

## THE U. N. B. ON ACTIVE SERVICE

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THE chief glory of the University of New Brunswick lies in the fact that, very happily, it combines the old and the new. With a respectable and even historic past, it enjoys a progressive present, promising well for an abundantly fruitful future. It is not well for a college, any more than for a family, to dwell unduly on its past record, however enticing the retrospect. Noble deeds of past generations are of use only as they inspire the present in its duty towards the future.

The story of the University of New Brunswick begins almost with the history of the Province. In the successive decades through which it has lived, its object has been to represent the paramount thought or opinion of the time, and to give expression to the thought in action. Founded as an institution in association with the school of religious thought then prevailing, when the time came that this particular body no longer represented the religious sentiments of a majority of the people, the custodians of the college, in honesty of purpose, concluded that a state-aided hall of learning should no longer be affiliated with any particular sect. Thus, a radically forward step was taken, long before the schools of the Province were organized on a similar basis.

Another forward move, made at a time when development along such lines seemed daring, was the admission of women as students. Reactionism condemned, but progress applauded, this innovation. Looking backward, one now sees how well chosen were these advanced policies, and that disaster would have befallen the University had less weighty counsels prevailed. So the University of New Brunswick has kept pace with public opinion, having been even in advance of it, if anything, at times.

Freedom, breadth of thought, toleration,—these formed the keynote of the curriculum, and today are of the very atmosphere of the college. One regrets that residence was abandoned and looks forward to its restoration. But the spirit of residence has been more or less maintained by the association of students in fours and fives and sixes in various lodging-houses throughout the city. Thus the interchange of ideas outside lecture hours—such an important feature of university life—has not been quite allowed to die out.

Another characteristic of the University of New Brunswick deserves special mention. It should be, and is, the college of the people. The tendency has

been, as time passed, to democratize the University and make it truly popular, without lessening its efficiency. To make use of a paradox, democracy is the true aristocracy. It means that the best shall prevail by reason of merit. It means that lack of birth, or rank, or wealth, shall no longer hinder. Every man shall stand on his own feet, by his own strength, and shall not be held — propped up.

Still another pleasing trait in the student life is the attitude towards work. Of late years, at all events, observers of the college spirit have noticed that the student who idled away his vacation was regarded with scant consideration. The University of New Brunswick had no place for the slacker long before the war protruded into the lime-light this unenviable and unhonoured character. Snobbery had no place among the students. The lad, who, during the holidays, threw off his coat, put on the overalls, and, if necessary, worked as a navvy on the railroad, was held, infinitely, in more esteem than the student who dallied away the time over tennis balls and ping-pong. The lad who did things was esteemed. Herein, once more, the college interpreted the true spirit of the times, for the war has put us all in the laboring class.

And the contribution of the college to the war has been the very choicest it could give. From all parts of Canada and the United States, from the halls of Oxford and elsewhere in old England, and from other parts of the King's dominions, graduates and undergraduates bobbed up in the early days of the war. Some took commissions when they could get them, and others took whatever job came first to hand and did the best they could with it. Whether the immediate duty lay in teaching an awkward squad the primitive lesson of forming fours, or the more intricate task of mastering the mechanics of an eighteen pounder, or the hazardous job of curry-combing the hind flanks of a kicking mare, it was all in the day's job, and it was more or less cheerfully done, excepting the usual "grousing," which is the soldier's privilege. The University of New Brunswick men were not the sort of whom plaster saints are made. On the contrary, the most of them were a gay and festive lot. At times, no doubt, their language was monstrously vivid, and their religious convictions did not always lead them to tumble over one another in their zeal to attend church parades. Their peculiar shifts to "make" sick parade on Sundays would be worthy of imitation by any fair weather civilian. They had