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## AN ABLE ADDRESS ON THE INFLUENCE OF THE U. N. B. IN CAN. LIFE AND LETTERS

Hon. J. B. McNair, K. C. and Rhodes Scholar,  
Traces History and Influence of Our University  
—Changes in Courses Intimated

Speaking at the University of New Brunswick Convocation, Hon. J. B. McNair, K.C., Attorney General, and Oxford scholar, traced the history and development of the University, and its influence on the Life and Letters in Canadian life. He also intimated that marked changes must come in our educational methods and practices to co-ordinate them with the general life of the people.

Hon. Mr. McNair said:

"We meet in special convocation this afternoon to pay our special tribute to two outstanding citizens of Canada who in their several fields of endeavour have performed signal service to our Dominion. It is altogether fitting that we should pause for a moment during these ceremonies to remind ourselves what is this institution which has seen fit to place the seal of her approval on them and what her true purpose. Perchance from the wells of memory we may draw fresh confidence and by our crystal gazing new hope and inspiration.

Our University has her roots deep in the foundation of this province. Upon the walls of the Library Building hangs the petition of a group of United Empire Loyalists, signed almost as their feet first touched these shores, praying of the Governor of their new province for the establishment of an Academy of Arts and Science in the new capital, by them styled Fredericksburg.

In the rude conditions of their day what changes have been wrought! Time and space themselves seem cowed before the march of science and invention. But against the rich background of our vaunted twentieth century civilization rise the companionate spectres of war and want. Is it not time that we again set reason on her throne and knowledge upon her pedestal?

It would not be without interest to trace in detail the early growth and recent development of our University; but I am not unmindful of the President's admonition that my share in these proceedings is to be brief. It will suffice to observe certain well-known landmarks.

In 1800 the College of New Brunswick was founded by a Provincial Charter, which in 1828 was surrendered in favour of a Royal Charter incorporating the College under the name of King's College, Fredericton. By Special Act of the provincial Legislature the University of New Brunswick was established in 1859, on a non-sectarian basis, with all the grants, properties and privileges of King's College.

In 1828 the present site was selected and the Arts Building erected. Until 1900 it stood a lone sentry on a campus that is today surrounded by well-equipped buildings.

Such brief account speaks of the physical appointments of our institution. But what of that which constitutes the real University, those spiritual forces and qualities which have their shifting domicile in the

character of the men and women who year after year issue from her halls?

As we seek to view the power and influence of the University of New Brunswick name after name stand forth upon her honor roll, conjuring up lives of high endeavor and achievement that have left a lasting impress upon the history of our province, our Dominion and our Empire. Their works live on, fortified in fitting measure by the efforts of those who in our immediate day, in the professions and public life and in the fields of literature, science and education draw inspiration from their record and example.

It would be easy to recall the names of many whom native virtue and ability carried to the very pinnacle of success. But our University breeds a freemasonry of spirit; and I feel sure that at this moment the minds of many of you turn to a still more numerous throng, graduates all, who, true to the teaching of their Alma Mater and her traditions, have carried on, unheralded and unsung, in ample service to their country and their fellowmen.

By what measure can we presume to gauge the value of a human life? Is not each home and community maker, whether of high or low estate, a nation builder?

The suggested subject for my address was the influence of this University on Canadian life and literature. I trust I will be pardoned in developing the topic in an unconventional way. For I prefer to direct your gaze into the rising, rather than the setting, sun.

Those things that were will receive sufficient testimony. To project into the future and shape a course there in, calls for higher hope and greater courage. With a civilization seeking to maintain as its chief cornerstone a social and economic system neglectful of human values, with a world torn by passion and seemingly bent on self-destruction, how can we maintain a balanced hope without a gift of vision?

Amid our surroundings this afternoon, redolent of peace and contentment, strife and bitterness seem far away. Yet at this moment the fancies of two continents are engrossed with thoughts of war.

Under the shadow of a great nation near at hand we may feel secure. Let us not forget however that we are of an Empire and while we so remain, when Great Britain is at war, we are at war! Would we change that condition?

### Imperial Relationships

It has not escaped your attention, I am sure, that a movement is on foot which would open the way for a material change in our Imperial relationships. I refer to the efforts of a new school of thought, which professing that the notion of Canadian nationhood is inconsistent with the maintenance by the provinces of this Confederation of their British ties, would remove our constitution, the

charter of the provinces, out of the custody of Westminster.

Their arguments are entirely specious and carry no conviction. There is no inconsistency. British genius has developed a type of Empire that is unique. So far as the self governing Dominions are concerned it is now accepted that there is no subordination. Cannot we, within our Canadian nation, maintain a league of provinces which, within the ambit of their powers, likewise know no subordination?

A break in our constitutional frame work may open wide the door for the forces of separation. Subserviency to a central authority in my view would prove too high a price for New Brunswick to pay for release from the cares and responsibilities of Empire.

### Canada and Peace

Instead of constitutional experiments we can more profitably apply ourselves to the promotion of habits of thought which eventually may render war obsolete. We in Canada can not perform miracles, but we can do our bit in the battle for peace.

To that end we should endeavour to create a broader knowledge of the causes and effects of war and a demand to know the real reasons therefor. In order to obtain this fuller enlightenment we must make our educational efforts vital and real by enlisting the legitimate self-interest of the people themselves. There is nothing unworthy in this; and we can be sure that when we make our educational methods practical by relating them to the physical and economic interests of the people we shall give them new force and vigor.

### Social Problems

As we shape our plans we must not ignore the many problems that crowd in upon us connected with our social and economic system. Are we to face the task of reconstruction boldly, and through rational processes win through, or shall we, our faculties dulled by indifference or despair, drift into chaos?

It is idle to think that men today will endure an empty larder or face a barren future with the inertia and helplessness that marked general conduct in a former day. Change is inevitable. It is the function of true leadership to direct a course towards an orderly change.

The effort should be to develop a spirit of individual self-help as well as a desire for co-operation. To that end our educational activities should be primarily directed.

Independence and self-reliance alone would be unavailing. We find those qualities at their highest in the jungle. Mutual sympathy, a spirit of good-will team play such is the sine qua non of intelligent action. I feel that co-operation will become popular when it is seen to pay.

None present would decry the dignity and worth of a classical education. Happily there will ever be minds

## ABILITY TO REASON STRESSED BY SIR EDWARD BEATTY AT CONVOCATION

That wisdom was not the result of the accumulation of information, but rather of the ability to reason, and that "we must face the fact that skill can only be useful to the human race when it is the servant of wisdom," was emphasized yesterday by Sir Edward Beatty, G.B.E., K.C., LL.D., Chairman and President of the Canadian Pacific Railway, in an address before the convocation of the University of New Brunswick and a meeting of the Canadian Society of Technical Agriculturists. Sir Edward received the honorary degree of LL.D. from the University.

The tendency of educational development, Sir Edward said, had been in the direction of the creation of institutions of learning especially equipped to provide training in those physical sciences whose ambit had widened so greatly in the century of

to whom knowledge appeals for its own sake. We should, however, be practical enough to admit that, for the vast majority, to make a living is the first problem in making a life.

There is nothing unworthy in being matter of fact in our educational methods. All learning has its cultural value. The agriculturist who by the intelligent application of scientific methods keeps his fields free of weeds, or his flock of disease, improves his material lot, but also gains in moral stature. The artisan who justly prides himself on work well, because wisely, done, advances on the payroll, with an added self-respect.

When our forefathers looked about for a site for our University they chose a hill-top, the symbol of hope. The past has indicated, the future will prove, that their choice was prophetic.

### Changes at U.N.B.

Marked changes are needed and must come in our educational methods and practices to co-ordinate them with the general life of the people. In the work of creating a sounder individual viewpoint, in the process of community building and in provincial development generally, this University is destined to play an important role.

She has been often described as the crown of our educational system. I venture to predict that in the new arrangement she will, with a new dignity, occupy a place as the very centre of the social and economic life of our province.

Today she has seen fit to accept into her membership two distinguished men who in the world of practical affairs have contributed in large measure to the upbuilding of our nation. In honor of them let us again pledge her to the great tasks that confront the leadership of our day.

the industrial revolution. The growth of great centers of learning had not been permitted to prevent the continued life and growth of smaller institutions faithfully discharging their duty of keeping the lamp of learning alight.

"The test of the success of education in any country, and in any period of human history will always be the same," Sir Edward said. "A public life directed purely to the end of expression of the high ideals of a free people and a private life ruled by the pursuit of these simple virtues which the human conscience knows instinctively to be good—these are the objects for which we try to train our youth."

The qualities needed for success were virtue, wisdom and skill. Canadians living in a country of great natural wealth, could not blame any failure on external forces. Virtue, the moral qualities which form a nation's character, must come first. Wisdom must come next "for it is only from wisdom that we can learn how to carry out the commands of virtue by skill." There never was a time, Sir Edward continued when wisdom was so badly needed. The development of skill imposed on Canadians the need of added wisdom such as our forefathers could never have foreseen. Sir Edward cited aviation, radio, and moving pictures as examples, and in replying to those who have attempted to decry the increase in human skill said: "It is a basic part of faith in humanity, that we should believe that human beings can still learn to use new powers for good and not for evil."

Institutions such as the University of New Brunswick could play a major role in forming the wisdom of the human race by encouraging their members in the fields of ethics and reason. Sir Edward concluded this portion of his address by saying: "In the field of education I am convinced that we can already see that we erred in our concentration of effort in the development of skill, without a sufficient realization of the added wisdom which the use of added skill requires."

"I have faith enough in human nature to believe that we shall learn this lesson and apply it, and that the educational system of this country will increasingly devote its efforts to the increase of wisdom. In such a plan institutions such as this, which has so greatly honored me today, can take the lead."

Turning particularly to the members of the Canadian Society of Technical Agriculturists, Sir Edward said that he knew of no class of men in whom the possession of wisdom, could be of more direct use to society at large.

It was important that the technical agriculturists, in addition to advising farmers on purely technical questions, add certain counsels which they could draw from the wisdom which the institutions of learning could provide. It was, he said, highly important to find the real reason for booms and depressions, at the same time voicing his belief that "planned economy" was unconvincing, and to him particularly unreal because it could not plan effectively for farmers, the largest and economically the most important group or producers. Using wheat as an example, Sir Edward stated his opinion that over production did not

(Continued on Page Six)

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