

W.S. MacNutt

## THE UNIVERSITIES OF THE MARITIMES --

### A GLANCE BACKWARD

*A paper read to a regional meeting of the Royal Society of Canada in Halifax on April 16, 1973.*

The advancement of higher education in the Maritime Provinces has mirrored the strengths and frailties of the region, the hardihood of proud and stubborn parochialisms balanced against a chronic inability to achieve lasting unity or co-operation of any kind. It is because we are the oldest part of English-speaking Canada and because our Acadian population is of an antiquity equal to that of Quebec that our many universities owe their origins to the strands of political and religious thought that created war and tumult in the British Isles and in Europe during the seventeenth century. We have never experienced war, but of tumult and rivalry we have endured a plethora. Geography, like history, has multiplied parochialisms. Seas and forests have divided our loyalties and have powerfully militated against the appearance of a metropolitanism that could lead and unify us in the world of learning as well as in politics and commerce.

Unifying ideas were dominant at the very beginning. The first inspirations were of clerical origins and are to be found in a meeting of Loyalist clergymen at New York in March of 1783. Their first premise was that the American Revolution had occurred because the people of the revolted colonies had not been educated in principles of loyalty to the Crown. The colonial church, they reasoned, had failed

in its task by want of a university for the training of the priesthood. It followed that, if the remaining provinces of the North American empire were to remain within the British fold, there should be a university in Nova Scotia where the Church would regularly refresh itself with new recruits and from which obedience to constituted authority could be industriously propagated.

The constituency for the proposed university was not so narrow as hindsight might suggest. Anglicanism in the eighteenth century was in low profile. Its doctrinal latitude offered some form of invitation to almost all. Before leaving New York, the Loyalists, who were of a variety of religions and social backgrounds, generally asserted membership in the Church of England. It was the Church of State, and loyal subjects of the Crown could readily accept an affiliation that did not offend conscience. Even the most embittered separatists who detested episcopacy were willing to accord it a status roughly equivalent to that of motherhood. For these reasons it can be argued that the foundation of King's College at Windsor in 1790 was by exercise of a public principle. The new Oxford of British North America would be open to all citizens of the provinces from distant Niagara to the Banks of Newfoundland. The public principle gained repute by a generous grant from the British Government for the construction of a building and a large annual grant from the legislature of Nova Scotia for maintenance and support.

The fledgling province of New Brunswick was not to be left behind in the profession of zeal for higher learning. Late in 1785 a group of Loyalists, all men who had served the royal cause in the war which had just ended, petitioned Governor Carleton for establishment of a centre of learning in the new capital of Fredericton. The government had but one means of granting the request, ample land resources, and a grant of six thousand acres in and about the town, was given. Land was not enough and for many years the province was quite incapable of sustaining the ambition. But, like Harvard and a great many other worthy institutions, the University of New Brunswick dates its founding from this statement of good intention. And it was symptomatic of the junior province, inhabited by the most loyal and worthy subjects of the Crown in North America, to accept no grade subordinate to Nova Scotia, military, ecclesiastical, commercial or educational.

Provincialism was a powerful agent of division but sectarianism was the force that fragmented ambitions for a university acceptable to all. If Anglicanism ever really bore the mantle of universalism it was, by 1800, in tatters. As Protestant evangelism of all varieties swept through the land the Baptist and Methodist movements crystallized into organized churches. In resistance to this onset against the primary place of the Church of England, the Governors of King's, upon receiving the Royal Charter of 1802, passed statutes based on those of Oxford, requiring matriculants to subscribe to the Thirty-Nine Articles and to attend no church services other than those of the Church of England. The result, not intended, was to deprive King's of the greater part of its constituency. Though the rolls are lost it appears that between 1790 and 1802 it attracted two hundred students. Anglican zeal and the politics of arch-Toryism destroyed the metropolitan dream of its founders. Its student body dropped to a round dozen or so, all drawn from its prosperous academy, its mainstay over a century and a quarter at Windsor. It became the first of a cluster of denominational colleges within the Maritime Provinces.

By the time Lord Dalhousie came to Halifax in 1816 as lieutenant-governor of Nova Scotia religious division had made the notion of a unified society something more problematical than the most absurd fiction. Coming late upon the Maritime scene but in formidable array, the Presbyterian Seceders of Pictou County had established an institution of their own and, undeterred by opposition from the Kirkmen of Halifax, were requesting financial aid from the public. The equality of all religions before the law and the educational ambitions they manifested inspired a member of the government to remark upon the imminence of a "a Babel system of education" supported by public funds. Amid these rivalries it seemed to Dalhousie that the precepts of Edinburgh were more applicable than those of Oxford. The place for a university was the centre of population, the seat of the legislature and courts of law, of the military and mercantile society. Halifax possessed a reservoir of talent in the learned professions of law, medicine and theology that could serve a college well. And, appealing especially to those excluded from King's, a college at Halifax could be open to the entire country. With a speed that was astonishing in the annals of colonial administration, Dalhousie launched upon his venture. Funds were available from customs duties collected at Castine

during the war of 1812. Imperial consent for their employment was quickly obtained. A magnificent site adjacent to the Grand Parade was requisitioned and the cornerstone of Dalhousie College was laid in May, 1820.

The principles were liberal and public, but Dalhousie came into the world before its time. Rather naively the founder had composed a board of governors who were extremely interested in the survival of King's and, as Joseph Howe said many years later, though they did nothing against Dalhousie they certainly did nothing for it. An attempt to bring King's to Halifax in union with Dalhousie, on terms highly favourable to the Church of England, broke down on the scruples that Windsor was central for New Brunswick as well as Nova Scotia, that a seaport town was conducive to dissipation and extravagance, that classical learning would be submerged "in the more showy and dazzling employment of experiments and amusing pursuits". Lacking students but financially bolstered by private benefaction from England, King's pursued its rural and lofty ways at Windsor, up to 1828 the only degree-conferring college in the region. At Pictou, Thomas McCulloch, labouring heavily in his vineyard but handicapped by a charter more Presbyterian than he wanted it to be because of the influence of the Kirkmen at Halifax, pursued more political and practical aims in education, taking it for granted that every Nova Scotian boy should be trained for a vocation. Dalhousie College was a legal person only. For nearly forty years the splendid building of the Parade yielded rents to its governors from a confectionery shop, an infants' school, an academy of art and sundry other private endeavours.

The commercial prosperity of New Brunswick in the 1820's enabled it to live in emulation of Nova Scotia and the ambition of the Loyalists came to fruition for their grandsons. The treasury abounded with revenues from the timber trade, and a highly skilled lieutenant-governor, capable of placating both the Archbishop of Canterbury and the provincial legislature, brought King's College, Fredericton, into being. Anglicanism in England, where a college had been founded by political radicals and religious agnostics, was on guard to preserve the godly and traditional education of youth, but Sir Howard Douglas was able to persuade the Archbishop that the

Thirty-Nine Articles should not be imposed on candidates for degrees. Since the college was founded from revenues under imperial control the legislature was at first, somewhat miraculously, willing to accept almost everything else of Anglicanism, and the first principal, the Reverend Edwin Jacob, with a bevy of Anglican professors, imparted the classical disciplines of Oxford and the teachings of the established church to what was at first a respectable body of students with all the authority of a royal charter behind him. This triumph for the higher learning in New Brunswick was accomplished to the mortification of Bishop John Inglis of Nova Scotia. King's at Windsor lost an important source of students. What was left of the early ambition for one great British North American university under Church of England auspices could not withstand the provincial pride of New Brunswick.

By 1838 the Maritimes could boast two small colleges, would-be miniatures of Oxford, yet both unacceptable to the great majority of the population because of their firm denominational character. This was not because denominationalism was unpopular. On the contrary, all religious bodies now aspired to the foundation of colleges exclusively their own and very democratically were testing their influence in the counsels of government for the seeking of public funds. The unpopularity and impracticality of the non-sectarian ideal, propagated by Lord Dalhousie, were illuminated by the failure of 1838 to bring his college to life. Broad agreement came from a coalition of Free Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists and Roman Catholics which overpowered opposition in the legislature. A bill was passed providing for the appointment of Reverend Thomas McCulloch as president, bringing with him half the provincial grant to Pictou Academy. His very reputation as an educator appeared to guarantee success for Dalhousie. At Pictou he had taken the strong and modern line that classical studies need not be central to education, that *otium cum dignitate*, allegedly the ideas in education at Windsor and Fredericton, were out of place in Nova Scotia where students should be trained to face contemporary problems and to raise material standards of living. From his log schoolhouse at Pictou had grown a far-famed academy. A man of cloth among the people, he understood points of view of a pioneering society, though always dreaming of a university at Pictou that ultimately might rival his own Edinburgh. His influence extended

far beyond Pictou, and though its specific objectives were never realized, there is a good case for saying his is the most important figure in the region's history of higher education.

Yet McCulloch's frailties were responsible for a continued fragmentation of the worthy urge for the pursuit of learning. When he insisted that all three of the professors at Dalhousie should be Presbyterian a principal prop for the revived college was abruptly removed. The Baptists had supported Dalhousie on the founder's original premise, that any Christian body endowing a chair should be entitled to a voice in its government. This powerful and militant church group seceded from the scheme when the candidature of the most learned classical scholar in the province, Reverend Edmund Crawley, was set aside. While McCulloch struggled at Halifax, the Baptists created Acadia College at Wolfville and a domed wooden building of classic proportion rose on the Minas shore, constructed, according to the boast, without money, by the gratuitous offer of and transportation of boards and shingles and by unpaid labour.

In these years, between 1838 and 1843, the problem of deciding whose business it was to control higher education in Nova Scotia, the government or a cluster of churches subsidized from the public treasury, perceptibly sharpened. Standing on an austere public principle, Howe declared that he would not give a shilling to denominational schools, and the debate on "the college question" at this stage determined political alignments that lasted for a quarter of a century. Yet existing grants to King's, Dalhousie and Pictou Academy opened an arena to any Christian body requesting public assistance. The Baptist Education Society received a grant for Acadia. Under the leadership of Archbishop Walsh of Halifax, Roman Catholics were acquiring recognition as an important political, as well as religious, force, and St. Mary's Seminary was subsidized by the treasury to become, ultimately, something much more than a school. Another incipient bishop's college at Arichat, later to be moved to Antigonish, served the Scottish Catholics of eastern Nova Scotia and would soon, with equal justice, require assistance. The sharp thrust of the denominational principle was perhaps most poignantly revealed in 1842 when the Nova Scotian legislature looked beyond its borders to subsidize the Methodist academy at Sackville. Within the Dominion of

Academe there could be no union of chosen peoples. Sectarian exclusiveness ruled the field. Perhaps it was King's that set the pace. Between 1829 and 1831 the promptings of four colonial secretaries at Whitehall to move to Halifax for a union with Dalhousie, combined with threats of compulsion, were successfully resisted.

Especially amongst the Reform party at Halifax there was quiet thought that one university would suffice the entire province, that the dissipation of financial resources to a host of institutions could result only in failure to produce educational standards worthy of Nova Scotian ambitions. To Howe's coarse and abusive criticism of denominational colleges there was added the sombre rumination of Sir William Young that he would sacrifice place and power to create a provincial university. By 1851 the principle laid down by William Annand, that support of denominational colleges was "unsound and ought to be abandoned" appears to have become official policy. All of them were reduced to a level of absolute equality and their financial requirements were gratified by token amounts only. King's, where the student body in one year dwindled to three, lost its position of privilege and its statutory grant of £400 per annum.

Yet the ambition for one university in the favoured location of Halifax was ultimately realized because of another movement essentially donominational in character. By 1860 three Presbyterian churches were moving towards union, and they produced a plan which, in the words of the Dalhousie historian, saved Dalhousie College from oblivion. Willing to endow three professorships, they requested the appointment of three Presbyterians to the Board of Governors. The provincial government and the Halifax community rallied to support the cause. The Congregationalists, who had maintained the obscure Gorham College at Liverpool, agreed to join, and the Dalhousie Act of 1863 set the college on a forward course from which it has never wavered. The Post Office was ejected from the building on the Parade, and in the month of November instruction commenced with six professors and sixty students. Dalhousie at once affected the stance of a provincial university, but the designation was never allowed by law. Open and free to all, in the words of Lord Dalhousie, it nevertheless acquired, owing to Presbyterian initiative a somewhat sectarian character. There can be no doubt that, provincial university



or not, Dalhousie was the place, in spite of the hazards of a seaport town, where the Presbyterians could most safely send their sons and daughters.

New Brunswick acquired a provincial university but only after labour pains that lasted forty years and the product was not joyfully received by all. At King's in Fredericton, Anglicanism, minus the requirement of the Thirty-Nine Articles for candidates at matriculation, conveyed an impression of ease and complacency alien to the workaday environment. A few well-paid professors and begowned young gentlemen who made themselves conspicuous by loitering about stage-coach stops and other public places did not, it was hardily maintained, adhere to the moral standards becoming an institution of learning. "The subtleties of the *Areopagitica*", "the conceits of a Sappho", "the nonsense of a fabulous mythology", seemed poor return for the annual grant of £1,000, granted by the Civil List. To make it more popular it was made less exclusively Anglican in 1846, but what to many appeared otherworldliness remained ensconced in its citadel. It failed to gain public approbation, and by 1854 the legislature was prepared to close it down or, possibly, to meet the wishes of a vociferous rural opinion, to convert it to an agricultural college.

Criticism of King's, Fredericton, reflected a perennial feature of public debate in all the Atlantic Provinces - opposition to centralization. Expenditure of public money in a capital city could always be presented as wasteful indulgence of a privileged class. Money given to King's, it was argued in the legislature, was needed in the constituencies and, if higher education was desired, the college should be placed on a locomotive and moved around the country. Courses in natural philosophy and engineering, the public lectures of James Robb on agricultural chemistry, and other concessions to those favouring the more vocational idea, failed to bring the necessary repute. A continued failure to recruit students and the unending assault on the last privileges of established Anglicanism made the demise of King's appear inevitable. When the Methodists, capitalizing on the reputation of their academy at Sackville as the best school in the Maritime Provinces, applied for university status in 1858, the strong forces in the legislature arrayed against King's secured a large majority to discontinue its grant. Its few loyal supporters at Fredericton sensed a wicked conspiracy of the Methodists and the business men of Westmorland County to secure the provincial grant for their new



institution. Favoured by a wealthy and ambitious religious denomination, by a record of success, Mount Allison appeared a logical candidate for any gratuity New Brunswick might offer to the higher learning.

Yet the public principle was maintained. Mr. Manners Sutton, the lieutenant-governor at Fredericton, was the centre of a group of politicians who deplored the clash of sectarian rivalries in the legislature. With the tacit understanding of several influential leaders he passed the problem across the water. On his advice the British Government disallowed the act discontinuing the grant to King's. To maintain tranquillity an academic renovation was necessary. The University of New Brunswick Act of 1859 dislodged the Anglicans from their position of privilege. For good measure it was ordered that no religious teaching should be permitted. Without discrimination of any kind the University of New Brunswick could attract faint praise from all but real encouragement from only its faithful of Fredericton. From the outset it had to contend against the power of the pulpit to draw young New Brunswickers to Sackville, Wolfville or Windsor. Religious rivalries may have been completely dispelled from its management but no provincial government could afford to alienate highly articulate Christian denominations by giving too much encouragement to its protege that had sprung from a seed-bed of sectarian acrimonies. Other parochialisms were present. Samuel Leonard Tilley, though strongly supporting the principle of a provincial university, favoured its location at Saint John where the whole official establishment at Fredericton had always been an object of jealousy. Only at Saint John, it was asserted, were there enough men of wealth and talent to serve as the proper base of a university constituency.

By 1863, when St. Francis Xavier entered the lists, the Maritime Provinces could show six universities with degree-granting powers. All were starvelings, well accustomed to endure adversity in a climate where advanced education was an expensive luxury. Erudite outsiders warned of impracticality and fecklessness in the maintenance of so many institutions and urged the establishment of a common examining authority for the granting of degrees on the model of the University of London. Yet universities continued to proliferate. Roman Catholic

bishops, eager for the education of priests and literate laymen in their dioceses, required educational centres for advanced instruction. St. Dunstan's appeared at Charlottetown in 1855, a triumphant successor to the premature St. Andrew's College of twenty years before. The Acadians of New Brunswick, led by Father Camille Lefebvre, who arrived at Memramcook in 1864 with eight dollars in his pocket, founded St. Joseph's and it quickly became a cultural centre for the Acadian national idea. St. Thomas at Chatham, Sacre Coeur at Bathurst, St. Louis at Edmunston, Ste. Anne's at Church Point, Mount St. Vincent at Halifax, all arose in the shadow of cathedrals or by sponsorship of monastic institutions. All eventually, after serving apprenticeships as schools or collegiate institutions, gratified their founders by the offer of the baccalaureate.

As the Maritime Provinces moved from the expansive age of wood, wind and water to the relative obscurity of Canadian provinces, all of these hardy colleges sought the sunlight of academic reputation and popular esteem. Their progress was as gradual as the material progress of the region. The addition of a new professor or of a few books, an increase of a dozen or so students, the purchase of a new piece of scientific equipment, could be hailed as a stepping-stone to new triumphs. Energetic alumni societies fostered loyalties and helped to hurdle financial crises. A spiritual and economic austerity, inherited from Scotland and New England, ensured the husbanding of resources and careful management. Years later the Carnegie Commission remarked upon the fatalistic philosophy that prevailed. No matter how slim the offerings, how few the facilities, the man of destiny would overcome all obstacles. Dawson of McGill, Grant of Queen's and a great many others in all walks of life, offer some credibility to the point of view. However primitive the academic environment, Scottish rigour dominated the classrooms. Harsh competition was strenuously encouraged, and the winning of high marks could bring a man at least to the threshold of a great career.

Amid this constellation of universities, set in a minor firmament, it was unquestionably Dalhousie that made most rapid progress. Its location in the capital city assured it of a growing student body and made it an object of solicitation for wealthy merchants and for leaders in the government and professions. During its critical first years the Presbyterians supported it robustly, though denying to themselves

several opportunities of making it another denominational college. But Dalhousie's forward movement of the 1870's and 1880's was primarily owing to an immense number of bequests that made it, temporarily, the most lavishly endowed university in Canada. Foremost among the benefactors was George Munro, a wealthy Pictonian who had established a publishing empire in New York. Altogether he endowed seven chairs, providing as well many scholarships and bursaries. Favoured by such good fortune, Dalhousie was able to break clear from the limits of the very few subjects deemed essential for the educated man. A separate faculty of science was established. Demands for training in the professions resulted in studies in Law and Medicine, from which full-fledged faculties eventually emerged. Medicine commenced as early as 1867 when students had to climb a ladder leading to a dark attic room for instruction in anatomy. On at least two occasions the medical fraternity threatened secession from the University, but the common conscience of the Halifax community and the good management of the Board of Governors gave short shrift to these disruptions.

Enlightened individuals invariably supported universities, but governments must have wearied of their importunities. In New Brunswick, where the principle of public support for one university had been accepted, the situation was relatively simple. Yet governmental generosity was considerably more sparing than private benefaction elsewhere. As late as 1898 the annual provincial grant was \$8,800, and the University of New Brunswick was still harassed on the floor of the legislature by complaints that the money was ill spent. A nucleus of devoted professors maintained their tenure, but the large number of brilliant young men who merely served an apprenticeship at Fredericton is likewise impressive. Until after the First World War the President typed out his own letters in the mornings and taught mathematics in the afternoons. Amid this condition nigh to penury the humanities were on the defensive, and the University, in keeping with the spirit of the age, gravitated towards the natural and applied sciences. A forestry school establishment in 1907, complementing a well developed programme in engineering, made a quick impact on the staple industry of the province.

Dealing with the universities was, for the Nova Scotian Government, something like tilting at windmills. One university at Halifax had undoubtedly been the most acceptable solution in Liberal circles and, with this object in mind, the government of Joseph Howe supported Dalhousie as far as it dared. The Conservative administration that came to office in 1863, consisting of seven Anglicans and three Baptists, was more susceptible to denominational pressure. Forty years before, in 1823, the government had loaned Dalhousie £5,000 and had never insisted on repayment. In 1864, forty-eight petitions, principally from the Baptists, came to the legislature, insisting on the redemption of the loan and protesting the support given to Dalhousie. The highly political solution was an increase of \$400 in the grant to each of the other colleges, including Mount Allison. It was universally agreed that "small colleges" had some merit. Later, as the colleges asked for additional financial relief, the government embarked on a policy leading in two opposite directions, hoping that ultimately the twain would meet. It constituted, in emulation of the University of London, an examining and degree-conferring body known as the University of Halifax. But it did not withdraw the degree-conferring power from any of the colleges, and it increased the grant to each one of them for a period of five years, trusting that co-operation would come and surrender to the new dispensation take place. At the same time it attempted to throw Dalhousie exclusively into the hands of the Presbyterians so that a perfect symmetry of denominational colleges under a publicly controlled university might appear. Granted that there was wisdom in the plan, the elements of courage and compulsion were totally lacking. Not a single candidate ever arrived to be examined by and to receive a degree from the University of Halifax. The failure apparently gave the government excuse to abandon the plan. In 1881 all grants to the colleges were withdrawn.

Yet at this stage all were certain of survival, a triumph in itself. Acadia, the pride of the Baptists of the Annapolis Valley, had always acquired much of its inspiration from New England. In consequence it became a leader in the social sciences and in the discipline of Education, a subject regarded as trivial and frivolous in the other universities until after the First World War. Graced by a large Ladies' College, Mount Allison acquired eminence in music and the visual arts,

and the dictinction of the first university in the Commonwealth to award a degree to a lady. The University of New Brunswick was the fount of the first school of native Canadian poetry. Around 1910 St. Francis Xavier entered the field of adult education, forming a People's School which was a harbinger for its pioneering role in the co-operative movement of the 1930's. Enrolment in all slowly increased as did the preeminence of Dalhousie, principally by reason of its professional offerings to which Dentistry was added in 1908.

As the universities became more venerable they were still sustained by loyalties that were mainly denominational. In 1921 the student body at King's was seventy-five percent Anglican, at Acadia eighty percent Baptist, at Mount Allison seventy percent Methodist, at St. Francis Xavier virtually one hundred percent Roman Catholic. In spite of its more ecumenical appeal, Dalhousie was forty-eight percent Presbyterian. The minorities were mostly drawn from surrounding communities so that regional loyalties supported religious. Competition was lively and only rarely did it give way to co-operation. One such moment, very important, came in 1907 when Dalhousie announced an intention to enter the field of mining engineering. Four other colleges showed similar intent, and the Nova Scotial Government took control by establishing the Nova Scotia Technical College. Each college, again including Mount Allison, was given representation on the Board of Governors. A budget of \$50,000 endured constant sniping in the legislature, but the obvious saving of expenses and careful management outlasted criticism. Local lore at Fredericton declares that about the same time, when the University of New Brunswick raised its school of engineering to degree-granting status, Mount Allison agreed to abstain from competition on condition that the University of New Brunswick would not invade its own preserves of music and the fine arts.

In response to many requests the Carnegie Corporation, in the decade 1911-21, awarded over \$7,000,000 to the universities of the Maritimes, and it was from this source that the best report on their general condition was to emerge, one that was relatively ignored at the time and that since has been almost forgotten. So many universities among a population of a million people appears to have aroused the curiosity of the Corporation, and late in 1921 their commissioners,

William S. Learned and Kenneth C.M. Sills, paid visits to all. Their conclusions were a mixture of gentle praise and regretful deprecation.

The stock, they declared, was "as good as could be found". They discovered among students "less initiative, less spontaneity, less discussion in class." Against these there was much less superficial smartness, much greater thoroughness, closer thinking, more confident knowledge, more wholesome seriousness than in the United States. The greater asset of the universities was a cadre of well-trained, dedicated and over-worked professors who suffered because of an inability to pursue research. Five of the thirty professors at Dalhousie were members of the Royal Society of Canada. Mount Allison could boast seven graduates who held full professorships in mathematics in Canadian and American universities. Of twenty-seven graduates of all the universities who entered Harvard Graduate School, seventeen took the Master's degree within a year of arrival. Men of Acadia were held in high honour at Yale. Good reputation abroad was not made by men of passing standard.

Adversely and without qualification there was much more to say. Our colleges were dissipating their energies and resources, duplicating curricula, and, even at Dalhousie, were accepting large numbers of conditioned students. Some of them maintained on their campuses secondary schools which gave them the character of collegiate institutes rather than of universities. Standards generally fell far short of colleges elsewhere. With the possible exception of Acadia, none was doing anything for the public school system which was desperately in need of university influence. Professors lacked the inspiration of the presence of graduate schools. Altogether, endowments amounted to about \$2,500,000 for the benefit of a thousand students, equalling the endowment of Bowdoin or Amherst, each of which had a student population of a thousand. The only facilities worthy of a university were the scientific equipment at Dalhousie and the library at Acadia. Only Nova Scotia Technical College possessed sufficient facilities to do its work in a limited way. Possibly, mused the commissioners, if Lord Dalhousie's plan of a century earlier had been adopted, Nova Scotia in 1921 might boast a Harvard.

Their recommendations, published in June, 1922, proposed the correction of what they obviously considered a series of costly errors.

They envisaged a University of the Maritime Provinces located at Halifax, consisting of a federation or confederation of all that would be willing to join. A combination of university and college instruction, such as that established at Toronto in 1890, was suggested. Natural sciences and other non-controversial subjects would be taught by the University. Each college could maintain its identity by instruction in the Humanities and by nourishing its own version of true religion. The times seemed propitious for a strong move in the direction of unification. Three colleges had just experienced disaster by fire and most were conducting ineffective financial campaigns. First reactions were favourable. When the Carnegie Corporation invited delegates to Halifax for meetings in August and October, all tentatively approved of the plan, subject to the opinions of their governing bodies.

Following this preliminary success, the Corporation brought the question to the difficult arena of decision-making in January of 1923 when it offered \$3,000,000, six years of income from the British Dominions and Colonies Fund, for implementation of the plan. Several years of debate followed. Denominational pride and prestige as well as the merits of small colleges opposed to those of the large university enjoyed free play. Old loyalties were shaken. Regional interests and the commercial prospects of small university towns had to be considered. Constitutional questions, principally the division of powers between university and colleges, received lively argument. What would happen to traditions and habits of thought engendered in the colleges over decades of devoted labour?

Results fell far short of the Carnegie proposal. Within a month Acadia University produced an uncompromising negative. Dalhousie beckoned hopefully. Mount Allison, where the proposed federation was linked up with current movement for Church Union, wavered, and not until 1927 did the Board of Regents unanimously conclude that the proposal was unacceptable. St. Francis Xavier at first showed strong division of opinion, but six months of debate brought the same decision. Easily the most likely candidate for acceptance was King's where the financial position was clearly desperate. After a series of conferences, in which Dalhousie participated, the Corporation made an offer of \$600,000 contingent upon removal to Halifax and the raising of \$400,000 for building purposes. The agreement came in 1923



and, after four extensions of the time-limit for the raising of funds, King's was established at Halifax with a fine group of buildings and its degree-conferring power, except in Theology, held in abeyance in favour of Dalhousie. The University of New Brunswick was omitted from the specific proposal of 1923, presumably because of its tax-supported status and because of a degree of interest in the proposal inferior to that of the other universities.

But one small step towards unification had been taken, yet the Carnegie Corporation did not lose interest or faith in the universities. Regarding its major proposition as premature, it nevertheless disbursed over a million and a quarter dollars to the institutions of the region over the next ten years. Its generosity no doubt had the effect of impelling co-operation. Owing to its influence the Central Advisory Committee on Education was organized in 1924. A common examining board for matriculation, representing thirteen colleges, was formed, and the universities agreed to reduce the numbers of conditioned and special students. Dalhousie, King's and Mount Allison abstained from competition in appealing to the public for financial assistance. Prince Edward Island was an especial recipient of a large grant for library services and the teaching of Economics.

Local and denominational loyalties held hard against the reasoned appeal of the Carnegie Corporation and the financial enticements offered, and, over the next ten years the universities, perhaps in defiance of reason, flourished. Between 1922 and 1934 the five involved in the plan for federation enjoyed a growth in student population from 1,600 to 2,100. During six prosperous years between 1923 and 1929, so many new buildings arose that it appeared each, in the range of its ambitions, might ultimately rival Harvard. Energetic and skilful raisers of funds, of whom President Patterson of Acadia might be taken as a characteristic figure, caused endowment to double. Having stood aloof from what appeared to be an almost exclusively Nova Scotian venture, the tax-supported University of New Brunswick experienced something like a harvest time. The Carnegie overtures to union were successfully employed to give government a greater sense of responsibility. The annual grant was substantially increased and the City of Fredericton, for the first time in its history, honouring the material needs of higher education, awarded a special gift of \$25,000.

Led by Sir George Foster the Alumni established the Half-Million Dollar Endowment Plan to make the University financially independent for all time.

Living memory recoils from the task of narrating the remarkable growth of the universities and the multiplication of their functions since the Second World War. At this stage History becomes contemporary politics. The massive introduction of federal aid during the veteran period and following the Massey Report of 1951 has strengthened diversity and fortified local autonomies, has thrown financial resources in as many directions as urgencies have dictated and as popular ideas have supplanted elitist. In the Maritimes, where we have always been considered a little bit quaint for the number and variety of our institutions, we have lustily participated in this remarkable expansion. We have ignored the injunctions of our native sons, Walter C. Murray and Henry Marshall Tory, who went west and successfully imparted, at least for their lifetimes, the notion of one province, one university. Out of our divisions have been added the University of Prince Edward Island, the University of Moncton, the University of New Brunswick at Saint John, and Xavier College at Sydney. If there is any doubt that our regional passion for the establishment of universities has subsided, tidings from New Brunswick suggest an international university on the St. Croix, another on the Miramichi and still another on the North Shore. And there is the fairly recent exhortation of a former cabinet minister, ephemerally a power in the land, that every county should have a college.

As in politics and in trade, the Maritimes have refused to settle their educational destinies from a single metropolitan source. We have preferred a judicious division of scarcity. The colonial faith in the value of the "the small college", the belief that a lively dialogue on the ideas of Plato or the nature of the university can be conducted from the vantage point of a few cracker barrels, have survived the modern environment. We are entitled to be mildly amused by the eccentricities of our forbears, perhaps by our own as well. But, knowing the colossal contribution to the life of the nation made by our colleges, who would dare to ridicule?

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