

New Brunswick Schools of the Olden Time.

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(Continued.)

With the coming of the Loyalists, in 1783, the number of English inhabitants was increased from about 1,500 to 13,000, with a more than corresponding increase of wealth and education. Amongst the Loyalists were some of the brightest and ablest minds of the old American colonies. Lawyers, such as Chipman and Putnam; clergymen, such as Byles, Andrews and Scovil; soldiers, such as John Saunders, Beverley Robinson and the DeLanceys; descendants of the oldest families of New England—the Winslows, Tilleys and others whose forefathers came over in the *Mayflower*. But without stopping to particularise it is sufficient to state that as regards education, refinement and integrity, the character of the Loyalist founders of the province stood high. Many of those who filled leading positions in the government of the country during its infancy had enjoyed all the advantages of a collegiate education, and were naturally anxious that their children should not be entirely deprived of like privileges.

On the 8th of March, 1783, a meeting was held in New York to consider the ways and means whereby the cause of religion and education might best be promoted in the new communities about to be founded by the exiled Loyalists. Dr. Charles Inglis, afterwards first bishop of Nova Scotia, and Jonathan Odell, first Provincial Secretary of New Brunswick, were amongst those present. After due deliberation a plan was drawn up for providing religious and educational privileges for those emigrating from the old colonies to Nova Scotia. The plan was subsequently forwarded by Sir Guy Carleton to Lord North, with a recommendation in its favor. Among the suggestions it contained was that of setting apart lands for the use and maintenance of schools. In connection with the subject of education occurs this paragraph: "It will be highly beneficial and expedient, both from the present state and the immediate prospect of extensive settlement of that province, that the youth be furnished as soon as possible with such means of necessary education and liberal instruction as may qualify them for public utility,—filling the civil offices of government with credit and respectability,—inspire those principles of virtue and public spirit, that liberality of sentiment and enlargement of mind which may attach them to the constitution, happiness and interests of their country. For this purpose a public seminary, academy or college should, without delay, begin to be instituted at the most central part of the province."

In a subsequent letter to Sir Guy Carleton, the originators of the plan reiterate their conviction that "the founding of a college or seminary of learning on a liberal plan, where youth may receive a virtuous education and can be qualified for the learned professions, is, we humbly conceive, a measure of the greatest consequence. . . . If such a seminary is not established the inhabitants will not have the means of educating their sons at home, but will be under the necessity of sending them for that purpose either to Great Britain or Ireland, which will be attended with an expense that few can bear, or else to some of the states of this continent where they will be sure to imbibe principles that are unfriendly to the British constitution."*

The forethought manifested by those who, even before their arrival in the land of their adoption, had considered the interests of their children, was destined to bear good fruit; but of this more anon.

It is manifest that the circumstances of the great majority of the exiles, who, at the close of the American revolution, either through choice or necessity, abandoned their old homes and came to this country, were such that the sending their children abroad for an education was simply an impossibility. They had sacrificed their possessions, their various positions, in most cases their ALL. Their position was one to excite universal sympathy.

A very fair idea may be gathered of the mingled emotions with which, at the close of the war, they regarded the destruction of all their hopes by a glance at the letter addressed to Sir Guy Carleton, March 14th, 1783, by the officers of the loyal American regiments on behalf of themselves and their men. The letter modestly refers to their important services during the contest and to their personal sacrifices, and expresses anxious concern for the future of their families, which in many cases include "wives born to the fairest expectations and tenderly brought up, and children for whose education and future happiness they feel responsible." The letter closes with a humble request, "That grants of lands may be made to them in some of His Majesty's American provinces, and that they may be assisted in making settlements in order that they and their children may still enjoy the benefit of British government."

After the arrival of the Loyalists in this province

* It is interesting to compare with the above paragraph a complaint made some years later to His Excellency Sir Geo. Arthur, then Lieut. Governor of Upper Canada, that in many parts of that province the teachers then employed were "not only of an inferior description in point of character, as well as of attainments, but in many instances Americans, who introduce books from their own country, in which the history and institutions of that republic are colored in a manner very dangerous to the principles formed in their pupils; and the foundation of loyalty is thus sapped in the rising population of the country."