

expedient to uproot the institutions which have grown out of the past condition of things, or to contend for a theory which is obviously impracticable. Instead of struggling for what is beyond our reach, it is infinitely better to accept what we possess, to make the most of what has been secured, and to look hopefully forward to that which is attainable. The time has gone past for seriously discussing whether there should be one University or several Universities in Canada. It would be a step backward to unsettle the public mind with respect to their permanency. In this Dominion, as in the mother country, we must hold on to that which is good, and do our best to build up and give stability to those institutions which are calculated to advance the happiness and prosperity of mankind. May we cherish the idea that Queen's University is one of those institutions, and that it has an important mission to perform on this broad continent during centuries which are to come. This idea is pregnant with questions, and we are led to ask ourselves, "What is the proper work of Queen's, and how should it be performed? What should our country expect of this University, and what does our time especially need?" It will be conceded that the great object of education is the development of the human faculties, by the operation of such influences as will subdue our evil natures, will strengthen our best natures, and will cultivate and enrich the mind, so as to form the best possible individual characters. Its grand aim is to ennoble the propensities and tastes, to strengthen the moral sense, and to fit man to discharge his duties as an intelligent being, in the best manner of which he is capable in the land in which he lives, and in the age in which God has given him life. If this definition be accepted it is clear that the system of education to be followed at this Institution should be that which best meets the conditions laid down—that the University of Queen's, in order properly to perform the functions and fulfil the hopes and expectations of its friends, must provide an opportunity for the Canadian youth to acquire a sound intellectual culture, and to enrich his mind with stores of thought, in order that he may be prepared well to perform his part in elevating the condition of his race, and in raising the character of his country in the scale of nations. During the long period when Europe was sunk in the grossest barbarism, and brute force reigned supreme, the colleges and convent schools were the great repositories of learning; and to them and to the ecclesiastical teachers who conducted them we are mainly, if not wholly, indebted for the treasures of classical literature which have been preserv-

ed to us. There cannot be a doubt that from the fifth to the fifteenth century literature owes all to the shelter of the Christian Church, that it has been the sanctuary of the culture, the philosophy, and even the traditions of literary antiquity. The establishment of universities during the middle ages was among the greatest educational achievements of that period, and when a desire for knowledge sprung up in men's minds they found in classical literature a rich inheritance from two cultured races; but the noble thoughts of the enlightened Greeks and Romans could only be conveyed to the student in the languages in which they were recorded. Libraries were few, and before the invention of printing, books could not easily be multiplied. Consequently oral instruction was, to a large extent, a necessity. In those days the only course for the instructors was first to teach the language of the classic writings, then to unroll the manuscripts and to unfold the treasures they contained. The century that witnessed the invention of printing gave rise to other events which contributed to a revolution in human affairs; but nothing exercised a more powerful influence on education than the introduction of the art of multiplying copies of writings by the printing press. This art practically exempted the works of learned men from the operation of decay, and furnished the means of preserving from age to age the noblest monuments of human intellect. Since the fifteenth century, printing has in a most wonderful manner increased the number of copies of every standard work; it has multiplied libraries in every country; and, with the help of translations, the literary treasures of every language, and the scientific wonders of every nation have been brought within the reach of all. As an illustration of what is possible in this way, and the degree of importance which printing gives to any writing, we may instance the Holy Bible. Within the whole of the first fifteen centuries of the Christian era, the total number of manuscript copies of the Scriptures in existence at one time, must have been insignificant. Through the instrumentality of printing the circulation is estimated to reach at the present time one hundred and fifty millions, and the languages or dialects into which the Bible has, in whole or in part, been translated, is reported to be over three hundred. It is advanced in favour of classical studies that the civilization of modern Europe is reared upon the wreck of ancient Greece and Rome, that the classic languages and literature furnish the key to the languages, literature, jurisprudence and philosophy of modern nations, that their study strengthens the mental faculties, and refines the mind by making it familiar with