

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK, PAST AND PRESENT*

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THE President, on behalf of the Alumni Society, has graciously asked me to speak to-day upon some topic growing out of my experience since I have been a member of the Faculty of this University. Many subjects of this nature have come into my mind, but I have decided upon one which has to do with my mission here. I am to discuss "The Function of this University", as I understand it. In my treatment I shall deal with the past history only so far as it reveals the function of the College, and I ask your indulgence if on this account I neglect many historical features of great interest to us all.

I

THE FUNCTION OF THE OLD COLLEGE OF NEW BRUNSWICK

In 1785 a number of Loyalist gentlemen presented a memorial (a copy of which now hangs upon the University walls) urging the expedience and necessity of establishing a school for liberal arts and sciences, and asking that trustees be appointed and lands reserved for its support. This memorial was granted by the Executive Council; the Charter was ordered to be drafted and the lands reserved.

The Charter of the incorporation of the College of New Brunswick was not given until 1800, but some years before this date the trustees had opened an academy for boys in Fredericton. It was not until 1823 that the College undertook collegiate work, and in 1828 three students were given the B. A. degree—the only graduates of this College. The Seminary, or collegiate school, was more largely attended, and continued in operation until 1871 when, by reason of the *Free Schools Act*, it became the Fredericton Grammar School. The demand of the Province in this period was in reality for more and better secondary schools to prepare youth for life, and to prepare the few who could afford it for college education. Lack of interest in education, lack of schools for college preparation, the small population, and the

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religious exclusiveness of the College account for the small attendance. The Rev. Dr. Summerville was the only President of the College, and its only teacher; and the work was too large for one man to carry on alone.

II.

THE FUNCTION OF KING'S COLLEGE

The College received a new Charter in 1828, but was incorporated under the name of King's College "for the education of youth in the principles of the Christian religion and for their instruction in the various branches of literature and science which are taught in the Universities of this Kingdom". The Governor, Sir Howard Douglas, was a firm supporter of the College; on January 1, 1829, he opened the new Arts Building and presented the Charter for King's College to the institution. He spoke of his deep feeling of satisfaction on the occasion. The College, he said, was the first and greatest object of his mission, and its establishment gave him more complete satisfaction than any other public office in his life. "The function of the College was," he added, "to train men to virtuous and well educated, accomplished manhood", and to bring to them "the blessings of sound, virtuous, useful, religious education, to enable them to live to old age with consciences devoid of stain and conduct devoid of censure". Thus the function of the College was to instruct youth in arts, science, and literature, and to train men to live virtuous, patriotic, and religious lives. It was also to train men to enter the ministry of the Anglican Church, and to prepare for other professions. It was, in fact, to be an institution of higher learning for the aristocratic youths of the Province, to be preparatory to the professions, and it was controlled and dominated by the Anglican Church.

King's College under the Presidency of Dr. Jacobs for nearly thirty years, and his associated professors, failed to draw many students, and its entire existence was an almost continuous conflict with the Legislative Assembly. The Province was backward in education, its schools were inferior, and the attendance was small and irregular. Many of the secondary schools were denominational; the denominations began to develop academies, and a little later colleges, in which they could find that equality which King's College denied to them. The Assembly demanded that the College be abolished, and that the revenues be used for

other educational services which would benefit more of the people. It objected to the control of the institution by an irresponsible group of the Family Compact which controlled at that time the main positions in government and on the bench, and to its religious exclusiveness. The College Council was autocratic, reactionary, and opposed to the reform movement for responsible government.

Conflict between the Assembly and the College continued in bitterness and intensity until in 1854 the Assembly won. In that year a Royal Commission was established to recommend action to end or amend the College in a way to meet the needs of the people of the Province. It was in the debates of this period that the Attorney-General made the statement that the existing Charter of King's College was not the one that the Lieutenant-Governor expected and had sent to the Imperial Government for confirmation, but was one that the head office had secured through machinations of Dr. Stocker from Upper Canada; and that Sir Howard Douglas was so dissatisfied and disgusted with its exclusive and illiberal character that he did not lay it before the Assembly until he was near the close of his term of office. It should also be said that the new Charter for the University of New Brunswick was strongly supported by members of the Legislative Council who were members of the Anglican Church. A similar struggle for larger freedom took place in other colleges in the kingdom, for example, in King's College, Ontario, and later in Oxford and Cambridge.

The report of the Royal Commission was submitted in 1854, but on account of the strife and differences of opinion it was not accepted and acted upon until 1859. It was not until years later, when the College had removed the evils complained of and had become useful and efficient, that old issues were forgotten.

III.

THE FUNCTION OF THE COLLEGE AS PROPOSED BY THE ROYAL COMMISSION, AND EMBODIED IN THE ACT CREATING THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK

The Royal Commission of 1854 was composed of five men, two of them noted educationists, namely Dr. Egerton Ryerson, Superintendent of Education for Ontario; and William Dawson, then Superintendent of Education for Nova Scotia, and later Principal of McGill University. The report of the Commission was an able one.

The Commission urged strongly that the College be retained, and that its education be more "comprehensive, special and practical"; that it be non-denominational; that the Chair of Theology be abolished; that the College seek to serve other strata of the population by offering courses in engineering, land surveying, agriculture, and in commerce and navigation; that the Province improve its educational system by establishing a Normal School, by reconstructing the Parish and Grammar Schools, and by making the University the highest institution of learning in the educational system.

IV.

THE FUNCTION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK SINCE ITS ESTABLISHMENT IN 1860

The main recommendations in the report of the Commission were embodied in the Act for the Establishment of the University of New Brunswick. This Act was passed in 1859, and was confirmed at Buckingham Palace in 1860. The growth of the University was slow until the turn of the twentieth century. Until this time, the growth of the Province both in population and in industry and commerce was very gradual. Then the provincial grant to the College remained unchanged for over seventy-five years.

The College under the new Charter sought to reach other classes of students. In 1860 President Brydone Jack stated in his euaenial address that in his view the arts course was essential to sound *mental training*, but he proposed to add to it "courses of study adapted to the needs of the age and to the circumstances of the country". This was practically the view of the institution when I was a student here in 1894-1898. The Arts Course was education *per se* in its subject-matter, and in its method it gave mental training *par excellence*.

However, the necessities of the Province led to the establishment of departments of applied sciences. In 1889 the Chair of Civil Engineering was established, and in 1890 Civil Engineering entered into its new building and became a department. In 1889 the Chair of Physics was established, and somewhat later a department of Physics and Electrical Engineering. In 1907 a Professor of Forestry was appointed. Now we have a Department of Forestry housed in its own building and preparing students for the important development of forest industries. In 1923 the Law Faculty was established in the city of Saint

John. As yet we have no School of Agriculture, although there is a field of practical value for the Province, and demanding the theory and principles of the great sciences of chemistry and biology. We have students who now take a pre-medical course, and who work in co-operation with larger institutions where the work here is recognized and credited in their medical schools.

It is evident that since 1900 the University has developed rapidly on the side of the practical or applied sciences. There has been a large increase in the equipment, the members of the Faculty and the students of these subjects. The Encaenial exercises to-day show that the Arts Department has only a small part of the entire student body. This change has been brought about not so much by a change in the theory of education as by social demands, and by the necessities of the industries. To be sure, we have increased the staff in the Arts course. We now have men in Modern and English languages, in History, Politics, Economics, and Education. Yet our education is slowly shifting from the old cultural type to that of the applied sciences.

V.

THE PRESENT FUNCTION OF THE COLLEGE

What, in view of these facts, or "our past history", is the function of the College now? What is our goal for it? Is it concerned with providing a broad liberal education, or is it to become a mere group of professional and vocational schools? May education be both liberal and vocational, provided the vocation involves in its preparation an understanding of the theory and principles of an exact and established science on which it rests? To teach such applied sciences is to give a liberal or cultural education. But professional or vocational training, which concerns itself with mere skills, and habits of dealing to insure success or prosperity, is not cultural in character, and is not worthy of a University, but can be learned directly in the industry in question.

On the other hand, an Arts course may be so selected and carried on as to fail to provide culture or liberation of mind. The formation of mere habits of memorizing, or cramming of unrelated items, provides no scope for creative thinking, and no appreciation of values. Count and Chapman say that in education "liberal" signifies "a generous and plentiful training—a training that frees from ignorance, superstition, dogmatism, and

narrowness in ideas, doctrines and sympathies"—"An individual is liberated not by information and by great learning, but rather by an attitude toward life. To be able to see two sides to a question, to realize ignorance, to appreciate expert service, to feel an abiding obligation to study and direct the course of social life, to be public-spirited, to recognize the claims of national and international obligation: these are the hall-marks of the man whose education has made him free".

Is our education in this University now moving towards or away from this liberation of heart and mind? First of all, we must recognize the real distinction between a cultured and an uncultured mind. Our ideas of culture arose years ago from the class culture of the aristocracy of the Mother Country. Culture was the hall-mark of the man who passed as a true member of the higher class of leisure. In Canada it often meant that one could speak without grammatical error, that he was able to quote correctly certain passages from classical and English writers, but unfortunately too often it did not mean a liberation of mind which expressed itself in broad sympathies, in creative thinking, in freedom from narrowness in "ideas, sympathies and doctrines".

The distinction between the education of one of the free citizens and of the servile masses goes back to Aristotle. Greece had its caste system, and Aristotle discussed the education of the free citizens of Greece who had leisure because they lived by the toil of others. They were to be able to contemplate their world, to understand it and to appreciate and enjoy it—especially its intellectual and aesthetic aspects. But the education of the servile class was very different. They did the work in an age that knew nothing of machinery or of modern science: therefore they must obtain hand skills by assiduous application, by habituation. Training for them involved the formation of correct habits largely by what the psychologist would now call "conditioning"; their work became to quite an extent habituated and a matter of routine. There was the thought-provoking education of the free man, and the formation of sensori-motor habits for the skilled workman.

Now society has undergone radical changes during the centuries, and with them a change in our view of the nature and function of man and of education. We are a democracy in which we recognize the infinite worth of each personality and his right to an education which will provide him opportunity for his richest and highest development of intellect, feeling, appreciation and expression, and for his greatest service to society. We have a

far different value of the common man from that prevalent in an aristocracy.

Equally important is the difference in our scientific outlook, in our inventions and our productive system. Our age is a scientific one, and therefore we have a machine type of production. In the mines, forests, agriculture, commerce, transportation and trade, construction, farming, health protection, and such like, an understanding of modern science is required. The worker in our industries requires some knowledge of the mathematical and qualitative basis of the sciences—of mechanics, physics, chemistry, biology, and perhaps psychology and sociology. The modern world demands therefore intelligent citizens, citizens with ability to perceive facts and their meanings, and to test these by experiment whenever necessary. The industrialist must work intelligently, with a full understanding of the processes and methods in his industry. Further, in the complex social sciences the problem of analysis and experimentation is even more difficult, yet equally important for progress in these sciences. Science is the one method of advancement in *Man's control over nature and human nature*. Any applied or pure science which rests upon the principles and theory of the exact sciences, and which provides an intelligent interpretation of data and a foresight of consequences, is surely cultural. It gives man by his knowledge control over the forces about him, and therefore *liberates* him and makes him no longer a slave but a *master* of nature. A vocational education based upon the sciences making use of symbols for the widening or extension and intensification of meaning is education or thinking in its most exact sense. It is solving complex problems by the best methods which have been worked out by human experience. Dr. Whitehead, the great philosopher, has said "The antithesis between a cultural and technical education is fallacious. . . There can be no adequate technical education where there is not liberal education, and no liberal education which is not technical, that is, which does not impart both technical and intellectual vision."

If our conclusions are correct, then vocational education may be liberal or cultural insofar as it seeks to understand and to interpret the theory and principles of the science or sciences which are applied; but insofar as it rests upon tricks of the trade, or upon skills and routine that can be acquired without thinking to any extent, it provides no freedom for the mind or real appreciations for the worker.

But in our Arts course are we seeking a broad general educa-

tion, or are we providing especially in junior and senior years a professional education? Perhaps sixty per cent of our Arts students are taking courses to prepare them for teaching in schools or for further education preparatory to college teaching, or to research work, or to welfare and health work, or to the civil service. The rest are probably pre-students, pre-law, pre-medicine, pre-ministry. A few others have at least a bias towards subjects appropriate for their professional career. There is therefore practically no longer a general liberal education which does not look towards or have a bias for some profession or vocation after college.

But the youth of the present needs not only preparation for one vocation, but some preparation at least for many other vocations, which are sometimes called avocations. His vocational training may be for a chemist, an engineer, a teacher, or an artist, but his avocational training should help him to become a useful and efficient member of a state, of a family, a member of several associations, whether professional, recreational, health, educational, artistic, or let us hope above all, an efficient membership of the Christian Church. Are we to give no higher education for these avocations, which mean so much for the welfare of the individual and the community, and in which he will find much of the happiness and joy of life? All of them rest upon some knowledge of the experience of the race, and upon the advances that are being made in the physical and social sciences. He must appreciate these activities in their significance and meaning if he is to be a good citizen. What general training should the College offer for these avocations? Since all must enter them, should there be common training in these activities?

Since mathematics is one of the main lines which the creative spirit of man has followed in its development, and since it is now the language of science, one must understand it at least to a degree to live in our world of scientific civilization. An appreciative understanding of history is also important, since its time-sequences and its causal relations enable us to see the relation of the present to the past, to foresee the future, and therefore to live intelligently. A knowledge of our English language and literature, which brings with it the traits of English character and roots in the Graeco-Roman civilization as it has been transformed by Christianity, is essential for the appreciation of our civilization. Training to speak and to write the English language clearly and correctly is very important for communication and appreciation. A knowledge of another language, and especially

of Latin where students can master it with a degree of interest and ability, is very important because of the accuracy and excellence of the language itself as a vehicle of communication, and because of the rich values of the whole civilization it enables us to interpret and to appreciate. The world in which we live is being continuously recreated by science, and we must attain some appreciation of the achievements of science and of the methods it employs if we are to live intelligently and cooperatively.

Our environment is largely a social one, created by the tradition and institutions of human experience, and a knowledge of the social sciences dealing with health, politics, economics, sociology, and psychology is necessary for intelligent citizenship. Then there is the great world of appreciation and of expression in art, music and literature, and an appreciative understanding of these is essential if life is to find enrichment and satisfaction. Finally, there is a need to organize all these values—of knowledge, sociability, industry, beauty, righteousness, religion—into some unified system within the soul of the individual and within the universe of knowledge if we are "to see life steadily and see it whole". This task of philosophy was central with Greek and medieval thinkers.

The problem is how to get time for these avocations and for the vocations. We have admitted that vocational education, so far as it involves an intelligent understanding of the principles of the science upon which it rests, is cultural and liberalizing. But there is a danger of narrowing its vision to the neglect of other values of life, and of focusing attention upon the profession, often not upon the science it applies, but upon a success based upon advancement in position and an increase in pecuniary gain. A wider knowledge of its relations to the whole world of scientific concepts, and to the great social and moral ends for which the industry is a means, gives the true leader and the cultured man. It is surely this type of man that College education seeks to develop. The ideal forester is not looking primarily for pecuniary success out of the immediate gain from lumber operations, but he sees the meaning of the forest for civilization, and seeks to utilize its resources in a way to promote a proper balance between immediate and future uses. He is a servant of society, and serves the industry for society. "The larger outcome of the College education is to create in the student an understanding and appreciation of the principles upon which must be reared that society and that civilization for which the clear in mind and the pure in heart are forever striving". Men now are fighting for

that better world order. Are we seeking in our education to inspire a love for it, and an understanding of the principles upon which it must be based?

The high-school as well as the College is engaged in secondary education. Could we co-ordinate these two institutions in order to make them more efficient? If we could extend the high-school course to four years, and use the last two years of high-school and the first year, or the first and second years of the College course for the general subjects of an avocational nature and the remainder of the College time for our professional training, might we not provide for intelligent socially-minded citizenship and for efficient professional and vocational workers? The University of Chicago has integrated the last two years of the high-school and the first two years of the University into a College for liberal education.

This College was established to provide a liberal education, and we trust it will never resign this function. *All its graduates should be liberated from ignorance, prejudice, dogmatism, from unworthy motives and low aims, by an earnest search for knowledge and a real appreciation of the great ideals. That training of heart and mind which brings with it intellectual and moral insight, which enables one to discern the truth and to feel under obligation to make it prevail, is the true liberation of the soul.* Ruskin said "If your work is first and your wage is second, you are the lords; but if your wage is first and your work is second, you are the fiends."

May I ask you graduates to make your vocation or profession your supreme social function? Put your primary interest in the scientific and technological principles it embodies, in its progress as a medium of social advance, in its relation to the whole world of scientific concepts, and in the social ends and purposes it is meant to serve.

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I am now closing thirty-four years as a teacher in this University. I can sincerely say that I have made my profession my supreme mission in life, and I have found satisfaction in it. I have enjoyed communion with the great thinkers of the ages, and have had real happiness in the fellowship of my pupils. I can say with the Great Teacher "I have had meat to eat that you know not of". I trust that when you come as near to the close of your career as I am now to mine, you may look back upon

it as I now do with gratitude for the rich values it has brought you, and for the peace of mind you have obtained in it. Sir Howard Douglas said the University was meant to teach us "to live to old age with conscience devoid of stain and conduct devoid of censure". You are going forth from here into this war-torn world. You are to take membership in our social institutions. They are good insofar as they are a medium for social cooperation and for the satisfaction of your common needs; but they are evil insofar as they are static and reactionary in a progressive society, and are used as fortresses of greed, exploitation and special privileges. What they need is, first of all, to undergo a searching analysis by social science, involving a clear discernment and unhesitating rejection of the evil in them and a re-construction of the good into adequate instruments for a nobler social order. This is the task for the man who understands, the man whose mind is trained to think clearly and to follow unflinching the straight path of duty. Every young man, like Abraham of old, must go forth to discover or create the city of his ideal, and in building it to find that his inner vision grows in clearness, in definiteness, and in reality until behold he realizes that his City of God is within his own soul. A good life and a good social order are achieved together. May you enter by faith into your full citizenship of that better world order that you go out to-day to realize, and in that citizenship discover your true self and the peace and happiness of true living.