

THE AYLESFORD UNION.

"That ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the Gospel."—PAUL.

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Acadia's Retiring President.

It is with great pleasure that we are able to present to our readers an excellent portrait of Rev. A. W. Sawyer, D.D., LL.D., the honored and beloved retiring President of Acadia University, whose strong personality has been so long identified with our educational work, and whose rich intellectual endowments, coupled with executive and didactical abilities of the highest order, have played so large a part in lifting Acadia to the honorable position which she to-day occupies among Canadian universities. The many friends and admirers of Dr. Sawyer, will be interested in the following short sketch of his life, for which we are indebted to the *Acadia Athenaeum*.

ARTEMAS WYMAN SAWYER was born at West Haven, Vermont, in 1827, and was the son of Rev. Reuben Sawyer, a minister of the Baptist denomination. He received his preparatory education at New London (now Colby) Academy, in New Hampshire, and graduated from Dartmouth College in 1847. For three years he occupied a position on the high school staff at Windsor, Vt., then entered upon theological studies at Newton, Mass. Here he met his friend and classmate, Rev. S. W. DeBlois, D.D., on whose recommendation Dr. Sawyer was appointed to the chair of classics at Acadia College, in 1855.

After graduating at Newton, President Sawyer was pastor of the Baptist church at Lawrence, Mass., where he was ordained. Responding to the call from Acadia, he resigned his pastorate at Lawrence and entered upon his duties here. He filled the classical chair with marked ability for four years, and brought into prominence and popularity the benefits of a liberal

culture in the classics. Returning to the United States in 1860, he was pastor of the Baptist church at Saratoga Springs, N. Y., until 1864, when he was appointed principal of New London (now Colby) Academy. In the autumn of 1869, Dr. Sawyer came back to Wolfville as President of Acadia College, and Professor of Intellectual and Moral Philosophy. He received the degree of D. D. from Colby University in 1867, and that of LL. D. from Acadia University in 1888, the jubilee year.



Steady and marked growth have characterized the institutions since. Twenty-five years of unceasing and tireless effort have been devoted to their interests by their faithful president. All the strength of a high executive ability, and all the riches of a broad and liberal culture and high intellectual powers have been expended in their behalf, and the evidence of progress is seen on every hand.

Perhaps a brief comparison of the catalogue of 1869 with that of 1896 would prove most interesting

in obtaining an idea of the progress made. Between these dates were many seasons of discouragement and periods of darkness, the most trying of which was experienced, when on Dec. 2nd, 1877, the college building was burned to the ground. The faculty in 1869 consisted of five acting professors; now it is increased to eleven. The number of students in all classes was forty-two, while the calendar of the current year shows an attendance last year of one hundred and twenty-one. The standard of

matriulation was then and is now placed well above the average, but hardly a vestige of the old curriculum now remains. A great change has been made in this respect. The optional courses of the present time afford a wide scope for free selection and the gaining of an intimate acquaintance with subjects suited to individual tastes, while their restriction to the last two years of the course secures a good all round development before special lines are open to choice. The whole curriculum has been enlarged and extended until now it has attained a very high degree of efficiency.

The endowments of the University have greatly increased, and large and graceful buildings have been erected. Of the seven buildings now to be seen, not one was in existence in 1869. These and many other improvements have been made under the watchful eye and fostering care of President Sawyer, and have required faithfulness, judgment, and executive ability which very few are able to bestow.

While upon all sides are heard expressions of sincere regret that advancing years and impaired health have rendered imperative Dr. Sawyer's retirement from the more arduous duties of the Presidency, general satisfaction is felt