

nation hold aloof from an active interest in the affairs of the nation. Still another excuse is presented, to the effect that commercial pursuits hold out such great inducements that they attract nearly all to themselves. The answer to this, however, is found in the large proportion of teachers and preachers, as above mentioned, who certainly are not in the way of making fortunes.

Turning aside from all these, we find a better reason assigned by some who have turned their thoughts to the subject. They see a surer cause for this difference between their country and others in the university system which maintains in the United States, and think that the absence of high thought and high culture may be traced to the absence of those great communities of thinkers which may be found in Europe. They assert that there are no great centres of thought and culture; that the vast resources of the United States have been misapplied; that while much money has been spent, it has been dissipated on a multitude of small colleges; and that the great interests of the nation have been sacrificed to the prejudices of religious denominations.

This view may, or may not, be a correct one; but, at any rate, there is something in it—much, indeed, that at first sight appears just. For if we examine the character of American colleges, we find the greater number denominational. This system was adopted at the outset. At the outset, also, the colleges were necessarily more like schools than universities. At the present moment the greatest seat of learning in the United States is Harvard University. It was begun on the denominational system, and was out of the control of the State. Changes have taken place in it, yet still it is essentially denominational: it cherishes also its early traditions; its students are boys rather than men; and it would be difficult to say how long it will before Harvard can rival Oxford. Efforts have been made in other directions. Turning aside from the denominational colleges, we find two other classes represented. One class is created by the State, and the best example of these may be found in the University of Michigan. Another class is found in some which have been created by private effort chiefly, and in strict subjection to a wise and liberal theory, the best example of which may be seen in Cornell University. Admirable as both of these last mentioned institutions may be, they, however, are far from being commensurate with the resources and the necessities of such a nation as the United States. It is felt that between the needs of the United States and the supply there is a vast difference, and it has already become a serious question among earnest minds there, how the necessity may best be met. Various suggestions have been made, but none seem to satisfy the exigency of the hour as well as the proposal for a National University. The advocates of this plan recommend an Institution which shall be worthy of the nation, and be the equal of the great universities of Europe. They assert that it is of as much importance as the Pacific railroad. They ask for a University where there shall be Professorships endowed liberally enough to attract the best thinkers of Europe; and Fellowships and prizes to stimulate the intellect of America. They wish for endowments worthy of a great people, so that inducements may be offered to a community of scholars and thinkers to spend their lives in intellectual labor. They think that if this were done the effect would be felt in one generation. By that time they hope that the United States would be raised to an equality with France and England; and, indeed, with the abounding life and energy of this young country, they see no reason why a class of scholars and thinkers should not be produced who would surpass the world.

For us in this Dominion, the United States must often serve as an example. Already we have followed in the footsteps of our brethren across the border in many things. We have adopted their school system; their college system may also be seen among us; and when they begin thus to propose educational reforms, it will be well for us to see if our own circumstances will not admit of a similar reform?

The condition of our colleges, considered as a whole, has much resemblance to that of the United States colleges, though of course there are some material differences. Looking over these Provinces, we find a large number scattered about without any great centres of education. Among the lower provinces there are Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island without any. Nova Scotia, however, seems to make up their deficiency in this respect, for we possess no less than five. New Brunswick has Sackville, which belongs half to Nova Scotia; and its Provincial University, which

is smaller than some of our own colleges. In Canada we notice Toronto, McGill, Kingston, and a considerable number of smaller institutions. In looking over all these it is not too much to say, that so many colleges in so small a population is certainly a great dissipation of strength and resources, which, if united and more widely expanded, would lead to far different results. This, indeed, is the opinion of many thoughtful educationists of the Dominion, and already various plans have been made, looking toward a reformation of our higher education. One plan is that each province organize a Provincial University on a larger scale, making use, as far as practicable, of the colleges already in existence. Another plan is, that one University be established for the maritime provinces, another for Quebec, and another for Ontario. A third proposal embraces the idea of a National University for the Dominion, and resembles that which has been proposed, as above mentioned, in the United States. If this last plan were possible, it would indeed be the greatest conceivable blessing for our young nation. We want a great University, with a great library, with great inducements to entice men to thought and study. So great a thing, however, may scarcely be practicable, and something less important must suffice. Yet, in any case, the country needs some action of this sort from its government. Something should be done, and done generously. There should be universities with libraries, prizes, honors, and large rewards to men of brains, large enough to induce such men to devote their lives to thought and study, without any idea of seeking more money-making employments.

Denominational colleges have been tried throughout all America, and have been found wanting. Our government has grappled with the question of Common Schools; it is now time to take up the equally important question of the Universities. So long as a Reform is made, it matters not whether it be effected by the Dominion government or by the local. Let the denominations stand aside, and stop their warfare for a time, until a University may be established that shall stand apart from religious questions. The government may safely overlook the dissensions of sects, and act for the nation. Some of our denominations have already embraced most eagerly the principle of unsectarian common schools; these, at least, ought to embrace the principle of unsectarian universities. After accepting one, there is no alternative but to accept the other; for the arguments which maintain the one, maintain the other, and the two must stand or fall together.

THE MISSING SHIP.

Breeze, thou hast swept o'er the stormy Atlantic!
Thy kisses are fresh, with the salt of its spray;
Knowest thou aught of the ship that is missing—
The ship that sailed bravely and blithely away?
Answer! oh answer!

Wave, let the seething of turbulent waters
Send thee to break on the still, sunny beach;
Say, did she yield to the winds and the darkness?
Or spread her white sails till they bore her from reach?
Answer! oh answer!

Where have ye stranded her, winds of the ocean?
Where have ye scattered her, waves of the sea?
What is the fate that hath claimed her and wrapped her?
Whisper, oh whisper the secret to me!
Answer! oh answer!

Thou that controll'st the might of the tempest;
Thou that restrain'st the wing of the wind;
Thou, in thy ken, holdest all of this mystery;
Lift up the veil and show what is behind.
Answer! Lord, answer!

For, behold, there are hearts that cry out in the night time,
Who have no delight in the face of the day;
Hearts that go out on the wild waste of waters
To look for the ship that sailed blithely away.
Answer! Lord, answer!