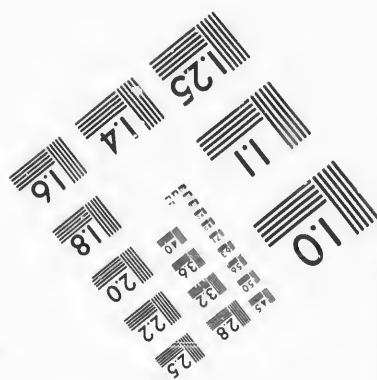
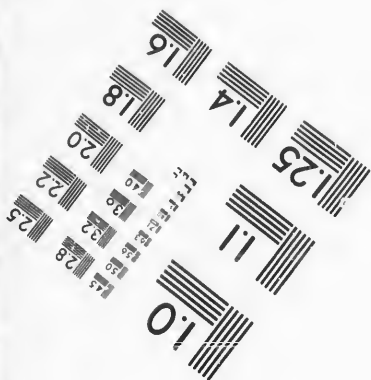
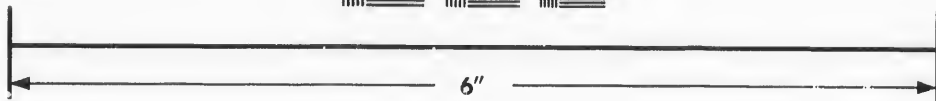
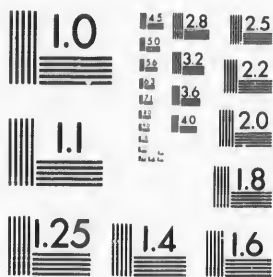


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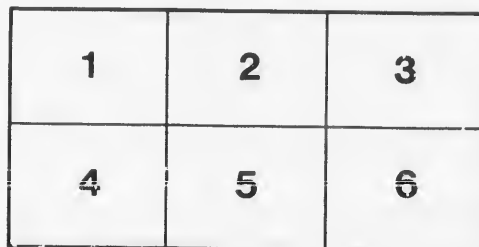
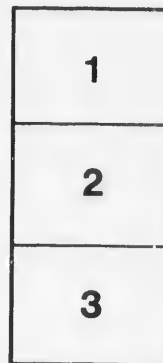
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REMARKS

ON

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

IN

NOVA SCOTIA.

By HUGO REID,
PRINCIPAL OF DALHOUSIE COLLEGE,
AUTHOR OF "THE PRINCIPLES OF EDUCATION," &c.



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UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

IN

NOVA SCOTIA.

THE many endeavors that have been made to establish a course of University Education in this Province, sufficiently show that great numbers have been quite awake to its advantages, while the want of success* that has attended these efforts proves, either that the attempt is premature, or that the means adopted have been inadequate, or in some way not well directed to secure the end in view.

* No disrespect is meant towards the founders and supporters of our present Colleges, whose efforts to supply the advantages of a Collegiate education for the youth of this Province, are, indeed, most honorable to them. Every one must acknowledge the great obligations the Province is under to those who have begun and persevered in such efforts, under circumstances of great discouragement, and undoubtedly their labors have been of benefit to the country. But when, in a population of nearly 300,000, including a considerable number of persons of ample means and superior intelligence, we find that the best of these Colleges has only fifteen students, of whom about half are preparing for the ministry, and that another leading one cannot maintain a Professor of Modern Languages, nay, not even a Professor of Mathematics—it must be admitted that they have been anything but successful, and have not conferred on the people of this Province the advantages to be derived from an efficient University.

It will hardly be maintained that the country is not yet sufficiently advanced for the establishment of a University. As a money-making, or even as a self-supporting Institution, Nova Scotia cannot maintain a College; and, if we judge by the experience of other countries, it is doubtful if she ever will. No where, either in present or in former times, do we find self supporting Universities. Those of Oxford and Cambridge, Glasgow, Aberdeen and Dublin, as well as the Continental Colleges, are supported by liberal endowments,—partly from the Government, partly from munificent bequests of private individuals. These induce learned men to accept the chairs—to devote themselves to research and discovery in their peculiar subjects—and to hold out an opportunity of obtaining the highest education to that small class that appreciate and desire it; a class almost every where too small to remunerate the professor by their fees.

A University is designed to be in advance of the wants of the great bulk of the community. It is required to direct and stimulate those wants; to aid struggling genius; to foster and encourage literature and the sciences. Its missions, besides preparing for the learned professions, are: 1.—To educate to the highest point a certain class who have means and leisure to continue at their education beyond the ordinary school period, and who, mixing in the world with the accomplishments and higher tastes acquired at their Alma Mater, shall exercise an elevating and refining influence on the mass. 2.—To assist and forward the education of those in humbler circumstances whose talents render it desirable to secure them for literary or scientific pursuits. 3.—To seize new discoveries and enlarged views as they arise, teach them to the class within their reach, and thus aid in diffusing a knowledge of them and rendering them productive. 4.—To set aside, in the professors, a body of men of talents and acquirements for the special cultivation and extension of literature and philosophy.

Wherever we find a few with talents and a taste for knowledge; wherever two or three are found with genius and an ardent zeal for literary or scientific pursuits, but without means to provide for the cultivation of these tastes and talents; wherever there are a few

with sufficient means and leisure to prevent the necessity of their being sent direct from school to business,—there the University will find its mission and its appropriate work. If Universities were needed, and founded, and did good service in the thinly peopled and semi-barbarous states of Europe, hundreds of years since, there is surely scope for one such institution in Nova Scotia, a country that starts from the vantage ground of modern times, with their multitudes of new sciences and new arts.

The failure of the University system in Nova Scotia, must, I apprehend, be attributed to imperfections in the means adopted for carrying it out; and there appear to be three principal causes why the attempts hitherto made have met so scanty a measure of success.

1. Waste of power and means in the endeavour to maintain several Colleges in so thinly peopled a country.
2. The sectarian character of these Institutions.
3. The location of the Colleges in country villages instead of in the large towns.

First, I would submit that a small province such as this, with a population of not more than three hundred thousand, cannot support more than one efficient University, and that the attempt to establish more is a waste of means and power that can result only in failure.

Let us enquire what is necessary to constitute a University. We find in the College at Edinburgh, exclusive of chairs especially designed for the learned professions, no less than *fifteen* professorships, and this University is considered somewhat behind the wants of the age in having no chair of "The English Language and Literature," no chair of "Modern Languages," and no chair of "Geology," that subject being included along with Zoology, &c., under "Natural History." In University College, London, a more modern institution, and which may, therefore, be taken as a better exponent of the demands of modern times, there are no less than *twenty-one*

professorships, besides those designed peculiarly for youth entering the learned professions.*

We cannot hope to attain to anything like either of these ; and some of the chairs in these universities may, perhaps, be viewed as educational luxuries. But I think it will be conceded that there cannot be anything pretending to the character of a University, at all commensurate with the progress of science and learning, without at least seven or eight chairs, as follows :

1. *Literary Department.*

ENGLISH LANGUAGE, Literature, and History, with Comparative Grammar and General History.
THE CLASSICAL LANGUAGES.
MODERN LANGUAGES.
LOGIC AND MENTAL PHILOSOPHY.

2. *Scientific Department.*

MATHEMATICS, with Mechanics and Astronomy.
CHEMISTRY, with Heat, Electricity, and Magnetism.
GEOLOGY AND PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY, including Meteorology, (i. e., the Earth and Atmosphere.)
ORGANIC SCIENCE (Botany and Zoology, with Human Physiology and Ethnology).

* The following are the Chairs, each filled by a separate Professor, in University College, London :

<i>Literary Department.</i>	<i>Scientific Department.</i>
English Language and Literature.	Mathematics.
Comparative Grammar.	Natural Philosophy and Astronomy.
Ancient and Modern History.	Chemistry.
Philosophy of Mind and Logic.	Practical Chemistry.
Political Economy.	Botany.
Latin.	Zoology.
Greek.	Geology and Mineralogy.
French.	Civil Engineering.
German.	Mechanical Principles of Engineering.
Italian.	Architecture.
Sanscrit.	

Besides these, there are thirteen Professorships in the Faculties of Law and Medicine.

It is possible that a professor might be found capable of taking the two last, reducing the number to *seven*; but this is not desirable. In the present extended and advanced state of these various subjects, it is not to be expected that one man can do justice to more than one of them.

Now, it is hardly necessary to say that there is not the slightest prospect that, within a reasonable time, any one of the existing colleges can supply what is, certainly, the minimum of professorial chairs for an efficient university in this, the latter half of the nineteenth century. Undoubtedly, a large amount of most valuable instruction, and an admirable course of intellectual training, are given at such an institution as King's College; but it cannot be denied that the great majority of those who might, do not avail themselves of its advantages, and that it still falls much short of what a university, in the present day, ought to be.

The waste of power in thus attempting several colleges is ruinous. We have four or five professors of classics, where one might amply suffice for the wants of this province for many years. When we do need *two*, we should like to see them, not in separate colleges, but giving greater strength and efficiency to the same university—one for Latin, the other for Greek, as is usual in all the British colleges. While we have thus several professors of classics, in different places, each spending his time and talents and the college means on some ten or twelve students (if so many), there is only one professor of chemistry in the whole province, no professor of *history*, no professor of *comparative grammar* and the *English language and literature*, and no professor of *geology*.*

* In the present very extended state of these sciences, it is impossible that any one man can do justice to the three *vacant* subjects, chemistry, geology, organic science. These form four distinct chairs in almost every European college of modern foundation—chemistry, botany, zoology, and geology. The professor should not have his mind distracted with too many subjects. This is a point of no small importance, as may be judged from the advanced state of scientific knowledge, and the numerous separate professorships in all newly established colleges.

England, with a population more than sixty times that of Nova Scotia, has not more than eight Universities. In the United States, where the democratic and Federal system gives unusual encouragement to the growth of separate institutions, there is only about one College for a population equal to that of this province, if we can reckon even so many; as a number of the so-called Colleges are hardly entitled to the name, being in a very inefficient state indeed. Scotland, with ten times the population of Nova Scotia, has but six Colleges,—about one for a population of half a million,—while we have three or four for little more than half the number.

What we want is one complete and efficient University, not several imperfect ones, each deficient in one or more points of the first importance. We know that the present system does not supply one College meeting the requirements of the times, and we see by the experience of other countries that it cannot be reasonably expected that it ever will be able to do so.

Their sectarian character is the next impediment to the success of the existing Institutions. Men are averse to sending their sons where they may acquire a bias in favor of a different Church from that in which they wish to rear them; and, although there is no doubt that the Professors and Governors of the present Colleges act with the strictest honor on this point, and scrupulously abstain from influencing in any way the religious views of such of their pupils as belong to other denominations; still, the associating much with honored teachers and friendly fellow students of another sect, is apt to implant a leaning towards that sect—certainly to moderate the prejudices against it; a happy effect, in truth, if it operated equally in favor of all sects, but of more questionable advantage when it is in favor of one sect only. Besides, there is a sectarian *esprit de corps*, which renders men reluctant to aid in supporting and strengthening other religious denominations. These feelings combined must, and, as every one knows, do prevent the great majority sending their sons to our denominational Colleges. Many who would take advantage of the existing Colleges, imperfect as they are, are repelled from them by their sectarian character.

If we consider the necessary expenditure, and judge by the

experience of Britain and the United States, we may safely say that a University, adapted to modern times, requires the support of a population of not less than a quarter of a million; and that no denominational College, drawing on its own sect alone, or mainly, for endowments and students, can maintain itself in an efficient condition on a much narrower basis. Yet it is attempted in this Province to establish Colleges for sects numbering only a sixth of the above amount.

It is highly desirable, indeed, that youth of various religious sects should meet and form friendships at College, rub off their sectarian corners, and thus early learn to like and esteem those of different religious views, : to treat differences of opinion with respect and moderation. This indirect but great benefit of mixed education is lost where all or the great majority belong to one sect, for the simple reason that, generally, parents will not send their children to the Colleges of other denominations than their own.

It is also of the utmost importance to remove every impediment which may indispose men to giving their sons a superior education. There are so many plausible reasons for neglecting this, besides want of appreciation of the advantages of a College education—economy, unwillingness to send their children too early from under the parental eye, opportunities of settling them in business—that we should be careful not to add to these the very unnecessary objection, that there is no accessible College but one of sectarian description.

I am aware that the different religious bodies require certain special professorships, for training their youth to the ministry; but it does not seem necessary, in order to obtain this, that each sect should (if it could,) maintain a whole College. In this Province, for many years, there will be but few in each denomination, in training for the ministry; and a small room in the College set apart for the purpose, or a room in the professor's house or hired outside, would generally suffice. Then, we might have *one* great University, in which all sects would unite for the secular department, while each would maintain such Theological Chairs as it might require. Surely all Protestant bodies may unite upon the

Chairs mentioned above; nay, even the Roman Catholics might also join. Perhaps they might not desire to have their youth attend the Protestant Professors of History and Mental Philosophy; but surely, every denomination of Christians, and even Jews and Mohammedans, might unite to learn Chemistry, Mathematics, and Mechanics together, and thus, by combining their strength, have one complete and efficient University, instead of several inefficient ones, which, besides their incompleteness, repel by their denominational character.

The third cause of the failure of the universities in this province is to be found in their situation, in thinly peopled villages in the country, instead of being in the large towns — in Halifax if there is but one, and in Pictou, if a second should be required.

The majority of parents have a well-founded objection to sending their sons from home at the very critical period between sixteen and twenty-one years of age. They may appreciate the advantages of a first-rate education, continued up to the latter period, but think that the serious risks to which a youth is exposed when left to himself, freed from the parental control, guidance and example, are too great to compensate for these advantages; and accordingly they prefer sending him to business to occupy him and keep him under their own eye at this trying time of life. Hence, the university should be in the largest town, to be brought to the homes and firesides of the greatest number of the class for whom it is designed.

But there is yet another important consideration, which should lead us to place the university in the largest town. Such an institution is not only for those preparing for the learned professions, or those who desire to pursue a complete general education; it is invaluable also for another and a quite distinct class — those who have a peculiar taste or aptitude for some special department of literature or science, and who, for the public interest as well as their own, should have easy access to the means of acquiring full instruction, extending to the most recent and advanced information, on their favorite subjects. Take, for example, chemistry: wherever there is any populous community, a certain number will be

gifted with a taste and talent for that science. It is for the public good that such persons should be able to procure thorough instruction in chemistry. Their peculiar gifts will not then be lost to society; and chemical science, and the various arts dependent on it, will be enriched by their after labours, if they have been well grounded in the principles and practice of the science, and placed in possession of the latest views and discoveries. So with mathematics, mechanics, botany, zoology, geology, classics, history, &c. In every community there are numbers who have such peculiar aptitudes; the means of thorough instruction are required for the development of these peculiar talents; and as the cities afford the greatest number and variety of such talents, it is in the cities, above all, that the means of cultivating them should be supplied. Some would attend the chemical class, who have little interest in other subjects; mathematics, geology, metaphysics, would be the attraction for others. Thus, the university in the populous city has the most powerful effect, not only in placing a superior education within the reach of the greatest numbers, but in promoting that great general good, the extension and improvement of the sciences and arts, and in eliciting that latent talent, which must lie dormant and useless if not thus called forth into life and action.

It is in this way that the Scotch colleges, notwithstanding some serious defects in their system, have been of very great service to the Scottish people. Placed in the large towns, perfectly accessible on easy terms, devoid of any sectarian character, and affording the opportunity of studying any subject without the necessity of taking others not required, (though, of course, there is a curriculum for a *degree*,) they have given a great stimulus to general education, encouraged the study of every department of science and learning, and fostered every variety of taste and talent.

What can be a better instance of the inutility of the present system, than the position of the one professor of chemistry in the province,

Wasting his sweetness on the desert air,
at Windsor, when Halifax, with its thirty thousand, wants him,
and the whole country wants him, and would have access to him in.

the capital ; when, stationed there, he would give an impetus to the study of this fascinating and most useful science throughout the length and breadth of the land, and by lectures, practical classes and analyses, would greatly increase his own emoluments, at the same time that he would be doing an essential service to the province. In a young country like this, we desire particularly to develop its material resources. For this end we need professors of *chemistry, mechanics, botany and geology* ; and we need them placed where they can instruct and stimulate the greatest number. But here, we find the great, the wonderful discoveries of the last three hundred years — far exceeding, in amount, all previously known of physical science — so rich in applications to agriculture, manufactures, and every useful art — laid upon the shoulders of one man, and withheld from the great bulk of the population ; for he is placed exactly where he is of the least possible use to the greatest possible number.*

It would appear, then, that a university, to attain the utmost usefulness of which it is capable, and to have any prospect of success in a young and thinly peopled country, ought to be placed in the centre of the most populous district. The University of Nova Scotia, if there ever is to be one, must be in Halifax.

To attain this great end it is not necessary, nor is it desirable, that the efforts made by various parties to establish colleges in this province, should be thrown away. If the existing colleges were to unite their means and strength, they could form a complete and highly useful central Institution in the capital ; separate, not one of these is a College such as the times require, and they are in situations where they can get little support for themselves and do little good to the country. United, they supply means and materials for an Institution that would command extensive support, and be a real benefit to the Province.

* The Governors of King's College have rescued this province from a great reproach. But for this one appointment, it might be said that the collegiate system of Nova Scotia ignored the whole splendid range of modern discovery.

Nova Scotia has need of a University to prepare her youth at home for the learned professions; to impregnate those who will be her future public leaders with the refined and intellectual spirit imparted by high mental cultivation and an acquaintance with literature and science; to draw out and foster the native genius of her people; to scatter abroad a knowledge of the sciences and useful arts, by which alone we can hope to render available the rich material resources of the country. Who doubts that Nova Scotia abounds in natural poets, orators, mathematicians, mechanics, and numbers of others fitted to enrich and adorn their country, if their minds were stored with the requisite knowledge, and invigorated by the requisite cultivation.

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
 Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire,
 Hands that the rod of empire might have sway'd,
 Or wak'd to ecstasy the living lyre;
*But knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
 Rich with the stores of time, did ne'er unrol.*

That a people may avail themselves of all their resources, and take rank among the nations by contributing to the stores of literature and philosophy, they must have the means of educating the varied talents of their sons to the highest point. The natural force of genius will do little without information and training. This was the case, even in former times, when the first prizes to be won lay on the surface, inviting men to gather them. If we examine the lives of those eminent men who have enriched mankind by their literary works and scientific discoveries,—who have laid the foundation of the present magnificent structure of literature, philosophy and the arts,—we find them, with few and trifling exceptions, to have belonged to the most highly educated classes, numbers being found among the priests and nobles.* All that the unedu-

* This will be at once seen on enumerating the names of Copernicus, Tycho Brahe, Kepler, Bacon, Galileo, Napier, Newton, Leibnitz, Pascal, Boyle, Cavendish, Lavoisier, Laplace, Cuvier, Lyell, the two Humboldts, Grotius, Montesquieu, Locke, Voltaire, Adam Smith, Hume, Gibbon, Reid, Robertson, Burke, Johnson, Bentham, Byron, Walter Scott, Goethe, Bulwer, Macanlay, &c.

cated peasant or artizan has given us, is nothing compared with what we owe to the highly educated class; the latter, too, a mere fraction, in point of numbers, compared with the uneducated classes. If this was true formerly, when the spoils to be gathered lay on or near the surface, how much more must it be the case now, when he who would find treasures must dig deep; when so vast an amount of knowledge has been accumulated in every department of literature and science, which must be known and built upon by those who would add to the structure?

The great educational want of this Province is a University in its capital, with a full complement of professorships, to provide the most complete instruction on every useful subject, especially on the physical sciences; and, with *scholarships* or *bursaries*, to place this instruction within the reach of youth of talent and merit, who are unable to avail themselves of it from their own resources. Without some such institution the education of the country must be behind the age, and below the standard of that of other nations.

How such an institution is to be established and supported is, undoubtedly, a question of some difficulty. The Legislature may undertake it, as an important national work; the existing colleges may unite and form one efficient college in the capital; or the wealthy inhabitants may found and endow it, as was so often done in old times.* That it will be done some day, in one or other of these ways, or by a combination of them, there can be little doubt. The sooner that day arrives, the sooner will Nova Scotia derive the full benefit of the genius of her sons and the treasures of her soil.

* In innumerable instances in the old world and in the United States, educational institutions have been endowed by the munificence of private individuals, who thought that superfluous stores of wealth might well be employed in the extension of the means of education and encouragement and advancement of learning. Such were William of Wykeham, George Heriot, Owens of Manchester, Girard of Philadelphia, &c.

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