divide after the wants of the Provincial institutions were supplied, and owing to the general progress of higher education the revenue has since turned out miserably inadequate. For thirty years Toronto University and College discharged their functions as well as hampering conditions permitted, all the time acquiring a firmer hold on the people to whom they belong. Two years ago the vice-Chancellor, in his commencement address, announced that the time had come for an appeal to the Legislature for more funds, if the cause of higher education were not to suffer. This announcement was met by imitations from the supporters of denominational universities that such an application to the Legislature would be strenuously opposed by them unless their institutions were to be subsidized also, and out of the protracted discussions which ensued has been evolved the scheme now submitted to the people by the Minister of Education.

The essential features of that scheme are: (1) A re-arrangement of the functions of Toronto University and University College so as to make them both teaching institutions, the former alone, however, conferring degrees; (2) certain conditions on which other colleges now conferring degrees in arts, law and medicine, may be confederated with Toronto University; (3) certain other conditions on which other colleges that confer no degrees at all, or only degrees in divinity, may be affiliated with Toronto University; (4) an obligation on the part of the Government, in the event of the scheme being carried out, to furnish additional accommodation for University purposes, and additional teachers in both University and College; (5) certain provisions under which the graduates and undergraduates of the other confederating universities may become graduates and undergraduates of Toronto University and take part in its management; and (6) the widening of the University curriculum, by accepting certain subjects usually taught in the affiliating theological colleges as the equivalents of certain other subjects in the ordinary arts course. It seems to be implied, though there is no express stipulation to that effect, that the Legislature will, if the project goes into effect, be asked to secure the future of the University by increasing the endowment.

It is understood that none of those who took part in the preparation of this scheme, are, even in honor, bound to press upon their own denominational or educational allies the expediency of falling in with the project. On the other hand, the Minister of Education is not bound to make any effort to enlarge the sphere, improve the appliances, or increase the staff of the Provincial institution, except in the way of carrying out the general plan. It is to be hoped, therefore, that a scheme which is on the whole well calculated to advance the cause of higher education, will not fail on account of either the refusal of the patrons of denominational universities to fall in with it, or the failure of the Legislature to appreciate the importance of having the educational system of the Province made more efficient in its highest department. While the scheme is not exactly what the supporters and friends of the Provincial University and College would like, we believe the University Senate and the College Council did right in approving of it as it stands. They have thus freed themselves by anticipation from all blame for the failure of the movement, if it should fail. From present appearances it is likely to succeed, but in any other event the duty of the Senate and Council is perfectly clear—(1) to make, by means of improved methods, the best possible use of their present resources; (2) to press on both the Legislature and the public, with persistence and moderation, the claim of the Provincial institutions to additional revenue; and (3) to strengthen that claim by exerting a more direct influence on the secondary schools of the Province. Such a policy will eventually meet with a fitting reward, and at no distant day the scheme of union now offered to other universities may be replaced by one of virtual absorption. Meanwhile, whether it is acted upon or not, the scheme elaborated by the conference will remain a mile-post in the history of higher education in Ontario.

THE LATE JAMES BETHUNE, Q.C.

The Bar can ill afford the loss of the ability and honesty of the late Mr. Bethune. In this country, owing to the overcrowding of the twin