

Why, it may be asked, should we crowd all the British youth into two ancient seats of learning? Why not promote the growth of other institutions in London, Durham, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland? That such competition should be encouraged, I fully admit; but it will still be desirable that Oxford and Cambridge should expand freely, and that they should cease to serve as models of an exclusive and sectarian principle. Before the Reformation their spirit was catholic and national: since that period, they have dwindled, not into theological seminaries, for they have never in practice afforded a complete professional course for divinity students, but into places for educating the clergy of the Established Church, and the aristocratic portion of the laity professing the same form of Christianity. Such a system, coupled with the abandonment of professional studies in general, tends to dissever throughout the country men of different callings, creeds, and professions. It has a dissociating influence. It separates during the period of youth the nobility and gentry from the higher portion of the middle classes, the barrister from the attorney, the physician from the surgeon, the legislators and lawyers of England from those civilians to whom the government of eighty millions in India is to be consigned, the members of the Anglican church from the Romanists of Stonyhurst or the Dissenters of Hackney, the civil engineers of Putney from the medical students of London. It disunites these and other sections of the same community, and throws them into antagonist masses, each keeping aloof from the other in cold and jealous seclusion, each cherishing sectarian or party animosities, or professional and social prejudices. Complaints are often heard, and not without reason, of