

# THE VARSITY:

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## A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR THE UNIVERSITY.

About sixty years ago, and seven years before the granting of the Royal Charter establishing the Provincial University, the Parliament of Upper Canada passed an Act, which will be found among the statutes of 1820, and cited as 60 GEORGE III., or 1 GEORGE IV., chap. 2, in which provision was made for the election of a member to represent the then proposed University in the Provincial Parliament of Upper Canada, and also affirming the principle of "Representation by Population," and also presenting that each county of one thousand inhabitants should be represented by one member, and when it increased to four thousand inhabitants, by two members; and that each town in which Quarter Sessions were held, and which had one thousand inhabitants, should be represented by one member. The section conferring the Parliamentary Electoral franchise on the Provincial University reads as follows:—

"IV. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That whenever a University shall be organized, and in operation as a Seminary of Learning in this Province, and in conformity to the rules and statutes of similar institutions in Great Britain, it shall and may be lawful for the Governor, Lieutenant-Governor, or person administering the Government of this Province, for the time being, to declare, by Proclamation, the tract of land appendant to such University, and whereupon the same is situated, to be a town or township, by such name as to him shall seem best; and that such town or township, so constituted, shall be represented by One Member: Provided always, nevertheless, that no person shall be permitted to vote at any such election for a Member to represent the said University in Parliament, who, besides the qualification now by law required, shall not also be entitled to vote in the Convocation of the said University."

This Act seems to have remained upon the Statute Book until the Consolidation of the Statutes of Upper Canada, in 1859, when it was repealed as 1 GEORGE IV., chap. 2, by chapter 1 of the Consolidated Statutes of Upper Canada, s. 5, and Schedule A., p. 1044.

At the time the Act was passed, the qualifications required of Parliamentary electors were: (1) That they should be British subjects; (2) That they should be possessed of a property qualification of the yearly value of over forty shillings sterling.

The Royal Charter of 1827 presented the qualifications of the members of Convocation thus:

"And we do further will, direct and ordain, that the Chancellor, President, and Professors of our said College, and all persons admitted therein to the Degree of Master of Arts, or to any degree in Divinity, Law, or Medicine, and who, from the time of such their admission to such Degree shall pay the annual sum of twenty shillings, sterling money, for and toward the support and maintenance of the said College, shall be deemed, taken, and reputed to be, Members of the Convocation of the said University; and as such members of the said Convocation, shall have, exercise and enjoy, all such and the like privileges as are enjoyed by the Members of the said Convocation of our University of Oxford, so far as the same are capable of being had and enjoyed by virtue of these our Letters Patent, and consistently with the provisions thereof."

The provision of the Royal Charter has been varied by the Revised Statutes of Ontario, chap. 210, and the membership of Convocation has been conferred on all Doctors and Bachelors of Law; all Doctors and Bachelors of Medicine; all Masters in Surgery; all Masters of Arts; all Bachelors of Arts of three years' standing; all Doctors of Science; all Bachelors of Science of three years standing, and all graduates holding other Degrees which thereafter may be recognized as qualifications for admission to Convocation.

Parliamentary representation of the Universities in England was, until 1603, of fitful enjoyment. Sir WILLIAM BLACKSTONE, in his Commentaries (v. 1, p. 194), says: "The Universities were, in general, not empowered to send Burgesses to Parliament, though once, in 28 EDWARD I., when a Parliament was summoned to consider of the King's right to Scotland, there were issued writs which required the University of Oxford to send up four or five, and that of Cambridge two or

three, of their most discreet and learned Lawyers, for that purpose. (Prynne's Parliamentary Writs, v. 1, p. 345.) But it was King JAMES the First who indulged them with their permanent privilege to send constantly two of their own body, to serve for those students, who, though useful members of the community, were neither concerned in the landed nor the trading interest; and to protect, in the Legislature, the rights of the republic of letters." The motive for conferring this privilege on the Universities, is thus expressed in the King's grant of 1803: "As in the Colleges of our University there are many statutes, constitutions, &c., and as in past times, and especially of late, many statutes and Acts of Parliament have been made concerning them, it therefore appears to us worth while, and necessary, that the said University should have Burgesses of its own in Parliament, who, from time to time, may make known to the Supreme Court of Parliament the true state of that University, so that no statute or act may offer any prejudice or injury to them, or any of them severally, without just and due notice." (Dyer, v. 1, p. 135.)

The University of Trinity College, Dublin, obtained the privilege of sending two members to the Irish Parliament in 1613, but, by the Articles of Union, in 1800, the representation was limited to one member. In 1832 the representation was restored to the original number of two members.

The Imperial Parliament in 1867 and 1868 recognized the right of the other Universities in Great Britain to be represented in Parliament, and in those years granted the Parliamentary franchise to the Universities of London, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen.

The University of Toronto has now about 1200 members of Convocation, and about all of them are qualified, according to the Upper Canada Act of 1820, to vote for a Member of Parliament for the University. The revision of the present system of Representation in Parliament must take place after the Census of 1881. The advocates of University Consolidation may find some arguments for their idea in an agitation for a re-enactment of the statute of 1820, giving Parliamentary Representation to a University for Ontario. THOMAS HODGINS.

THE Debating Society has long been in a position to sympathize with the representatives at St. Stephen's who have suffered from the tactics of Messrs. BIGGAR and PARNELL. The galling persistency of Obstructives could have been fully realized last year by a single attendance at one of the Friday night meetings. Obstruction, in this instance, took the form of prolonging the preliminary business until the soporific effect of wind-bag speeches rendered it desirable that the debate should be hurried through as quickly as possible. The individuals who constituted this party are not luminaries in debate, and they naturally yielded to the temptation of devoting the strength of their lungs to fantastic interpretations of the Society's statutes and regulations. The little books covered with red paper proved a god-send for the purpose; they were considered indispensable to members who were bent on making themselves heard, and who had not the capability of arguing intelligibly outside of a "clause by clause" discussion. The slightest informality in the presentation of reports, the least infraction of etiquette in the appointment of committees were some of the welcome signals for the Literary and Scientific Parnellites to display a marvellous versatility in red-tape distinctions. But the spirit of captiousness will eventually exhaust the patience of the most tolerant assembly, and we may rely on the probability that, during the coming terms, the dominance of this dead-head faction will be substantially impaired.

THERE is a College sheet which bears the medieval title of *Notre Dame Scholastic*, and its contents have a most ultra-medieval flavor. But what we wish to call attention to, is a column reserved for lists of names under the heading—Roll of Honor—Class Honors—List of Excellence. Each list being preceded by an explanatory introduction. Thus:—

### ROLL OF HONOR.

[The following are the names of those students, who during the past week have, by their exemplary conduct, given satisfaction to all the members of the Faculty.]