

# THE 'VARSITY:

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## UNIVERSITY REPRESENTATION IN THE LEGISLATURE.

My article on this question in the *'Varsity* of the 23rd October last, has called forth a rejoinder from P. V., in which the writer argues against the University having a Parliamentary representative, on the timid ground that "to give the University a representation in the Legislature would be to involve the University in political wrangles, and it might come, in some degree, to share the fate of the party which, for the time being, it espoused;" and that "from any closer connexion with politics, it would be sure to suffer."

This argument is not a novel one; but I find it difficult to apprehend what is meant by the University, or the constituency formed in it, "sharing the fate" of a political party. The two great political parties in England and Canada,—as well as their prominent individual members,—have had their experiences of the "prosperity of a victory," and the "calamity of a defeat;" but I know of no constituency, or statesman, having suffered for attachment to either of the great political parties.

Much stronger arguments against giving Parliamentary representation to the University can be found in the inexpediency of bestowing political rights and franchises upon literary and scientific corporations. Such corporations are created by the legislative power for the efficient performance of a department of the public duty of the nation; and on no intelligent ground therefore,—consistent with our present Parliamentary system,—can it be argued that such corporations are entitled to the Parliamentary franchise as a political right. Our Parliamentary system is based upon the right of each tax-payer, who possesses a certain property qualification, to be represented in the legislature which regulates his taxable liability; and while such a system prevails, exceptional representation in Parliament to Universities and kindred educational institutions would destroy the symmetry of the political system of the nation, and furnish material for the argument that other quasi-public corporations should also have representation in Parliament.

But should the Legislature in its wisdom abrogate the present political franchise, and introduce a suffrage not based upon the money value of a certain property or income, but upon the educational qualifications of the electorate, then the question might be found to be an arguable one.

In my article I avoided giving the arguments for or against University representation in the Legislature. My object was to quote the historical precedents bearing upon the question, and so to sound the views, and draw out the arguments, of my fellow graduates.

We can only indulge in conjecture as to the inaction of former Governments in dealing with the question. One reason has, I think, been rightly suggested by P. V., that "the Act was a mere fancy, based on what had no existence at the time it was passed." Another reason may have been that the Act affirmed the principle of "Representation by Population," and prescribed one thousand inhabitants as the minimum number of each constituency, and the University up to the time of the repeal of the Act (1859), had not given much promise of coming up to that number. And lastly, it may be that the reasons I have given above, influenced the Government, and left the Act, as P. V. says, "a law which wanted the breath of the executive to vitalize it."

THOMAS HODGINS.

## OUR LATE VICE-CHANCELLOR.

Last Friday night at the meeting of Convocation, Mr. J. C. Hamilton, seconded by Dr. Richardson moved the following resolution:

That this Convocation deplores the great loss which the University has sustained by the death of its Vice-Chancellor, Chief Justice Moss. In the exercise of his high office he won the respect and good-will of every one. His extensive information and his dignified politeness combined to attract to him the high esteem of all connected with the University as well as the public at large. That a copy of this resolution be forwarded to his widow.

On the same night at the meeting of the Debating Society the following resolution was passed by a unanimous vote, which was given whilst reverentially standing:

That this Society deeply deplores the loss sustained in the death of the late Vice-Chancellor Moss, one of its founders and warmest friends. That a copy of this resolution be forwarded to his family and to the papers.

## PROFESSIONS, AND PARTICULARLY THE LEGAL.

Few in this country have been born to wealth, and even these fortunate ones would not be wise in remaining idle. Every one is called upon to make the selection of a business or profession, and there are few considerations in life more important, and at the same time more embarrassing.

Canadians seem to have a strong inclination for the learned professions, and have so persistently flocked into them, that there is no longer standing room for those seeking admittance. Our system of public schools has placed a moderately good education within the reach of all. This is an excellent thing, but it must be confessed that its advantages are not wholly unalloyed. Boys in every rural school taste a little of the sweets of culture, and straightway become ambitious for a higher calling in life than that which satisfied their fathers. And so it has come to pass that while we are anxiously importing from abroad laborers, artizans, and farmers, we have thousands of native Canadians who are willing to do anything rather than follow these occupations. There is no country in the world where education is more general than in Ontario, and there is no country where young men are more averse to labor of the hands.

Of all the learned professions to which the young aspirant may turn his eyes, law is, and has always been, the favorite. The reasons for this are not hard to discover. It is supposed to yield an easy income, to confer social position, and to open the way to many rich prizes. Some facts concerning this favorite calling may not be amiss, leaving it for others to speak of the condition of the remaining professions.

It would be stating the matter very mildly to say that at the present time the legal profession is over-crowded. The plain fact is, that there is not room in Ontario for any more lawyers, and that in the natural course of events, there cannot be for some time to come. Not only has the number in practice increased to something phenomenal, but the emoluments to be derived have decreased proportionally. Every statute in the nature of law reform or re-organization of the courts, which has been passed in this country during the last thirty years, has had the effect of reducing lawyers' fees. Few fortunes have been made at law in this country during that time. Lawyers as a class are not given to complaining of the results of legislation which is so severe upon them. They framed these very statutes, and were instrumental in getting them passed, and they fully recognize the rule that the welfare of the people should be consulted, even at the expense of a class or a profession. But the fact still remains that every law reform, however beneficial to the