

KING'S COLLEGE— SESQUICENTENNIAL

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IN the August of this year, 1939, a three days celebration commemorated the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of the University of King's College, Halifax, marking that university as the oldest English-speaking institution of its kind in His Majesty's Dominions overseas. To that celebration came alumni of King's from all parts of Canada, from the United States and from England, together with friends up to a number exceeding a thousand. This celebration in some ways was more than a local event. When the British possessions in North America were merely colonies, the home government—in its care for the education of the young—founded four institutions, each called King's College. One of these was in New York, and after the Revolution became known as Columbia University; it is still proud in a quiet way of its old royal associations, and it sent two official delegates and an illuminated address to King's College, Halifax, to mark the Sesquicentennial of the Halifax College. The other King's Colleges were: in Toronto—now The University of Toronto; in Fredericton,—now The University of New Brunswick; and in Windsor, Nova Scotia.

The Windsor College was founded in 1789, through the energy and foresight of Bishop Charles Inglis, the first Anglican overseas Bishop; and in 1802 a Royal Charter was granted to the College by King George III to supplement the original Provincial Charter upon which the College began its career. There is no doubt of what the original intention of the British Government was in founding King's College at Windsor. The official name of the institution is "The University of King's College", and its prototype quite possibly is the University of Trinity College in Dublin. In the words of the Charter, King's College was to be "the Mother of an University". Obviously it was hoped that whatever other colleges might subsequently be formed in various places in the Maritimes should be governed by one University Charter, and enjoy a uniform and common curriculum and a common degree.

Immediately the new College ran into complications, due to the prevailing religious laws in England, in particular the

Test Act against Protestant Nonconformists and the Penal Acts then in force against Roman Catholics. In the ancient universities of England the Thirty-Nine Articles were a bar to entry for all except orthodox Anglicans. To the credit of Bishop Inglis it must be noted that he was definitely against the enforcement of these disabilities against non-Anglicans in Nova Scotia, and his desire was to open the doors of King's to all young men who desired a higher education. It was the civil authorities of the day, and especially the reigning Chief Justice of Nova Scotia, who thwarted the Bishop's plans, and in consequence, when by 1830 religious bars to higher education were removed by the British Parliament, intolerance had produced its results, so that distinctly denominational colleges sprang up in various parts of the Maritimes, and Dalhousie University—with no denominational affiliations at all—was founded as sort of a protest against them.

King's remained in Windsor until 1923. The College was never large, but the number of first-class servants of Church and State which came from this old royal institution is truly amazing. In its career the College in Windsor saw many changes in the world. Founded in the year of the French Revolution, it lived through the Napoleonic War, saw the Industrial Revolution entirely change industrial and commercial life, witnessed the rise of most of the British Empire, and was quite an ancient institution by the time Canada achieved Confederation. World crises came and went, and the fortunes of the College rose and fell with them. In 1914, when the Great War broke out, the College was left with only three male students, and these not fit for military service. Emerging from the War with her fortunes somewhat repaired, King's in 1920 met what seemed to be almost irreparable disaster, when fire destroyed practically all her buildings. At this point the Carnegie Corporation of New York attempted to repair the damage that had been done by old religious intolerance 130 years before. A project was mooted to combine the then existing four universities of the Maritimes with the fifth, Dalhousie, which by this time had established professional schools and seemed the most likely nucleus for a larger university. For one reason or another the Carnegie scheme failed of success in its entirety. King's, however, took advantage of the offer, floated a campaign, and with the assistance of some 6000 friends re-established herself in new buildings on the Dalhousie campus, in association with the latter institution. For 16 years this association has con-

tinued, and has very definitely strengthened the resources and efficiency both of Dalhousie and of King's. King's still retains her old residential system, based upon that of the older universities of England, and maintains her old traditions of "Manhood, Learning, Gentleness". That the old spirit which has carried the College along during the century and a half still exists, was clear from the enthusiasm and affection manifested by our alumni and friends in the celebration of last August.

It is difficult to put into words what exactly grows out of age, tradition and tone; but the feeling in this old College is that having weathered so many storms in the past, when resources were far more tenuous than they are at present, old King's—the Mother of all English-speaking Canadian universities—will live through the present crisis too, and emerge stronger and more useful to Canada than ever before.