

however, consider the main disadvantage peculiar to that second scheme.

The great objection to this plan, and it is alike obvious and fundamental, seems to be, that by carrying it out, an endowment, not perhaps more than sufficient for the establishment of one useful Seminary, would be frittered away into portions utterly inadequate, severally, for the foundation and maintenance of *any thing like a University* in the land. Instead of one well-furnished Institution, with a sufficiency of Instructors to allow of that division of labour which alone conduces to excellence, and of the appliances needful to the advancement of sound learning and accurate science, we should have our Country dotted here and there with a number of mean and inefficient Academies, each—by its scanty staff of Professors, its limited library, its paltry museums and defective apparatus, belying the name it bore—that of a University. It is not wonderful that there should prevail, in this Colony, very incorrect ideas as to the nature of a University, and the pecuniary amount required for its effective establishment. But no one who is qualified to form an opinion on the subject, no one practically acquainted with the statistical details of such matters, will charge us with exaggeration, if we say, that to establish, on the most economical footing, any thing deserving the name or fitted for the purposes of a University, and that too without a *Medical School*, or with a very imperfect one, would require a sum of at least £100,000, or one third of that amount in hand, and a yearly revenue equal to the interest of the remainder. Nor would even that sum achieve the desired result, unless the duty of two or three Professors were conjoined, and committed to single Instructors, until the number of pupils, and consequently the amount of tuition-fees, should far exceed any thing that, on the system of separate Universities, can be expected for some generations in Canada.

We may, it is true, if we please, imitate the inhabitants of the neighbouring Republic, mistaking a warning for an example. The Appendix to the Twenty fourth Report of the American Educational Society, now lying on the table at which these remarks are penned, exhibits *precisely one hundred* separate Universities and Colleges, (exclusive of merely Theological and Medical Institutes,) established within the United States previously to 1840. Almost all, if not all, of these exercise, it is believed, University powers, so far as to confer degrees in Arts. A third of them, or probably more, are in the habit of conferring also degrees in Divinity, Law, and Medicine. In fifteen of these (so-called) Universities or Colleges—some of the fifteen founded as far back as 1794, and consequently, at the date of the Report, *forty six years* in operation—the average number of Instructors of every degree, all departments included, was *three and one fifth*; the average of Students, *nine*; the average of volumes in the respective Libraries, 1026—a smaller number than is contained in the private library of every second professional man in the United Kingdom, and far below that of many a Scottish parochial library. Of all the American Universities not one, except those of Harvard and Yale, has a library of 20,000 volumes.

Now—estimating the population of the United States, at the date of the Report, at *seventeen millions*, and that of Canada West, at present, at somewhat above *half a million*, we are already, with three Universities in that part of the Province, on a level with our Republican neighbours. But is this state of things—the ridicule of the European world of letters—and of which the result is superficial instruction and empiricism—to be a model for the Legislature of a British Colony? There are, we have no doubt, persons who imagine that such statistics give evidence of a prosperous state of learning, and who think, because a multitude of common and grammar schools is an undomable blessing, that Universities cannot be too plentiful. We can only hope that such persons have not found their way into a Legislative Assembly to which Divine Providence has committed the responsibility of dealing with such questions.

But in whatever way—whether by frittering down the funds of King's College, or by liberal and adequate endowments through an unnecessary waste of the public means—we establish separate Universities, one result certainly awaits us. We shall have men of high attainments in science and literature, here and there spending their lives and energies in lecturing to spiritless half-dozens of pupils, with the same expenditure of labour which would have availed for the instruction of hundreds, and infinitely less of that zeal which stimulates and sustains the laborious; while in vain we shall look to find, amid the thinly attended halls of our numerous Seminaries, that spirit-stirring intellectual activity, that University air, which gives life to great literary effort, and fans the flame of youthful genius. What is a University?—for elementary in the consideration of the subject as the question may be, we feel that it is needful to ask it—What is a University? Not a mere

Charter, and endowment, and staff of Teachers in various branches of art and science—not a mere *insundibulum* of knowledge, of this and that kind, into the intellect and the receptacles of the memory—but a miniature world—a commonwealth of varied dispositions and tastes and talents—in which man is not merely taught to know, but trained and stimulated amid the multitude of his fellows, to reason, and to act, and to excel, in all matters intellectual and moral—in which, not more by the instructions of qualified preceptors, than by the inspiring contact of other minds, engaged in friendly rivalry in similar pursuits, the early spark of talent is kindled—the individual capacity experimentally ascertained and strengthened—the erratic bent of individual taste and genius restrained and beneficially directed—the energy of the individual will be repressed where excessive, and invigorated where weak—the timidity and self-distrust which are not seldom the natural accompaniments of the finest powers, and the presumption as often attendant on limited abilities, alike worn off before the period of public action, and with infinitely less cost and pain than in the ruder school of worldly experience—where, in short—by the play and action of mind on mind, the future guardians of man's best interests are led each to know in some measure practically his appropriate part so he comes forth to perform it—and where all this goes on under the direction and example of the learned, the wise, and the pious.

And how is this great object to be realized in a thinly peopled country like ours, by the system of separate Universities? Let us do a little we can concentrate the matured and nascent talent of the Province, many years must pass by before we can possibly have in Canada West a University possessing that great essential to efficiency—a *sufficiency of Students* under a corps of Teachers enabled, by a proper division of the branches of science, fully to do them justice. The number of youth at this moment pursuing, in that part of the Colony, what may be properly called *University studies*, students of Medicine included, does not certainly approach one hundred. To delay to legislate in such a manner as shall, if possible, bring these together, is a sufficient neglect of the true interests of learning. To legislate so as that they shall necessarily be kept apart, or that any party shall find it its interest to keep them asunder, were a blunder worthy of Goths. Of such a self-defeating course cheapness would be no recommendation. What then shall we say of it, with the certainty before us of its entailing on the public treasury demands without end, and which it will be impossible, because unjust, to refuse. That this will be the result is proved already by the numerous petitions on the table of the House for aid to rival Academies. But this consideration, we again say, is not the truly important one. If the system of separate Universities be the best, then—whatever be the cost—let the Parliament, to the full extent of its available means, proceed to provide for the people and their descendants that which next to Righteousness, "exalteth a nation"—solid Learning, and true Science. But so far from being the best mode of advancing these precious interests, it is so surely the worst, that were it our express aim to doom Canada to a lasting and hopeless mediocrity in every literary and scientific pursuit, we could not more effectually attain it than by the system of separate Universities with our present population, each twinkling like a rush light, and instead of illuminating, itself scarce visible amid the darkness around. Let this system be encouraged, and many a generation will pass over our heads, ere that Spirit of Learning, which dwells, as the *genius loci*, in the ancient academic bowers of Europe, will visit our desolate halls and drowsy atmosphere.

And while such will be the inevitable effects of the system of separate Universities on the interests of Education, what will be its bearings on our *social condition*? In attempting to appreciate these, we have to set out from the consideration that these Universities will be, not merely *separate*, but, *sectarian*. The adoption of that system by the Legislature will amount to a public proclamation of the impossibility, the hopelessness, if not the undesirableness, of the various sections of the Religious Community "dwelling together in unity as brethren;"—and the surest way will have been taken of realising the dismal foreboding, by rendering it all but impracticable for our children to understand each other better than we have done,—by furnishing each denomination, at the public expense, with the means of training the flower of its youth, not for public but party purposes, *non reipublice sed sibi*; and of perpetuating the self destroying feuds by which our Province has hitherto been lacerated. We shall have established schools not of science, but of sect, in which the minds of our youth will be steeped for years in the gall and vinegar of partizan distrust and animosity, and from which the educated, and therefore influential, members