

Institute and University College, what more can be needed or desired save the topstone of a single State University?

As a theory nothing could be finer; but in this intensely practical age, men are very shy of theories which will not bear the test of experiment and matter of fact. They do not ask, Is your system symmetrical? but, Will it meet the needs of the people to the largest extent and in the best way? *When* has it done this? *Where* has it done it? There is but one country—France—where the experiment has been tried, and there the results have been so disastrous that there is a loud outcry for a return to the old system of several independent Universities instead of one controlled by the State.* It is easy to say that one State University, richly endowed, would be far better than several independent institutions conferring degrees; but I mistake the drift of sentiment among the people of this Province if they will consent to abandon the real and solid advantages of competing Universities, in different localities, for the very doubtful advantage of having the appliances of higher education centralized in one huge corporation in the city of Toronto.

The scheme involves, I think, more than most people are aware of, and it is time its provisions were carefully examined, and an attempt made to estimate its probable effects upon the outlying Colleges, as well as upon the cause of higher education in general. So far as the Colleges are concerned, I shall consider chiefly the interests of the one with which I am more immediately connected, namely, Victoria University. Queen's having refused—very wisely, I think—to enter the proposed Confedera-

* "Before the great Revolution, twenty-three Universities, each with a separate autonomy, were spread over the kingdom, adding largely to its intellectual productiveness. But these Provincial Universities were destroyed by the great Revolution. Napoleon I. reconstituted the University of Paris in 1808, by making it the single University for France. He did this with the power of a military despot and the professional instincts of a drill-sergeant. The University of France now became the Department of State Instruction, and included every kind of education, primary, secondary and collegiate. . . . The result has been, in the opinion of the most eminent Frenchmen, that its operations, more than any other cause, has led to the humiliation of France as a nation. Recent events have strengthened the conviction which De Tocqueville expressed twenty years ago, that there is a continually increasing poverty of eminent men in France."—*Dr. Lyon Playfair*.

"The unanimity is surprising with which eminent men ascribe the intellectual paralysis of the nation to the centralization of administration and examination by the University of France."—*Ibid*.

M. Lorain, Professor in the Faculty of Medicine, Paris, declares that a Central University, professing to direct everything, really directs nothing, but it trammels all effort in the Provinces. [By "Provinces" is meant any place