

We regret that the editorial of the last issue, in which we spoke of mathematics as being "fixed beyond all change," should have been misconstrued to mean that there had been no *improvement* in the mathematical department during the last few years. Such an idea is perfectly preposterous, and we feel assured that our old professor will do us the justice of believing that it never entered our mind. If we did not take first-class honors and the gold medal in mathematics, we are quite satisfied that he does not on that account bear us an unyielding grudge, and we certainly can carry through life none but the very kindest recollections of one of the most perfect teachers and kindest hearted gentlemen it has ever been our pleasure to meet. The editorial in question could never be twisted to mean anything of the kind except by reading it wholly apart from the context. What it meant to say, and what it did say, was that this department had never yet been made optional. We said then, and say yet, it is time it should.

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We have received a communication from some one unknown on the subject of literature, bees, dreams, Gulliver, philosophy and mathematics. It was probably intended as a Christmas present for the editor. We have accordingly laid it carefully away in tissue paper until what time the subscription list is all paid in, when we intend to frame it. One of its chief beauties, apart from the variety of subjects embraced, is that it will read either backwards or forwards with equal facility and force; or, in case of an emergency, one might begin in the middle and read up and down alternately. We beg to remind our friends that all contributions, to ensure insertion, must have the author's signature attached, not necessarily for publication, but etc.

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There were several points made by the Principal in his address of the 22nd which are well worth the consideration of our students. In the first place his idea of patriotism was tersely expressed in the single sentence "Canada is a good enough country for me." In these last days when everyone is ranting about loyalty, and when loyalty may be taken to mean devotion to British interests, to the interests of one particular province at the expense of other portions of the Dominion, to the interests of the United States, or anything else under heaven except the one thing needful, it is encouraging to find one public man to whom patriotism means devotion to Canada and her interests first, last, and all the time—against any other country whatsoever.

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Again, on the question of sectarianism, his opinions do not seem to have been much modified by his trip; or, if they have, it is only in the right line, that of greater breadth.

"Where do I place the Church? Along with political parties. I look more to the character of the man than

the Church he belongs to. If he is a good citizen and a true man in his family, I have no fear of the Church."

We have no desire to mar the beauty of this extract by commenting at length upon it. We only pause to notice that Principal Grant would never have reached the spiritual height marked by the above words through the course adopted by some men of reading only their own side of religious questions, and looking upon all others as devices of him who was once called the "Son of the Morning."

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The reverend gentleman gave utterance to another idea well worth the thought of all who are interested in theological topics, when he said in his sermon of Sabbath morning that "the Bible was not a catechism but an organism," and that for this reason all of its truths were not of equal importance.

This idea, which is the outcome of an age of theological inquiry such as perhaps the Church never before witnessed, if taken to heart and made the watchword of practical homiletics, would do much to allay the bitterness of sectarian strife, and to hasten the coming of the time when all these petty lines of difference in the Church shall be destroyed, and Christianity shall present to the world an unbroken front such as has not been hers since the days of her infancy.

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The discussion which the publication of Robert Elsmere has provoked both at home and abroad is an interesting comment upon the power which religious questions have to-day to stir the hearts of men. We propose at a later time to consider the work at some length. Meanwhile, for the benefit of our readers, we publish a single extract from the Rev. Joseph Cook's article in the current number of *The North American Review*:—

"'Robert Elsmere' is the echo of an echo. In its central anti-supernaturalistic contentions, it is largely a rehash of the anonymous work, 'Supernatural Religion,' which some years ago made considerable noise in England. That work was substantially an echo of a now decadent continental school of rationalistic criticism, led chiefly by Strauss and Renan. Matthew Arnold's own positions in relation to historic Christianity were largely such an echo. It is or ought to be well known that, after full and prolonged hearing, they have produced small effect upon real experts in the field of discussion to which they refer. Mrs. Ward's book echoes on this subject her uncle's now really belated and outgrown opinions. Roger Wendover is a disciple of a school of anti-supernaturalism that has been discredited in the highest circles of scholarship in Germany for nearly a quarter of a century. He is the echo of an echo after the original voice has ceased to be authoritative.

"Strauss himself abandoned the famous Mythical Hypothesis before he died. It was buried before its author, as every scholar knows. Professor Christlieb