

THE STUDY OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES IN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES.

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ON account of the wide-spread popular interest in social and economic questions throughout the country as evidenced by the mental attitude of large bodies of people, by articles in the secular and religious press and by the existence of numerous social study clubs in remote country villages as well as in the large centres, it seemed a not profitless undertaking to see how far the colleges are responding to the public demand for instruction along the lines mentioned. The task has not been a difficult one as the number of universities in Canada is not great, there being only fifteen English ones doing regular college work leading to degrees in arts, science, medicine and law, and it is only the Arts courses that are of interest in this particular investigation.

While the age of scepticism in regard to purely economic study may be said to have passed away, and political economy is accepted as an essential in nearly every college curriculum, the study of sociology is still regarded as of doubtful character, and on the whole a thing to be shunned by orthodox institutions of learning. This attitude of course is gradually changing, and it is inevitable, as governing bodies learn more of the nature of sociological researches and the value of the work they have long looked at askance. This tendency is observable in the colleges under discussion, and from it we may expect new development.

1. I have not attempted to include the various French Catholic colleges, but have confined myself to the English. The several colleges

affiliated or federated with McGill and Toronto have not been considered, as their courses of study are identical with the central institutions.

Under the general term used in the title of this article, I include political science proper, covering constitutional history and international law, and sociology and economics. It can be seen from the course subjects and references to which of the trinity each properly belongs. It is not a matter of importance that the three be differentiated; it is simply instructive to know in a general way how far what is evidently a popular interest is reflected in the higher places of learning. It might seem that the initiative in thought would come from the University; but as a matter of fact this is not always the case. Universities cling to traditions, and view with distrust any teaching that may be at variance with these preconceived notions. It will be seen from the attached compilation of courses that the Maritime Province colleges have taken up the social sciences in a broader way on the whole than the institutions in other parts of the Dominion. If discoverable, the causes which have led to this shaking off the shackles of the past would be most interesting; but it is not the aim of this paper to undertake such a discovery. This is intended merely as a search for things that are, without seeking the causes for their existence. I have taken up the universities alphabetically and have thought it well to insert a tabulated statement concerning them, as it may serve to illuminate what is to follow.